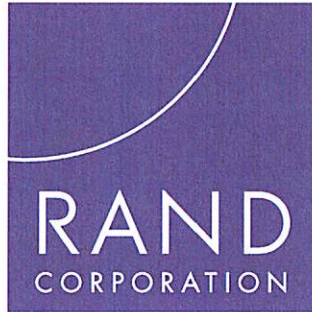


Special Report

The Rand Corporation - Katie Whipkey



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In Sitka, landslides represent a rare, sometimes catastrophic, and difficult-to-predict hazard affecting safety and security of lives and properties. Despite significant dangers associated with landslides, current landslide warning systems do not provide adequate risk reduction for most communities worldwide, and Sitka is no exception.

A collaborative research team of RAND Corporation, the Sitka Sound Science Center, the City and Borough of Sitka, and other partners is working to deepen the scientific shared understanding of the natural science of landslide prediction and the social science of warning and response systems. This network and shared understanding will define a tightly integrated scientific approach to collaboratively build a smart and connected predictive warning system that increases community safety. The research team has been [awarded](#) a planning grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) to prepare to submit a [proposal](#) for a full-scale, multi-year research effort. If awarded, this full-scale grant will support creating this network and establishing meaningful connections with Sitka with the purpose of leaving behind sustaining and useful capabilities.

The first step to creating such a system is empowering the community to reflect on their own social connectedness and resilience. Through a series of conversations, the research team is seeking to build an understanding of the issues at the heart of a community, particularly those identified by citizens and governments, and taking the time to figure out how to come to the best solution for landslide forecasting and warning. As a result, the community will help define and co-produce the research plan for the grant. These community conversations will cover key topics including: (1) assessing gaps in landslide hazard prediction and forecasting in Sitka and Southeast Alaska; (2) collecting needs and concerns of community members for a warning and prediction system; (3) determining research and decision support needs of local government decisionmakers and homeowners; and (4) identifying and clarifying priority topics for the full proposal to NSF.

Public meetings for discussion will be held on the following days at the **Sitka Sound Science Center** in the Karsh Classroom:

Wednesday, January 10 from 6:00-7:00pm

Friday, January 12 from 8:00-9:00am

About RAND

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