

Flooding Worst Since '47, Eight Inches in 3 Days

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Three early-morning cloud-bursts in three days, the worst a torrential 4½- to 6-inch Wednesday morning, brought creeks and smaller streams out of their banks throughout Davis county Wednesday—creating the worst flood conditions since 1947.

As a county average, more than eight inches of rain have fallen in the past three days.

Only a week ago this morning, farmers were looking for the moisture that would give crops the boost needed to put them in the near-bumper category. Since then Bloomfield has measured 9 inches of rainfall, with other sectors of the county—particularly to the southwest—getting more than 11 inches.

With fields of soybeans and corn standing under water, the crop outlook is looking seriously dark for some farmers. A fast recession of water, plus a small cleaning shower for the beans, would help keep losses at a minimum.

Things looked bleak enough Wednesday morning, when all creeks had burst out of bounds at some place in the county—but another two inches early Thursday served to reactivate creeks that had approached normalcy after cresting early Wednesday.

Crops-wise, Soap Creek in the northwest section of the county wreaked the most havoc. Jack Chamberlain of the Soil Conservation Office, who visited the flood scene in that area, told the Democrat that two-thirds of the bottomland was underwater. One farmer, W. W. Swain, had 150 acres of his bottomland north of Lake Wapello under water.

East of Highway 53, in the northeast section of the county, Soap Creek was still within its banks Thursday morning, but the early morning rainfall could send the already bank-full creek over the top in that area.

When the damage was surveyed Wednesday in the south section of the county, Fabius, Carter and both big and little Wyacondah had burst out of their banks.

Carter was running over fields with considerable current, doing more damage than those creeks which merely sent their waters quietly into surrounding fields.

Thursday afternoon, it was reported that Carter Creek had risen from its Wednesday stage and was standing four to five feet deep in some fields. A soybean field on the Truman Alo-shire farm in the Wesley Chapel vicinity looked like a small lake.

Fabius was at its worst below Savannah, where at one point it stretched out of bounds for a quarter mile on each side.

The Wyacondah was at its worst in the Stiles area. On the Harvey Clover farm, it was covering a half-mile along its banks.

County Engineer Jim Riggs told the Democrat late Wednesday that it was the North Wyacondah that did the most county road damage. Although the water ripped off the gravel in several places, no apparent damage was done to the eight bridges along its course. At 10:30 yesterday morning, a road near the Brumley school (7 miles southeast of Pulaski) appeared impassable, with two feet of water covering the road.

Three different locations were seen where the water, which ran with such force that it couldn't get through culverts quickly enough, overflowed across the roads, taking rock and part of the road grade.

Chamberlain reported that much of the North Wyacondah bottomland was in pasture.

A mile and one-half north of Stiles on the South Wyacondah, Riggs reported seeing water standing on 25 or 30 acres.

The Fox creek in north Davis was pretty well behaved Wednesday, although it had backed into the low spots. It wasn't out of its channel banks, however. Today it was running at bank-full in some spots and could overflow at its crest.

Byers told the Democrat Wednesday that his investigation in the northeast section showed the Chequest out of its banks, covering some corn and meadowland. Soap Creek at that time was out in some spots, but damage was slight. Chamberlain and Verle Arnold, covering the northwest, said Chequest in that area was still contained when they saw it yesterday, but more water today could bring that creek out.

The nearly eight inches that's fallen in Bloomfield in the first six days of this month puts the year's total at 29.5 inches. Normal ranges from 30 to 33 inches.

Rainfall since last Thursday totals exactly 3.99 inches, as measured by the city's rain gauge. Last Thursday, the kick-off of the deluge, 1.01 inches fell, followed by .01 Friday, .03 Sunday and .09 Monday. Then fell the big ones.

At halfway between midnight and breakfast Tuesday, 1.45 inches fell, 4.35 was recorded Wednesday, the bulk coming in

Rain

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the early morning, and the caper—to press time—2.05 inches Thursday morning.

Byers said that the Tuesday-Wednesday storms delivered a one-two punch that helped the corn but little. Tuesday's high winds and moisture softened up the soil and weakened the root structures, bending some corn in the process. Wednesday morning's winds weren't near as stiff as the morning before, but they took a greater toll because of the weakened condition of the corn.

The three storms were accompanied by rapid fire lightning flashes. Claude Bickel, manager of Citizens Mutual Telephone Company, said all three storms brought lightning that took out phone line fuses. About 75 phones in all were taken out of service, but use was restored by nightfall each day.

The smaller streams, which fill quickly and flow more violently, did most of the road damage in the county, Engineer Riggs said. Several acres reported trash washed up on the roads by swollen small streams. Plank "throwdowns" used for water passages at field entrances, washed onto the road near Bunch.

Near Monterey, southwest about 3½ miles, a 12 foot log and some smaller items of debris, were carried onto the road and dumped. Water was down to a trickle in that area by Wednesday afternoon.

Also near Monterey both ends of a bridge fill were washed out. Three miles northeast of Stiles the fill wash-away under one corner of a bridge will reduce traffic there to one way.

The water damage didn't hurt any work done by the county road crew this year, Riggs said. And it fortunately came before the extensive resurfacing program got underway.

It was Wednesday's half-foot rainfall that started creeks on their rampage, but Tuesday's two-inch rain, which saturated the soil, made run-off more than it would normally have been. The Cantril vicinity, where water today stood over Highway 2 east on Fox Creek, had only one inch of rain Wednesday.

The three-day combination overflowed most farm ponds throughout the county and the pressure broke at least one levee structure.