



## **PUBLIC SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **DANGER WARNING**

### **UNSTABLE WINTER ICE CONDITIONS AT VALDEZ GLACIER LAKE**

For immediate release: 12.23.2021, 5:00 p.m.

Valdez Glacier experienced an extreme calving and separation event during summer 2020. Since that time, ice conditions on the lake are different than experienced in the past. Most of the current lake ice is relatively new.

Although the lake may now appear frozen, danger still exists. Glacier icebergs above and below the lake's surface may potentially fracture, move, or collapse, causing danger and instability for those recreating nearby. Recreationists at Portage Glacier Lake outside Whittier experienced similar conditions in April 2020: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=doimqS6r6zg>.

**The City of Valdez recently received reports of underwater calving that penetrated through the frozen lake. Icebergs have also rolled and shifted despite the frozen surface. Conditions in the lake are changing and dynamic.**

Water in the lake is constantly flowing from the face of the glacier to the lake's outflow. This reduces ice thickness in some areas and contributes to unstable ice below the surface. Ice caves may collapse from lack of support or movement. Avoid climbing on ice and be aware of rocks, ice, and snow that may fall from overhead areas.

Blankets of snow may cover crevasses and other hazards. Locations of new ice may cause disorientation when visibility is limited due to weather or darkness, even for those normally familiar with the area. Snow avalanches and rockslides from adjacent mountains also pose a danger to those recreating on the ice and may compromise the lake's frozen surface.

Please recreate responsibly. Gather information from a variety of sources prior to using Valdez Glacier Lake. Consider risk, weather conditions, and your intended route prior to departure.

If you chose to enjoy the lake, ensure you are prepared. Go with others. Make sure someone at home knows exactly where you are going and when you intend to return. Be realistic with the physical limitations of those in your group. Wear appropriate clothing. Take safety equipment, first aid supplies, and a working communications device in case of emergency, as cell coverage in the area is spotty.

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Contacts: Aaron Baczuk, city emergency manager, [abaczuk@pd.valdezak.gov](mailto:abaczuk@pd.valdezak.gov) or (907) 835-4560 or Allie Ferko, public information officer, [afenko@valdezak.gov](mailto:afenko@valdezak.gov) or (907) 202-0711