

**Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe**  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 03/26/2014**



**SAUK-SUIATTLE INDIAN TRIBE RESPONDS TO OSO MUDSLIDE DISASTER**  
*Tribe Continues to Support Darrington Community*

DARRINGTON, WA: At this time, all Sauk-Suiattle Tribal members are accounted for. The Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe were without telephone service, cell phone service and internet connectivity from Saturday until Monday evening of this week. The Tribe continues to have intermittent communication abilities as a direct result of the Oso Mudslide, resulting in challenges in doing business and providing the services required for the Tribe. The closure of SR 530 directly impacts the health needs of community members, adding two hours travel time to health providers in Arlington, Everett, Seattle and other areas, as community members are now routed north to SR 20 and then through Sedro-Woolley. The additional travel time is placing a financial burden on already strained resources in a community with 75% of Tribal members living 200% below the federal poverty level. This transportation issue makes it challenging to meet the basic medical and provision needs of community members.

The Tribal Council has passed a resolution for a Declaration of Impact from State of Emergency Declared for SR 530 Mudslide of March 22, 2014, as this affects our medically fragile community members being able to access their vital health care needs. We have been advised that ambulance services will take up to 90 minutes to respond, airlift by helicopter will take up to 50 minutes to respond due to the remote location of the Sauk-Suiattle reservation.

The Tribe owns the only gas station in Darrington. The tribally owned Shell Station in Darrington has expanded hours and increased stocking and refueling in an effort to meet the increased traffic.

Tribal Council Vice-Chairman, Kevin Lenon, who also serves with the Darrington Fire Department as a volunteer, has been actively involved in the search, rescue, and recovery efforts since the mudslide happened. Several Tribal members have been volunteering daily in various capacities, alongside countless other community volunteers, FEMA, the National Guard, local, state and federal officials.

The Sauk-Suiattle people have a long standing relationship with their Darrington neighbors, assisted with the building of the Baptist Church and the Community Center in Darrington. Our people are feeling the sorrow of this devastating event and are working alongside our neighbors to support one another and to provide healthy activities for community youth during Spring Break and beyond.

Students from the Darrington Youth Council have met with Sauk-Suiattle staff to organize youth events to help promote unity and community among the youth and to utilize these events as an opportunity to express their feelings about the recent tragedy.

There will be a fund-raising event for the Victim's Relief Fund held on Saturday, April 26, from noon to 10 p.m., with performances throughout the day to help raise funds. Additionally, there will be a Silent Auction of donated art. It is anticipated that this event will be held at Darrington High School with coordination by Sauk-Suiattle volunteers and the Darrington Youth Council. All proceeds will be deposited at Coastal Community Bank in Darrington, WA. Please contact Coastal Community Bank at 360-436-0284, to make direct donations.

Artists and volunteers may contact Renée Roman Nose, Health & Social Services Director for the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe and volunteer coordinator of the event, at 360-436-0131, ext. 223, or e-mail: [rromannose@sauk-suiattle.com](mailto:rromannose@sauk-suiattle.com) for additional information about the fund raising event. More information to follow on our website: [www.sauk-suiattle.com](http://www.sauk-suiattle.com).