

Title: **Haleysurveysdamage,stops inConwaytoaddressflooding**
 Author: BY AUDREY HUDSON ahudson@thesunnews.com
 Size: 90.21 square inch
 Myrtle Beach, SC Circulation: 61238



Haley surveys damage, stops in Conway to address flooding

BY AUDREY HUDSON
 ahudson@thesunnews.com

CONWAY

Gov. Nikki Haley conducted an aerial tour of Horry County on Wednesday and afterwards warned locals to be prepared for a second onslaught of floodwaters when the Waccamaw River crests.

"When we flew over, I could see it coming," Haley said during a news conference at the county's emergency operations center in Conway.

"You could just see the water rising, moving in (this) direction. We're watching a lot of water come through the Midlands – a lot of what we had in the Midlands is now coming down your way," Haley said.

"We just want everybody to be prepared. There is another wave of water coming," Haley said.

Crest predictions have changed throughout the

week, but a National Weather Service official surveying the damage here said the river will hit 16.1 feet late Wednesday night into Thursday morning.

It could take a week before the floodwaters retreat, added Steven R. Pfaff, warning coordination meteorologist.

Haley and Horry County Council Chairman Mark Lazarus advised that residents in the Conway area

should also expect to see more road closures as the

SEE HALEY, 7A

Expect more road and bridge closures after the Waccamaw River crests overnight Wednesday

Floodwaters could take days to recede

National Guard and rescue teams have been stationed near flooded communities

FROM PAGE 3A

HALEY

river crests.

It's not just the flood-covered roads that are the problem, officials are also seeing wet soil cause a multitude of issues including shoulders separating from the roads and compromised bridges.

"As the water flows down, we are doing assessments of what's safe, and what we have said is, when in doubt, close it," Haley said. "So it's going to be a little bit of an inconvenience for a while, but it won't last long. I'd rather know that those roads are safe."

At least 15 fatalities have been reported statewide, some from motorists attempting to drive through roads that were blocked for safety reasons.

"I know this seems inconvenient, but the cones

and barriers are there for a reason, we really need people to respect it," Haley said. "We don't want to take any chances of roads sinking."

"We want you to be diligent, and we want you to be smart, and we want you to understand that we've got another wave coming and we just need to be careful," Haley said.

Nearly 5,000 National Guardsmen are being deployed around the state, many of which can already be seen guarding roadways into flooded areas around Conway.

Swift-water rescue teams are prepositioned in Horry County, along with law enforcement officials from the Department of Natural Resource and SLED.

Evacuations are still voluntary, but worsening con-

ditions could warrant a mandatory order in some low-lying areas along the river.

"This should not be normal day-to-day routines yet," Haley warned. "You need to get all your important things in one spot, and if you can, stay with a friend or family member."

Lazarus said emergency officials are stationed at more than a dozen posts where roads have been closed. Only residents who live in the flooded areas are being allowed in to check on their property, or ride out the flood.

"It is a serious situation but a livable situation, and we will make it through," Lazarus said. "This is a strong community and a strong state, and we will be

better for it in the end."

“ I KNOW THIS SEEMS INCONVENIENT, BUT THE CONES AND BARRIERS ARE THERE FOR A REASON, WE REALLY NEED PEOPLE TO RESPECT IT. WE DON'T WANT TO TAKE ANY CHANCES OF ROADS SINKING.”

Gov. Nikki Haley

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Todd Wood takes a selfie with South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley at the Horry County Emergency Operations Center in the M.L. Brown Building in Conway on Wednesday.

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JANET BLACKMON MORGAN jblackmon@thesunnews.com

South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley talks about the need to use caution over the next few days as area rivers continue to swell and flooding may worsen along the coast. She toured the county with local officials and then held a press conference at the Horry County Emergency Operations Center in the M.L. Brown Building in Conway on Wednesday.

Title: **Sandbags and rocks reinforce Wildewood areadam**
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com
 Size: 92.53 square inch
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Sandbags and rocks reinforce Wildewood area dam

BY ANDREW SHAIN
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The aftershocks from the weekend's historic rainstorm continued to shake the Columbia area Wednesday with more dams breaking, more flooding fears and more people dying.

Two employees of a Kentucky-based company who were repairing rail-

FROM PAGE 1A

AFTERMATH

ignoring barricades, citing the accident that killed Vance and McDonald.

"It's closed because we're trying to protect you," she said of barricaded roads.

But a spokesman for R.J. Corman, the Nicholasville, Ky.-based railroad repair contractor that employed the men, disputed reports its workers had ignored safety warnings.

There was neither a barricade nor any signs on the road, R.J. Corman spokesman Noel Rush said. The company is working with public safety agencies to determine exactly what happened, he said.

The three survivors were flown back to Kentucky to be reunited with their families and receive grief counseling.

"This is a very sad, sad, sad event," Rush said. "We are very much affected by this. We are praying

road tracks damaged in the storm died early Wednesday after their vehicle became submerged in floodwaters in lower Richland County.

The bodies of Robert Bradford Vance, 58, of Lexington, Ky., and Ricky Allen McDonald, 53, of Chesapeake, Ohio, were

pulled from the vehicle in Cedar Creek, Richland County Coroner Gary Watts said.

Vance and McDonald were traveling with three co-workers from a job site about 3 a.m. Wednesday when their vehicle drove through a barricade, near the 2100 block of Conga-

ree Road, and fell into the creek, which had washed out the road, Watts said.

The three other railroad workers were able to escape.

Gov. Nikki Haley and other officials issued warnings about drivers

SEE AFTERMATH, 7A

for the family and friends of our employees."

At least 17 people have died in South Carolina since more than 2 feet of rain drenched portions of the state in a storm that has been described as a once-in-1,000-year event.

Nine of the victims died in Richland County, which received more rain on Sunday than the previous three months combined.

The floods also are unearthing caskets from area cemeteries, Watts said.

"We just ask that if anyone notices that, that they call the Sheriff's Department or city Police

Department, and we will respond and take care of those issues as well," he said.

The coroner would not say where the unearthed caskets are, saying he wanted to avoid generating sightseers. As the

coffins are discovered, they are being moved to county facilities where they will be held until further arrangements can be made.

CONCERNS ABOUT DAMS

Fears about flooding continued more than four days after the severe rain ended.

Waters rose on rivers downstream from the Midlands, putting communities from Conway to Williamsburg on alert.

But more flooding could come to neighborhoods in the Columbia area as well.

Crews worked frantically Wednesday to shore up the Beaver Dam Road dam in the Wildewood community in northeast Richland. County officials suggested about 1,000 nearby residents evacuate as a precaution, but the earthen dam was holding after more than 3,000

sandbags and large rocks were dropped in to reinforce it.

The potential failure of the Beaver Dam raised concerns about flooding in Wildewood and down along Jackson Creek, which leads into Arcadia Lakes and Forest Acres.

Still, a seventh dam broke in Richland County on Wednesday — Ulmers

Pond on Mill Creek in southeast Columbia.

Statewide, 14 dams have been breached in Richland, Lexington, Aiken, Orangeburg and Lee counties. More than 60 are being monitored.

Richland County has two dams under observation for possible breach in the Sandhills area — Woodlake, also known as Legion Lake, and Briarcliffe.

Haley and the head of the state agency that regulates dams said Wednesday

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day they will examine what happened at the breached and whether more money needs to be spent on inspections after the storm recovery efforts. South Carolina spent \$200,000 on the safety of more than 2,300 dams in 2013.

“We have done an outstanding job,” said Catherine Heigel, director of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, which regulates private dams.

Haley said the focus should be on the small portion of dams that failed during a historic storm. “It’s amazing we have not had more issues than we had,” she told reporters.

Haley spoke as Craig Fugate, administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, visited Columbia on Wednesday.

Another Obama administration official, Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson, will visit Columbia and Charleston Friday to view damage and re-

covery efforts Friday.

WATER, ROAD WOES CONTINUE

As Haley spoke, the city of Columbia continued to work to restore water service after rain ruptured lines.

About 5,000 households were without water Wednesday, down from more than 40,000 the day before. But the city asked customers to conserve water while repair efforts continue.

Crews continued to try to fix a 60-foot breach in the Columbia Canal dike, which threatens the operation of a nearby Columbia water treatment plant.

A second section of the canal’s dike collapsed Wednesday, stalling repair efforts that included dropping 1-ton sandbags near a breach.

The breach in the canal forced city officials to start building a temporary boulder dam to create a reservoir in the canal. The reservoir would raise the water level so the city

water plant can continue providing water to about 188,000 customers in Columbia and lower Richland County.

In neighborhoods, crews have started picking up storm debris.

Columbia began collection Wednesday and will resume garbage collection Thursday. Richland County resumed garbage collection Wednesday. Lexington County is providing extra trash containers to dispose of storm debris.

More than 400 roads and bridges remained closed across South Carolina Wednesday — including nearly 150 in Richland and Lexington counties, according to the S.C. Department of Transportation.

A 14-mile section of Interstate 95, between Manning and Sardinia, also remained closed. The section of I-95 between I-20 and I-26 remained open only to local traffic.

USC HITS THE ROAD

The storm also put the brakes on some popular

weekend activities.

The S.C. Department of Natural Resources suspended deer hunting until Monday in areas hit hard by the severe rains and flooding.

And the University of South Carolina decided to move its football game Saturday to Baton Rouge, La., home of this week’s opponent, LSU. The school said it did not want to stretch law enforcement officers while they work on flood recovery.

“We want to do what’s best for our community here in Columbia. (The) governor, the (USC) president, law enforcement, they all think this is the right thing to do,” Gamecocks head coach Steve Spurrier said.

“We’re not ready for a ballgame here this Saturday afternoon.”

Staff writers Avery Wilks, Clif LeBlanc, Cassie Cope, Tim Flach, Roddie Burris and the Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader contributed

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TRACY GLANTZ tglantz@thestate.com

A car lies in Myers Creek in Hopkins where the bridge on Lower Richland Boulevard collapsed.

Title: **More victims, more fears as S.C. fights floods**
 Author: BY SARAH ELLIS AND TIM FLACH sellis@thestate.com, flach@thestate.com
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THE FLOOD OF 2015

More victims, more fears as S.C. fights floods

2 railroad company workers die; officials focus on holding dams together

Destruction brings out 'heartwarming' volunteerism in Columbia, Midlands

BY SARAH ELLIS AND TIM FLACH
sellis@thestate.com, flach@thestate.com

"Heartbreaking and heartwarming."

Eugenia Hardwick described at the scene around her in a friend's northeast Columbia yard, where heaps of unsalvageably soaked possessions lay pulled from the house. All along Kilbourne Road and in the neighborhood behind it, similar scenes unfolded, flanked by lines of cars that had pulled in just to offer help.

Volunteers clogged the hard-hit neighborhood bordered by Gills Creek and Lake Katherine, behind Whole Foods near Fort

Jackson, where historic rainfall this weekend caused unprecedented flooding.

Even if the floods didn't reach their houses, the people of the Midlands and beyond felt the deeply devastating effects of the weekend's catastrophic weather.

"I'm just amazed at all these people that are helping people that they don't know, or they didn't know before," Hardwick said.

Sixteen-year-old Russell Isaacs and his family were lucky enough not to feel the hurt of the floods. But he felt the hurt of

his community, all the same, and that drove him to action.

On Wednesday, he and his mother, Tammy Neff, rallied a group of boys from the A.C. Flora ROTC program and the Columbia chapter of DeMolay, an international young men's organization, and descended on Kilbourne Road, ready to assist. With swarms of other volunteers, they helped homeowners gut their drenched houses.

In that neighborhood, flood-

SEE HELP, 7A

FROM PAGE 1A

HELP

waters rose several feet in many houses, even above the roofs of some, neighbors said.

"Your eyes are opened to how lucky you are, and other people weren't as lucky," Isaacs said. "I just wanted to help them through this time of need."

At a news conference Wednesday, Gov. Nikki Haley saluted all the volunteers who were showing up to do this

Haley said the flood has brought out "neighbors helping neighbors and people helping strangers."

"We are people of compassion," she said.

Mallory Gore, a 17-year-old student at Ben Lippen School, came to the neighborhood at the foot of Lake Katherine with a youth group from Columbia's First Baptist Church despite hobbling along on a crutch.

"I can't do much physical (work), but I can help brighten people's day," she said.

Gore was part of a group that her older sister, Brittany Hoffman, led from First Baptist in downtown Columbia. Hoffman said the group came because "the city is hurting."

Hoffman, a teacher in Richland 2, and many of the teens have the time off from school as the city

and county continue to recover from the flooding.

They were directed to the Kilbourne area by church groups who had been checking in with different authorities about where to go to give help. She said more than 100 young people from the church spent the day handing out drinking water, running supplies to different areas and helping clean up at homes.

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Some members of downtown's Midtown Fellowship forewent Bible study to come help clean up the neighborhood instead.

"We're trying to help out any way we can,"

George Thomas said. "Most of us were fortunate enough not to be affected."

Another group came down from the Christian Life Church in the St. Andrews area.

"How can we take it easy when our community is suffering?" said Sonia Isom.

Another church member, Samuel Burton, said the work has been hard,

"but this community was hit hard."

Reach Ellis at (803) 771-8307.
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Beverly Steinhaus hugs Carol Hill, a friend who helped clean her house on Burwell Street after it was submerged in floodwater. During the flood, a boat ended up on their front porch after a neighbor was saving flood victims from their homes.

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Wika Hemapattawee lays out photos at a friend's house on Kilbourne Road that was submerged in water during the flood.

Title: **Haleyis doing a good jobon flood**

Author:

Size: 2.94 square inch

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Haley is doing a good job on flood

I did not vote for Gov. Nikki Haley either time because I did not like her policies. But I commend her for the leadership she has shown in both the Charleston massacre and the Columbia flooding. And I thank her for it.

*- Janet O'Keeffe
Columbia*

Title: **Forum on policing, social justice scheduled for Thursday**
 Author: BY ROBERT BEHRE rbehre@postandcourier.com
 Size: 18.29 square inch
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Forum on policing, social justice scheduled for Thursday

BY ROBERT BEHRE
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Charleston County Sheriff Al Cannon, state Sen. Marlon Kimpson and others will talk about social justice and policing issues at 6 p.m. Thursday at the International Longshoreman's Hall in Charleston.

The "21st Century Social Justice" forum also will include former federal prosecutor and New York City lawyer Quentin Williams, and Nicole Porter of The Sentencing Project, a

Washington-based nonprofit.

The topics are expected to range from police body camera legislation to civilian oversight of law enforcement. The event is free and open to the public.

"We want to hear from everyday citizens, community leaders, legislators and law enforcement representatives alike," Cannon said in a statement.

Organizers said the forum is an outgrowth of President Barack Obama's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, which issued an interim report just

weeks before the April shooting of Walter Scott by North Charleston Police officer Michael Slager.

That task force was created to increase trust between police and the public.

Kimpson, D-Charleston, co-sponsored legislation requiring body cameras be used by all state and local law enforcement agencies — a bill that Gov. Nikki Haley signed in June.

"Other hard decisions are ahead, so we must continue to work hard and remain vigi-

lant," said Kimpson, who has said he wants to try to reform South Carolina's gun laws next year.

The forum is co-sponsored by the Charleston County Sheriff's Office, and Forty Six Blue & Associates. The International Longshoreman's Hall is at 1142 Morrison Drive. For more details, contact fortysixblue@gmail.com.

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Title: **Graham: S.C. flood damage could top \$1 billion**
 Author: BY ADAM BEAM and MEG KINNARD Associated Press
 Size: 125.39 square inch
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Graham: S.C. flood damage could top \$1 billion

BY ADAM BEAM
 and MEG KINNARD
Associated Press

COLUMBIA — It could take until the weekend for the threat of flooding to ease in storm-tattered South Carolina, where a senator warned of a potential billion-dollar cleanup bill, two more people died in the floodwaters and the flagship university sent a home football game 700 miles away.

Rivers rose and dams bulged as storm water from days of heavy rains made its way to the Atlantic Ocean, causing a second round of flooding downstream.

Gov. Nikki Haley paid a visit to the coast, which she said would still be in danger for another 24-48 hours.

“We’re holding our breath and saying a prayer,” she said.

U.S. Senator Lindsey Graham warned the disaster could “break the bank” of federal emergency funds, possibly topping more than \$1 billion.

In another image of the storm’s otherworldly toll, state officials said caskets have popped out of the ground in 11 instances in six counties.

At least 19 people in South Carolina and North Carolina have died in the storm, while many survivors returned home to discover they’d lost everything.

Wendy Dixon burst into sobs after realizing her wedding album and dozens of photos of her two sons and three grandchildren were destroyed.

Overcome with emotion and

barely able to walk across her waterlogged carpet, Dixon grasped the arm of a niece inside the Columbia apartment.

“Everything is gone!” she wailed. “My clothes and all can be replaced. But my little things, my pictures, are all gone.”

It was another anxious day of waiting for floodwaters to recede around the capital city. About 1,000 residents near the compromised Beaver Dam were told to evacuate Wednesday morning, though the order was lifted several hours later when crews shored up the dam.

Haley said 62 dams across the state were being monitored, and 13 had already failed.

However, she said South Carolina was fortunate that those represented only a small fraction of 2,000 or so dams regulated by the state.

At a news conference, Haley and other officials were asked repeatedly about whether the state had spent enough in previous years to maintain dams and other infrastructure.

“I think the analysis of this can be done after” the danger from the floods passes, she said in one testy response.

But Graham said the federal lifeline must be treated with care to avoid a “pork-laden monstrosity” like the federal government’s aid package to

the Northeast Hurricane Sandy in 2012. He warned state and county officials not to use the disaster as an opportunity to ask for money unrelated to flood damage.

He also said it would take weeks to get a reliable damage assessment.

“We’re talking hundreds of millions (of dollars), maybe over a billion,” he said while visiting a shelter in Columbia.

And in an extraordinary move for the football-crazy South, the University of South Carolina announced it was moving Saturday’s football game against No. 7 LSU some 700 miles to Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The university said more than 80,000 fans expected for the game in Columbia would have put too much stress on weakened infrastructure.

In the most recent storm-related deaths, a group of five railroad workers were in a pickup truck when it drove past a barricade and plunged into the water where pavement was washed out. Three men in the pickup managed to get to safety around 3 a.m. Wednesday and divers later found the bodies of two men, authorities said.

The workers were in town to help repair washed out tracks.

Sheriff’s spokesman Lt. Curtis Wilson said the barricade was in the wrong lane, but regardless, the railroad work-

ers should not have been out because there was a city-wide curfew in place.

Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott said all nine deaths in the county have come from people trying to drive in flooded areas. Officers have located the cars belonging to several other missing people.

“I’m fearing the worst on that,” Lott said.

Flood warning in effect

A flood warning is in effect for Berkley, Charleston and Dorchester counties until 2:30 p.m. Thursday, according to the National Weather Service in Charleston.

Area emergency management agencies are reporting that high water levels and flooding is continuing. While most flood waters are receding, areas along the Ashley, Edisto and Santee rivers can expect worsening flood levels as the water rises.

The Weather Service encourages anyone who lives near a river or creek to monitor water levels and be prepared to evacuate if they keep rising.

Locations that will experience flooding include North Charleston, Summerville, Goose Creek, Hanahan, Moncks Corner, Huger and McClellanville.

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N. Chas. residents return home

Speaking with reporters Wednesday morning in the Pepperhill neighborhood, North Charleston Fire Chief Gregory Bulanow said the city was in recovery mode, and

working to get evacuated residents back into their homes.

Roughly 3 feet of standing water remained in portions of the neighborhood, which was previously evacuated due to the flooding, authorities said.

No burglaries have been

reported at the evacuated homes, Police Chief Eddie Driggers said. Residents are encouraged to return to their homes to begin damage assessments, officials said.

—Brenda Rindge



GRACE BEAHM/STAFF

Allison Wells is overwhelmed as she moves her soaked belongings to the trash as families return to their homes after waters recede in the Pepperhill neighborhood Wednesday in North Charleston.

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BRAD NETTLES/STAFF

Partially washed away by flooding, Dorchester Road at Sawmill Branch Canal near Summerville remained closed Wednesday.

Title: **Truck driver accused of price gouging volunteers**
 Author: BY MELISSA BOUGHTON mboughton@postandcourier.com
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Truck driver accused of price gouging volunteers

BY MELISSA BOUGHTON
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A Summerville tow-truck operator charged nearly three times the normal rate after being called to remove cars left at a gas station while volunteers helped evacuate animals Saturday from a flooded shelter, according to Dorchester County sheriff's deputies.

At least two people had parked at a gas station Saturday near the Frances R. Willis SPCA on Four Paws Lane in Summerville to help remove animals during the severe flooding. A station employee called Carolina Towing and Recovery to remove the vehicles.

Robert Andrew Boland, 40, of Blue Jasmine Lane charged \$250 for towing one of the vehicles. While attempting to tow a second vehicle, a woman showed up and he charged her \$150 to unhitch her car from his truck, according to inves-

tigators.

A price list from the business shows that daylight towing in Dorchester County is \$85, a media release states.

Further investigation also showed that the towing company did not have a valid business license to operate in Dorchester, according to the Sheriff's Office.

Boland was charged with price gouging during an emergency and cited for operating without a business license. Efforts to reach the business were not successful.

Residents and businesses were reminded this week of a law against price gouging that went into effect Friday when Gov. Nikki Haley issued a state of emergency because of flooding from torrential rains and swollen rivers, according to S.C. Attorney General Alan Wilson.

The law remains in effect for the next 12 days and prohibits "unconscionable prices during times of disaster," Wilson's office said in a written statement. It's a misdemeanor offense that carries a possible penalty of a \$1,000 fine and 30 days in

jail.

Wilson said that while area residents are likely to see neighbors and do-gooders lending a helping hand during the flood, they will also see those looking to take advantage of the situation.

Residents are urged to notify his office if they experience any instances of price gouging. They can email any examples or documentation about likely violations to info@scag.gov, tweet photographs or examples on Twitter by tagging @SCPriceGouging or call (803)737-3953.

Complaints can also be filed with the S.C. Department of Consumer Affairs by calling toll-free, 1-800-922-1594 or going to consumer.sc.gov.



Boland

Title: **Floods don't stop some MB tourists, others still up in the air**
 Author: BY ANGELANICHOLAS For TheSun News
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Floods don't stop some MB tourists, others still up in the air

Chamber, businesses bombarded with calls from beach-bound tourists checking on conditions

Cancellations poured into hotels late last week as weather worsened

Tourism leaders say beach is fine now, but check road conditions along planned route to Myrtle Beach

BY ANGELA NICHOLAS
 For The Sun News

Rainy weather and flooded roads did not stop some tourists from following through on plans to vacation at the beach this past weekend but road conditions through several states still have tourists concerned.

A group of businesswo-

FROM PAGE 3A

TOURISM

had encountered was when water started pooling in the parking lot at Pelicans Landing and they had to move their cars across from their rented condominium to a higher elevation. On Monday, in addition to their pedicures, the women planned a day of shopping and a movie in place of a day at the beach.

"We had planned this trip and we were not stopping," Boggs said. She quoted her friend Tammy Wheeler who said, "A bad weather day at

men, determined to get to the beach for some much needed relaxation, drove through pouring rain Saturday all the way from Ashland, Ky., to get their vacation started.

"There were supposed to be seven of us but three bailed. They were afraid,"

the beach is still better than a day at home or work. We'll take the hurricane."

Other vacationers were not quite as brave as Boggs' group. Tom Moore, general manager of the Hampton Inn & Suites on South Ocean Boulevard, said he had counted 135 cancellations as of Friday afternoon and finally lost count.

"That hurt. That was tough. But when people see the bad weather coming that's what happens," he said. Moore said everyone

Joyce Rakes Boggs said Monday while enjoying a pedicure with her friends. Boggs said the group had looked forward to time with "no men, no kids" and leaving behind hectic jobs with long hours.

The rain did not prevent them from enjoying their

time while it pelted Myrtle Beach and flooded roads. "We stayed in our pajamas all day Sunday, cooked dinner in, read books and relaxed," Boggs said.

The only problems they

SEE TOURISM, 11A

who canceled received a 100 percent refund.

"We took a strong hit but what could we do? Things like that happen and we don't hold them (tourists) to it," he said. "They'll remember us down the road when they come back."

Moore said some visitors who had planned to leave over the weekend had to stay longer because of road conditions. He also noted that some of his staff could not make it to work be-

cause they could not get there due to the flooding.

Moore said the outlook for this week is good and callers were already booking rooms for the Columbus Day weekend. He said the hotel as of Monday only had 30 rooms open out of 227. "I feel like the way the forecast looks, we're going to do good," he said.

Inquiries have poured into the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce mostly from people trying

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to determine if they should move forward with plans to visit the beach this week.

Chamber President Brad Dean said from the number of inquiries it "looks to be a pretty busy week."

Dean said his office is fielding calls letting potential visitors know that there are some closures but with sunshine expected to return, the beach is "up and running."

"We are urging people to take care getting here," Dean said. "But once they are here their problems will be few and far between."

The chamber, along with Horry County officials, is urging travelers to visit Department of Transportation websites to get updated information on road conditions.

"They need to evaluate the different road options and take into consideration closures," Dean said. He said the chamber has been working with a number of groups that had meetings or conferences planned, working to relocate their activities if they were scheduled for outdoors.

"We had a large group of Brazilian media here this week and they've gotten to see Myrtle Beach indoors more than planned," he said. "The good news is they also spent more time

in Myrtle Beach than they had planned."

Dean said calls coming in to the chamber are mostly from people trying to decide whether to come or to cancel.

"We've been telling visitors all day, as long as you can get here, you're going to have a great time. However, the challenge is getting here. They may want to push their travel out a day or two and look for alternate routes," he said.

Whether to come or cancel is the question nagging a group of 45 women scheduled to attend a Pisgah Seventh-Day Adventist Church retreat/vacation. Gloria Dorsey said her group has traveled from just outside Washington, D.C., for the last 15 years to hold their retreat at Island Vista Resort in Myrtle Beach.

Late Monday, the group's leadership decided to brave the conditions and head for the beach, leaving on Wednesday or Thursday.

"The resort says they are in good shape but when you are in leadership you don't breathe until everyone is back home safely," Dorsey said. She said that while some of the women fly into town, most drive separately coming at different times and from differ-

ent directions.

Dorsey said she had been listening to Gov. Nikki Haley on TV and had been monitoring the DOT websites about flooding, downed trees and damaged bridges across South Carolina.

"The other scary thing," she said, "is where is all that water from Columbia is going when it has to move downstream toward the ocean."

Horry County spokeswoman Lisa Bourcier said while the county has "boots on the ground" checking all the roads, the best advice they can offer is to visit DOT websites for the routes in each state that people plan to take.

"They may need to cross check websites to see what roads have been impacted," she said.

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THE CHALLENGE IS GETTING HERE. THEY MAY WANT TO PUSH THEIR TRAVEL OUT A DAY OR TWO AND LOOK FOR ALTERNATE ROUTES.

Brad Dean, president of the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce



Title: **Firstresponders, volunteers, deservegratitude**
 Author: By theEditorial Board
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EDITORIAL

First responders, volunteers, deserve gratitude

By the Editorial Board

As floodwaters begin to subside across the region, Grand Strand residents not directly affected by historic rains should count their blessings, be patient about life returning to normal, and, most important, thank first responders who helped in myriad ways.

Those in a position to do so, also should consider how to help. And curiosity seekers need to stay off flooded roads and out of waterlogged neighborhoods.

First responders, who have performed in the finest tradition of public service, include volunteers, such as those with the American Red Cross, as well as professional firefighters and paramedics, law enforcement officers, local and state emergency management and utility workers.

Red Cross volunteers such as Paul Fritchman of Little River will be staffing shelters. Fritchman will assist folks at Risen Christ Lutheran Church in North Myrtle Beach. Nanci Conley, executive director of

the Eastern S.C. Chapter of the Red Cross, notes the ongoing need for trained volunteers who respond to home fires as well as historic rainfall and flooding.

"We need to build our volunteer pool," Conley says.

By late Monday, the S.C. Highway Patrol had 3,196 calls for service, including 1,112 collisions. No doubt, some of those highway collisions involved people who ignored warnings and were traveling when they did not have to be on the road.

The S.C. Department of Natural Resources made 150 swift-water rescues on Monday, according to the state Emergency Management Division. On the same day, the S.C. Army National Guard flew 24 missions.

One particularly asinine stunt, happily not recorded here, involved the Coast Guard rescue of a man on a jet ski. He should have to pay the cost of his rescue from a situation he created – or spend some time in jail. Others, such as the driver of the pickup truck who drove deliberately into

raging floodwaters in Columbia, seem determined to prove the theory of evolution.

Warnings about road conditions must be taken seriously. The person who leaves home simply to look around, and finds himself stalled in a flooded street, should expect to sit some time in his vehicle. The S.C. Emergency Management Division received numerous reports of motorists moving barricades from blocked roadways.

Gov. Nikki Haley rightly made the point that getting back to normal will take some time. Roads and bridges must be inspected and assessed for damage. Motorists will need patience as state, county and municipal engineers determine that roads and bridges are safe for use before they are reopened. Haley said officials may err on the side of caution – and that is how it should be.

Perhaps the flooding will sharpen the focus on the need to adequately fund the state's transportation infrastructure. Failure to fully address the issue is a

major shortcoming of the General Assembly. In 2016, legislators and the governor surely will have more good reasons to correct the situation.

In the aftermath of the rain, as floodwaters begin to subside, residents not seriously impacted – nearly everyone is or will be affected in some way – may wish to help.

A cash contribution to a voluntary organization, such as the Red Cross, "can be used immediately in response to a crisis," according to the Emergency Management Division. Cash "allows organizations to purchase or provide exactly what is needed, when it is needed and to procure supplies near the affected area."

Historic rainfall will continue to affect thousands

Return to normal will take weeks, or months

Those not seriously impacted can help with contributions

Title: **Floods, rain expose SC's flawed dam safety program**
 Author: BY SAMMY FRETWELL sfretwell@thestate.com BY JOHN MONK jmonk@thestate.com
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Floods, rain expose SC's flawed dam safety program

Six Richland County dams broke, causing death and destruction in floods

DHEC, in charge of dam safety, declines to comment Tuesday

Not even a warning system in place

BY SAMMY FRETWELL

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COLUMBIA, SC Recent heavy rains and floods across South Carolina that broke multiple dams and destroyed hundreds — if not thousands — of homes have turned a spotlight on the state's dam safety program.

South Carolina has for years had one of the nation's weakest dam safety programs, consistently ranking near the bottom of rankings in federal and state government reports.

In 2013, the state spent less than \$200,000 on its dam safety program, employing a handful of people devoted specifically to inspecting and regulating the structures. That's roughly the same amount the state spent on the program in 2010, when a national report rated South Carolina 45th nationally in financial resources committed to dam safety.

Lori Spragens, executive director of the national Association of State Dam Safety Officials, said resources for inspecting the state's dams remain low in South Carolina. All told, South Carolina has 2,300 dams, most of them privately owned and made of earth.

"They could definitely stand to have some legislators looking

at their program and trying to provide some more money," Spragens said, noting that aggressive inspection programs spot problems in dams that could prevent failures. "It's a public safety issue. That's why it is so important."

Whether a more aggressive program could have prevented the six dam breaks in Richland County and more across the state this week is uncertain. But experts say more aggressive inspection and oversight programs improve the chances that dams can withstand heavy rains like this past weekend's.

Failing dams were tragic this week for many Richland County residents. Hundreds of homes suffered major water damage or were destroyed, and several motorists were trapped below failing dams when their cars were swept away by raging waters. Bridges on major thoroughfares such as the Devine Street corridor were closed.

Most of the destruction in Richland County occurred along an interconnected network of some 200 ponds and lakes — each with its own dam — known as the Gills Creek watershed. The watershed meanders along

some 70 miles, from the high ground around the Village at Sandhill shopping complex down a long slope to the Congaree River. It goes through the U.S. Army's Fort Jackson and the cities of Columbia, Forest Acres and Arcadia Lakes.

Until this week, many people assumed that watery network was safe.

"We're going to have to reassess what is the new normal," said Erich Miarka, executive director of the Gills Creek Watershed Association. He predicted extreme weather events may cause more watershed problems if the county and state don't beef up dam safety standards. His group advocates for a cleaner and restored watershed.

"If you control nature — build dams and have lakes and homes in residential areas around them — you may have to build the dams to a higher standard," Miarka said.

Another problem the storm underscored is the lack of a warning system to keep people off roads below dams and to evacuate residents when a dam's integrity is threatened.

"Water flows downhill — it's not rocket science," said Jim

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Knapp, a University of South Carolina earth sciences professor.

Knapp said he was puzzled that no warning system was in place to alert people to dam breakages. He lives in a Forest Drive neighborhood adjacent to Gills Creek where it flows by Trenholm Plaza. He woke Sunday morning to see a river flowing across Forest Drive and was surprised that there had been no warning.

The Gills Creek dams were built over many decades, mostly by private developers. They are mostly owned and operated by homeowners' association. Some of the waterbasin's larger dams failed this week, officials said.

Richland County Emergency Services Director Michael Byrd said Tuesday afternoon that four dams broke Sunday and Monday: Cary Lake, Arcadia Lake, Upper Rockyford and Lower Rocky Ford. Later Tuesday, the dam at Lake Elizabeth broke. It lies just north of the Gills Creek watershed, an association spokeswoman said.

Several other dams were in danger of failing late Tuesday, including a shaky structure separating Spring Lake in Forest Acres from Forest Lake, officials said. State and county officials are monitoring those dams.

Other dams that were in jeopardy Monday were Beaver Dam near Wildewood and Forest Lake, Byrd said.

However, Byrd said he was optimistic those dams would hold because lake levels were dropping.

Some of the dams that have failed are at highly visible lakes, which are lined with homes, many of them built in the 1950s and 1960s and purchased by people attracted to waterfront property.

Meanwhile, a dam on Fort Jackson, Semmes Lake, also broke. A Fort Jackson spokesman said on-base damage was minimal: the loss of a stretch of one road and minor flood damage to a building. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will assess how to rebuild the dam. However, the spokesman also said Fort Jackson officials are studying whether the water from the Lake Semmes' breakage ended up in the low-lying King's Grant subdivision just outside the fort. An unknown number of homes were flooded in that neighborhood.

"We are looking at that," said Army spokesman Patrick Jones. "We do know that would be the logical path for the water to go."

The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control said Tuesday it could not provide recent data about the dam safety program's budget and staffing levels because of the ongoing crisis created by this past weekend's floods.

In 2013, the dam safety organization gave South Carolina a 47 percent rating in state compliance with the group's national model for dam safety. The national average was 76 percent, the organization said.

Lisa Jones, a former state flood plain manager and now a private consultant, said South

Carolina's dam safety program needs improvement. She said the program is "underfunded and overworked."

Jones said many of the state's dams are aging structures that are "out-of-site, out-of-mind."

Maintenance of dams through the years has often fallen on property owners' associations, whose leaders have changed hands. As a result, experts say those property owners officials don't always realize the responsibility that comes with maintaining their neighborhoods' dams.

Tuesday afternoon, Gov. Nikki Haley was asked at a news conference if she would press the General Assembly to devote more state resources to dam safety.

Haley said taking steps to reinforce dams is important. Improvements at the Lake Murray dam – a \$100-plus million venture to make it more earthquake proof and generally stronger – were a plus, she said. "That's a perfect example of what needed to happen, and we are glad it happened."

After disasters, the public and officials often come up with better ways of dealing with safety situations, she said. Currently, it's too early to be specific about additional safety measures because the state is dealing with the unfolding emergency. "Then there will be a time of, what do we do so that if this 1,000-year rain ever hits again that we are more than prepared, more than ready...our goal is to go back and absolutely say, 'What else can we do'"

ALL TOLD, SOUTH CAROLINA HAS 2,300 DAMS, MOST OF THEM PRIVATELY OWNED AND MADE OF EARTH. RESOURCES FOR INSPECTING THE DAMS REMAIN LOW.

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Rockbridge dam in Arcadia

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From left, Grady Adkins, Todd Chambers and Tom Teuber, president of the Upper Rockyford Lake Homeowners Association, survey the dam at Overcreek Road in Columbia on Tuesday.