

Surface Transportation Board

Incoming Correspondence Record

#EI-3109

* Required Fields		Recorded by <i>Diana Wood</i> on <i>08/17/2007</i>	
*Docket #:	FD 34284 0	Affiliation:	Environmental Organization
*Name of Sender:	Robert Fitzgerald	Letter Type:	Letter w/ Attachments
Group:	MCEAA	NEPA Type:	Draft EIS Comment
Attention Of:	Victoria Rutson	In Public Docket?	☒ Yes ☐ No
*Date Received:	08/15/2007	Phone Number:	
Date of Letter:	07/21/2007	Email Address:	
Group's Address:		Group's Zip Code:	-
Group's City:			
Group's State:			

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

The Medina County Environmental Action Association, Inc.

202 CR 450, Hondo, TX 78861
www.dontmesswithquihi.com
Dr. Robert T. Fitzgerald, President
Lester Landrum, Vice-President
Archie Gerdes, Director
Randy Wood, Director
Alyne Fitzgerald, communications

Phone 830-741-5040

Fax 830-426-2060

Jacque Conrad, Secretary
Mary Walpole, Treasurer
Ted Portenier, Director
Erna Balze, Membership

Received
August 15, 2007
Dr. W
#E1-3109

July 21, 2007

Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Victoria Rutson
Section of Environmental Analysis
1925 K Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: Finance Docket #34284
Vulcan Materials/SGR Application
Medina County at Quihi, Texas

Dear Ms. Rutson:

Recent natural flooding events point out the fact that the location of Vulcan/SGR's proposed quarry and railroad is not a safe one, and thus far the engineering data provided by Vulcan/SGR shows they will not make it safe. The Medina County Environmental Action Association believes it is important to bring to SEA's attention these events. Recent precipitation in the Quihi area, although not as great as other areas in Texas, on June 28 and again on July 20 and 21, 2007 points out the need to report to the SEA Section the impact made by three to five inches of rainfalls in the area of the proposed quarry and rail loop, which bears the brunt of drainage of over 18,000 acres of upland water shed. Please see enclosed upgradient map of drainage through the proposed area..

As proof of the extreme flooding, we are enclosing newspaper reports, pictures and a map of the area affected, and articles from the July 5, 2007, Hondo Anvil-Herald concerning the June 28 flash-flooding events on roadways. A second article in July 5 Anvil Herald graphically depicts the dangerous effect of heavy rainfall on County Road 351, which Vulcan trucks would have to "navigate" to and from the proposed quarry and railroad loop. As you know, the proposed quarry plant and rail loop location on CR 353 is north of the lower 2.5 miles of CR 351. A letter to the editor on July 12, 2007 attests to the danger and certainty of flooding in this area.

MCEAA, Inc. and others are of the opinion that construction of the plant, fuel storage, and rail loop's strategic location in the path of the Polecat and Elm Creeks and their flood ways, will increase the flooding potential with loss of life, property and damage to the historic rural Quihi landscape. If Vulcan/SGR disagrees with this statement we challenge them to prove it. Graphic support for our assertions is presented with pictures, made after the 4" rainfall in the upland watershed. As MCEAA has previously pointed out, this amount of rainfall is not uncommon in this part of the "Texas' Flash Flood Alley." Enclosed is a copy of several newspapers' coverage of flooding of 1997. Similar flooding also occurred in 1998, 2002, 2003 and six times in 2004.

The berms and trestle bridges for the rail line will present additional flooding problems during times of heavy rainfall. Enclosed is an article about flooding in areas of the city of Hondo, with Mayor Jim Danner's statement that the railroad beds of the Union Pacific rail line act as a dam and cause this problem.

Page 2

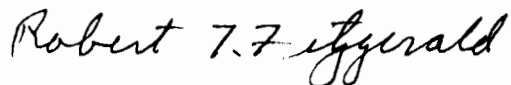
July 21, 2007

Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Victoria Rutson
Re: Finance Docket #34284

In the past, Vulcan has stated there will be "no problem" with storm water runoff from the quarry site, as upland drainage will be contained within the pit area. This may be true after fifty years of excavation, but not true in the early development phases of the quarry. Vulcan's logic should be studied by an Environmental Impact Study on the 1760 acre proposed quarry site. MCEAA again respectfully requests STB to require an Environmental Impact Study on the quarry and rail loop as a connected action to the SGR rail line application. We make this request for the sake of our lives, property and historic resources in the area. If STB decides not to require an EIS on the quarry site as a connected action, we ask you to consider consultations with agencies you feel would be appropriate, such as FEMA and Corps of Engineers, in making your decision concerning this application.

MCEAA, Inc. wishes to thank SEA for its patience, time, and effort thus far devoted to this project's application. Please include this letter in the records of FD 34284.

Sincerely,



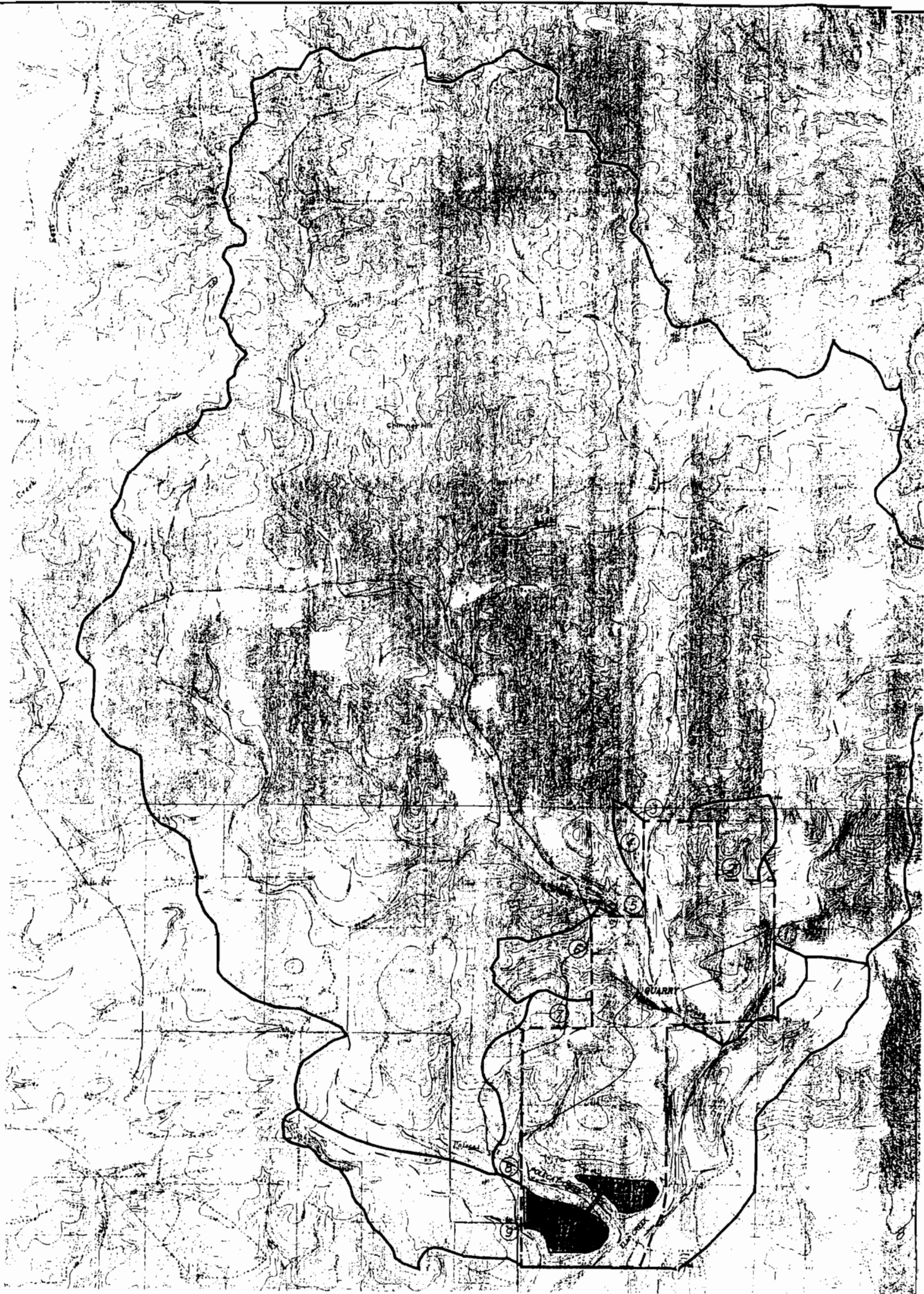
Robert Fitzgerald, President

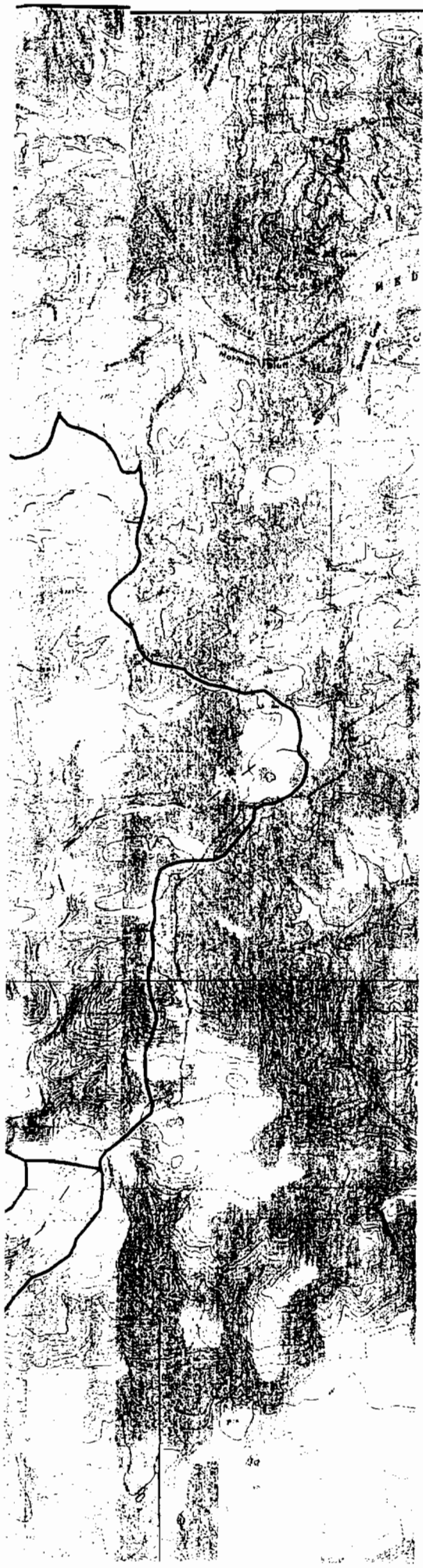
Attachments:

- Map of 18,301.91 acre drainage map, by Overby and Descamps
- Flooding pictures and flooding map
- Newspaper: Hondo Anvil Herald, July 5, 2007, pages 1, 3, and 5
- Copies of newspapers of 1997
- Letter to editor of Hondo Anvil Herald, July 12, 2007, from Quihi resident
- Copy of article in Hondo Anvil Herald dated July 19, 2007, regarding City of Hondo flooding.

CC: U.S. Senator K. B. Hutchison
U.S. Senator John Cornyn
U.S. Representative Ciro Rodriguez
Texas Representative Tracy King
Lawrence Oaks, Executive Director, Texas Historical Commission
Pat Brawner, Flood Plain Administrator for Medina County
Medina County Judge Jim Barden
Medina County Pct 1 Commissioner Ronnie Ulbrich
MCEAA Attorney David Barton

MCEAA, Inc., for your Home, Health, and Heritage





Scale 1"=2000'
AT FULL SCALE

UPGRADIENT AREAS ACCUMULATED AREAS (ACRES)	
NODE	
1	2,326.30
2	1,333.58
3	973.87
4	48.43
5	13,246.18
6	168.24
7	59.58
8	838.75
9	506.92

- LEGEND
- PROPERTY LINE
 - DRAINAGE AREA BOUNDARY
 - (12) NODE

WHILE DEALING WITH JURISDICTIONAL WATER COURSES WITHIN THE QUARRY AREA ARE NOT PART OF THE WATER POLLUTION ABATEMENT PLAN, VULCAN ACKNOWLEDGES THAT IT WILL NOT MINE THESE AREAS WITHOUT PRIOR COORDINATION WITH JURISDICTIONAL AGENCIES.

Denver K. Koyt



REVISIONS

11815 MARFIELD
SAN ANTONIO, TX 78216
Tel: (210) 828-3320
Fax: (210) 828-3389
oak@overbydescamps.com

**OVERBY
DESCAMPS
ENGINEERS**

Overby • Descamps • Engineers • Surveyors

Vulcan Materials, Medina Quarry
Attachment B: Upgradient Areas

EXHIBIT 4

PROJECT NO. 0557.00
DATE 03/08/08
DRAWN ESP CHECKED BY
SHEET 1 OF 1

July 28,
2007



WILLIAM LUTHER/STAFF

Some D'Hanis residents say a new railroad trestle restricted the flow of Seco Creek, worsening the flooding a week ago.

Flood victims want disaster assistance

Frustration mounts in D'Hanis as state, feds assess damage.

BY ZEPH MACKCORMACK
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

D'HANIS — Frustration among victims of last Saturday's flood grows each day that government aid doesn't arrive to help them rebuild, relocate or to prevent the Seco Creek from again washing over this small town.

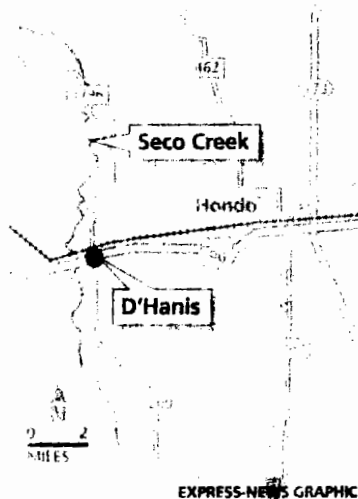
"Do you need

MYSA.COM

Keyword:
Slideshows
For photos of the D'Hanis flood cleanup.

at a meeting Thursday.

Inspectors toured the devastation this week, and Katherine Cesinger, a spokeswoman for Gov. Rick Perry, said, "They're in the process of evaluating the damage assessments to determine what level of state and federal aid they may qualify for."



EXPRESS-NEWS GRAPHIC

Several speakers said flooding on the north side of town was aggravated by a railroad trestle that created a bottleneck on the flooded Seco Creek, and by railroad tracks that run east-west through downtown and held back the rising waters.

"It appears that is happening," agreed Medina County Judge Jim Barden, noting the tracks beside U.S. 90 have been elevated in recent years.

See D'HANIS/5B

■ Donations of clothing, bedding, housewares and furniture are being accepted from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays at the Holy Cross Catholic Church, 375 County Road 5214 in D'Hanis.

■ Financial contributions can be with checks payable to D'Hanis Disaster Account at the Hondo National Bank, P.O. 340, 1112 18th St., Hondo, 78861, or through the Salvation Army and the Red Cross.

D'Hanis residents demand remedies

CONTINUED FROM 1B

Although some locals say a new trestle built in 2006 worsened the problem, Union Pacific spokesman Mark Davis said before the meeting that there's 15 percent more space below the new bridge than the old one.

The bottom of the new overpass is 20 inches lower than the old one, he confirmed, but the length was increased to 240 feet from 180 feet, and the county's flood plain administrator approved the project.

Davis said railroad officials are willing to discuss possible improvements with local leaders, who were both criticized and praised by residents Thursday for their response to the worst flood here in 70 years.

Nearly 100 homes were damaged and scores of families were forced to seek food and a bed at a shelter in Hondo that will remain open for the near future.

Some residents on the hard-hit west side complained they had too little advance warning of the approaching torrents that reached 5 feet deep.

Barden said a siren should be installed by mid-August as part of a countywide storm alert system, but conceded it might not be heard everywhere in town.

Even before the muddy tide subsided late Saturday, leaving much of the town strewn with debris and many of its 700 residents in shock at the devastation, Barden had

state and federal disaster declarations.

Barden said damage should qualify D'Hanis for the disaster designation that could provide federal money for emergency aid, loans and possibly relocate residents in flood-prone areas or alter local drainage to reduce the impact of future floods.

The Red Cross, Salvation Army, church groups and local volunteers already are offering help and county road crews have hauled away 600 cubic yards of soggy debris and furnishings as of Thursday.

Beyond losses to homes and personal property, early estimates indicate more than \$1.5 million in damage was done to roads and bridges in the area.

Residents suggested the creek bed be deepened, realigned or otherwise contained to prevent flooding that's become all too familiar.

But Barden told the crowd of roughly 200 locals gathered at the school gym Thursday, "We can't control Mother Nature."

The overnight rains that exceeded 15 inches north of town caused the raging creek to diverge from its usual path and cut through farm fields and into the downtown area.

"The best remedy for all would be to relocate people who live in the flood plain," said Barden, pledging to see if federal "mitigation funds" are available to buy those homes.

There was clear resistance to the idea of vacating areas called home by generations of families.

"You're asking everybody to relocate and they've lived here all their lives," said Janet Aase, 43.

Lisde Garcia, 79, said she lacks the resources to leave her home, which has flooded more times than she can remember in the past 50 years, but never as bad as this one.

"We know there's floods, but they can't afford to move," said her daughter, Virginia Garcia Canestraro, 50, of San Antonio.

Barden urged residents to be patient as the disaster declaration request is reviewed in Austin and Washington, D.C., saying, "It will be a long process."

Mario Reyes was among those seemingly resigned to fend for himself, saying, "I've been here all my life and nobody's ever done anything."

zeph@express-news.net

The map displays the Quihi, TX area, characterized by a complex network of water bodies and land parcels. Key features include:

- Water Bodies:** Medina Lake Dam, Quihi River, and various smaller water bodies.
- Land Parcels:** Numerous parcels are labeled with 'ZONE A' and 'ZONE C'. Specific parcels include 'MOUNTAIN VALLEY PARK SUBDIVISION', 'MEDINA OAKS SUBDIVISION', 'BALZEN FAMILY LAND HERITAGE RANCHES', 'GERDES FAMILY LAND HERITAGE RANCH', and 'CREEKWOOD SUBDIVISION'.
- Roads:** Major roads include CR 252, CR 351, CR 353, CR 354, CR 3512, and U.S. Highway 90. A 'PROPOSED QUARRY' is also indicated.
- Other Features:** The map shows the 'QUIHI RIVER', 'ALTERNATE ROUTE', and 'RAILROAD'.

***** MEDITA SAM RO

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July 21, 2007

Surface Transportation Board
Attn: Victoria Rutson
Section of Environmental Analysis
1925 K Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Re: Finance Docket #34284

Flooding pictures: June 28, 2007
North to South, from proposed rail loop to Hwy 90
(Average rainfall received in area 4 inches)

Location

1. CR 353: East-West portion, Elm Creeks, 2 branches and Polecat Creeks, south of proposed rail loop
2. CR 351: North-South portion, Elm and Polecat Creeks combined, crosses CR 351 eight times in this section.
3. CR 351 and FM 2676 Junction, Elm Creek south of proposed rail loop
4. CR 450 and FM 2676 Elm Creek
5. CR 365 and CR 4512 junction, Quihi Creek, near Proposed Route crossing of CR 365.
Water was 3 feet higher later – unable to get to site to take picture.
6. CR 365 Quihi Creek
7. CR 4516 and FM 2676 Quihi and Elm Creeks junction (at Quihi)
8. CR 4516: Cherry Creek, crosses road 4 times.
9. CR 454: Quihi Creek and First Creek
10. Hwy 90: Hondo Creek, after Quihi Creek junction

MCEAA, Inc., for your Home, Health, and Heritage



CR 353 turning west. Elm Creek crosses this section 3 times. Facing west.



Aftermath of 6-28-2007 flooding on part of CR 353



CR 353 Elm Creek Crossing East-West Portion



CR 353 Flood Damage Aftermath



1 of 8 Crossing of the Elm and Polecat Creeks on CR 351



1 of 8 Crossing of the Elm and Polecat Creeks on CR 351



CR 351 and FM 2676 Junction, Elm Creek south of proposed rail loop



CR 351 and FM 2676 Junction, Elm Creek south of proposed rail loop



Elm Creek at FM 2676



Elm Creek at FM 2676



Elm Creek at FM 2676 Flood Damage Aftermath



Elm Creek at FM 2676 Flood Damage Aftermath



CR 450 and FM 2676 Junction



CR 450 and FM 2676 Junction

Location 4 CR 450 and FM 2676



CR 450 and FM 2676 Elm Creek



CR 450 Elm Creek



CR 450 Elm Creek



CR 450 Elm Creek



CR 450 and FM 2676 Flood Damage Aftermath



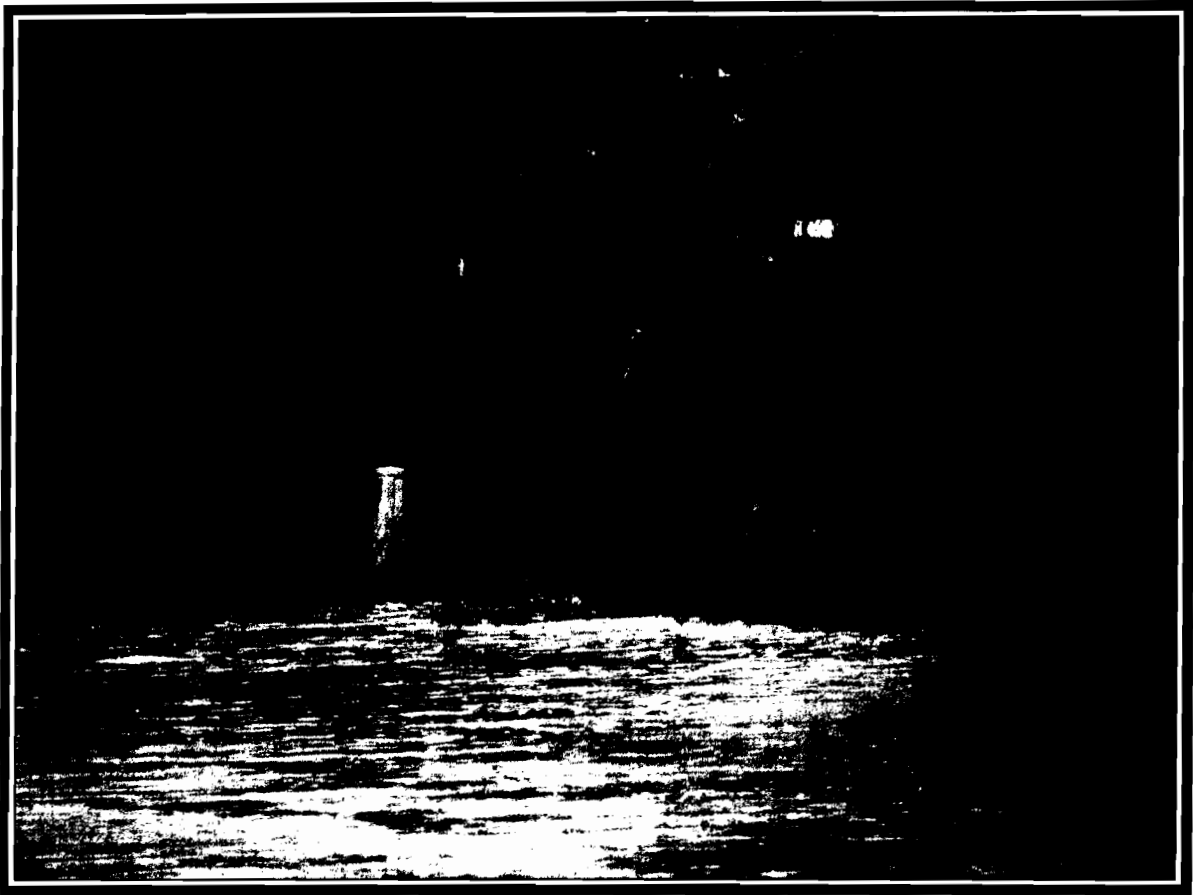
CR 450 and FM 2676 Flood Damage Aftermath



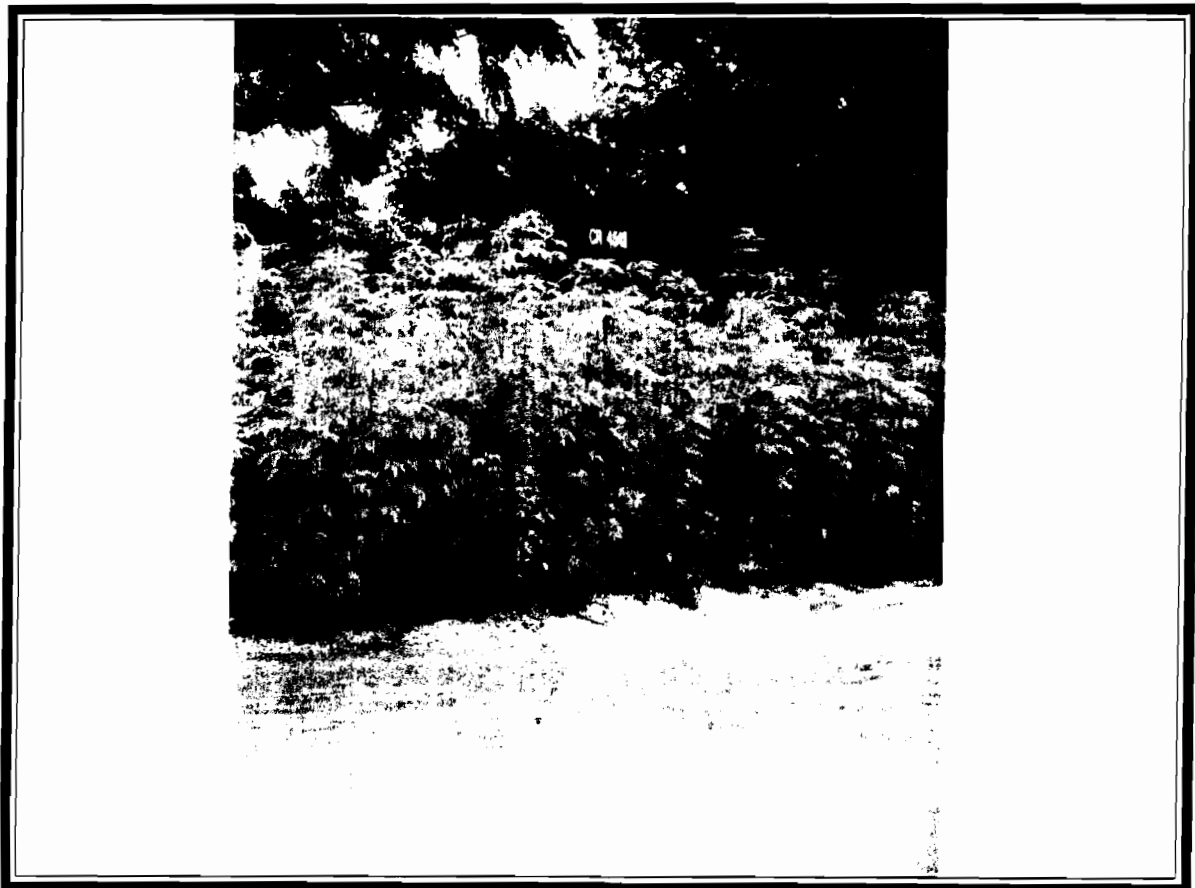
CR 365 and CR 4512 Quihi Creek. Water was 3 feet higher later-unable to get to site



CR 365 and CR 4512 Quihi Creek. Water was 3 feet higher later- unable to get to site



7-21-07 CR 365 and CR 4512 Quihi Creek.



6-28-07 CR 365 and CR 4512 Quihi Creek. Water was 3 feet higher later

Location 6 CR 365 Quihi Creek



CR 365 Quihi Creek



CR 365 Quihi Creek



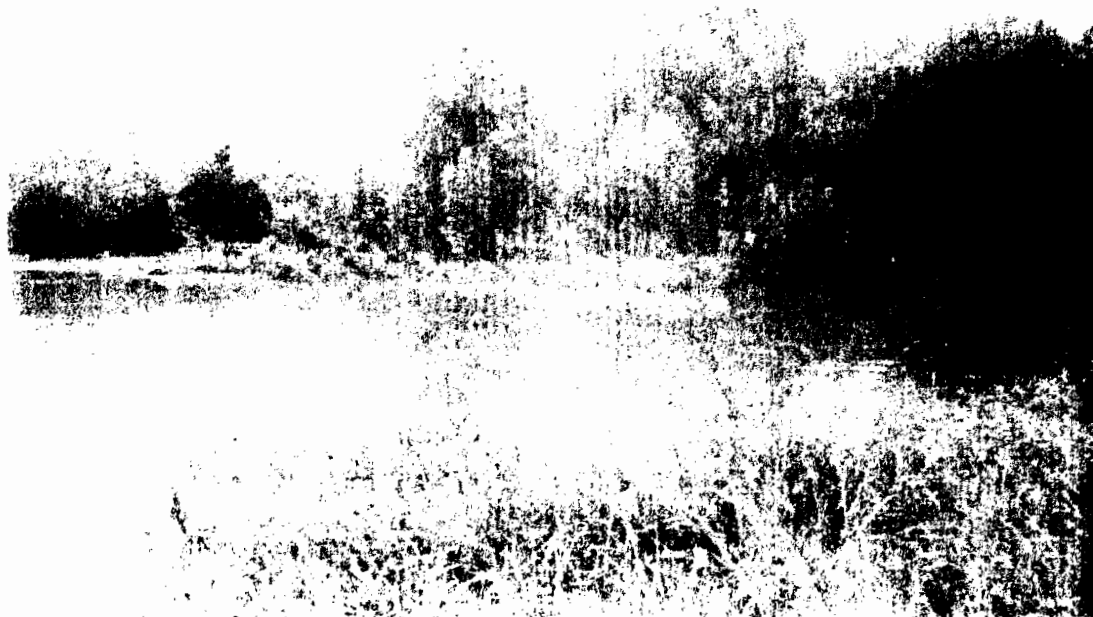
CR 4516 and FM 2676 Quihi Creek Crossing at Quihi.



CR 4516 and FM 2676 Quihi Creek Crossing at Quihi.



7.



7.



7

7/23/2007



Elm and Quihi Creeks at Quihi on CR 4516 corner of CR 365 Aftermath.



Elm and Quihi Creeks at Quihi on CR 4516 corner of CR 365 Aftermath. Facing west.



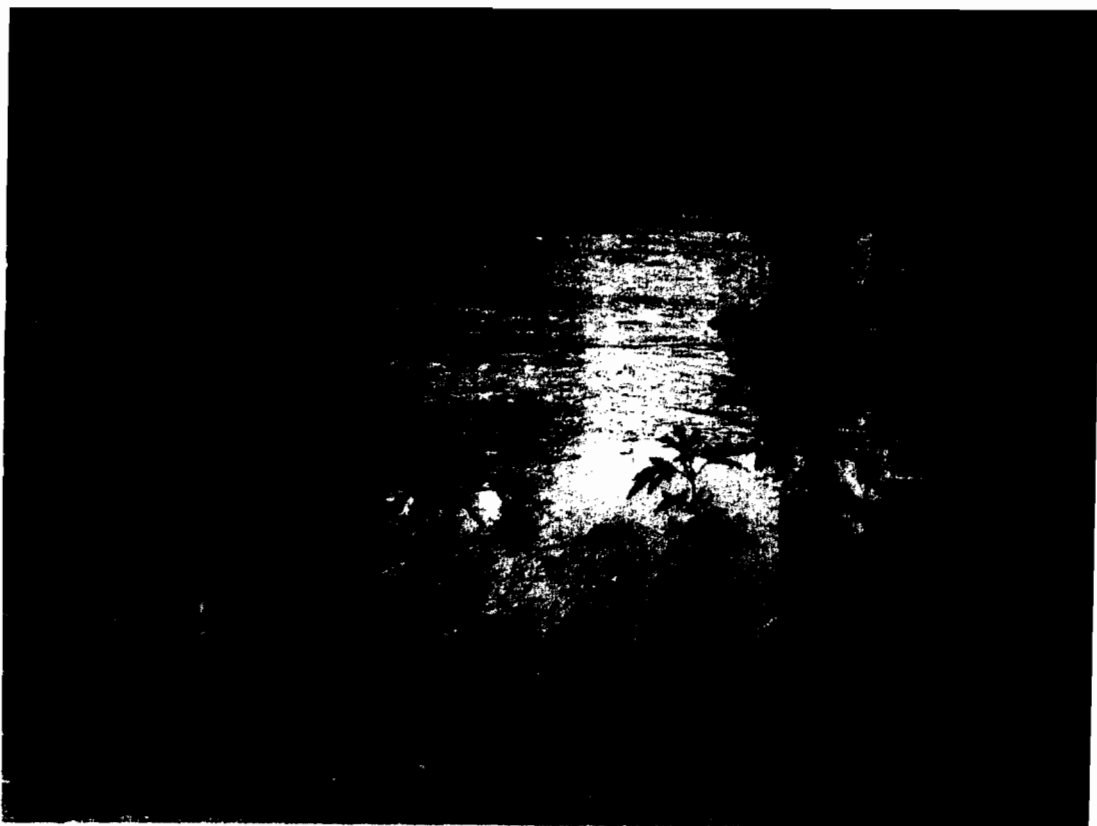
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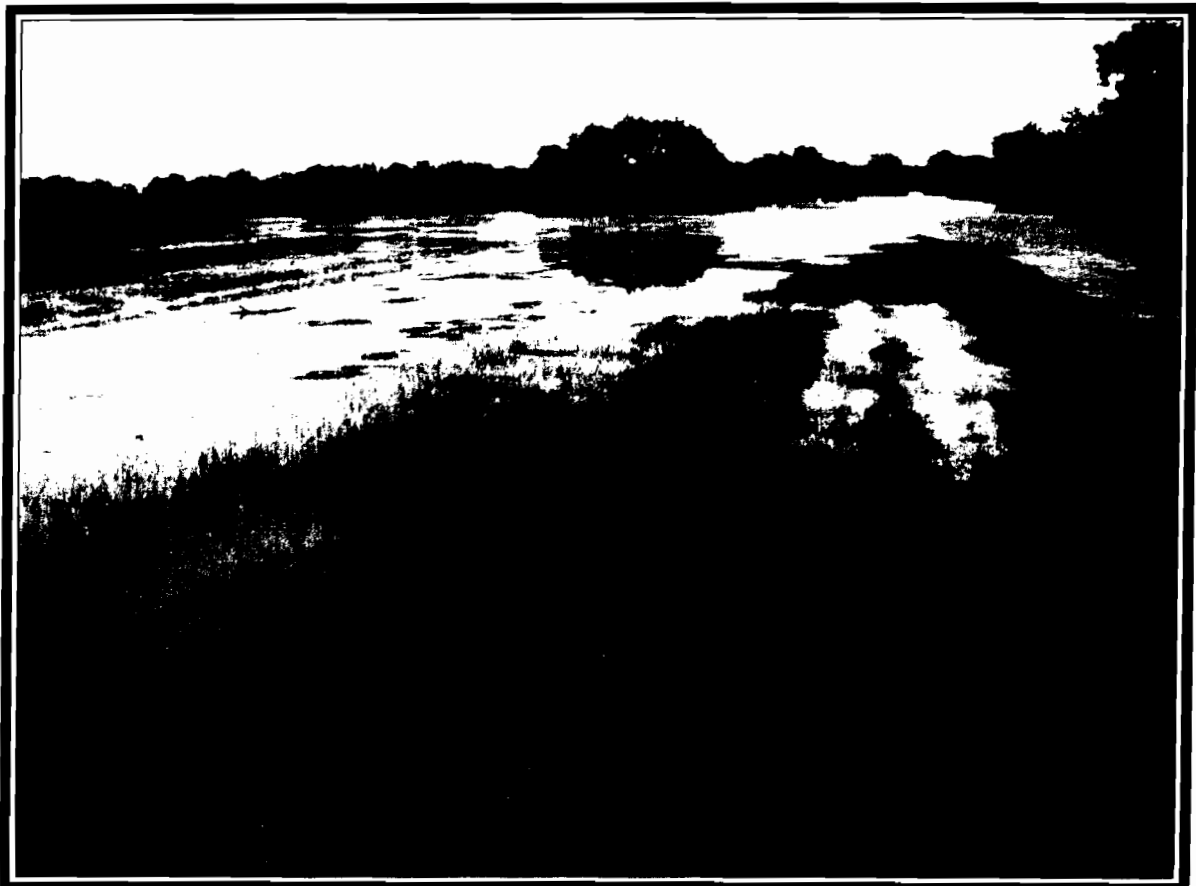


8.

Location 9 CR 454 Quihi Creek

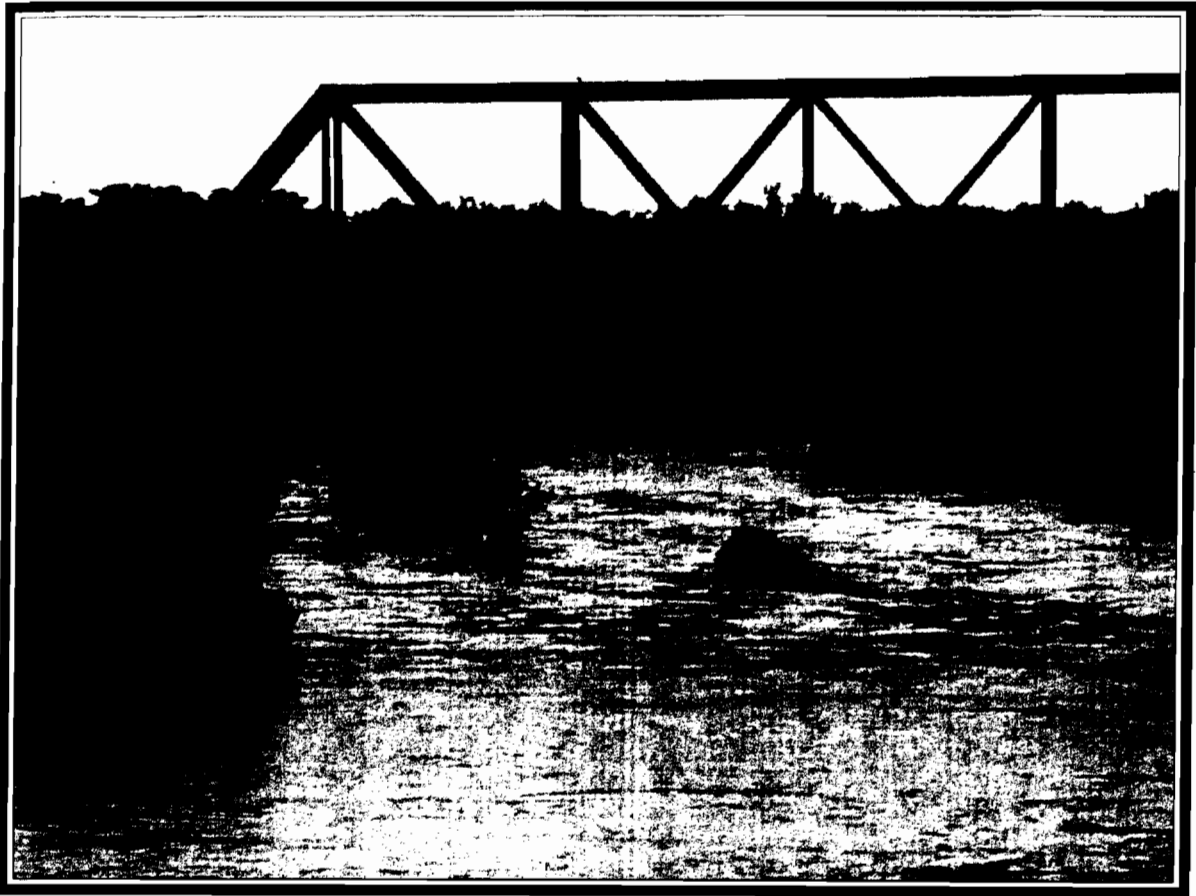


CR 454 Quihi Creek

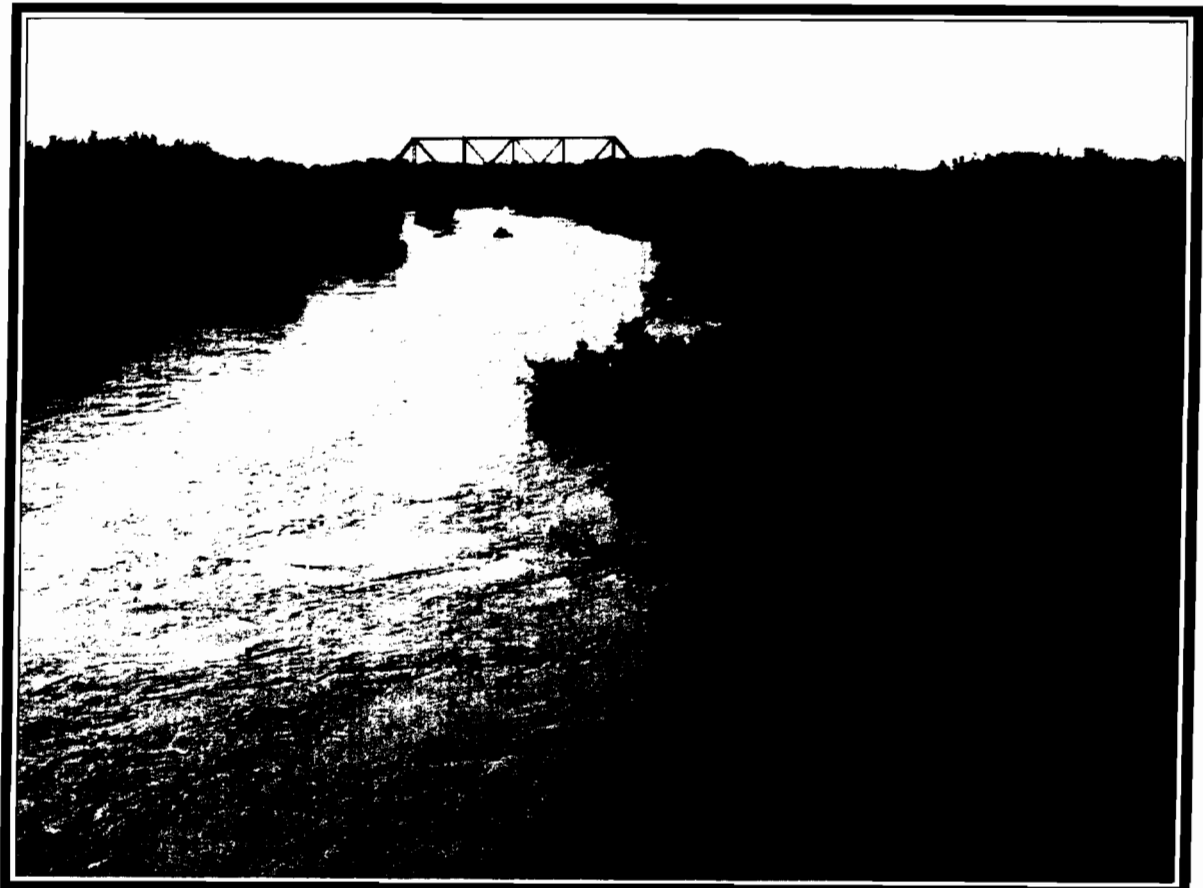


CR 454 Quihi Creek

Location 10: Hwy 90: Hondo Creek Rail Road Bridge



Hwy 90: Hondo Creek, after Quihi Creek junction (close up)



Hwy 90: Hondo Creek, after Quihi Creek junction

Your paper's
here early...

We're a little early this week.
With the July 4th holiday lan-
had to be altered in order to go
Our best solution was to go t
on Tuesday.
Publication will return to the

From the ANVIL Herald
July 5, 2007

Quarry site develop- to begin in coming

By William Hoover
ANVIL HERALD CORRESPONDENT

In recent weeks, Vulcan Materials Company's new Project Manager for the 1,760 acre Medina Quarry, Eric Remmert, has spoken to the Hondo Area Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club and the Rotary Club regarding his company's plans and progress toward opening their quarry north of Quihi.

The Medina Quarry, as Vulcan calls it, is over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. It is scheduled to be mined for construction grade limestone for 50 years after it begins operation. If the quarry opens in 2010, as planned, it will continue to be mined until 2060.

Remmert, who possesses a degree in Building Construction from Texas A&M University, has the formal title of Manager of Engineering Projects at VMC. Below he explains his qualifications and what he told the members of the public attending the presentations he made in the Hondo area.

"I will be managing the over-all project," he said. "As soon as we have all our internal plans in place, we will be starting portable crushing operations out at the site. All the permits for the site are actually in place, with the exception of a temporary storm water permit (which) we apply for two to three days before we start construction operations. We have already gone through the paperwork, we just have to apply and receive it."

The portable rock crusher is not what Vulcan will use for its long-term crushing operations. Rather, the portable crusher will be used to create aggregate to build the quarry's plant site and roads.

"This crusher will be towed in on a flat bed and it runs on a generator," said Remmert of the temporary rock crusher. "What (the portable crusher) is going to be used for is to base out, or prepare, the preliminary site work where the actual quarry processing plant (will be located). So everything will be internal to the site. In other words, you won't see any trucks. This is a small

crusher just for internal use at our site and it will produce 150 tons (of aggregate) a day, according to our permit."

Site plans must still be drawn up by the company Overby Descamps, now a part of Pape Dawson Engineers, which designed the Medina Quarry's Water Pollution and Abatement Plan (WPAP). "They will need to come up with a site bid package for the site work contractor who observes all the environmental regulations we have agreed to," Remmert said. "When we hire the person (or contractor) to do the job, I will coordinate (the hiring and environmental compliance) with our portable rock crushing crew and manager. At the same time they get the crusher to the site, we will have Medina Electric Coop power brought to the site. I have talked with (MEC's) Mark Howard and they will provide just temporary power for our construction trailer."

Pape Dawson is the company Vulcan worked with previously, along with TCEQ and the Medina County Environmental Action Association

(MCEAA), so Vulcan felt it best to continue with them. Pape Dawson will be assisting in developing the quarry's site work bid package.

"We have a six month portable crushing permit," said Remmert. "The first thing they do at any construction site is clear the land. In our case, we will clear the site in certain acre increments to comply with our WPAP. Then we will put down a white crushed gravel base."

Remmert said he expects to start preliminary quarry site development in 60 to 90 days, depending on how soon Vulcan obtains its bid package plans from Pape Dawson. "Power is not a problem as far as the supply out there for single phase power," said Remmert. "We will be clearing sections of the site and stabilizing sections by putting base down and installing all our silt fences. By early next year, we hope we will actually begin the real site work and the construction of the quarry plant."

Assuming everything goes as scheduled, the plant will start producing commercial grade

Your paper's here early...

We're a little early this week.

With the July 4th holiday landing on a Wednesday this year, the publication schedule had to be altered in order to get the *Anvil Herald* distributed in a timely fashion.

Our best solution was to go to press on Monday evening and get the paper in the mail on Tuesday.

Publication will return to the normal schedule for the July 12 issue.

development coming months

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limestone aggregate by the end of 2009 or the beginning of 2010, according to the project manager. "We have an 18 to 24 month construction window," said Remmert. "It takes a while to construct a large quarry and do it right within all the environmental guidelines. That is what some people were confused about. In the meeting they were saying, 'Oh you are going to have trucks coming in and out within months.' But that is not right. We are looking at two years from January 2008 before we will have the plant fully operational."

Asked why Vulcan wanted to use its proposed route for its seven mile Southwest Gulf Railroad (SGR) when the Texas Historic Commission and the Surface Transportation Board's (STB) Section on Environmental Analysis (SEA) have identified the eastern route as the less disruptive route, Remmert said such was not necessarily the case.

"Technically, that is not accurate because the eastern route has not been approved," said the engineer. "The SEA is the entity going through the whole

Environmental Impact Study (EIS) process. However, in that final EIS there are still three routes, (Vulcan's) preferred route, the eastern route and a route even further to the east. None of those are approved routes. They are still working to get a determination. Sometime in October we think, the (SEA) will have reached conclusions and they will give their recommendation of a rail route. As far as why we are pursuing the preferred route versus the other, you will have to talk to somebody else."

Vulcan will begin building its rail route, if approved, sometime next year. "Assuming we have a route recommended by the SEA by the end of December, and allowing another three months for the STB to approve that route, then we will have a route issued," said Remmert. "Say in January 2008, (if the STB designates a route for the SGR), we will know exactly where we have to go and then the rail construction process will start."

See QUARRY, Page 3A

QUARRY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

If the STB permits a route Vulcan does not like, Remmert confirmed the quarry would operate with trucks only. However, he could not say how many trucks a day would be entering and exiting the quarry site.

However, it has been estimated 850 trucks a day will be used if truck transportation only is used and up to 10%, or 85 trucks a day, will be needed even with a railroad.

"That is an operation issue," Remmert said. "My job is to design and construct the (limestone mining) plant and the railroad. I do not have the answer on those operational issues. All I can tell you is that using trucks only is an option. If the STB recommends a 'no route' alternative, which they could do, we will construct an unloading spur on property we own in Dunlay adjacent to the Union Pacific rail lines. It will be a place where the trucks from the quarry can go and load the trains."

Truck traffic, however, would not be limited to shuttling aggregate between the quarry and the UP line. "If local builders or people need rock and they are coming in and out of the quarry, they would be going to different places," Remmert said. "We have no way to control that, nor do we know how much that volume would be because we don't know what the demand is."

Remmert said Vulcan would work with Medina County and the Texas Department of Transportation to maintain the roads, because they are concerned about safety. "We are aware there are roads that will need to be improved. What I told people at the meetings was we have to work with the county. It is not up to us. We will recommend and do stuff but these are county and state roads; therefore TxDOT and the (Medina) County Commissioners have to be involved in the process."

Regarding how much

groundwater they will use, Remmert said Vulcan recognizes water is a precious commodity. "We are looking at all sources available to obtain that water," he said. "You have the Edwards Aquifer, but you also have the Trinity Aquifer and the Cow Creek Aquifer, which is below the Trinity (Aquifer.) We are in the process of having hydrogeologists look at the site and recommend to us what they think is feasible."

Remmert said no test wells have yet been drilled but that will happen soon. "Depending on what the hydrologist tells us and what is found, Vulcan will then drill the appropriate wells with the appropriate permits," he noted.

The Medina Quarry will recycle 70% of the water it uses in the mining process, according to Remmert, as part of its WPAP through on site water recycling plants. "We will use somewhere in the neighborhood of 2,400 gallons of water per minute to operate the plant," he said.

Remmert said the survey work currently being performed at the Wurzbach property was just part of the site preparation project and did not indicate any land was being purchased. "We have long term lease with the Wurzbachs, the Schweers and the Boehme/Balzen tracts," he said. "All the construction in the next two years will take place on the Wurzbach tract, the southernmost track. There will also be some activity on the Saathoff property, which is right across the road from the Wurzbach property on the southern side of CR 353. Everything is being done with long term leases."

Vulcan does not anticipate needing to pipe any water in from off the quarry site, according to Remmert. However, it is possible they might pipe water from one part of the site to another. "There are wells on the property already but we are not going to use those in an industrial capacity," he said. "In fact, those will be used in accordance with the WPAP as monitoring wells. So we, using another com-

pany, can monitor the level in the existing wells that are out there so we can gauge usage."

The project manager said the quarry operations will not affect the wells of area landowners or deplete the water table, regardless where the water is pumped from. "That will all be monitored," he said.

Regarding the provision of permanent electrical services, the Project Manager said he was still trying to broker a deal with a power company. "There are preliminary negotiations and discussions going on with MEC," he said. "They are providing the temporary single phase power with a temporary single-phase 200-amp transformer close to the site already. We can be hooked up to that connection in three to four weeks. But, that is just to power the office and construction trailers at the entry to the site. Plant power is a whole other issue. Preliminary discussions with MEC have begun on that. We need to provide them with more data. A lot depends on how they have to supply it to us and how their power grid is situated. We need to know our rail route first to determine how they will route (power lines) to us. There are various ways they could do that and it is up to them to decide. We have no control over that because, in the end, they (MEC) will actually route the power and deal with the issues of utility right-of-way."

The power lines could follow the rail easement, if a route is approved by the STB or they could go a different way, according to Remmert.

Asked if Vulcan or MEC would be responsible for obtaining permission from landowners to run above ground power lines across their property, Remmert was unsure. "That gets into the negotiations between Vulcan and the power company. Those negotiations will take place at the corporate level."

The Medina Quarry Project Manager said Vulcan would not use historic preservation donations as an incentive to try to persuade the STB or oth-

ers to support the rail route desired by Vulcan. The SEA alone will make the route decision, according to Remmert.

Asked about the power of taking private property against landowner wishes, via eminent domain which the aggregate company will receive if a rail route is approved by the STB, Vulcan officials said fair market value would be given to landowners for any land the SGR rail line might need. However, Vulcan officials are hoping landowners sell their land to SGR, if a route is approved, so the railroad does not have to invoke its power of eminent domain.

"We really don't know the final details of that yet," said Vulcan's Clay Upchurch. "We are hopeful that eminent domain won't even come into play in this whole thing. We want to successfully work with all the landowners and keep everybody happy through the process, regardless of the route that is approved."

Upchurch said Vulcan will negotiate to buy private land for the SGR rail line at fair market value, whether or not the company has to invoke its powers of eminent domain. "We may buy entire properties. We may buy pieces of properties. We may just buy the easement the rail has to go through," he said. "All of that will be subject to negotiation. We will have negotiations with each individual landowner."

If a landowner does not wish to sell land to Vulcan for the SGR line, the company could file with the local government which would send the landowner a letter telling them that they have to sell their property or else their land will be taken from them. Any landowner subject to eminent domain would still receive fair market value for their property, even if they have to unwillingly turn over their land to Vulcan and its railroad, according to Upchurch.

Upchurch and Remmert said Vulcan was due to issue a press release soon, in the next of couple days, to keep the public informed of the status of the proposed quarry.

www.  SanAntonio.com

RAIN JUST KEEPS COMING



JOHN DAVENPORT/STAFF

Floodwaters rush past an abandoned car in the 11000 block of Orsinger near Huebner and Vance Jackson. Firefight is responded to 16 years of high water rescue calls Thursday.

San Antonio Express-News

THURSDAY, JUNE 28, 2007

www.**My**SanAntonio.com

THE VOICE OF SOUTH TEXAS SINCE 186

CENTRAL TEXAS GETS DRENCHED

HILL COUNTRY

Three area tributaries at flood stage; one town hit with 19 inches in one night

IT'S NOT OVER

S.A. gets a flash flood watch while Austin-area residents are evacuated



TOM REEL/STAFF

The Third Street bridge was one of three bridges destroyed when Marble Falls was hit with 19 inches of rain. There were no injuries or fatalities reported.

Rescue workers stay busy as bridges, homes flood in Marble Falls.

LISA SANDBERG
STAFF BUREAU

MARBLE FALLS — Water-ary Central Texans, who sur-ved a deluge of intense sum-

mer storms early Wednesday, were bracing again for another round of flooding.

Between 10 and 12 inches of rain was predicted to fall overnight on already-soaked Marble Falls, less than 24 hours after a storm a night earlier dumped 19 inches of rain, swelling rivers and creeks, destroying three bridges and flooding as many as 150 homes and businesses.

Helicopters and boats plucked

dozens of people from trees, rooftops and vehicles as the water quickly rose with the torrents.

Central Texas authorities said they were amazed to report no injuries or fatalities, though there were plenty of close calls: Officials in Williamson County said 45 emergency rescues, including one in a helicopter, took

See S. TEXAS/6A

INSIDE

The forecast: There's an 80 percent chance of rain today, dropping to 40 percent Friday. Check the seven-day forecast and more weather data. **Page 8C**

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Go online for live radar images and insight from the Weatherman

CONTINUED FROM 1A

place early Wednesday. Thirty-two high water rescues took place in Marble Falls in just six hours.

"It's the worst I've ever seen in my life," said Marble Falls Mayor Raymond Whitman, 47, whose own home took in some water Wednesday.

He said looters had been seen in town but there were no serious reports of thefts. No curfew has been set, he said.

At least 11 people have died in storms around the state over the past week and a half.

With more heavy rain forecast for Central Texas overnight, rescue teams on Wednesday afternoon began evacuating by air a dozen or so residents of Camp Creek, along Lake Travis in Burnet County, and strongly urged residents who live in the 200 homes below Lake Buchanan to seek higher ground. Three emergency shelters were up and running in Marble Falls; at least 30 people made use of them early Wednesday.

Residents of Graveyard Point, along Lake Travis, near Austin, were self-evacuating — a familiar routine during times of high water, said Roger Wade, spokesman for the Travis County Sheriff's Department.

The Sheriff's Department closed the only road leading from the town of Lakeway to Graveyard Point and was not "letting anybody in that doesn't belong," he said.

Floodgates were opened at all five area lakes, Burnet County Judge Donna Klaeger said.

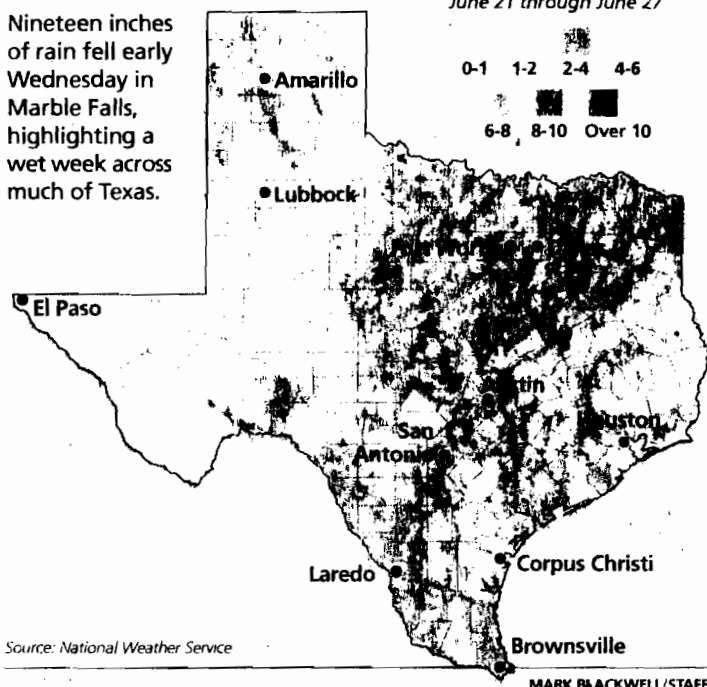
No one was expecting the usually welcome rains to go away anytime soon.

A flash flood watch for South and Central Texas was expected to remain in effect until noon today, according to the National Weather Service.

A very moist tropical air mass is expected to persist across the area, including the Hill Country and San Antonio, through the end of the week and into early next week. There's an 80 percent chance of rain today, dropping to 40

Saturated state

Nineteen inches of rain fell early Wednesday in Marble Falls, highlighting a wet week across much of Texas.



percent Friday.

"This is going to be an ongoing flood event. This will not be over with today," warned Joe Beal, general manager of the Lower Colorado River Authority, which controls water levels at the Highland Lakes in the Hill Country west of Austin.

"It's going to take days, if not weeks, to let this water drain out of the lakes," he said.

Lake Travis "is continuing to climb, and it's climbing at a very rapid rate," Beal said.

Three Hill Country tributaries were at flood stage Wednesday — the Llano River at Llano, the Pedernales River at Johnson City, and Sandy Creek near Kingsland, he said.

The release of floodwaters will swell the Colorado River in communities downstream of Austin, Beal said, but remain below flood stage.

Whitman Branch creek in Marble Falls, typically 2-3 feet wide, stretched at least 100 feet across. Several nearby buildings were flooded, and vehicles swept down the creek were overturned. The smell of gas and diesel fuel were heavy in the air.

Paul Irvin found his sheet metal shop near the creek under 6 feet of water.

"It was a sick feeling to see everything you've worked so hard for washing down," said Irvin, who said his 20 employees more than likely are out of work for a while.

Down the creek, at least four Frito-Lay trucks that had been loaded to make daily deliveries had washed away, spilling chips along the creek. One large truck emblazoned with the Doritos logo was stuck on its side in the running water.

Flash flooding washed out roads in Mason County and caused minor flooding across other parts of the Hill Country, where a heightened readiness was evident among officials who'd seen in Marble Falls just how bad things could get.

Mason County Judge Jerry Bearden reported one motorist was rescued, but no evacuations or deaths had been reported in the wake of the overnight storm that dumped up to 10 inches on already-soggy soil.

"We don't usually get this much rain at one time," he said. "The ground is saturated, so it's not soaking in. It's just

running straight into the rivers and lakes."

It's the wettest year on record in Austin, where more than 30 inches of rain has fallen since January, and Dallas-Fort Worth, Waco and Wichita Falls also have received near record amounts.

The rainfall has more than compensated for a drought that much of Texas had been experiencing since 2005, National Weather Service meteorologist Mark Lenz said.

Many of the nearly 7,200 residents of Marble Falls faced the peculiar problem Wednesday of being surrounded by floodwaters but having no drinking water.

The rains damaged the pipe connecting the city's water source with its water plant, Assistant City Manager Judy Miller said.

"It could be days before we get it working again," she said. "The city is pretty much shut down."

And so it seemed. Most businesses remained closed Wednesday. Tree branches and other debris littered streets, which attracted the curious, who snapped photos. Three area bridges were damaged. A smashed-up white limousine, presumably carried by floodwaters, came to rest alongside U.S. 183.

Nearby, Bill Wilcox was assessing the estimated \$300,000 in damages his funeral home sustained. Floodwaters burst through the north wall of Dignity Memorial early Wednesday, leaving a whole lot of muck, and a waterline in some parts of the building 3½ feet high.

Luckily, he said, "there were no bodies inside at the time."

Local officials said they did not have damage estimates from the floodwaters Wednesday morning and were spending the day preparing for what would come when night fell.

Isandberg@express-news.net
Staff Writers Gary Scharrer in Austin and George Zarazua and Zeke MacCormack in San Antonio and the Associated Press contributed to this report.

San Antonio Express-News

FRIDAY, JULY 6, 2007

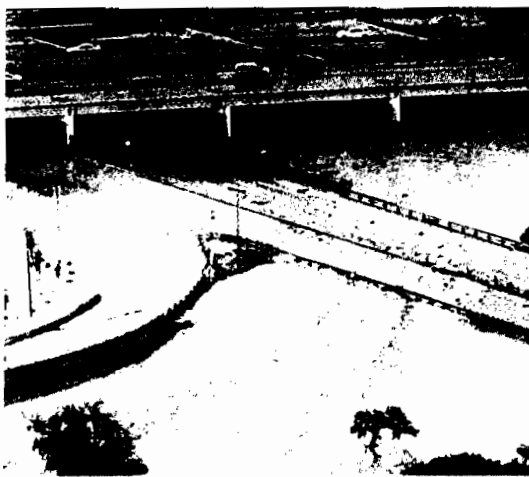
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IN AUSTIN

JUNE 27 | SOUTH SAN GABRIEL RIVER



IN SAN ANTONIO

JUNE 28 | BASSE AT U.S. 281



IN ARLINGTON

JULY 2 | RESCUED FROM FLOODS

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH: TEXAS HAS SEEN 40 DAYS OF RAIN

And with several rivers at flood stage, even more is expected.

PEGGY FIKAC
STIN BUREAU

AUSTIN — Texas is facing a rather challenge of historic proportions with more than 40

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Keyword: Weather

For the latest forecast, current radar and warnings.

days of storms affecting more than 50,000 square miles, disaster response officials said Thursday.

Thirteen lives had been lost to flooding and treacherous weather conditions as of

Thursday, and five people remain missing, according to initial reports compiled by state officials.

Nearly 1,000 homes had been destroyed in some 11 counties surveyed so far out of 51 affected, officials said.

"It's unprecedented in the scope of the size (of the area affected) and the time we've

See TEXAS' 8A

THE FORECAST

Today: 50 percent to 80 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. High 85 to 90.

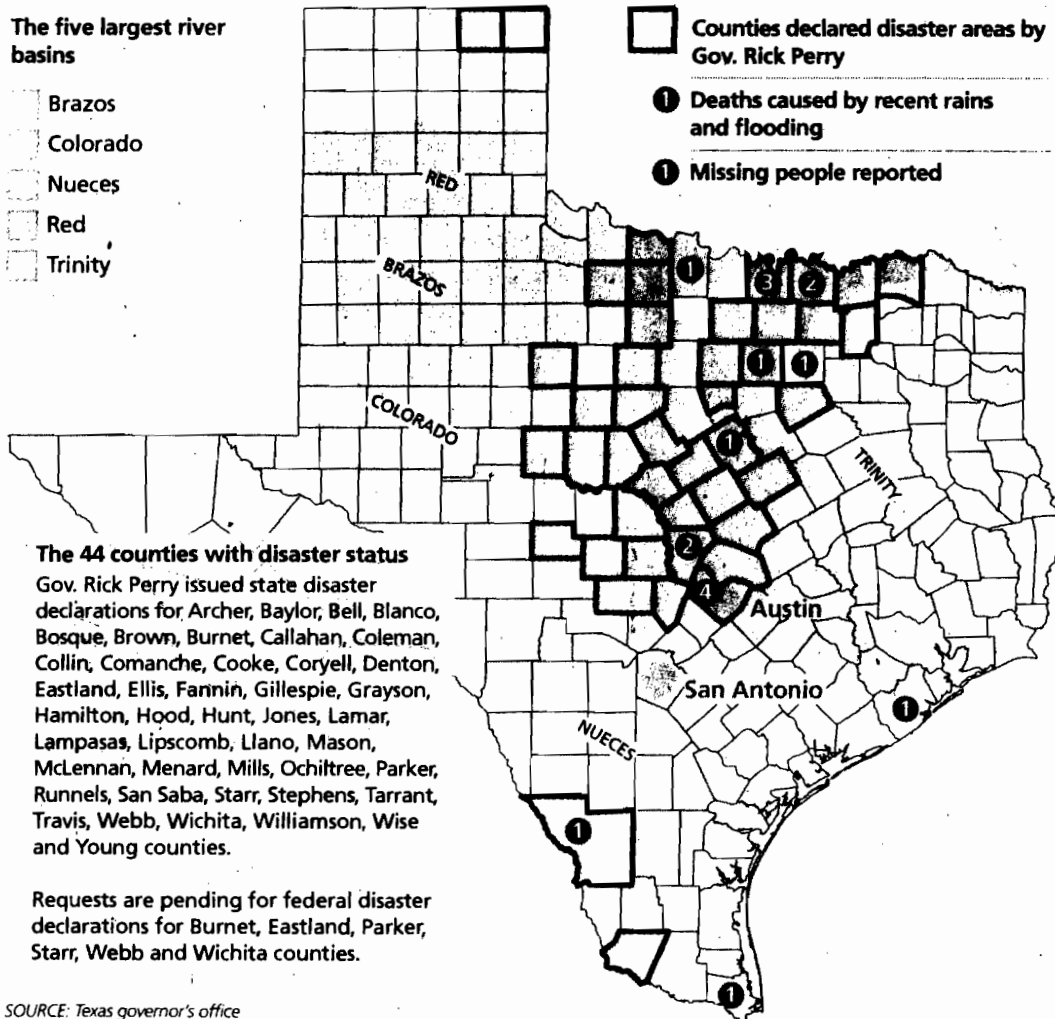
Saturday: 20 percent to 50 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. High 85 to 90.

Sunday: 30 percent chance of rain. High around 90.

Texas' rain takes on historic proportions

Fifty-year water mark

The weather that has hammered Texas is causing flooding in all five of the state's biggest river basins for the first time since 1957.

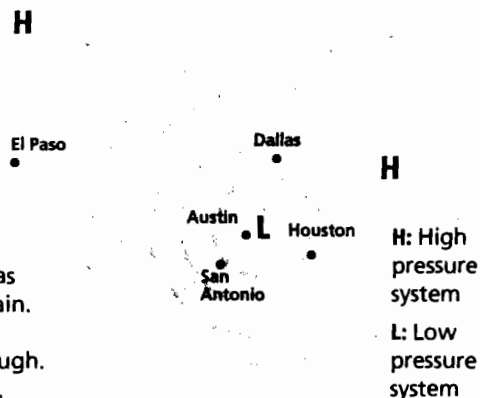


EXPRESS-NEWS GRAPHIC

Source of rain slowly moving on

A low pressure system, centered northeast of Austin is slowly moving northeast at five to ten miles per hour. Until the system moves on, some spots in the San Antonio area will get as much as 3 inches of rain. Most of the area will receive little rain, though.

Source: National Weather Service



"That's the problem with the weather. It just doesn't cooperate."

STEVE MCCRAW
director of the Governor's Division of Homeland Security

CONTINUED FROM 1A

under this," said Jack Colley, chief of the Governor's Division of Emergency Management, who has been dealing with flood operations since May 23.

Normally at this time of year, he noted: "We're fighting wildfires. We're not fighting floods."

Gov. Mark Perry has issued three disaster declarations for counties, six of them also have received federal disaster declarations.

With five major river basins — the Nueces, Colorado, Brazos, Trinity and Red — all at flood stage for the first time since 1907, even a little of the rain that's expected to continue until the weekend poses a problem, Colley said.

Having the river basins at flood stage means reservoirs must be managed with water releases and there is flooding associated with them, but not that every waterway connected to them is flooding. Rains of 1 to 3 inches still were expected around Texas, with 4 to 6 inches possible in some locations.

"We've reached the point now where these lakes and reservoirs are at their maximum capability. When you hear ... 1- or 2-inch rain, to you that may not seem significant," Colley said. "But right now, those 1- or 2-inch rains are very significant because there's just simply no place for it to go."

Of particular concern Thursday were the Sabine, lower Trinity, Brazos and Nueces rivers, he said.

With affected counties stretching from the northern to the southern part of the state, Texas already has deployed its largest search-and-rescue effort, Colley said.

Perry has activated more than 250 Texas National Guard members and 71 high-profile military vehicles to assist with response to flooding and other emergencies; plus other vehicles and teams to help with potential search-and-rescue missions.

Across the Rio Grande Valley, officials carefully watched the possibility of more rain, but also have begun clean-up

operations in flooded areas.

"Right now, we're monitoring a couple of neighborhoods that are at risk," said George Garrett, emergency management coordinator for Weslaco.

About 10 inches of rain has fallen in the Mid-Valley area since Tuesday, Garrett said, adding that the water was receding steadily.

To the west, a mandatory evacuation for some neighborhoods in Rio Grande City expired Thursday. Some families stayed in a local Red Cross shelter.

The Rio Grande City area received up to 13 inches of rain Sunday before getting more heavy rain Tuesday, leading a tributary of the Rio Grande to flood, said Dennis Gonzalez, acting emergency coordinator for Starr County.

"We were expecting much worse, but thank God the rain stopped," he said. "Right now we're moving into a clean up stage."

Flooding this week damaged about 100 homes in the area, Gonzalez said.

Starr County has asked Perry for a disaster declaration, a request that was still awaiting an answer.

Hidalgo County has called an emergency meeting for today to begin repairs of flood-damaged areas.

Steve McCraw, director of the Governor's Division of Homeland Security, noted that just the area affected by flooding is "bigger than a lot of states."

It's larger than Mississippi, at 48,434 square miles.

The number of affected counties is more than twice the approximately 22 touched by Hurricane Rita, officials said.

Predictions are that the weather system should leave Texas by Saturday or perhaps Sunday, Colley said. As always with the weather, that's subject to an update.

"That's the problem with the weather," McCraw said. "It just doesn't cooperate."

pfikac@express-news.net
Staff Writer Mariano Castillo in Laredo contributed to this report.

JUNE 28, 2007
MEDINA COUNTY, TEXAS

CHRISTINA BARBEE
STAFF WRITER

Medina County is no stranger to the extreme, whether it be scorching drought or rising floods. Nearly halfway through the year, floods seem to be the order of the day.

"It seems like we don't just have rain anymore, it seems like we have flood or hail, or wind or tornadoes," said Medina County Sheriff Randy Brown.

Over the past week, area law enforcement have had a heaping dose of storm-related action and with a forecast for rain, the alert will likely continue.

"There's always a bunch of us out, including myself," said Brown, "anytime there's flooding or storms, there's always more deputies out, checking the low water crossings, assisting the public."

Fortunately, Brown's crew only had to engage in one high water rescue in the past week, which is still under investigation.

On C.R. 463, in the Natalia area, two people were rescued from the rising waters of Chacon Creek.

Amanda Jones, 20 and Salvador Solis, 23 were

pulled from a tree by deputies and the fire department after grabbing it to avoid being swept away.

"We were able to enter the water and from there, we pulled them to safety with a rope," said Brown.

Will Carter, trustee of the BMA, said the spillway of the creek just eroded and washed away and it's not the first time it has happened.

"The spillway is made of clay and with so much turbulent water coming down there, it eats a hole in the spillway," said Carter.

He said he does not know how much the project to repair the spillway will cost and will require a meeting of the BMA with the state.

"I don't think it will cost all that much. We'll probably do it with our own equipment. We've done it before, we just have to do it under state guidelines," said Carter.

Brown said the south end of the county was hit the worst with the most recent flooding, culminating in the cities of Devine and Natalia.

However, the city of LaCoste is always the recipient of high water in the event of a flood, due to its valley location.

La Coste mayor Henry Seay said the water has since receded, but during the beginning of the week, the city felt the intensity of the rain.

"It pretty well shut us down, three of the main roads out of town were all blocked-off and we couldn't get out, the only way out of town was through Lytle, said Seay.

With more rains expected in the coming week, Seay said his best advice to citizens is be aware of their surroundings.

"Just be careful, don't drive around the barricades when they have them put up," said Seay.

Brown agreed and said the best way to avoid a dangerous situation is to not drive through water, even if barricades have not been placed on the roads yet.

"If people see water, they need to turn around, they think it looks ok to cross and the next thing you know you've gotten yourself in a predicament and plus you've got emergency services come out and they're risking their lives to save those people and it just causes a big problem," said Brown.



Members of the La Coste VFD and the La Coste police department came out to assist a stranded motorist, who attempted to pass through one of the many lower water crossings that engulfed the city. (Photo by Jeff Wilton)

And the rains kept coming

MEDINA VALLEY TIMES

Thursday, June 28, 2007

THE

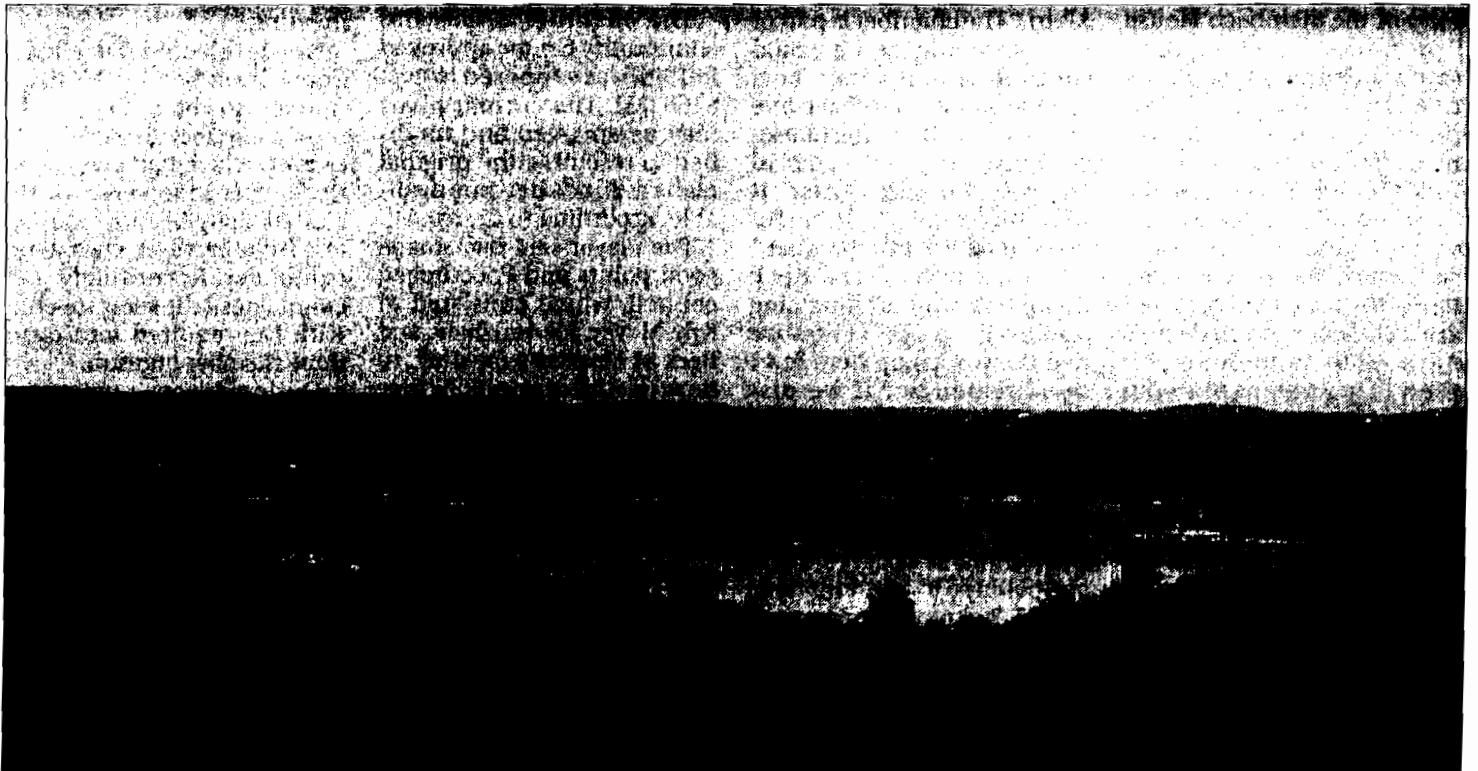
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Medina Dam

Rain in the "Bucket" fills Medina Lake

By Sula Combs
CASTROVILLE ANVIL STAFF

As visual proof of the unusual amount of rainfall we have had this spring, Medina Lake rose almost 29 feet between March and June 25.

Last year's drought had a profound effect on the lake, which reached a low point of just about 38 feet below the spillway in March. Now it is only eight feet ten inches low.

According to BMA Business Manager Ed Berger, annual irrigation allotment of 46,000 acre feet was completely used. "There was enough for corn and cotton, but the

grass and vegetable farmers got hit in September."

He reported that they opened up the canal for 20 days in January to fill farmers' tanks and 13 days in early March and also again in early June, but so far this year, "We have used only about 2,000 acre feet."

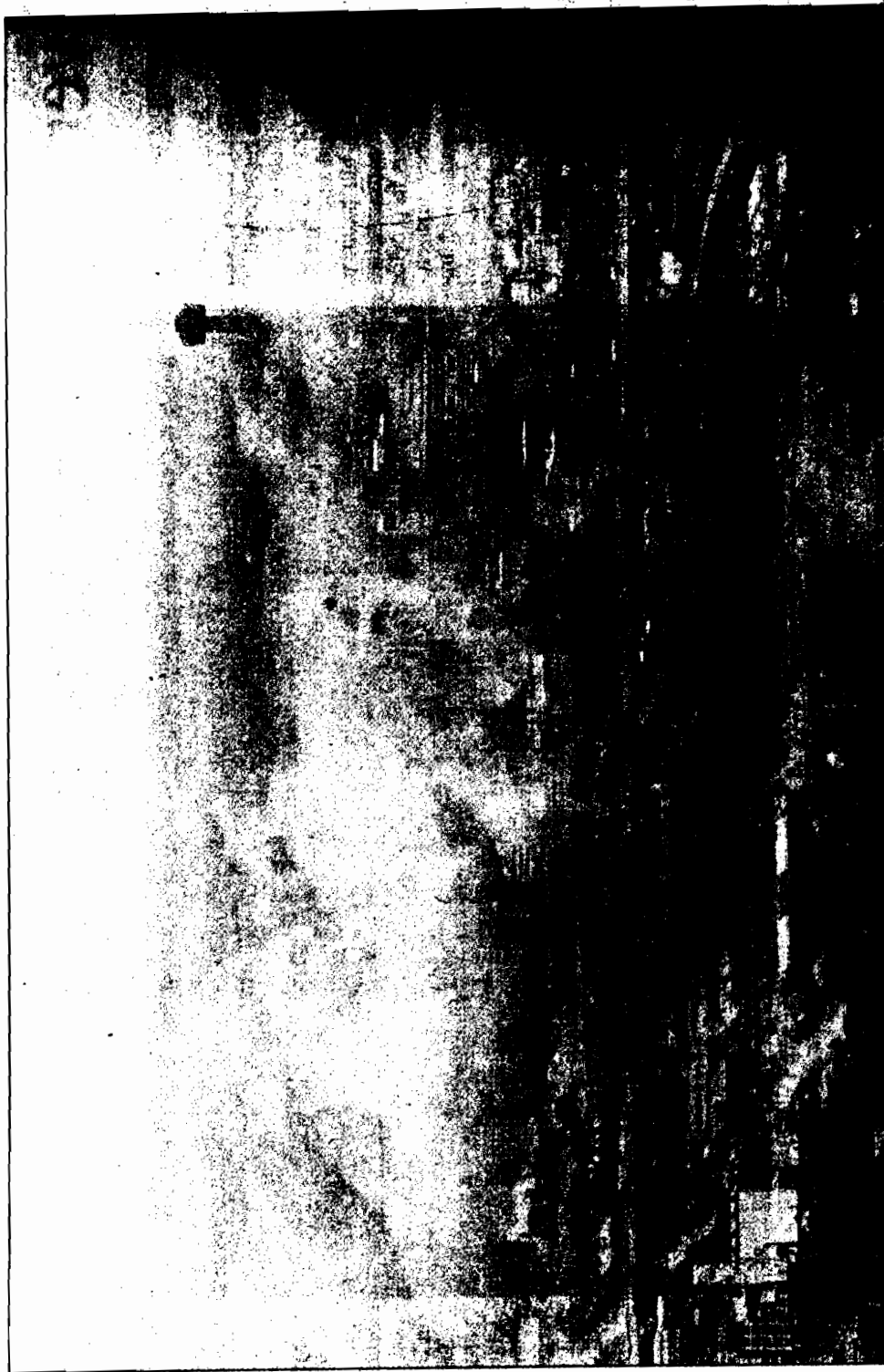
The "Bucket" is north of Bandera, an area which can receive prodigious amounts of rainfall. The national record was set at the Manatt Ranch north of the little town of Medina in 1978, when it rained 48 inches in 52 hours.

Locals say there is a bad drought about every ten years and an unusually rainy year every five years. The last rainy year was 2002. Expect more rain.

"The problem is that we have so much moisture that even a weak disturbance can produce a lot of rain."

METEOROLOGIST BOB FOGARTY

RIGHT: Rain and clouds engulf the San Antonio skyline.



A 'weak' system is hammering us

And brace yourself: The pummeling could continue into next week.

By DON FINLEY
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

The formula for rain around here generally isn't too complicated: Moist breezes blowing in from the Gulf of Mexico mix it up with a cold front or a low-pressure system high in the atmosphere to send a little badly needed rain our way.

So enough already. It's been raining for a week. Why isn't it going away?

In this case, the other system is a fairly weak area of low pressure in the upper atmosphere, stuck over much of Texas and Oklahoma, and disconnected from the jet stream that normally pushes storms around.

"It's a pretty weak system, but it's been enough to cause all this rain because we've been so moist," said Bob Fogarty, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service forecast office in New Braunfels.

Still, it's hard to reconcile the words "weak system" with the double-digit rainfall amounts that places like Marble Falls have seen.

"It's not a big, giant, deep, dynamic low that's blowing hard and is necessarily intense in its location," he said. "But the problem is that we have so much moisture that even a weak disturbance can produce a lot of rain. ...

"So there's a lot of water to come out of the clouds, and it's not moving very fast. It can rain a lot in one place."

One of two things will eventually happen to move this stubborn system out of here. Either the jet stream will slide south and push this mess to the northeast. Or, more likely, a semi-permanent zone of high pressure that extends from the Gulf to off the East Coast will shift west, elbowing the low pressure area out of Texas, Fogarty said.

When that might happen is another question. Some computer models call for the rain to stick around through the middle of next week.

djfinley@express-news.net



GLORIA FERNIZ/STAFF

LEFT: San Antonio firefighter Garnett Wurzbach (left) and probationary firefighter Arth Salazar verify that no body is in a car that has been swept away by rising water at Jones Maltberger and Basse roads. A passer-by had pulled the driver, Angela Garza, (photo below) out of the water-filled car.



GLORIA FERNIZ/STAFF

Angela Garza tells a San Antonio police officer how she became confused about the best way to go to get out of a harrowing situation as her car was swept up at Jones Maltberger and Basse. Garza, who had just donated blood at the Quarry Market, explained that the high water overtook her car as she turned onto Jones Maltberger.



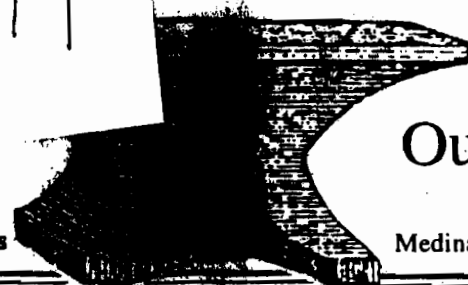
ABOVE: Leon Creek,
swollen by heavy rains,
flows under Bandera

1997

Volume 111, Number 26

Thursday, June 26, 1997

Published In Hondo, Texas



Our

Medina Cou

More rain than we

County begins cleanup after Sunday flooding

By Jennifer Schiffers

ANVIL HERALD STAFF WRITER

Heavy rains, flash flooding, high water rescues and evacuations kept emergency workers and law enforcement officials busy over the weekend. Residents of D'Hanis, Quihi and Medina County are struggling to recover from the massive damage sustained by the torrential rains.

Storms that roared over South Texas dumped between 1.5 to over 13 inches of rain. The aquifer received an eleven

foot boost as a result of the rainfall that was received.

As a result of the flash flooding early 350 people were evacuated from their homes. Red Cross shelters were set up throughout the area to provide a safe place for the flood victims.

Long time residents of D'Hanis said this was the worst flooding in recent memory. This flood is being compared to the devastation in 1935.

Approximately 30 families in Hanis and 20 in the Quihi area were affected by the flood waters.

The evacuations began around 4 a.m. on Sunday morning. None of the evacuees had time to get any of their belongings out before flood waters began to inundate their homes. Nearly a dozen people stranded by the high

waters were rescued by helicopters. DPS, Texas Parks and Wildlife and Channel Four helicopter pilots performed the daring rescues.

Emergency personnel were also faced with the potential of an explosion. Many propane tanks were

swept away by the raging creeks and rivers. All of the trains were rerouted or detained until the high water had receded.

Most of the roads in the county were closed due to the high water. Highway 173

was closed until Tuesday to through traffic because of damaged bridges.

Although the Hondo Volunteer Fire Company helped stop traffic from driving through the high water along the major roads, motorists still got stranded and had to be rescued. Several citations were issued to motorists who were caught driving around the barricades.

Medina County Commissioners held an emergency meeting Tuesday to sign a resolution requesting that the governor declare the county a disaster area.

Emergency Management Coordinator Elva Miranda said they hope to have a preliminary estimate on the damage by Friday.

State Rep. Tracy King has surveyed some of the damaged areas in

his district.

"I don't know yet whether we will be receiving any federal or state funds," King said. "But I have been looking into it. I am going to assist Medina County in every way I can to help them."

County Judge David Montgomery has been on the phone with the governor's office to determine what the county needs to do to qualify for assistance.

He said Governor George W. Bush had flown over the area to survey the damage.

"I have been on the phone with Joe Albaugh, the governor's chief of staff, and he assured me the governor will be in contact with us and assess the area within the next few days," Montgomery said.

Senator Phil Gramm's office has been in contact with the Texas Division of Emergency Management. Montgomery said Sen. Gramm has indicated his willingness to assist the state and local officials to pursue federal assistance, if Gov. Bush declares the county a disaster area.

Montgomery commended everyone for all of their hard work. "This was one of the best organized efforts I've seen," he said.

Sheriff's department also received reports that an unidentified person had been swept away by the currents before rescuers could get to him.

Chief Deputy Gilbert Rodriguez said they searched for a body until Tuesday. "No body was found and everyone has been accounted for so far," Rodriguez said.

See pages 6-7 for

• Photos of flooding from throughout the area

• Aide to flood victims on the way

• TDCJ units help area residents recover

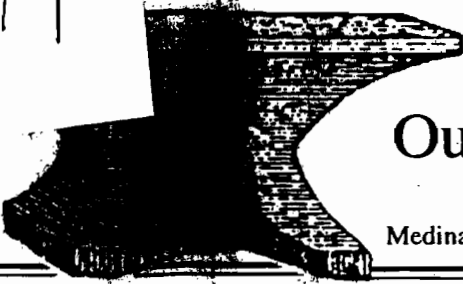
• Flood waters prove deadly

• Immunizations offered

Sunday morning's relentless rainfall produced flooding around Medina County, including this bridge over Hondo Creek on FM 2676 east of Quihi. Total



1997



Our 111th Ye

Three Sections, 26 Pages
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ndo, Texas

Medina County's Leading Newspaper

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Sunday
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relentless
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produced
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around
Medina
County,
including
this bridge
over Hondo
Creek on
FM 2676
east of
Quihi. Total

Area flood damage extensive

Rain bad for some, good for others in the five county area

CHIP LOWE

Staff Writer

Flood waters hitting South Texas two weeks ago did major damage to some in the five-county area, with others benefiting from the rainfall.

"Right now we're estimating a 5-10% loss of crops throughout the county, and probably about the same for livestock," Medina County Agricultural Extension Agent Wayne Scholtz said. "The thing to take into account is that this is a loss in total production over the whole county, so losses could be fairly high in some areas."

One of the most damaging effects of the flooding is the loss of fences along range and crop land, especially in the northern parts of the county.

"From Quihí north to the county line there's barely a fence left standing," Scholtz said. "It's practically an open-range situation right now which could make the losses worse in the next few weeks."

District Conservationist

Lynn Post, with the Soil

Conservation District, priced the fence damage between \$8 and \$10 million dollars throughout Medina County.

Still working on livestock loss estimates, Post said the damage is "substantial," to both domestic and exotic herds in the area.

Pinpointing actual livestock loss right now is difficult, especially with the loss of fences. Scholtz said it will take much longer to determine the county's loss of livestock than crops.

"The missing livestock will take time to sort out," he said.

"They could have been washed away by the water, or they could have just wandered off after the fences were down."

Because the flood hit without warning, most Medina County ranchers in low areas were unable to move their livestock to safer locations. The swift rivers cut off access to ranches quickly.

"We've got a lot of ranchers who don't live on their ranch-

es," Scholtz said. "The flood hit us so fast, most of them didn't have a chance to get out there and take action to save their herds."

With access to several parts of the county still limited and many areas still under water, Scholtz said assessing the total damage will take time.

Medina and Bandera counties were hit especially hard because there was little warning before the floodwaters roared over their banks from the north. Other neighboring counties had more time to prepare and suffered far less damage.

Dimmit County fared better with the recent rains, with ample warning before the damage could be done.

"We were expecting something a lot more dramatic. The flood didn't affect more than 10% of our county, and most of them were just inconvenienced more than anything," Dimmit County Agricultural Extension Agent Hector Zamora said. "We did lose some houses and fences in low areas by Nueces River, but we expected that. It's



Medina, Bandera and Frio counties expect the largest loss of livestock from recent floods.

a chance you take living by the river."

Most livestock in Dimmit County was moved before the water hit, he said, but agricultural damage may be more evident when the county dries out.

"There was a lot of livestock shuffling going on, so we weren't hurt too badly there. But most of our crops are in the rich soil along the river, and it probably did wash out a lot of the top soil. We can't calculate it until the water goes back down."

With the advanced warning,

Zamora said the Department of Transportation and county officials worked together to prepare the areas that were hardest hit in Dimmit's October floods.

"We went ahead and closed some roads that took the last flood the hardest," he said.

"Since the river's been pretty full since October, we were worried it was already saturated and would make things really exciting. But we were expecting it, we pulled together and we got through."

Continued on Page 10

QUIHI CREEK



HARRIS Western Centers



RIVERCITY ... Ben Musquez took this picture of downtown D'Hanis just as the flood waters began to recede



PHOTO BY TINA CHRISTENSEN

One of the Hondo Creek bridges on Tarpley Road took the brunt of Sunday's floodwaters, cutting some of the county's northern residents off from the rest of the population.

Neighbors' aid brings joy to area woman after Hondo Creek rampage

By Mrs. Stanley (Ella) Mumme

Today, Monday, June 23, the Hondo Creek water is almost clear as it rushes past, on its hurried way to another road crossing.

It is hard to believe that only yesterday it rose to the highest it has ever been in the 56 years I have lived beside its banks. The destruction it has caused in its short course through these acres is heart-breaking... the giant piles of washed gravel, sand and sorted rock singly spread over a large area, some washed back into the creek sand pit (with machinery still on its floor) filled to overflowing, road torn up and pea gravel too deep...

As I drove to check the other crossing, I made it just fine going coming back over the same area, I hit a buried rock in the pea-covered road. After some time of shoveling and trying, I knew the car was too stuck for me to get it out. Two young neighbor boys came on their four-wheel all terrain vehicle. They were eager and helpful. I was impressed with their knowledge of how to go about this job. They were very respectful and courteous. After trying for some time, though, we decided to stop as it was noon time.

About 4 p.m., as I started off with the tractor and air tank to see what I could do, I was met by three neighbor families who had brought their pickup, changed the flat tire, and were bringing the pickup home.

Words can't express the joy I felt as the recipient of the gift and effort these neighbor families gave so freely to help me. Thank you sincerely. And to the county employees who fixed the car, thank you, also.



PHOTO BY BEN MUSQUEZ

Flood waters claim one life

Flood waters claimed the life of a man around 1:30 a.m. on Monday. Adolph Cruz, 76 and his wife Haydee, of Moore were on their way home in their car when swift waters swept their car away.

The woman managed to get out of the car but was unable to help her husband get out of the car.

Mrs. Cruz managed to walk several miles to get help. Dispatchers received the call at 5 a.m. and recovered the body at approximately 8 a.m.

The incident occurred on FM 462 near the Frio County line.

Shots offered

The Medina County Health Unit is offering free tetanus shots for people that are working in the flood clean-up. Shots will be administered at the D'Hanis High School cafeteria from 9:30 a.m. until 3 p.m.

Anyone who is unable to get the shots at the school on Friday can come to the health unit today.

Although there is no charge for the immunization, donations are accepted.

gan to recede

ors' aid brings sea woman after Creek rampage

Mumme

23, the Hondo Creek water is almost clear and in its hurried way to another road crossing. At only yesterday it rose to the highest level it has ever reached. The destruction through these acres is heartbreaking. The washed gravel, sand and sorted rock surprise area, some washed back into the creek... the water still on its floor) filled to overflowing... the water too deep...

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The joy I felt as the recipient of the gift of time from the families gave so freely to help me. I thank the county employees who fixed the crossing,

Quihi area



PHOTOS BY KATHY ADLON

The "downtown" area of Quihi sustained the highest water level mark recorded in more than 40 years. Water from the combined Quihi and Elm creeks brought some two feet of water up to FM 2676 south of Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Newer residents at the far end of the block of CR 4520, on the creek bank, had to be evacuated when the rising water forced them to climb onto rooftops and into trees. Al-



PHOTO BY JEFF BERGER

ers were knee-deep on D'Hanis resident Alberto Fernan- is point, at 11 a.m. Sunday, the water was still a few inches g into his home on FM 2200.



This photo was taken from Hwy. 2676 looking west on CR 453. The backwater low area only carries water when the Quihi Creek over- flows its banks.

Flood victims reminded to take safety precautions

Emergency Officials Remind Flood Victims About Safety precautions

The Texas Department of Health (TDH) and the Texas Division of Emergency Management (DEM) have warned that flooded streams and rivers and rising lakes in South and Central Texas already pose an immediate threat to people in some areas. Heavy rains and thunderstorms have kept the ground saturated for days, allowing no time for normal run-off to occur.

Tom Millwee, Coordinator of the Texas Division of Emergency Management, said, "Violent flooding, lightning and the conditions that result from such weather are serious threats to health and safety. All people in the affected areas should use caution while evacuating flooding areas, and later, while returning home as the water subsides."

He added that his office and TDH have compiled the following list of precautions which can help save lives during flood emergencies.

- At every stage of the emergency, remember not to panic. Your calmness and ability to deal with the circumstances can save the lives of others.

- During flooding, do not attempt to drive through flood water of more than one foot deep. If your car stalls, abandon it and seek higher ground.

- When evacuating, comply with government directions and never drive around detour signs—they are there for your protection.

- Take only essential items, such as prescribed medications, baby clothing and supplies, a supply of cash, traveler's checks or credit cards, flashlights, batteries and a battery-operated radio. Use the radio to stay tuned to the National Weather

Service for weather changes.

- Store and carry valuables in water-tight containers.

- As you leave your home, and if you have time, turn off gas, electricity and water. Afterward, do not enter flooded buildings unless you know the electricity is turned off.

- Do not allow children to play near any flood water or storm drain.

- Take care while wading in flood water, since debris may hide nails, wires, broken glass and other hazards.

- Listen for public announcements about the safety of municipal drinking water, since flooding can contaminate treatment plants and wells. If testing indicates that your water supply is tainted, expect to hear a "boil water" order. If you have any doubts about the safety of your municipal or private well water, take no chances - drink only bottled, boiled or specially treated water. If you are unable to evacuate to higher ground, but have enough time, sterilize bathtubs, cooking utensils and other large containers with bleach and fill them with water before contamination can occur.

- If you use bottled water, know its source. If you use boiled water, be sure it boils for at least one minute to kill most organisms. To treat water using a kit, follow enclosed directions, or if you don't have a kit, add one-eighth teaspoon of household chlorine bleach to each gallon of water.

- Do not eat foods that have been in contact with flood water. For babies, use only canned baby formula, not powdered formula prepared with tainted water.

usually can be eaten if they are still "refrigerator cold," but discard previously refrigerated food after it has remained at room temperature for more than two hours, or if it has an unusual odor or color.

- Wash hands with soap and treated or disinfected water before eating or preparing foods, after toilet use, after helping in clean-up activities and after handling floodwater-contaminated items.

- Seek medical treatment, including tetanus vaccinations to prevent infection, for any wounds or injuries.

- After flooding some areas may become infested with mosquitoes, for which products containing DEET are effective. During cleanup operations, be sure to drain standing water where the insects can breed.

- Be aware that wildlife, including poisonous snakes, may also seek shelter from the flooding in debris and places where they are not often found - in trees, homes, even in cars which are left open.

- If you have had to evacuate, consult authorities about downed power lines, chemical contaminations, roadway damage and other flood-related hazards before returning home.

- Return home during the day, for better visibility and to avoid using electric lights. Do not use gas lanterns or torches.

- Do not re-enter your flooded home until the main electrical switch has been turned off. Leave your home immediately if you suspect a gas leak, and try to report any utility damage to authorities.

- Children should never be allowed to play around high water,



PHOTO BY CATHY DELK
Quihi. Hope Palacios
Resendez (left) and
received an almost



PHOTO BY CATHY DELK

The rescue squad talks strategy from their Hwy. 90 landing pad.



PHOTO BY

The floodwaters were knee-deep on D'Hanis resident Albe dez, but at this point, at 11 a.m. Sunday, the water was still a shy of coming into his home on FM 2200.



PHOTO BY CATHY DELK

A joyous reunion took place after a helicopter rescue from the rain-swollen creeks near Quihi. Hope Palacios receives a hug from great niece Mirage Rodriguez, after she along with her cousin Elma Resendez (left) and granddaughter Jacqueline Alvarez rode to a safe landing on Highway 90. (We also received an almost

Flood victi

Emergenc.

The Texas Departmer (TDH) and the Texas Emergency Manageme have warned that flood and rivers and rising lak and Central Texas alrea immediate threat to peop areas. Heavy rains an storms have kept the gi rated for days, allowing normal run-off to occur.

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- Take only essential i as prescribed medicati clothing and supplies, a cash, traveler's checks cards, flashlights, batter battery-operated radio. Us to stay tuned to the Nation



PHOTO BY JEFF BERGER

r. Wallis Stiles watches the water come through the yard of the rectory at Holy Cross Catholic Church in 'Hanis late Sunday morning. By that afternoon, all the water had receded.



lients from the Ney Unit work to load debris along the streets of 'Hanis.

TDCJ assists with recovery effort

Following the devastating floods last weekend, many people have begun the clean-up and are attempting to put their lives back together. The clean-up process will be much easier thanks to the efforts of the clients at the Texas Dept. of Corrections Ney Unit. Monday and Wednesday after the flood waters had receded, a crew of 45 men from the Ney Unit was transported to help the areas that sustained severe flood damage.

Trucks drove along the streets as the clients loaded debris left by the flood-

and personal belongings piled out on the street were also loaded up and hauled away.

The clients also worked to clear the roads and repair culverts which were damaged by the flood waters.

Ney Unit Clients have been working ten hours a day to get things cleaned up as quickly as possible.

Residents forced to stay in the shelters received help from the Torres Unit. Numerous mattresses and blankets were taken to the Red Cross Shelter at McDowell to make their



Helpful neighbor

Numerous individuals including law enforcement officials, fire fighters, electric workers, highway crews, helicopter pilots, and a lot of folks who just simply went out of their way to help friends and neighbors in their time of need deserve a big THANKS for their tireless, around-the-clock efforts.

So,

THANKS

hit by the floods, the clients helped get help volunteers transport supplies to the sewer station cleaned up. Trash and from the shelter.

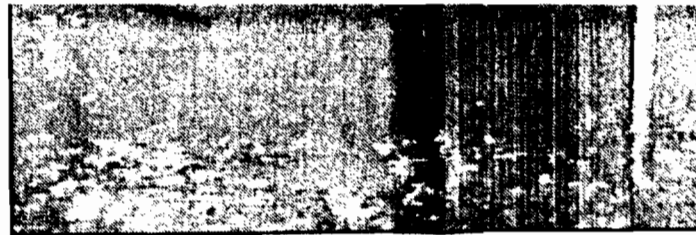


PHOTO BY

The water was up all along 18th Street Sunday morning. I as it looks at the intersection, this was the only 18th Street which wasn't barricaded immediately after the big rains.

Trucks and trailers were emptied by the clients from the Ney Unit.

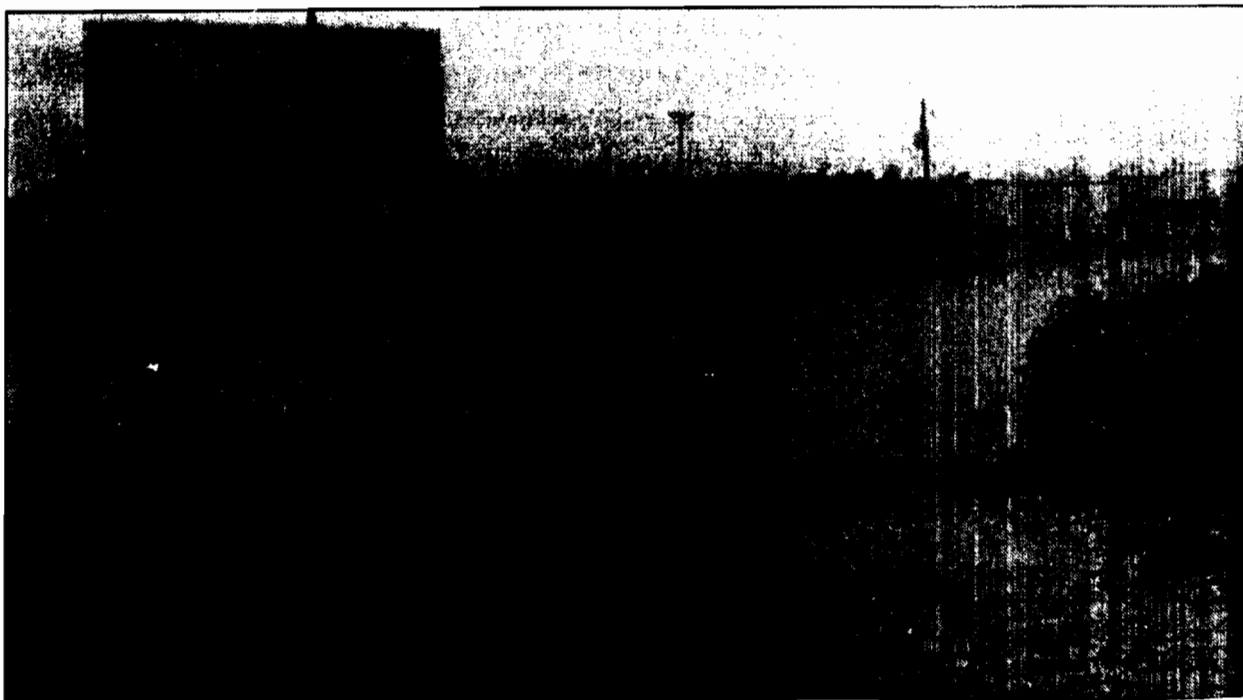


PHOTO BY JEFF BERGER

The Little Live Oak Creek wasn't so little Sunday, as it swelled behind the Landmark Shopping Center. The creek made its way past the Encinito Apts., where it completely filled the trench, spilling over into Ave. U.



If it had a name, it was: creeks, taking a large



PHOTO BY CATHY DELK

A regular traffic jam formed on Highway 90 as the water from the Hondo Creek, plus all that from the Verde Creek which joins the flow just north of the highway, engulfed the roadway. Traffic wasn't cleared to cross the bridge until 3:30 Sunday afternoon.

How much rain did

Who rescued y

What kind of da
was sustained in y

How high did the
at your house

Call us and tell u
your experience
share your pict

We want to hear yo

Hondo Anvil F

426-3346

Helpful neighbors

Numerous individuals, including law enforcement officials, fire fighters, electric workers, highway crews, helicopter pilots, and a lot of folks who just simply went out of their way to help friends and neighbors in their time of need, deserve a big THANKS for their tireless, around-the-clock efforts.

So,

THANKS!

BERGER
church in



Chamber of Commerce Director Elmo Pope and Salvation Army Representative Johnny Vega were on the phone trying to coordinate the relief effort following the flood.

Help for flood victims begins

The Salvation Army and Red Cross have been working closely with the county to provide the families that received damage as a result of the floods with food, clothing, supplies and other essential needs to help them recover.

Johnny Vega, a service rep for The Salvation Army is heading up the relief effort for the organization.

"We will try to take care of anything they need," Vega said. Approximately 50 clean-up kits were shipped to Medina County to help residents impacted by the flood recover.

"Anyone interested in making a contribution to help the flood victims can bring the goods to the Chamber office at 1802 Ave M," Chamber of Commerce director Elmo Pope said. "Monetary donations are also welcome."

A voucher system has been set up to help people get the things they need to return to their homes as quickly as possible.

The Salvation Army distributed clean-up kits earlier this week. An-

other truck of supplies is on the way.

Pope encourages everyone who suffered losses due to the flood to contact the Chamber office and let them know what their needs are.

The American Red Cross has established a telephone hotline to provide assistance to victims of the South and Central Texas flash flooding.

People with disaster-caused needs may call the Red Cross Hotline at 1-800-775-6803. Red Cross assistance may include providing the means to pay for what they need most from groceries, new clothing, and rent, to emergency home repairs, transportation, household items, and medicines.

An assessment team is looking over the damage in the D'Hanis and Quihi areas. A distribution center has been set up at McDowell.

A truck will be at the Holy Cross Parish Hall in D'Hanis from 9 a.m. until noon to distribute packaged clothing to families impacted by the flood.



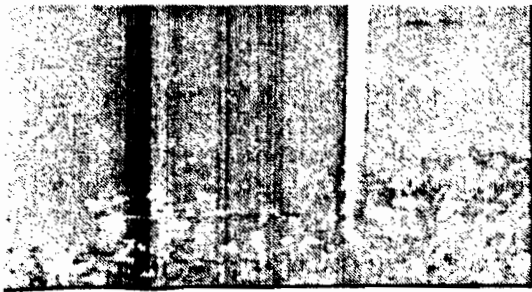


PHOTO BY JEFF BERGER

long 18th Street Sunday morning. But as deep section, this was the only 18th Street crossing and immediately after the big rains.

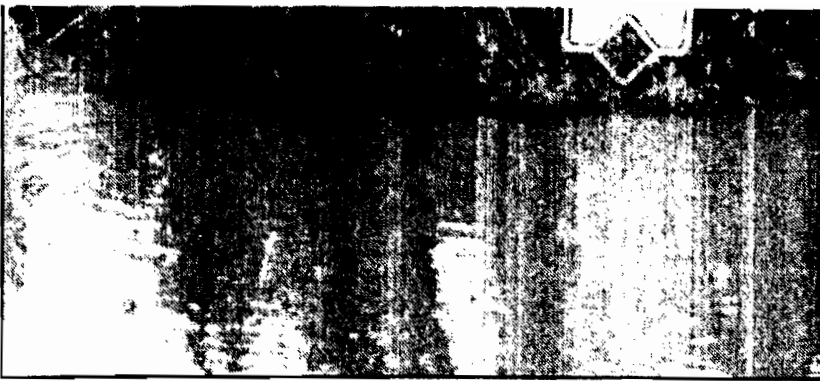


PHOTO BY JEFF BERGER

Keith's obviously been working overtime, constructing a really, really large pool at the intersection of Highway 90 and FM 2200 in D'Hanis.



PHOTO BY JEFF BERGER

If it had a name, it was over the banks. The normally placid Elm Creek east of Quihi ran wild, as did all area creeks, taking a large chunk of FM 2676 with it.

Walpole Property

JEFF BERGER
enter. The
to Ave. U.

How much rain did you get?

Who rescued you?

What kind of damage
was sustained in your area?

How high did the water get
at your house?

Call us and tell us about
your experiences or
share your pictures.

We want to hear your story.

Hondo Anvil Herald

426-3346

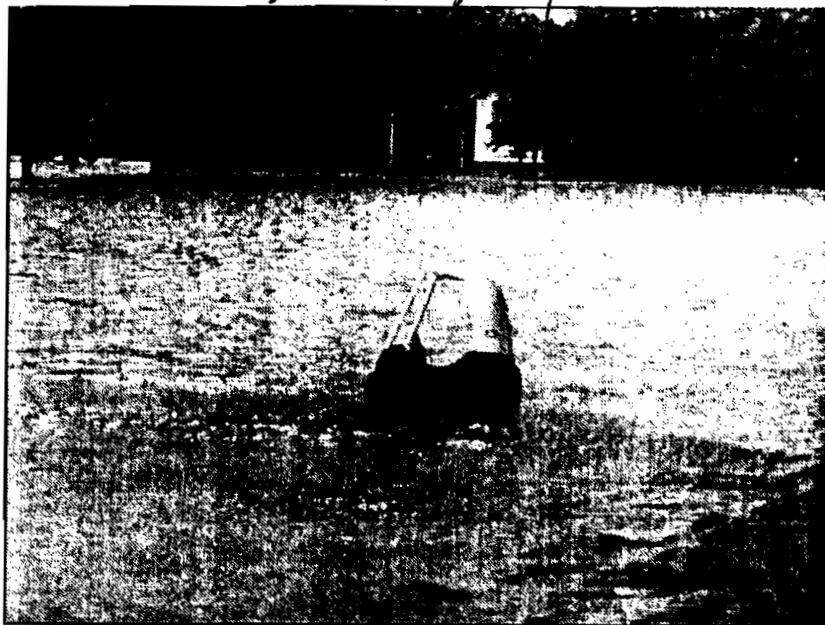


PHOTO BY SYLVIA LUTZ

Vehicles large and small were washed away by the high waters in D'Hanis Sunday morning.

CATHY DELK
the Verde
ed to cross

Area flooding caused substantial damage in county



Sherry Jones has enjoyed heavy rains.

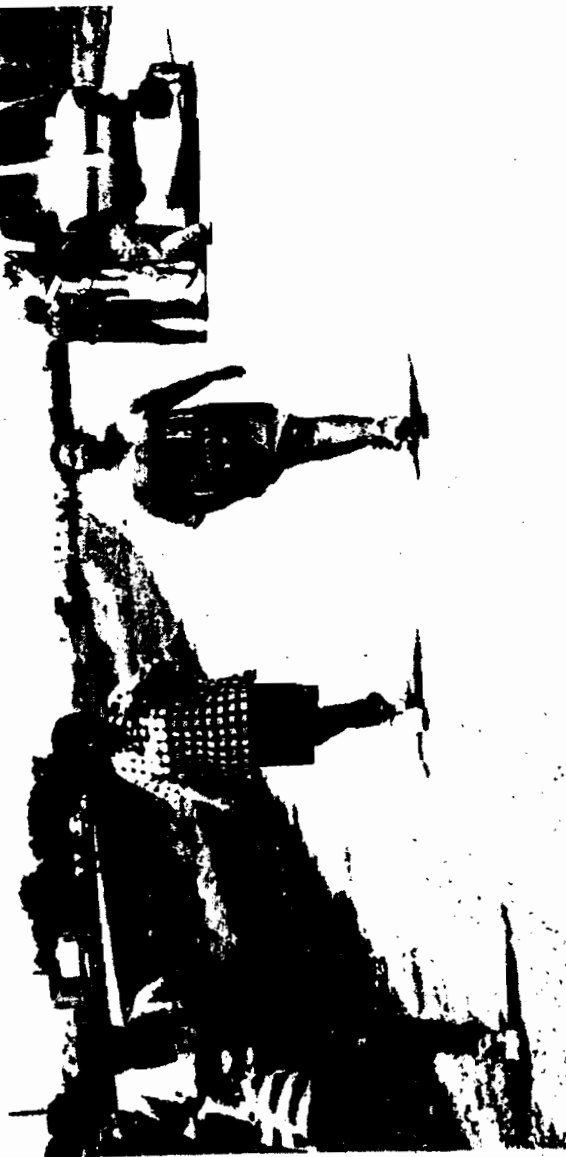
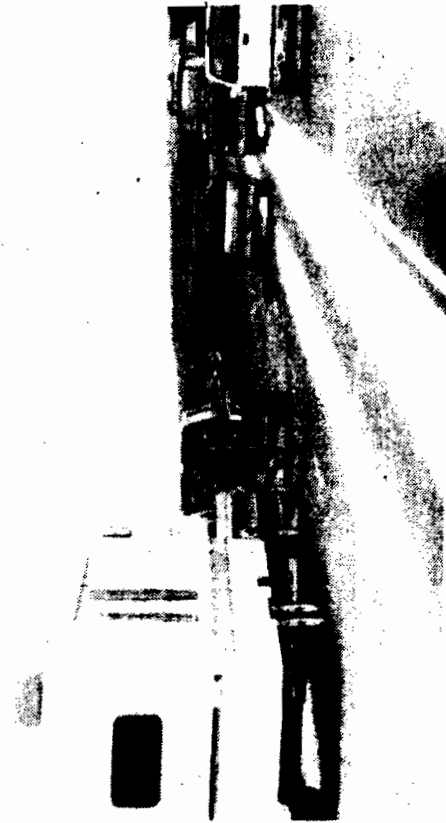


PHOTO BY JIM FERGI
This family had to be rescued by helicopter when the Hondo Creek and area sloughs merged out of banks and closed Hwy. 90 most of the day.



The Hondo Volunteer Fire Company blocked Hwy. 90 while the Hondo Creek was out of its banks. Hundreds of motorists were delayed or rerouted.



Many road were damaged by the flooding. Damage estimate to re roads and bridges, clean out culverts and remove debris is expe

to exceed \$400,000.



PHOTO BY JEFF BERGER
 Janny Weynand, Shauna Riddell and Tim Carter watch in awe as the
 t New Fountain, leaving behind a mass of tangled wreckage which had
 ument.

of the damage assessment complete, nearly 810 homes were damaged or destroyed by the floods in nine counties

County	Total
Bandera	190
Bexar	161
Cornal	54
Guadalupe	161
Kendall	70
Medina	87
McMullen	20
Real	35
Uvalde	32



Cade Thigpen and Tyler O'Bryan made the best out of high water

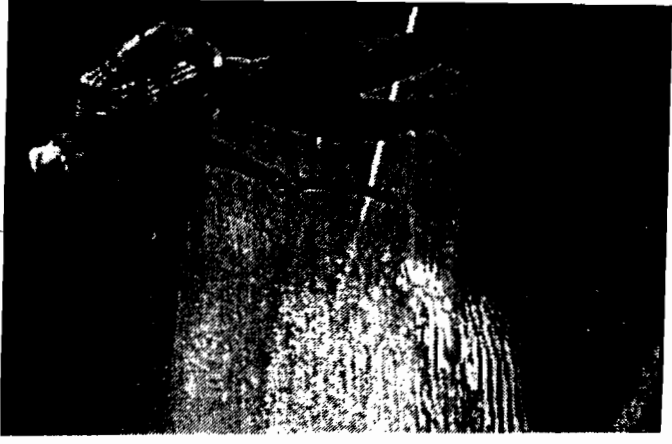
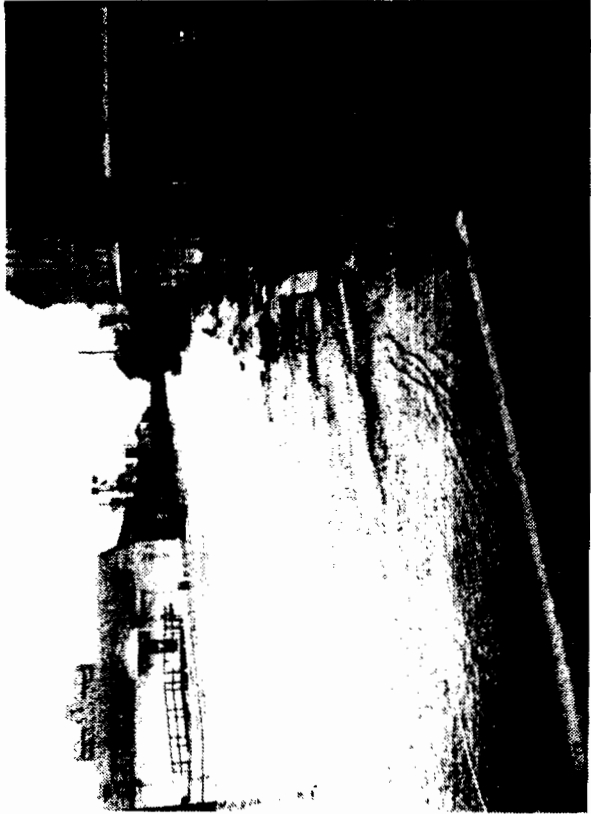


PHOTO BY ROBYN O'BRYAN, HONDO
 " Chapman marks the water's edge as the water began to recede. Sun-
 hich is located to the northwest cor-
 eek and highway, had three feet of
 it was the highest they can remem-
 Chapmans lost all their cattle, with
 sday.



Ave. M and 18th street became a river following the heavy rains. Some
 businesses received minor water damage due to the high water.

SAVE \$8.00



103 PORTRAI

Below is a copy of a letter from a supporter of the quarry and rail line project, who is a lifelong resident of Quihi and member of a family with financial interests in the proposed Vulcan project. She attests to the long history of the danger, devastation and unpredictability of these flash floods through Quihi, via the Elm, Quihi, and Polecat Creeks. She urges those not familiar with, or unable to cope with, these floods to not locate here. Vulcan should heed her advice. Vulcan has yet to recognize, acknowledge or address these flooding issues, after 8 years of being asked to provide proof that their quarry and rail loop and rail line will not increase the flooding potential. Their only response is that 'flooding will happen'.

Hondo Anvil Herald • July 12, 2007 • 9A

Your Turn

Hondo Anvil Herald
P.O. Box 400, Hondo, TX 78861
anvil@hondo.net

Dear Editor,

I must reply to the articles in the paper last week regarding the concerns of some of the people north of Quihi about the flooding along the Elm Creek and other smaller creeks on CR 351 and 353. Those people involved in the rescue are lucky to have survived.

That land and those creeks have been there for over 100 years. It's part of nature. I have lived no more than 50 yards from the banks of the Elm Creek for 68 years, first growing up on my parents place and now since I'm married. I have seen the creeks a lot higher than this.

The flooding is nothing new. When we were growing up we knew to expect this ev-

ery time it rained a lot. We stayed home. Chickens, sheep and cattle were washed away. My Dad probably had to put back more "washed out" fences than anyone else. My husband is out there right now, as I'm writing this, trying to put back our fences that were washed away.

We don't like it, but anyone living next to these creeks has two choices. Either learn to live with it or move away. Simple as that.

Whatever you do, please don't expect any Medina County Commissioner, Sheriff or anyone else to come up with some kind of miracle to avoid the flooding. That is absolutely impossible. You are living with nature.

Leona Niebuhr
Hondo



HONDO

Thursday, July 19, 2007

Medina County

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75 Cents

Lopez speaks out for northwest side residents

By William Hoover
ANVIL HERALD CORRESPONDENT

Former Mayor, city park namesake and community leader T.A. Lopez made an unsolicited speech to council regarding the construction of an elevated 16th Street bridge where 16th Street crosses Elm Slough.

With the region, Hondo and Elm Slough saturated from this year's record rains, Lopez informed council the water has been standing up to six inches deep on 16th Street at the slough. He said the water retention is a hazard for children, motorists and other northeast side residents.

Silt has also built up in front of the numerous drainage inlets at the base of the 16th Street bridge walkway. The inability of the water to flow south is forcing residents without cars in the city's oldest section of town to cross over on bicycles or walk through the storm water, which is of unknown quality. People who must drive through the standing water, which sometimes sits on the road for two weeks after a rain, can also damage their cars' brakes, alternators, and other parts, according to Lopez.

The spry, 86-year-old community activist told council some 70 houses in the oldest section of the city are affected by the standing water on 16th Street and its hidden hazards. Many of the residents, such as Lopez himself, are United States war veterans. Lopez said the bridge across Elm Slough on 18th Street does little for the 70 families living north or east of the Elm Slough's intersection with 16th Street.

"We want a bridge on 16th Street because, when it rains, it floods the street," he said of his northeast side neighbors. "A lot of traffic has to go across there (the intersection of 16th Street and Elm Slough). The people who live on Avenues A and B, on 16th Street and to the north, drive through there and a lot of people walk through there because they don't have cars. I don't see why we have to go around to 18th Street to get to downtown or back to our homes. That's the reason people are asking for an elevated 16th Street bridge."

The northeast side residents asked Lopez to speak for them before council because,

he said, a lot of them do not want to keep coming back to council to make their requests, just to be disappointed. "We have five WWII veterans, five Korean veterans, four Viet Nam veterans and we have two people serving in Iraq right now," said Lopez. "I, too, am a WWII veteran. We fight for this country but we don't get much."

Lopez said he and his fellow veterans felt like they were not receiving their fair share of city tax dollars when it came to infrastructure improvements. He implied an appeal to Austin was possible if the city failed to build an elevated bridge on 16th Street or if some other solution to the drainage problem was not found.

"I thought maybe you could give us an answer," Lopez told council. "If not, we will have to take other steps somewhere else."

The old, northeast side lots may be small and inexpensive, some were originally purchased for \$50, but they are home to the people who live there and nobody should be expected to give up their home, according to Lopez. The northside community leader suggested widening 16th Street, building a four to five foot high bridge over the existing road or installing 60 inch box culverts beneath the road to carry the water out of town.

Mayor Jim Danner said he appreciated Lopez's comments and noted he was not aware water stood on 16th Street at Elm Slough for up to two weeks. Danner noted the Union Pacific railroad beds act as a dam, making water back up on the city's north side and preventing the flow of storm water south under Hwy 90.

City Manager Robert Herrera assured Lopez a way to address the problem would be forthcoming as the city engages in other street extensions and drainage improvement projects. When the city extends 22nd Street as planned, Herrera said the city might have the opportunity to also fix the drainage on 16th Street at Elm Slough.

"I was out there this afternoon looking from Hwy. 90 to the north of the slough," said Herrera. "It is my understanding the city owns that (property to the north of Hwy 90). And it is also my understanding that the slough, from Hwy. 90 to the south, is actually not under the control of the City of Hondo. It was a

See LOPEZ, Page 2A

the Hondo Community Center at 10 a.m. New members are always welcome.

HHS band members

There will be a fitting for uniforms from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. on July 16 to 20 for returning members. The fitting for all members is from July 23 - 27, also from 10 - 2.

Woolfs PTO meeting

There will be an organizational meeting for Woolfs Intermediate School on Monday, July 23 at 6 p.m. in the Woolfs cafeteria. Everyone is welcome.

Red Hat Society

Red Hat Society will resume monthly schedule by meeting for lunch at 11:30 at Neal's Cafe in Concan on Tues., July 24. See article in this issue for directions.

LOPEZ

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A



PHOTO BY DAWN HOOVER

Elm Slough

concern I have raised in the past with some of our staff members because we do go out to the south to maintain the vegetation growth so the water can move out of town. We need some drainage improvements and, perhaps when we address the 22nd Street extension, we will get to that."

Herrera said Lopez's concerns had reinforced his desire to see a new UP railroad crossing for vehicles and pedestrians at Veterans Blvd. at Hwy 90, across from the Wal-Mart Supercenter. "A new railroad crossing at Veterans Blvd. would provide the residents of those 70 homes with an outlet and probably cost a third of the cost of a new bridge or walkway," said the City Manager.

Danner suggested keeping the slough well-mowed to facilitate the flow of water south of town until a better solution could be found. "The city manager will look into this and get back to you in three

to four weeks," Danner told Lopez.

The mayor promised Lopez some kind of action would be taken and council would consider addressing the problem at their upcoming budget workshops.

In comments made after the meeting, Lopez said the city had received various Community Development Block Grants intended for under-served, low-income areas of town, which could have been used to upgrade the 16th Street drainage problem. However, Lopez said the city's CDBG money was usually spread all over town and very little was spent entirely on low-income areas.

Lopez said he hoped the city could find funds to fix the 16th Street crossing, because providing safe streets is a basic city service. He noted the city was preparing to spend \$181,000 on a nature trail park, when making safe streets should be a higher priority because streets are ne-

cessities for all taxpayers, including northeastside residents who are proud of their history.

"They may be small but they are our homes and we are not going to move from there," Lopez said of his neighborhood.

In Other Business

• City Manager Herrera told council a workshop would be held in city hall on July 2, from 8:30 a.m. to noon to discuss pending budget issues. The July 25 workshop will be one of four and will bring council up to date on issues in the Fiscal Year 2006-2007 budget.

Herrera said actual budget workshops, for FY 2007-2008 would be held Aug. 7, 8 and 9. On Aug. 7 and 8, council will review the proposed budgets for city departments. On Aug. 9, the council will set the budget for the nonprofit entities the city supports. The new fiscal year begins October 1, 2007, and the budget must be prepared at least two weeks in advance, according to the City Manager.

"With our new (Home Rule) Charter, the budget must be presented to council on or before August 15th," said Herrera. "And it must be adopted by Oct. 1."

Danner noted the annual Hondo City Staff Picnic would be held in City Park #1 at 6 p.m. on July 27. The mayor encouraged council members, most of whom he said were not present last year, to make an appearance to show city employees they appreciate what they do for the town's citizens.

• The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Hondo City Council will be Monday, Aug. 6, at 6 p.m. in city hall. The meeting is open to the public.

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78861 Telephone: (830) 426-3346.
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