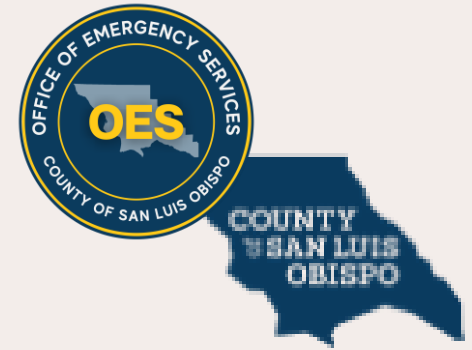


El Niño Preparedness



Water Advisory Resources Board
Meeting October 7, 2026



What does El Niño mean for SLO County Preparations?

El Niño is a seasonal influence rather than a guarantee of specific weather; it increases the potential for certain conditions, but it does not determine when, where, or how severe individual storms will be.

This means that the County must prepare for, and maintain readiness, for what could happen so that if it does, we are as prepared as possible.



El Niño Task Force



County El Niño Task Force

Purpose: Ensure the County, cities, and our residents are prepared to respond to and recover from any storm activity that has been enhanced by El Niño conditions:

- Coordination between agencies for better preparedness and response capabilities
- Public preparedness
- Mitigation of known hazards that can cause destruction to public and private infrastructure



Task Force Members

- Internal County Group
- Operational Area Group
- Communications Group
- Stakeholders Group
- Public Works Group

Task Force Objectives

- Mitigate, to the extent possible, known hazards that may cause infrastructure or personal property damage
- Work collaboratively with all stakeholders that will be impacted, including cities, public safety agencies, NGOs, schools, state agencies, special districts
- Keep the public informed on the potential impacts of El Nino and provide information on self-preparedness and ensure that it is accessible to all county residents and businesses.
- Maintain situational awareness of storm activity and communicate the situation to stakeholders and the public.
- Prepare to open multiple shelter locations if the needs arise and communicate the status of severe weather centers.
- Develop pre-plans and lists of supplies, equipment, and materials that will be needed.



How Do Preparations this Year
Look Different?

County preparations for El Niño are largely the same as its standard winter preparations, but with a greater level of intensity and readiness.

- Coordination between agencies
- Training of Disaster Service Workers
- Public information push
- Supplies, equipment, etc





NO FORECAST



**WHAT CAN SLO
COUNTY EXPECT?**



**HOW CAN YOU
PREPARE?**

Key Public
Messaging





Everyone Should Make a Plan and Build a Kit.

Family Disaster Plan - Identifying potential hazards, designated meeting places, evacuation routes, and a communication plan with emergency contact numbers, both in and out of the area.

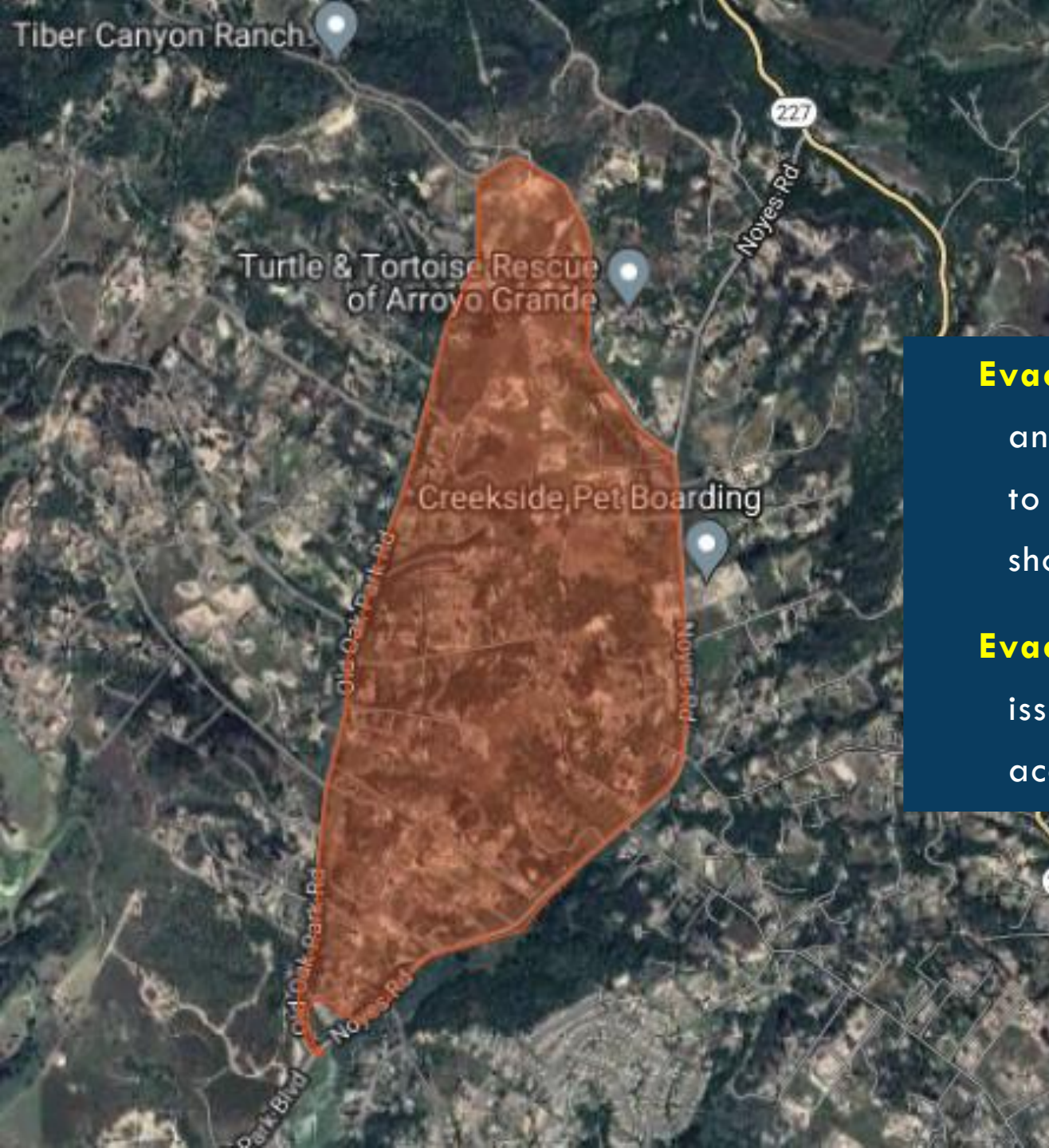
Disaster Supply Kit – Collecting basic household items you would need in an emergency – food, water, medication, and other supplies you would need to last for at least three days.

Learn Your Evacuation Zone

- Pre-established zones that can be used during large scale emergencies
- Could be used during flooding this winter
- Find your Zone at ReadySLO.org/EvacZone



Understand Evacuation Terminology



Evacuation Warning: Potential threat to life and/or property. Those who require additional time to evacuate, and those with pets and livestock should leave now.

Evacuation Order: Immediate threat to life; a lawful order issued to leave now. The area is lawfully closed to public access by law enforcement.

Be aware of Emergency Shelters

- Can be run by American Red Cross, the County in unincorporated areas or cities in their jurisdictions.
- Number of locations limited by staffing, equipment and facilities so may have to travel outside of their immediate area for sheltering.



Know How You Will be Alerted

Education campaign happening now to remind the public how we talk to them during emergencies and to sign up for alerts.



Sign Up for Notifications

- AlertSLO – Emergency messaging and important information messaging
- Reverse 911 – Protective Actions and emergency messaging





Emergency Alert System (EAS)

- Broadcast over local television and radio
- During an emergency, local officials could activate the EAS to provide emergency information and actions necessary to the general public over local radio and TV stations



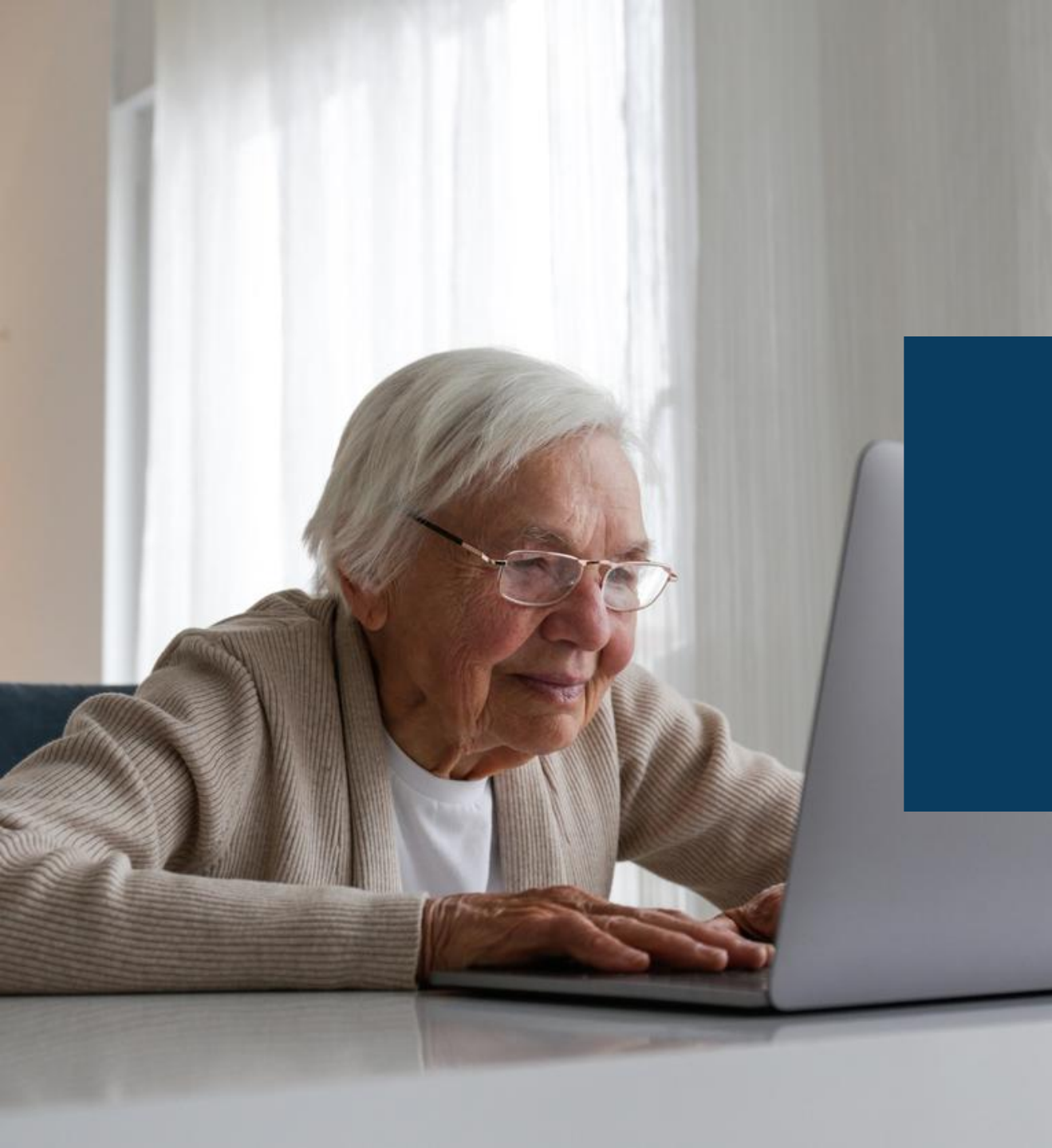
Wireless Emergency Alerts

- Emergency alerts that are sent to all cell phones in a geographic area.
- Not impacted by network congestion and there is no charge.
- 360 character messages so limited information provided but tell you where to get more information in each message.

NOAA Weather Radios



- Emergency alerts are provided to NOAA and are accessible over NOAA weather radios.
- They can be used to alert the public to weather and non-weather-related emergencies
- Great in areas without cell coverage.
- Can be purchased online or in electronics stores.



Questions?