

Heavy rains bring outages, flooding to South County

By RJ Marx
Cannon Beach Gazette

South County faced high winds, partial power outages and road closures, with a high wind alert throughout Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 12 and 13. The worst damage in the area was south toward Tillamook County and Nehalem, which faced flooding and road closures.

On Saturday afternoon, Oregon Department of Transportation reported the road surface on U.S. Highway 101 in Wheeler had collapsed. Drivers were diverted to alternate routes.

County Commissioner Lianne Thompson said Saturday she has spoken with Tony Hyde and Tim Josi, county commission chairs in Columbia and Tillamook counties, respectively.

"I've offered my personal and professional support, and they've both indicated their appreciation and assured me that they're managing as well as can be expected, given the extensive flooding and other issues they're facing," Thompson said. "We have branches, not trees, down in my neighborhood. We have power and water. We are doing well and grateful for it."

In Elsie, Highway 26 was sinking and sloughing in three places: at the top



R.J. MARX PHOTO/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

High water warnings along Highway 101 in Gearhart.



SUBMITTED PHOTO/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

Mullenbach Road and Highway 103 in Elsie, where a car was swept across the road Sunday, Dec. 6. The driver was brought to safety after the efforts of emergency personnel.

of David Hill, mile post 23 in the swale at previous repairs, and just west of the tunnel, reported resident and Elsie-Vinemaple volunteer emergency medical technician Diane Jette on Saturday afternoon.

A landslide, mud and tangle of trees caused a flow across Highway 103 near Bay Road, and was cleared by the Department of Transportation, Jette said. That area is now clear.

According to Jette, Riverbend Road homeowner Gene White is philosophical about the foot of water in his cabin.

"He was flooded out in 2007 and replaced drywall, carpet, kitchen and bathroom

cabinets," Jette said. "He's planning to make his place 'flood friendly' this time, maybe considering cedar tongue-and-groove lower walls that can be removed to replace the soggy insulation and then reinstalled.

"His upbeat 'go with the flow' attitude is in keeping with the independent coast range dwellers take-care-of-business stance," Jette added.

The Elsie-Vinemaple Rural Fire Department also received a report from a family trapped at home by landslide, and Highway 103 and Highway 202 closures with no power or cell service.

The fire house had four calls back to back on the windiest day to clear downed trees from Highway 103 and Highway 26, Jette said.

When a landslide left a part of Tweedle Road only one-quarter passable, the MacNicholls' family and their neighbors hunkered down. Electricity was interrupted by the downed wires in the slide and the power company was trapped in Vernonia. Highway 202 and Highway 103 were closed due to water over the road and more slides. Generators rumbled to keep food cold and water pumped from the

well. Oil lamps gave light. Ditches were dug to keep water from filling crawlspaces. Power was restored two-and-a-half days later as residents watched the water recede.

Other blocked roads were handled to and from 911 calls. "The best ones were when firefighters arrived with chain saws ready to discover that local motorists with their own equipment had handled the problem prior to EVRFPD's arrival," she said. "That pioneer spirit!"

In Hamlet, Fire Chief Bob Boone reported a "wet and windy weekend, but no real problems we have heard."

Localized flooding in Cannon Beach

In Cannon Beach, Public Works Director Dan Grassick said there were "rather minor and localized flooding issues."

"Some catch basins plugged up and water backed up in the street at a few locations but was mitigated quickly when the catch basins were cleared," he said. "Crews have been out keeping the debris cleared out of open channels, catch basin grates and trash rack screens."

A storm surge did bring the surf up to the vegetation line on the beach and there was minor ponding at low spots on some streets during heavy rains, along with downed branches.

On Wednesday, Dec. 9, flooding on Highway 101 between Cannon Beach and Seaside kept some from making it to work or appointments.

— Dani Palmer

CANNON BEACH POLICE LOG

Nov. 29
4:18 p.m. beach: property found. An officer found and destroyed a syringe on the beach.

Nov. 30
3:17 p.m. 500 block of Beech Street: fugitive. A male subject was arrested on warrant and for a driving while suspended misdemeanor.

Dec. 2
11:07 a.m. 300 block of Elk Creek Road: hit and run. A motor vehicle hit and run was reported.

11:15 a.m. Highway 101 and Tolovana: hit and run. A vehicle hit and run was reported.

Dec. 3
6:55 a.m. 800 block of Ecola Park Road: assistance rendered. A downed tree was blocking a roadway. Police were able to remove the tree from the road.

Dec. 4
7:21 a.m. Second Street restroom parking: camping within city limits. Subjects were warned for overnight camping.

1:38 p.m. Sunset Boulevard: information. A caller reported an unsecured load on a truck flatbed and an officer advised the driver to ensure the load was secured properly.

7:36 p.m. 1200 block of Pacific

Street: trespass. A caller reported an unwanted subject in their parking garage. An officer made contact and the subject moved on.

Dec. 6
2:16 p.m. 600 block of North Larch Street: theft. A caller reported theft of a wedding ring from a closet lockbox.

8:19 p.m. 700 block of Broadway: warrant arrest. A female was arrested for a felony warrant out of the Clatsop County Sheriff's Office and transported to the Clatsop County Jail.

Dec. 7
4:49 p.m. Highway 101 MP 26:

possession of a controlled substance. During a traffic stop, a canine was run around the outside of a vehicle and alerted to the passenger side. The subject admitted to having LSD inside the vehicle, and a small baggie con-

taining a white crystal residue was found. The subject was informed a case would be forwarded to the district attorney's office.

Dec. 10
5:39 a.m. Second Street: camping

within city limits. Subjects were warned for unlawful lodging.

7:33 a.m. Second Street restroom parking lot: camping within city limits. Subjects were warned for unlawful camping.

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