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Mudslide claims four people

■ **OREGON:** Weather dumps
five inches of rain on Eugene

By Jeff Barnard
The Associated Press

ROSEBURG — A hillside broke loose in soggy southern Oregon, killing four people, including a couple whose son and daughter narrowly escaped injury.

Streams and rivers were rising Tuesday, roads were closed, motorists stranded, residents evacuated and homes without power as nature provided a less-severe replay of last winter's catastrophic flooding.

A huge mudslide literally swallowed up a home 30 miles northwest of Roseburg Monday evening, killing four people inside.

"There's been way too much rain and the water made a liquid river of mud that demolished the house," Douglas County sheriff's Capt. Robert Stratton said.

Deputies recovered the bodies of Rick Moon, 46; his wife, Susan Moon, 44; Sharon Marvin, 40, a neighbor; and a third woman who was identified only as Ann.

Arnold Ryder, 70, was delivering newspapers in the area when the slide began. He was hospitalized in fair condition after he was hit by a wall of mud and debris.

The Moon's son, who is in seventh grade, was working with a neighbor to clear mud off the roadway below the house when the mudslide hit.

"There was a man and a little boy there," Ryder said from his hospital bed. "I heard him holler to the little boy to 'Run! Run! Run!'"

The boy, Justin Moon, and his sister, Rachelle Moon, who is in 11th grade, escaped without injury. Their exact ages weren't available. The girl was in the house before the slide, but her father had sent her out of the structure before the hill gave way.

Rivers and creeks in Western Oregon were brimming with water from heavy rain that began Monday. Interstate 5 was closed in southern Oregon due to mudslides. Traffic slowed to a crawl on the freeway in the Willamette Valley because of high water.

U.S. 101, the main coastal route, was closed by high water in the southwest corner of the state at Port Orford and near Bandon.

Rescuers reached about 50 people Tuesday who were stranded in their cars along Oregon highways 138 and 38. They were escorted to safety, but details were sketchy.

Flooding along the Willamette and Mohawk rivers in rural Lane County outside of Eugene forced the evacuation of several hundred residents, including bed-ridden occupants of a nursing home. Authorities didn't have an exact count of those evacuated.

Gov. John Kitzhaber declared a state of emergency in Lane and Clackamas counties.

The Lane County sheriff's office asked rural residents from Maple-

ton to Leaburg to gather enough food, water and emergency supplies to be ready for 48 to 72 hours of potential isolation from public services.

Lane County sheriff's office spokesman Ernie Loy said deputies were helping evacuate residents, including some people along the south fork of the Willamette River, which was 4 1/2 feet above flood stage.

"Many roads in the coastal range and the Cascade range are really not fit for travel in many locations because of downed trees, slides and high water," said Oregon Department of Transportation spokesman Ed Schoaps.

Steve Todd, meteorologist in charge of the National Weather Service office in Portland, said that, like last year's huge floods, this much-less-severe round of flooding was caused by the "pineapple express," a weather pattern that brings moisture-laden Pacific storms to the Northwest.

Close to 5 inches of rain fell along the central Oregon Coast and in the southern Willamette Valley in the 24-hour period ended at 4 a.m. Tuesday. North Bend on the southern coast reported 6.66 inches of rain.

He predicted that the Willamette River, which cuts through the most populated area of the state and bisects Portland, would reach flood stage in Eugene, Corvallis, Albany and Salem.

Floods: Some campus basements flooded

■ Continued from Page 1

boats — keeping track of highway closures and assisting in evacuations. At least 10 active evacuations were in progress throughout the day.

"This looks worse than [the floods of] February," Senior Trooper Oscar Powell said. "Our concern is with the people. Quite a few are refusing to leave. We can't force them to leave, but we can be there to assist."

And if families do leave their homes, Powell said he and his troops need to be on the look out for opportunistic criminals.

"We also just want to help curtail looters," he said. All of the area rivers except the Upper Willamette have reached flood stages.

The areas of Marcola and Goshen were the hardest hit by flooding, said Ernie Loy, representative from the Lane County Sheriff's office.

"We did a lot of evacuating in that area last night and this morning," Loy said. "Most people got out in time but there were people we had to go in and rescue because they waited too long."

No further evacuations were planned for Tuesday, but everything depends on what happens with the rain during the night, Loy said.

"It really depends on if the Willamette stays within its banks," he said. "We are keeping an eye on what's

going on out there, and I think we've got a pretty good handle on things."

Officers with the Sheriff's Department will continue to patrol high-water areas, assessing the danger and evacuating people as necessary.

The University wasn't exempt from its share of rain-related problems either. Basement flooding in Hendricks Hall, Gilbert Hall and parts of the Law School plagued University employees Tuesday, said Barney Raybold, operations manager at University Facility Services. Plugged drains also proved troublesome, he said.

"The unfortunate part of this storm is that we have maximum leaf debris," he said. "It's an on-going problem almost everywhere there's a drain."

Trees have also be affected by the excessive rain and wind. A tree across from Johnson Hall was roped off after officials decided it proved a threat to the safety of passers-by.

"We have recently done a study to identify high-risk trees," Raybold said. "It has been decided [the tree across from Johnson Hall] was susceptible to falling or damaging people. We want to keep pedestrians away from there. It does present a hazard to our campus community."

Rain is predicted to continue through today.

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