



Steve Helber/AP Photo

A Coast Guard helicopter crew prepares to hoist a group of stranded residents from their flooded homes in Burgaw, N.C.

Coast Guard: ‘The flooding is so expansive’

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and scheduled for the patrol starting 6 a.m. Tuesday.

Their patrol area extended over 150 miles north to south from Elizabeth City to Wilmington, North Carolina. They also covered areas that extend as far as 50 miles east to the coast. The flat terrain has heightened the effects of the flooding.

“Part of the issue is the flooding is so expansive and covers such a large amount of area,” Hale said.

Two pilots, a flight mechanic and a rescue swimmer occupied an MH-60T Jayhawk helicopter during the patrol. While weather is no longer an issue for pilots, unfamiliar structure heights and heavy air traffic are. Some structures reach hundreds of feet high, and sifting through radio traffic can be complicated.

“Flying, the pilots have to keep their heads on a swivel,” said Jason Frayne, a flight mechanic.

This is the first time anyone on the crew has responded to a major disaster.

“It was definitely very challenging conditions to fly over,” said Lt. Patrick Wright, a safety pilot along with Lt. Derrick Rockey. “The widespread devastation was not something you can really prepare for.”

At one point, the crew received word that 30 people were trapped without water, electricity or cellphone capabilities. Standing on a dry patch surrounded by extensive areas of isolated flooding, the people on the ground waved white towels to grab the crew’s attention. With help from a National Guard helicopter, the crew picked them up and took them to a shelter established inside a mall.

Perhaps the most striking moment for them came when they rescued an infant boy and his parents from their house. Three of the four crew members have children.

“They were cut off from the world. Being able to rescue him and his family was awesome,” Frayne said.

Convincing the parents to leave their house wasn’t easy, though.

“It took, kind of, a parent-to-parent and heart-to-heart conversation,” Frayne said.

But eventually the family was convinced to seek safer shelter. On the helicopter ride, despite the chaos around him and below him, the baby fell asleep.

“The little guy, he didn’t know what was going on,” Hale said. “A house is a house, but a home is your family.”



Coast Guard

Flood damage from Hurricane Florence can be seen from a Coast Guard helicopter.

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Lt. Patrick Wright | a safety pilot



Steve Helber/AP Photo

Residents wave to a Coast Guard helicopter from their flooded home in Burgaw, N.C.

Closing: Murray plans to relocate roastery inside a pole barn

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A year before Murray and Davis began roasting in Astoria, Columbia River Coffee Roasters started in Uniontown. Its coffee is now commonplace in many businesses around the region. Astoria Coffee Co. has eschewed the idea of growing bigger or selling wholesale, except to the Blue Scorcher Bakery & Cafe.

Murray’s Probat coffee roaster makes about 10 pounds of beans at a time, allowing him to offer upward of 30 varieties out of his store. The small-batch mentality appeals

to Murray, who said the customers are what have kept him interested for the past quarter century of roasting.

“I got to meet the whole town,” he said. “I got to know people. I got to watch their kids grow up. I got to watch their families change over time.”

Murray recently bought a home near Knappa, where he is planning to relocate the roastery inside a pole barn. He will continue offering small batches of coffee to individual customers out of his home, but is also looking for a local retail outlet such as the Astoria Co-op Grocery to

carry his products.

Despite planning to sell the building, Murray hasn’t entertained selling the business, knowing part of Astoria Coffee Co.’s success has been his experience roasting and the relationships he’s formed with customers. At 67 years old, he said he could continue roasting coffee for at least another 10 years.

“It’s really not that hard of work,” he said. “I have to keep my mind and my eyes together. It’s kind of like being a blacksmith or something like that. You get a trade, (and) you can do it for as long as you can.”



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian

Rick Murray, owner of Astoria Coffee Co., is closing his storefront at 37th Street and Leif Erikson Drive by the end of the year.