

State of Idaho Military Division / Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security  
News Release  
For Immediate Release, Jan. 8, 2009  
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(Boise) Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter today signed a State of Idaho disaster declaration to provide assistance to Benewah County in northern Idaho. Extreme winter conditions have caused a significant buildup of ice on the St. Joe River. The ice must be broken up in order to prevent flood conditions, considered likely in the face of a high snowpack and warm weather.

Without the ice breakup, there is a strong possibility of flooding in communities along the St. Joe River, including the community of St. Maries. Also threatened are bridges, roads, private residences, municipal water supplies, the municipal sewage lagoon and farmlands.

Benewah County officials are requesting State of Idaho emergency funding to hire commercial icebreakers, and the governor's disaster declaration provides a vehicle to assist with that funding.

*Note to reporters: The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security is the State of Idaho's emergency management agency. Please note that Idaho BHS is an Idaho-specific agency, and is not the same thing as the federal Department of Homeland Security. Within the State of Idaho organizational chart, Idaho BHS is aligned under the State of Idaho Military Division.*

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