



Information for Users:

- The lahar-hazard zones in valleys heading on Mount Rainier depict areas that are at potential risk from lahars. Future lahars will vary greatly in size and the hazards zones depicted on the map provide only an estimate of areas that could be inundated by the largest likely events. In the broad valleys of the Puget Sound lowland, only the largest lahars have the ability to affect areas near zone boundaries.
- Although hazard-zone boundaries are shown as lines, the degree of hazard does not change abruptly at them. Lahar hazards decrease gradually away from Mount Rainier and more rapidly with height above the valley floor.
- The hazard zones were developed by geologists who studied the extent of past large lahars, the last one of which swept through the Puyallup valley about 500 years ago. Pinning down the exact extent of these ancient lahars is difficult, so the outer margin of the hazard zone is only approximately located.
- The zones were constructed at a map scale of 1:100,000 (one inch on the map equals about 1.6 miles on the ground). Some viewer options may allow the user to zoom in to a scale of about 1:4,500 (one inch on the map equals about 375 feet). Users should note that as they zoom in below 1:100,000 scale, the zone boundaries will not closely follow details of the topography, and will make unreasonable shifts up and down hill, not typical behavior for water-mobilized lahars flowing down broad river valleys. Users should be aware of these scale-dependent shortcomings that are most common along margins of valleys.