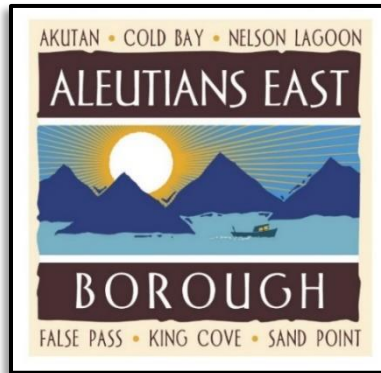


# In the Loop



---

## **8.2 Magnitude Earthquake Rattles Nerves, But No Significant Damage Reported**

It was the largest earthquake in the United States in more than half a century, with a magnitude of 8.2 last night, and yet damage was minimal or non-existent in communities off the coast of the Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands. While items tumbled off of shelves in some homes and businesses, others reported no damage at all. However, after experiencing their third earthquake in a little more than one year, it still rattled nerves.

“I was in bed, and I’m thinking, oh, it’s a little earthquake,” said Aleutians East Borough Assembly member Denise Mobeck, who is also the administrative assistant for the Sand Point Police Department.

Then the shaking grew in intensity.

“It was a slow shaking. All of a sudden my cat goes flying off the bed,” she said.

At that point, she decided to get up and go into the living room to investigate.

“Then I hear glass breaking out there because I have a hutch that has vases. So we lost a couple of the vases,” she said.

Mobeck also noticed items that fell off a shelf and onto the ground. As she surveyed the damage, she waited.

“I’m just watching everything swaying, and thinking to myself, when is this going to stop? It seemed to go on for a while,” she said.

The U.S. Geological Survey said the quake hit 56 miles southeast of Perryville and was about 29 miles below the surface of the ocean. Sand Point Police Chief Dave Anderson had just gone to bed after flying into the community from Seattle earlier that afternoon when the earthquake struck.

“I was thinking, oh, it’s not that bad,” he said. “If this had been the first time I had experienced this, I might have had a little adrenaline going.”

Then he got up to check and see whether there was a tsunami alert. Sure enough, there was. The tsunami warning for Alaska covered 1,000 miles, extending from Prince William Sound to Samalga Island, near the end of the Aleutian Islands.

King Cove City Administrator Gary Hennigh was in Kodiak for a conference when the earthquake struck.

“It was pretty intense with the non-stop sirens and most everyone evacuating to the high school,” he said.

In King Cove, Fire Chief Chris Babcock was watching TV with his wife when the bed started shaking.

“I told my wife, I think we’re having an earthquake. She said, no, no. I think it’s just the boys,” he said.

Babcock could hear his boys talking loudly in another room and acting concerned.

“I got up and told her, no, honey, we’re having an earthquake. I’ve got to go to work.”

Babcock waited.

“I was thinking, man, is it going to get worse or something? Then it stopped. It didn’t feel as strong as the one that we had in July and October of last year, but it seemed like it lasted a lot longer,” he said. “It felt like it was kind of a wave action. There really wasn’t any damage or anything out of place.”

As Babcock was heading to work, he noticed employees from Peter Pan Seafoods were already evacuating to higher ground.

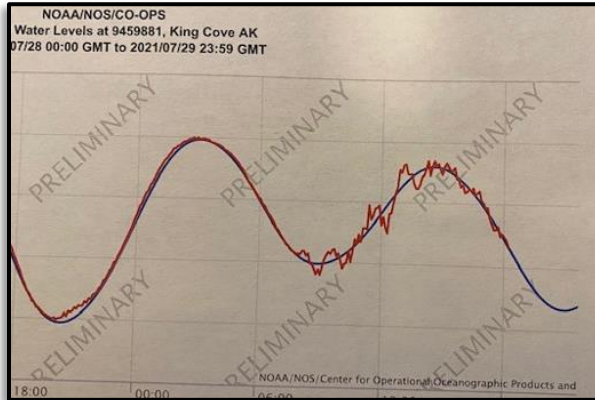


**Nearly 400 people evacuated to the King Cove School. Photo by Paul Barker.**

“I started the tsunami warning siren. Everybody arrived at the school within about 45 minutes after the initial warning,” he said.

King Cove School Principal Paul Barker said about 400 people gathered at the school.

“It could not have gone smoother,” Barker said.



**NOAA’s website on tides showed nothing of any significance. Photo by Chris Babcock**

Meanwhile, Babcock was checking the tides on a NOAA website.

“I was checking both King Cove and Sand Point, and I wasn’t seeing anything of any significance,” he said.

In Sand Point, Denise Mobeck went down to the clinic where the tsunami alarm is located, and manually turned it on. At that point, she saw some people driving up the hill.

“People were driving around, looking for any damage,” she said. “The officers were also going around downtown to make sure people were notified.”

Nearly 200 people gathered at the Sand Point School.

“It was quite orderly. The public knows how to respond to this,” said Police Chief Anderson.

The National Tsunami Warning Center canceled the warnings early this morning.

Sand Point Administrator Jordan Keeler called around to see if anyone had anything to report.

“No apparent damage this morning after city employees did their checks,” he said. “There were no injuries reported.”

Some people were very surprised that this earthquake, with a magnitude of 8.2, didn’t feel nearly as strong as two earthquakes last year, one in October (7.6 magnitude) and another in July (7.8 magnitude). The July 2020 earthquake caused damage to Sand Point’s old dock and to the road leading to the harbor.



**Boats return to the King Cove Harbor after tsunami warnings were canceled. Photo by Chris Babcock.**

“This one was quite different compared to the quakes last year,” Anderson said. “Last night’s earthquake wasn’t nearly as violent. It was a stark difference. We were very fortunate.”

# U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to Finish Cleanup work of Tigalda Island near Akutan

Tigalda Island, located about 33 miles away from Akutan, is often visited by birds and marine mammals, such as harbor seals, sea lions and sea otters. Animals, such as foxes and voles call Tiglada home, but otherwise, the island is uninhabited. However, starting today, this remote area will transform into a hub of activity for a short period of time. A small group of workers set up camp to get a project wrapped up which has historical ties to World War II.

Today (July 29<sup>th</sup>), field crews, authorized by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), began mobilizing to Tigalda to remove petroleum-contaminated soil, a project that has been years in the making. The southeast end of the island was a Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) associated with the former Aircraft Warning Service (AWS) Station radar facility, which became operational in 1944. The purpose of the AWS Station was to provide navigational and early warning support for military defense of the Aleutian Islands during World War II. The AWS Station was comprised of a 14-building arrangement consisting of six Quonset hut barracks, a kitchen/mess facility, a storage warehouse, a radio building, a power house, radar van antenna structures, latrines and a pump house.



An aerial of Tigalda Island. Courtesy of USACE.



Tiglada Island cliff site. Photo courtesy: USACE.

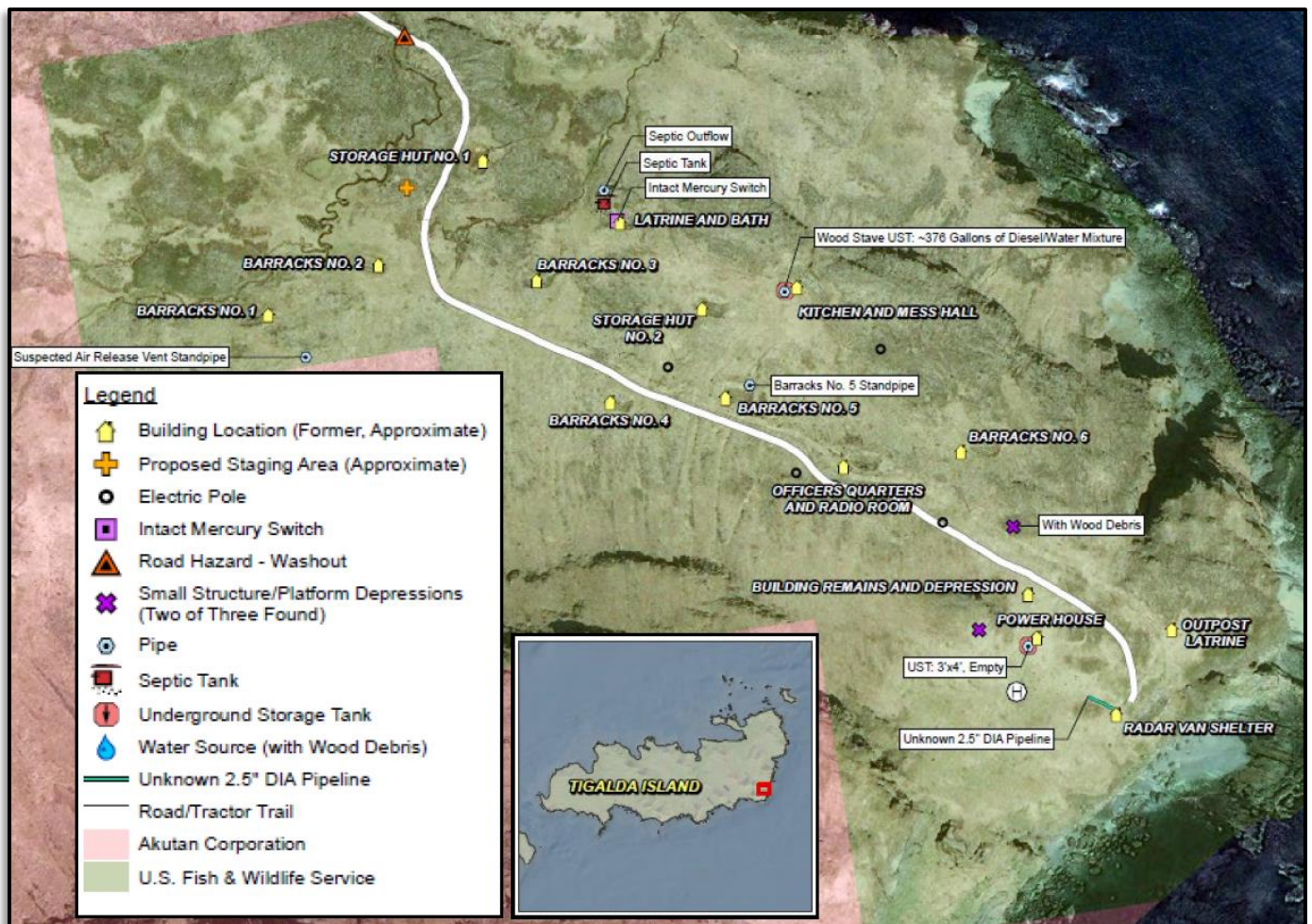
“At Tigalda Bay, the depressions of a storage hut, several potential WWII tent/buildings and three radar outpost locations are evident,” said Richard Ragle, FUDS Project Manager with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. “The AWS was abandoned in-place in 1945, although the radar equipment had already been removed in the fall of 1944.”

Until recently, the island was managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) as part of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge (AMNWR). Tigalda Island is now owned and managed by the Akutan

Corporation, with the exception of the parcel of land around the AWS, which is still managed by the USFWS.

The field crews include two staff members from USACE, (a Quality Assurance Representative and an archaeologist) who will oversee the work performed by the contractor. The contractor, Ahtna Engineering Services will have approximately 6 to 8 staff members on site for the 2-week project.

A mini excavator will be flown by helicopter to the site. Excavations will occur at three former building locations that have soil contamination above Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation cleanup standards.



“Once excavated, the soil will be bagged, flown to a staging area at the head of Tigalda Bay, and then shipped offsite for disposal,” Ragle said.

This is the last of many visits to Tigalda Island over the years. Site visits or environmental investigations were conducted in the 1970s, 1995, 1998, 1999, 2005 and in 2017.

“USACE had a contractor excavate contaminated soils by hand during the summer of 2018, but they were unable to remove sufficient contamination for the site to be closed,” Ragle said.

This summer, USACE is planning to close this chapter of the site's history and help to improve the overall quality of the ecological environment.

"The goal of this contract is to remove sufficient material to meet the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation Cleanup standards so that we can hopefully close the site after the summer 2021 removal action."

---

## First-Ever Pink Rain Champagne Walk in Sand Point Attracts Large Number of Supporters

On July 2<sup>nd</sup>, the residents of Sand Point painted the community pink in honor of Carlene J. Holmberg, who passed away a year ago from breast cancer. Grieving her loss has been a struggle for her family and friends. So while processing her loss, her daughter, Carmen Holmberg, decided to turn her grief into something positive.



**More than 91 people participated in the Pink Walk. Photo courtesy: Pink Rain Champagne.**

She organized a grassroots project and a Facebook page called Pink Rain Champagne, named after the three things her mother loved. That inspired a community-wide event, scheduled for July 2<sup>nd</sup>: a Pink Walk, BBQ and a Pink Party in her mom's honor.

"We always walked. It was just something my mom, the kids and I would do, so this was a way for me to honor her memory while grieving in a healthy way," Holmberg said.

The morning of the event, Holmberg posted a message to her mom on her Facebook page: "Today, we will be turning Sand Point pink in your honor. I do love and miss you so much. I hope you're proud."

The community turned out for the event in force, wearing pink and sprinkling pink powder and glitter everywhere. About 91 people registered for the event, with more joining that day. Participants met for the Pink Walk met at the harbor, just past the bridge. From there, people paraded along the lower loop.

“We had pink confetti shooters with powder in it. We had a couple of trucks and people in the back shooting out powder as we walked along the lower loop,” she said.



After the Pink Walk ended, participants enjoyed a barbecue meal. Photo courtesy: Pink Rain Champagne.

The walk ended at the Gear Shed, where people could enjoy BBQ meals. A registration drawing and prize raffle followed the BBQ. That evening, the community (ages 21+) celebrated at the Pink Party. Holmberg was overwhelmed by the community’s support. Besides those who purchased registrations for the event, businesses and individuals also donated cash, air miles and their time to help make Pink Rain Champagne’s day a complete success.

“My mom always donated to the local cancer fund and to the Baptist church,” Holmberg said. “With Pink Rain Champagne, I will continue to donate to them in her name.”

With the help of everyone who donated, Holmberg was able to donate \$5,000 to the cancer fund and \$2,000 to the Baptist church.

“I can’t express enough how thankful I am for all the support to make Pink Rain Champagne’s Pink Walk, BBQ and Pink Party a success,” Holmberg said. “This was a wonderful way to pay tribute to my beautiful momma. I know she watched us as we painted the town pink. We are an amazing community, and I appreciate all the love and support.”

---

If you’d like to subscribe to *In the Loop*, please email [ltanis@aeboro.org](mailto:ltanis@aeboro.org).





*Thank you for reading **In the Loop**. If you would like to subscribe or unsubscribe, please send an email to [ltanis@aeboro.org](mailto:ltanis@aeboro.org). For more information about our communities, our people, and our fisheries, please visit us at [www.aleutianseast.org](http://www.aleutianseast.org) and [www.aebfish.org](http://www.aebfish.org). For the latest news, find us on Facebook:*

[\*Link to AEB's Facebook page\*](#)

[\*Link to King Cove's Facebook page\*](#)

[\*Link to Cold Bay's Facebook page\*](#)

[\*Link to Sand Point's Facebook page\*](#)

[\*Link to Akutan's Facebook page\*](#)

