

Title: **Floods leave shared sense of memories lost**
 Author: By JAY REEVES and JULIET LINDERMAN The Associated Press
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Floods leave shared sense of memories lost

By JAY REEVES

and JULIET LINDERMAN

The Associated Press

COLUMBIA — Gills Creek flows past the Columbia Ballet School, and, a few miles downstream, a shop where people can pawn car titles to pay monthly bills. It fills lakes ringed with stately, white-columned homes worth nearly \$1 million and snakes by a working-class apartment complex where locals say it's best to leave before dark.

Over the past week, as the water rose after days of unrelenting rain in the heart of South Carolina, the creek spilled misery and pain on rich and poor alike, robbing both of the things most precious to them.

The once-a-millennium storm and mammoth flood that rolled in on a Sunday have further tested a state that has endured a year filled with more than its fair share of trauma: Back in April, a day before Easter, a white police officer fatally shot an unarmed black man in the back in North Charleston. In June, police said, a white man gunned down nine black church members in Charleston. The state was roiled for 23 more days before lawmakers removed the Confederate flag that had flown for 50 years outside the Statehouse.

Then, just as things calmed down, rains of biblical proportion began to fall.

Gills Creek spans 70 miles across Richland County and connects a network of lakes like a string of pearls. It is the main artery of a watershed that includes more than 45,000 acres and 100 ponds

and lakes on the eastern side of Columbia. Many of the area's 140,000 residents live in spacious, ranch-style homes that surround more than a dozen of the largest lakes, all of them created by modest dams.

"We have no natural lakes in South Carolina. Every single one is man-made," said Derrec Becker, spokesman

for the Emergency Management Division. "And when the water rises, it has to go somewhere."

At least 17 dams failed or were breached, and dozens more are still being monitored. Those breaches and failures, on lakes that feed into each other and into Gills Creek, caused a chain reaction downstream.

Stephen Marshall was swept away by the floodwaters Sunday morning while trying to reach his 85-year-old neighbor — later rescued by her son-in-law — and clung to a tree until a firefighter scooped him up.

By Thursday, Marshall had almost completely emptied his waterlogged belongings onto the lawn, where they were picked up by a garbage truck and hauled away.

Inside his den, the leather mask his father wore while umpiring high school baseball was saved, stashed on a shelf 6 inches from the 6-foot water line. His father, who died 15 years ago, had also given him a ball signed by Hank Aaron he'd snagged while working as a ticket-taker for the now defunct Greenwood Braves, and that too survived.

But Marshall's eyes welled up as he looked at binders and boxes full of baseball cards, sopping wet.

"It sounds trivial, but it's something I started as a kid. We collected baseball cards and I've had them since I was a child," Marshall said. "Stuff is stuff. A mattress, an HDTV, that means nothing to me. But it's the emotional attachment. Those memories. They're gone."

RECOVERY CENTERS

Two disaster recovery centers are open in the Columbia area to help flood survivors who need money to pay rent and make essential home repairs.

The centers will be open daily from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. at the Richland Library Southeast in Columbia and Richland Library Eastover in Eastover.

THEFT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED

South Carolina law officers say they're making arrests to stave off opportunistic criminals taking advantage of the suffering left by the state's flooding emergency.

Police in Sumter say they're looking for a 48-year-old Lexington man who promised to do \$2,000 worth of repair work, cashed an upfront check and disappeared.

The Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott says looters who are caught

will be charged with a felony punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

Lott says a curfew remained in effect for the entire Columbia area between midnight and 6 a.m. today.

GET INVOLVED

The United Way of South Carolina is organizing volunteers willing to pitch in and help flooding victims clean debris and ruined possessions from their flooded homes.

Volunteers can register at getconnected.uwasc.org/drm.

MORE RAIN

Thunder, lightning and a couple of inches of extra rain spread across storm-torn Columbia on Saturday. While smaller creeks were likely to swell again, the precipitation wasn't expected to add to the flooding of major rivers and lakes, Gov. Nikki Haley said.

The flooding has caused 20 dams to burst and nearly 100 more are being monitored to make sure they hold, Haley said.

STILL CAN'T MOVE

About 13 miles of Interstate 95 remained closed, forcing long-distance travelers to take a 168-mile detour through Columbia.

There was no estimate when the stretch of interstate, which normally carries an average of 30,000 vehicles a day, could

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reopen. In the meantime, travelers who would normally drive 74 miles between Interstate 26 to Interstate 20 must take a 168-mile detour.



JASON LEE • The Sun News via AP

Arthur Holmes and Carnell Linen row a boat Friday to get items from a flooded home in the Dunbar community of Georgetown. A week after the heavy rains first began, some South Carolina residents are still evacuating and others are stacking up sandbags for more possible flooding even as the nation's top security official prepares to inspect the damage firsthand.

Title: **Assessing road conditions 'a changing target'**
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com
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RICHLAND COUNTY

Assessing road conditions 'a changing target'

Assessments are finding more damage as waters recede from historic rain

Richland accounts for a third of all road and bridge closures statewide

Work begins Saturday to fix bridges on a closed section on Interstate 95, state's top priority

BY ANDREW SHAIN
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State transportation officials have started assessing some roads in Richland County after Sunday's historic rainfall, discovering more damage as flood waters recede.

"It's a changing target a little bit for us," said Christy Hall, acting director of the S.C. Department of Transportation. "We're still very much in the response mode somewhat."

Hall did not have a timetable for finishing the state's assessment of road damage in Richland. That assessment must be com-

pleted before repairs can begin.

Richland, which received more than a foot of rain on Sunday, accounts for a third of all road and bridge closures statewide.

About 125 roads and bridges were closed Friday in the county of the state capital, with more than 50 washed out. Both tallies were slightly higher than the day before.

County leaders said Thursday they would ask for 35 temporary bridges to help make some roads passable.

Gov. Nikki Haley said the state Transportation Department has contract road and bridge engineers ready to work.

Soon after the storm, state transportation crews worked to make sure interstates around Columbia were open, because they are being used as a detour around a closed stretch of Interstate 95.

A 13-mile stretch of I-95 in Clarendon County continues to be closed after engineers discovered foundation problems in 33 spots on 18 bridges, Hall said.

Underwater investigations found rivers washed away areas around the bridge foundations, she said.

Traffic is being diverted off I-95 onto I-20 and I-26. Interstate 77 between I-20 and I-26 is part of that detour.

A contractor will work from "daylight to dark" to fix I-95, Hall said, calling it the state's top road priority.

She did not have a timeline when the main interstate artery along the East Coast would reopen.

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The Burwell D. Manning Jr. Bridge where it crosses Gills Creek along Shady Lane in Richland County. The photo is from an aerial tour Monday provided by the S.C. Army National Guard.

Title: **'Our faith will get us through this difficult time'**
 Author: BY JANET JONES KENDALL jjkendall@thestate.com
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'Our faith will get us through this difficult time'

Columbia-area pastors have been on the front lines this week, offering not only help but hope to those affected by last weekend's floods.

BY JANET JONES
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TRENHOLM ROAD UNITED METHODIST

A lot of tears have been shed this week at Trenholm Road United Methodist Church, Senior Pastor Mike Smith said.

"There have been a whole lot of tears at this church - not just because of the tragedy but because we've seen a lot of people whose lives have been upended from their own substantial losses and yet we've seen them come out to volunteer and help other people," said Smith. "It's been an amazing week for me to see faith in action."

The church, at 3401 Trenholm Road, has been considered ground zero for the hard-hit Forest Acres area. Many of the church's 2,000-member congregation are from Gills Creek Watershed neighborhoods that were hardest-hit by the storm, including King's Grant, Forest Lake and Arcadia Lakes.

"We have members who have lost everything and we have a good amount of our membership whose homes have been partially

BETH SHALOM SYNAGOGUE

"If I were to sit back and just wait for the phone calls to come in, there are so many people's stories I would miss who are floundering in their difficulties," said Jonathan Case, rabbi of Beth Shalom Synagogue on North Trenholm Road, in another area hit hard by the storm. "What I am trying to be is proactive."

That's why Case and his staff are calling all of the synagogue's 320 families to find out how they fared through

destroyed at least on the basement level or first floor," Smith said.

In fact, the first floor of the church facilities themselves sustained damage, Smith said, including the church's preschool, which is one of the largest in the area. "We don't know when the preschool is going to be able to get back in there. The water came up to the walls, and we've got damage to the walls and carpets."

Thankfully, the church's newly renovated sanctuary, located on the second floor, was not damaged.

For those in need of emotional and spiritual support, Smith offers words of comfort by telling victims that God knows what it is like to suffer and that God is with those who suffer.

"I had a lady at the church (Wednesday) who lived in the Shandon Crossing apartment complex and she had lost absolutely

the weather and determine needs of food, water and shelter, in addition to hearing any spiritual needs they might have.

"I don't think there is any magic key of any word that can be spoken that can immediately heal such a wound," Case said. "When you have lost a home or lost valuable heirlooms or keepsakes, it's almost like an invader coming into your house and stealing some of your private possessions. You feel vulnerable.

everything she owned but she was just the most at peace. She was smiling and she gave me the biggest hug and she said, 'I know when I'm down and out God's people will provide,'" Smith said.

"That's why we are here. The church is called to be God's hands and feet and everything else - the body of Christ in the world not only in times of joy and happiness but in times of sadness and sorrow and disaster, and if we fail at that we have failed completely."

"THAT'S WHY WE ARE HERE. THE CHURCH IS CALLED TO BE GOD'S HANDS AND FEET AND EVERYTHING ELSE - THE BODY OF CHRIST IN THE WORLD NOT ONLY IN TIMES OF JOY AND HAPPINESS BUT IN TIMES OF SADNESS AND SORROW AND DISASTER."

Mike Smith, Senior Pastor Trenholm Road United Methodist Church

You feel like you have been attacked and there is a sense of hopelessness that is generated alongside those feelings."

Case already has heard devastating scenarios, including two member families who lost their houses entirely.

"If that were it, we can work with those people and do the best we can to support them and give them the encouragement as well as the physical needs they require, but the needs may well be more than that," Case said.

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Case called a meeting earlier this week at the synagogue asking members of the church and community to attend so they could hear from government officials, political leaders and disaster relief coordinators about what to anticipate in coming days and weeks. Those attending also heard from Nechama, a nonprofit voluntary Jewish organization that provides natural disaster preparedness, response and recovery services that Beth Shalom is partnering with here. Following the meeting, Case led a healing service that included songs, scripture reading and prayers of healing.

"Our first responsibility is to reassure people that they have not lost hope, that they are surrounded by a community of people who are like-minded and will support them and will love them and will give them encouragement," Case said. "A sense of hope that the rains will stop and we can be restored back to wholeness. But things will not be as they were. This is kind of like a death. When someone dies, you know that things will never be the same, but what brings a person back to a meaningful life is to convince them that, or to say to them, 'You are not alone. I am with you and I'm going to stay with you until you can walk on your own.'"

SEE FAITH, 4C

"OUR FIRST RESPONSIBILITY IS TO REASSURE PEOPLE THAT THEY HAVE NOT LOST HOPE, THAT THEY ARE SURROUNDED BY A COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE WHO ARE LIKE-MINDED AND WILL SUPPORT THEM AND WILL LOVE THEM AND WILL GIVE THEM ENCOURAGEMENT."

Jonathan Case, rabbi of Beth Shalom Synagogue

FROM PAGE 1C

FAITH

MT. HOREB UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Although physically spared from the brunt of the weekend's flooding, Mt. Horeb United Methodist Church in Lexington is committing to providing relief to flood victims for the long haul, according to senior pastor Jeff Kersey.

"Everybody wants to help and everybody wants to do something, and I think it's important to try to help people see that it's going to be a long healing process," Kersey said. "People are going to need us for months down the road. There are going to be thousands of people here this weekend from all over the country trying to help people, which is great and we certainly will be helping now, too, but those affected are going to need help for the next several months and into next year. We want folks to know we are here

for the long haul."

The church has helped provide goods and resources to area organizations. At Lexington Leisure Center, which has served as a shelter for Lexington residents displaced from the storms, Kersey has shared words of encouragement from Psalms 27 and 107.

"The main truth that I could share with people was that God is with you no matter what you go through and that He's always faithful," Kersey said. "We live in a broken world where bad things happen, so it's important to reassure people that God is with them and that He will walk with them through this recovery time."

Kersey also ministers to various political leaders in the state including Gov.

Nikki Haley, who is a member at Mt. Horeb.

"It's just emotional for our leaders to be on the front lines of all of this - particularly following the Charleston shooting," Kersey said. "They need to be ministered to as well and they are receptive to that."

"PEOPLE ARE GOING TO NEED US FOR MONTHS DOWN THE ROAD. ... WE WANT FOLKS TO KNOW WE ARE HERE FOR THE LONG HAUL."

Jeff Kersey, Senior Pastor Mt. Horeb United Methodist Church

KATHWOOD BAPTIST CHURCH

Families in the congregation of Kathwood Baptist Church, on Trenholm Road, lived in areas that were at the height of the flooding, said pastor Beth McConnell.

"One taken out of their home by canoe, another whose apartment was completely flooded, and others who watched as their neighbors' homes were inundated with water, while they were dry and could only watch," McConnell said.

In the aftermath, many hands have come together to help and hug those who have need, McConnell said.

"It is a time when emotions are on the surface, but also a time when hearts are open to receive the love of the faith community wrapping around them," she said.

Wednesday evening, McConnell led prayers for the healing and hope service at the church.

"We sang from a hymn in which one verse speaks of Jesus' support: 'His covenant ... Support me in the whelming flood; When all around my soul gives way, He then is all my hope and stay. On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand,'" McConnell said.

On Sunday, services will resume at the church as McConnell plans to talk about God's work in the community this week.

"It is evident that God is at work in

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this community. Every Sunday we are aware that 'where two or more are gathered in God's name, God is in our midst.' Now we understand that where two or more are - in rescue vehicles, canoes on flood waters, emergency workers working side-by-side in deep water, citizens distributing water and food, families rushing to care for one another, homes opening to strangers in need - God is in our midst," McConnell shared from her

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

To say that the Rev. Msgr. Richard Harris has had an emotional couple of weeks is putting it lightly.

On Saturday, Oct. 3, at St. Joseph Catholic Church, Harris delivered the homily at the funeral mass of slain Forest Acres police officer Greg Alia.

While trying to comfort his parishioners in that loss, within 24 hours, many of them were suffering as a result of damage from the flooding.

"We are getting notification from various sources ... calls from those affected, neighbors, etc. and still do not have a clear number," Harris said. "I am sure this weekend will reveal more. I am aware of at least a dozen families who have major to total losses. Half of these were rescued by boat."

Harris has offered com-

message planned for Sunday.

"Our God is not a God of destruction. Our God is a God of restoration. So we watch for God in our midst today and hold fast to hope for tomorrow. We know that God will take these broken pieces, restore them to wholeness, and beauty beyond our imagination."

"IT IS A TIME WHEN EMOTIONS ARE ON THE

fort to those who he has connected with, many of whom have expressed a sense of optimism despite the loss.

"Most of those I have spoken with are basically in shock and into their own survival mode and salvaging the most precious of their personal belongings and trying to get a sense of control back into their lives," Harris said. "Their attitude has been very positive and one of gratitude. It seems that all have said, in one way or the other, 'Monsignor, at least we have our lives, at least we are still together. We can replace our worldly items, but not our loved ones. Our faith will get us through this difficult time.'"

On Thursday, Harris made time to begin working on his sermon for the weekend masses. While he was unsure exactly

what he would share, he planned to use some of the same thoughts regarding coping in tragedy that he used for Alia's funeral last Saturday.

Among Harris' thoughts:

"If this tragedy does nothing but bring all of us closer ... if it awakens in us anew to the precious gift of life so that we will be more prone to forgive one another and never take each other for granted ... and be patient and more sincere with one another ... then ours is the Phoenix that has arisen from the ashes of despair, loss and helplessness."

"IT SEEMS THAT ALL HAVE SAID, IN ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, 'MONSIGNOR, AT LEAST WE HAVE OUR LIVES, AT LEAST WE ARE STILL TOGETHER.'"

The Rev. Msgr. Richard Harris at St. Joseph Catholic Church

SURFACE, BUT ALSO A TIME WHEN HEARTS ARE OPEN TO RECEIVE THE LOVE OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY WRAPPING AROUND THEM."

Beth McConnell, pastor at Kathwood Baptist Church

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Disaster relief concert

First Baptist Columbia is hosting a disaster relief concert on Sunday.

Modern hymn and song writers, Keith and Kristin Getty, will headline the downtown event at the 3,400-seat church sanctuary at 1306 Hampton St.

Doors will open at 5 p.m. for the 6 p.m. concert.

While admission is free, "a love offering will be received with 100% of the gifts given going directly to meet the needs of those suffering from devastating loss," the church said in a news release.

The Gettys are expected to perform many of their most popular songs such as "In Christ Alone" and "The Power of the Cross."



Perry Baker/Provided photo

Trenholm Road United Methodist is among churches that have jumped in to help flood victims. Here, volunteer Ruth Kennemore gets a list of needed items from Anita Leaphart and her daughter Jaynasia Mathis, 6, earlier this week. Family friend Jacqueline Covington, far left, also was at the church to get supplies and clothing. Members of the faith community have stepped in to help those affected by the flooding.

Title: **Why not name the flood Aquageddon?**

Author:

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Why not name the flood Aquageddon?

Hugo ... Katrina ...
Sandy ... Gracie ...
Andrew ... Joaquin ...
Those are official hurricane names.

So why don't we have official flood names?

The National Hurricane Center started officially naming storms — all of them feminine way back then — in 1953. Elevating sensibilities eventually detected the inherent gender-based slur of attaching feminine labels to mercurial, furious forces. Thus, male names were added to the hurricane-title mix in 1979.

But what should we call the Great South Carolina Flood of 2015? Or is it the Great Carolinas Flood of 2015?

Then again, what's so great about it?

We should instead borrow — or is it steal? — this name from dubbbers of some other recent watery calamities:

Aquageddon.

A tragic natural disaster that has wrought considerable loss of life, property and peace of mind in our state in no laughing matter.

Still, we can laugh or we can cry — or both.

And there has been comic relief in seeing government authorities, including Gov. Nikki Haley, wearing matching garments enhanced by Emergency Management Division logos while delivering flood updates. Such images don't just present a reassuring uniform approach to this con-

tinuing challenge.

They precipitate inspiration about how to stem the rising safety-menace tide of our state's dangerously decaying infrastructure.

Too many supposedly "conservative" politicians — including Haley — refuse to heed the fiscally, practically and morally responsible urgency of raising the state gas tax to upgrade our dilapidated road and bridge system.

Yet with that logical user-fee solution still facing an ideological road block, why not raise road funds by outfitting state and local officials in garb emblazoned with revenue-generating *corporate* logos?

Hey, it works for NASCAR.

And instead of perpetuating such pompous monument monikers as the Chip Limehouse Interchange, Glenn McConnell Parkway and Arthur Ravenel Jr. Bridge, the state could auction off infrastructure naming rights to the highest bidders.

If college football bowl games and arenas can rake in big bucks for naming rights, why shouldn't government do the same by sparking a big business bidding war for naming exits and lanes?

We're nearly three-quarters of a billion bucks shy on funding for the completion — or is it the extension? — of Interstate 526.

So why not test the market for the potential price of a Target, Taco Bell or even a

Calvin Klein Interchange?

Now test yourself on floods.

Go with the overflow

1) Name the deadliest flood in U.S. history.

2) Name the mammoth 1927 flood that affected 10 states.

3) Name the only three countries that have suffered top 10 death-toll floods, according to Wikipedia.

4) Bonus question, not on floods but on naming rights: Name last season's bowl game won by the team that now has the mighty Southeastern Conference's longest active postseason victory streak.

(Answers at column's end.)

So who's counting?

Thursday's column, gullibly relying on information from the Columbia Visitors Bureau website, reported that the South Carolina State Museum there is "our state's largest museum."

Patriots Point Executive Director Mac Burdette gently pointed out that the state's largest museum is actually much closer to home.

As the former longtime Mount Pleasant town administrator wrote in an email:

"We have over 400,000 square feet of exhibit area. Love the State museum, there Director Willie Calloway and his staff do a great job, but we are the largest. Moreover, State Museum, rightfully, receives about 2.5 million dollars each year in state appro-

priation (wish it was more), while PP does not receive any annual appropriation."

OK, so that popular local attraction is called the Patriots Point Naval & Air *Museum*.

And unlike the New England Patriots, nobody from Patriots Point has been implicated in Deflategate.

Answers

1) The Johnstown (Pa.) Flood took more than 2,200 lives in 1889. And in 1977, 80 people died in the Johnstown area from flooding caused by the Laurel Run Dam's failure.

2) The Great Mississippi Flood of 1927 took more than 240 lives and forced the relocation of more than 600,000 people, mostly in Arkansas, Mississippi and Louisiana. But it also dealt major devastation to Missouri, Illinois, Kansas, Tennessee, Kentucky, Oklahoma and Texas.

3) China (with six), the Netherlands (three) and Vietnam (one) are the only nations listed with top 10 death-toll floods.

4) In the 2014 Duck Commander Bowl in Shreveport, La., South Carolina beat Miami, 24-21, for its fourth consecutive bowl victory — the longest current postseason winning streak by any SEC team.

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FRANK WOOTEN

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Hard-hit residents start to see some relief

BY ANDREW KNAPP
 aknapp@postandcourier.com

For the first time since the skies opened a week ago and poured up to 2 feet of rain on South Carolina, people along the Lowcountry's rivers, creeks and streams heard promising news Friday.

In Kingstree, the Black River had fallen nearly 3 feet from the day before.

The Santee River near Jamestown rose more than 3 feet since Thursday, but predictions for its crest dropped by nearly a foot.

To the south, the depth of the Edisto River near Givhans Ferry peaked earlier than expected and started to fall, indicating that the worst of major flooding there was likely over.

Even in downtown Charleston,

where flooding is a common sight, high-tide levels dropped below flood stage for the first time in about two weeks.

On the Colleton County side of

Please see **RIVERS**, Page A4

Some see positive signs after devastating flood

RIVERS, from A1

the Edisto, damage to homes prompted the county to be added Friday to a list of those deemed federal disaster areas. Liz Butler saw the floodwater rise nearly 10 feet under her weekend home on Cardinal Lane. With the home on 10-foot stilts, the water stopped at the bottom of the house, though waves from passing boats lapped along the walls.

"I tell you what, it's amazing," Butler, a James Island resident, said Friday. "My husband and I and our neighbors are breathing a sigh of relief. ... But it'll be months before we can get back in there and start cleaning."

A flood warning remains in effect through Saturday for Charleston and Dorchester counties. Water continued to inundate communities along the Edisto, Santee and Black rivers. Gov. Nikki Haley also renewed her call Friday for

residents along area rivers to heed suggestions to evacuate if authorities show up at their doors. It was the ninth day of Haley's emergency declaration in the state.

"To look at Kingstree, to look at Givhans, there are no words to describe," she said. "These are boats in yards. These are rooftops; you can't even see the houses. ... It's devastating."

Experts also cautioned that riverside residents were not out of the woods even after water level gauges show that a river has crested.

"Major flooding is major flooding. That's as bad as it gets on a river," National Weather Service meteorologist Steve Rowley said. "It's an unusual event, and people on the river need to take heed."

The damage toll

For people who have left their homes and for others passing through, transportation statewide continued to be problem-

atic. In 22 counties, 384 roads remained shut down, and 125 bridges were closed.

Motorists are still barred from using a 13-mile stretch of Interstate 95 north of Manning, where state crews and contractors started looking at trouble spots on 18 bridges affected by fast-moving floodwater. Other portions of I-95 between interstates 26 and 20 were open to local traffic only.

The crews plan to start repairing damage this weekend and will work "daylight and dark" to get the country's major north-south highway reopened, Acting S.C. Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall said.

While concerns about flooding linger, some residents have shifted their focus to recovery. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has taken 25,000 applications for aid statewide, FEMA coordinating officer Mike Moore said during a news conference. The agency

already has approved \$4.3 million in assistance, he said.

During an appearance in North Charleston with Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson, Haley said it is far too early to put a price tag on the flooding's cost, which a few days ago was estimated at at least \$1 billion. Monday begins the assessment mode, she said.

Johnson continued to stress vigilance. "This is not over," she said. "Water levels are rising."

The governor's primary focus Friday again centered on the Lowcountry's rivers. The Santee River near Jamestown in Berkeley County had risen past 20 feet early Friday, up from 16.84 feet on Thursday. But the prediction for the river's crest fell from 23.7 feet to 22.6 feet. The river should hit that early Sunday.

In another positive sign, the Santee Cooper utility saw the extreme inflow of water wane at its Lake Marion dam. It reduced a controlled spill from

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the dam from 75,000 cubic feet per second to 30,000, the utility announced Friday.

Downstream, officials in Jamestown and in areas near Georgetown said they anticipated little impact to homes from the expected major flooding. The Weather Service stated that, at 23 feet, the river would start to flood one home on Lawton Farm Lane, which runs perpendicularly to the river just south of Jamestown.

Rowley said the Santee would not likely cause the shutdown of U.S. Highway 17 near the river, as some officials had warned earlier in the week.

'Feast or famine'

On the other side of the Lowcountry, state and local officials had urged people near the Edisto south of Givhans Ferry to consider evacuating. But the river crested at 16.06 feet on Thursday, well short of its record level of 17.5 feet, according to the Weather Service. It leveled off at 15.85 feet late Friday and was expected to stay around that until Sunday afternoon. The river will fall even further after that, dropping below major flood stage by early Tuesday.

Rowley said people south of the water gauges — at Givhans

Ferry on the Edisto and at Jamestown on the Santee — should be vigilant after those locations hit their peaks.

"What folks need to remember downstream," he said, "is that it's going to take a few days for that crest to work its way down toward the ocean."

Residents near Givhans Ferry, though, have already seen some water in the first floors of their homes. Haley, along with officials from Dorchester and Charleston counties, asked people there to prepare to evacuate their communities if the river rises more.

But Robin Thomas hopes the Edisto's downward trend of the Edisto's depth will continue despite further rainfall in the forecast.

Before most of the rain fell last weekend, the West Ashley resident and her husband went to their retreat property on Happiness Lane, where they have a camper as their base for boating, floating and fishing on the Edisto.

From spring to mid-September, the river was so shallow because of widespread drought in South Carolina that the bottoms of their inner-tubes would hit the bottom. Most residents in the community couldn't launch their motorboats.

"It's feast or famine," Thomas said Friday.

She and her husband, who live permanently on the Ashley River in West Ashley, grew concerned about their Givhans Ferry property after hearing the forecasts of historic rainfall last week. They jacked up the camper and put more cinder blocks underneath,

hoping to lift it further above the coming floodwater. But with the ground already saturated, the camper settled into the soft soil.

She hoped the numbers and the forecast for the river to recede further are accurate. The water had stopped rising Friday to nearly the top of the cinder blocks.

"If it goes up any more and the current gets strong, it might take our place with it," she said. "We don't know if anything seeped up underneath."

Rain, rain go away

More rain this weekend could slow the rivers from receding.

After mostly sunny skies Friday, showers and thunderstorms on Saturday could bring between a quarter and three-quarters of an inch, according to the Weather Service. Higher amounts are possible. The 80 percent chance of rain will come mainly after 2 p.m.

Saturday and will linger after dark.

The weather is similar to the one that brought the rainfall last week, Rowley said. But without a hurricane over the Atlantic Ocean, it won't draw in more moisture from offshore.

"It's just going to slow down the recession of water," the forecaster said. "It's something you have to look out for in the areas that got the most rain."

Like Thomas, Butler took precautions before the storm came last week, but the flooding still offered a lesson, she said.

She and her husband picked up everything between the home's stilts and relocated the stuff to an elevated porch.

Still, the duct work and the air-conditioning unit underneath were submerged and will likely need to be replaced.

But folks along the Lowcountry's rivers, particularly those in Butler's community, are accustomed to coping with occasional floods.

"Everyone took it seriously, but none of us expected this much," she said. "Everyone knows what to do, but we hope to never see it again."

Schuyler Kropf contributed to this report.

Title: **Hard-hit residents start to see some relief**
Author: BY ANDREW KNAPP aknapp@postandcourier.com
Size: 146.47 square inch
Charleston, SC Circulation: 110289



BRAD NETTLES/STAFF

Susan Norman tries to salvage family belongings from her father's Bridge Pointe home Friday. Last weekend's flood was the second time the neighborhood has flooded since August.

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Three river warnings



Edisto River

Flood levels
MINOR: 10 ft.
MODERATE: 12 ft.
MAJOR: 15 ft.

Latest level
15.85 feet (10 p.m. Friday)

Flood forecast
Edisto River at Givhans Ferry reached 16.06 feet, its highest level, at 10 a.m. Thursday.

Santee River

Flood levels
MINOR: 10 ft.
MODERATE: 17 ft.
MAJOR: 22 ft.

Latest level
21.06 feet (9:30 p.m. Friday)

Flood forecast
Santee River at Jamestown is expected to reach 22.6 feet, its highest level, by early Sunday.

Black River

Flood levels
MINOR: 12 ft.
MODERATE: 14 ft.
MAJOR: 16 ft.

Latest level
16.42 feet (10 p.m. Friday)

Flood forecast
Black River at Kingstree is expected to drop to moderate status by early Saturday.

SOURCE: NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

BRANDON LOCKETT/STAFF

Title: **1,000-year storm tests disaster plan**
 Author: BY SCHUYLER KROPF and GAVIN JACKSON skropf@postandcourier.com gjackson@postandcourier.com
 Size: 190.18 square inch
 Charleston, SC Circulation: 110289



1,000-year storm tests disaster plan

Response praised as shortcomings in infrastructure exposed

BY SCHUYLER KROPF
and GAVIN JACKSON

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gjackson@postandcourier.com

Despite 17 deaths statewide, disaster experts generally gave South Carolina high marks for its preparation and response to the “storm of the millennium,” saying 24 inches of rain in a weekend is an almost unheard of event that few, if any, emergency responders train for.

What has been exposed in the last

seven days is the state’s outdated infrastructure, as dams have been breached, roads washed away and bridges deemed too weak to trust.

“I’m seeing this everywhere,” S.C. Department of Transportation worker Radames Zambrana said of the bridges he’s seen where floodwaters have washed out the

support underneath.

While federal assistance is likely to be called on for some of the repairs, there’s sure to be renewed discussion in the Legislature in January about the state’s commitment to infrastructure after

Please see **RESPONSE**, Page A5



Poll

How would you grade the state government’s response to the severe rain and flooding disaster that has plagued South Carolina? Go to postandcourier.com/polls to vote.

Storm tests state’s disaster response

RESPONSE, from A1

decades of holding down spending to keep taxes low. The total cost of repairs is expected in the billions of dollars.

While the state warily watches rivers as the flood surge heads downstream toward waterlogged coastal communities, experts nationally say South Carolina was as prepared as it could be for the disaster, primarily because it was bracing for bad weather well in advance as Hurricane Joaquin approached offshore.

“A lot of citizens stepped up to the plate and did what had to be done to save lives and rescue people,” said Irwin Redlener, director of the National Center for Disaster Preparedness

at Columbia University in New York, rating the state’s performance from afar.

The state issued weather alerts, closed flood-prone roads and called for evacuations of low-lying areas. More than 3,200 National Guardsmen have been deployed to assist in evacuations, road closures and rescues.

Redlener said that the true test of how South Carolina and its leaders will be graded still lies ahead, as untold thousands of people will rely on state, federal and their private insurance resources to help rebuild. He is less optimistic that the recovery will be graded a success.

“Nobody has gotten this right after a situation like this,” Redlener said, pointing to the

displacements, infrastructure woes, and the lingering legal and housing disputes that still plague the Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy aftermaths.

While the financial damage tabulation won’t be known for days, at least 17 people died as a result of the storm in South Carolina, several from trying to drive through floodwaters or ignoring barricades. None of the deaths were in the Charleston area.

Larry Swanson, a professor in marine policy and management at Stony Brook University and who is part of the New York State Resiliency Institute for Storms & Emergencies that studied Superstorm Sandy in the Northeast, said the loss of

life is unfortunate, but reinforces the need to heed warnings.

“You can warn people, you can take certain precautions, but at some point you know you have to say ‘it’s arrived,’ and there’s not much we can do other than to try to save people on an emergency basis until it’s over,” he said.

More than a dozen dams failed throughout the state, forcing hurried evacuations in the Columbia area and raising questions about whether they were adequately inspected and managed.

State officials have been reluctant to discuss the dam breaks and whether steps were taken ahead of the breaches. Haley deflected questions at a news conference Thursday saying

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the focus was on keeping people safe still, not trying to assess if anyone was to blame for the 14 dams that had burst.

On Oct. 1, the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control, which oversees dams, sent out the following warning:

“Owners and operators of reservoirs statewide should check their dams today, and through the next several days, for possible problems caused by heavy rainfall from Hurricane Joaquin.

“According to the National Weather Service, a significant amount of rain is expected in the Southeastern and Mid-Atlantic United States.

“Dam owners should be aware of the conditions at their dams during such events,” said Chuck Gorman with DHEC’s dam safety program. “If such problems develop that failure of the dam might be imminent, the owner or operator of the dam should contact the downstream property owners and the local public safety officials.”

Locally in the Charleston area, officials said they were still assessing their responses, but some of the early takeaways include:

North Charleston Mayor Keith Summey said efforts to get residents in low-lying areas to go to shelters were hampered by their having made no arrangements for residents with pets.

“I think the pet issue was the big issue,” he said, adding that officials went through neighborhoods two or three times asking residents to leave but were met with resistance from those who wanted to protect their pets, and also their property, from potential looting or theft.

Tom Smith, Berkeley County’s emergency preparedness director, said he believed the county’s storm preparation “was about as good as it could get.”

No matter what government does, he said, everyone needs to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

“The weather service told the people the rain was coming

and told them how much,” he said. “You can’t really outguess Mother Nature.”

Charleston County Emergency Services Director Jason Patnor said the biggest plus the county had was that effective lines of communication had been created with local police, agencies and governments across the region.

“I think we had accurate reporting of incidents of flooding,” he said.

One area that could be addressed is to rehearse for larger scale disasters, including a 1,000-year storm.

“I don’t think we ever exercised that particular scenario,” he said.

Dorchester County Emergency Management Director Mario Formisano said officials already were on guard days ahead of the storm because of Hurricane Joaquin.

But officials had no accurate readings on the rise of the Ashley River because federal agencies had earlier removed a rain

gauge. The nearest monitor is miles away on the William Westmoreland Bridge in North Charleston.

Mark Wilbert, director of emergency management for the city of Charleston, credited early planning for having sufficient staffing, offering and delivering sandbags, pre-positioning high-water vehicles and prepping traffic diversion plans ahead of the storm.

The Associated Press contributed.



Online

MULTIMEDIA:

For more photos and video, go to **postandcourier.com/multimedia**.

MAP: For an interactive map with tweets, photos and video of the flooding, go to **postandcourier.com/flood-map**.

FORECAST: For an updated forecast, go to **postandcourier.com/weather**.

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BRAD NETTLES/STAFF

Shadowmoss Plantation resident Patty Sullivan lays out the flag that was draped over her father's casket at his funeral. Sullivan hopes to save the flag that was damaged from waters that flooded her home last weekend.

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WADE SPEES/STAFF

Katherine Lambert's infant daughter, Courtlyn, is passed to her after the South Carolina National Guard gave them a ride in an amphibious vehicle along Cainhoy Road on Monday.

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PAUL ZOELLER/STAFF

Members of the National Guard 1223 Engineering Battalion remove debris left at the curb as homeowners cleared out their flood-damaged homes Thursday in Arbor Oaks in Summerville.

Title: **FARMERS ASSESS LOSSES FROM FLOOD**
 Author: By ADAM BEAM and SUSANNE M. SCHAFFER The Associated Press
 Size: 103.38 square inch
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



FARMERS ASSESS LOSSES FROM FLOOD

Crop damage could total more than \$300 million

By ADAM BEAM and SUSANNE M. SCHAFFER

The Associated Press

BRANCHVILLE — Thad Wimberly tugs on a clump of peanuts, shaking off the mud as he cracks the soggy shells to inspect his crop. But all he can do is sigh as his livelihood disintegrates between his fingers.

Just a week ago, the 2,500 acres Wimberly farms with his partner, Jonathan Berry, baked in a drought that wiped out his corn crop. Now, his fields 60 miles south of Columbia in Branchville are filled with water. Moisture is trapped in his peanuts, creating mold and other toxins that make them unfit for humans and animals to eat.

He expects to lose as much as \$1 million this year,

as crop insurance only covers a portion of market prices. It paid out only about \$120 an acre for his corn, which he estimated he could have sold for \$300 to \$400 per acre.

“That’s the life of a farmer. You put your heart and soul into the ground, then something devastating happens like this and you are done,” Wimberly said. “Farming is gambling.”

Across South Carolina, the misery continues: Preliminary estimates show crop losses could total more than \$300 million in the state’s \$3 billion-a-year

Please see FLOOD on 11A

FLOOD

Continued from 1A

agriculture industry. Interstate 95, vital to the East Coast economy for trucking, remains closed over a stretch of 13 miles, forcing travelers to take a massive detour. The capital city is fighting to keep its water system running while people have to boil tap water before drinking it.

And even more rain could be on the way. A storm system will stall near the coast this weekend, bringing as much as an additional inch of rain to some areas, according to the National Weather Service. The heaviest rain is expected today, although

forecasters said it shouldn’t be enough to flood any additional areas.

“Underneath that water is the South Carolina we remember. Underneath that water is that state that is so beautiful — that is damaged, but we have to fix it,” said Gov. Nikki Haley, who warned that any final damage estimates could still be weeks away. “We’ll get there.”

Flood waters continue to move toward the sea, although authorities don’t expect the devastating damage that happened in Columbia when up to 20 inches of rain fell over two days last week-end.

Haley continued to urge people in Georgetown County and other coastal areas to be vigilant as flood waters rise. No one has had to be evacuated yet, but the water was isolating some homes, and the governor warned emergency officials could start knocking on doors any time.

It just isn’t residents who are inconvenienced. The foundations under some of the 18 small bridges that crisscross two rivers and swamps on a 13-mile closed stretch of Interstate 95 have been washed away and must be repaired before the highway can be reopened,

South Carolina Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall said Friday.

A contractor will begin working on the bridges 24 hours a day starting today, said Hall, who had no estimate when the road which carries 30,000 vehicles a day could reopen. In the meantime, travelers who would normally drive 74 miles between Interstate 26 to Interstate 20 must take a 168-mile detour through Columbia.

For farmers, the worst of the flood damage was in low-lying fields that spent days in standing water, hitting peanuts, cotton and soybeans especially hard, Agriculture Commissioner

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Hugh Weathers said. However, those crops account for a small percentage of what's grown across the U.S. And the state's top agriculture products — timber and poultry — took less of a hit, so national supplies shouldn't be

too severely affected. Weathers promised to seek federal aid for farmers. Back in Branchville, Wimberly and Berry have lost up to 75 percent of their peanuts, cotton and soybeans. The tractors and combines and

Wimco farms sit idle, unable to get out into the swampy fields. The only thing in abundance is anxiety, the hope that some assistance will ease the sting. "We might not have a foot of water standing out here,

but this is worse," he said. "It's not only the farm, or the money part of it, it takes a toll on your life. The stress. You're worrying about trying to make your bills, you worry about making sure your family is taken care of."



The Associated Press

Thad Wimberly, left, and Jonathan Berry inspect the damage to a field of peanuts following record rainfall and flooding in Branchville on Friday. Wimberly, co-owner of Wimco Farms in Branchville, said he expects to lose 75 percent of his crop.

Title: **State grants property owners permission to take action against erosion**
 Author: By STEPHEN FASTENAU sfastenau@beaufortgazette.com 843-706-8182
 Size: 52.85 square inch
 Hilton Head Island, SC Circulation: 20015



State grants property owners permission to take action against erosion

Emergency orders allow Harbor Island and Daufuskie Island residents to use sandbags.

By STEPHEN FASTENAU
 sfastenau@beaufortgazette.com
 843-706-8182

Some Daufuskie Island and Harbor Island homeowners in danger of losing property to erosion have received permission for a short-term fix, but long-term solutions will be more complicated.

The Department of Health and Environmental Control's Ocean and Coastal Resource Management division has issued eight emergency orders for property in Beaufort County, agency spokesman Jim Beasley said Friday. Four orders are for homes on Harbor Island. The remaining four are on Daufuskie.

Under the orders, homeowners are allowed to use sandbags and to bring in sand from elsewhere on the beach for minor renourishment. One of the Harbor Island orders only allows sandbags.

Possibilities for long-term fixes include a larger scale beach renourishment, with or without groins — man-made structures that trap sand as it drifts down the beach. Homeowners could also move their

houses back on the property or relocate them to another lot, Beasley said.

ONGOING ISSUE

Erosion at Daufuskie has long been an issue. Even before this past week, two homes had been deemed uninhabitable after the sand washed from beneath them.

Property owners are proposing a large-scale beach restoration. Melrose Property Owners Association has asked DHEC and the Army Corps of Engineers for permission to pump 1.4 million cubic yards of sand from the Calibogue Sound onto 5,000 feet of Daufuskie shoreline.

That application is still under review, pending an opinion from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Beasley said. Funding the project once a permit is granted will be the issue, said Mitch Evans, a property owner and past Melrose POA president.

A federal designation as an unde-

veloped coastal barrier prohibits the area from receiving federal grants from the work. Evans said his hope is that Beaufort County will be able to chip in and that increased property values on Daufuskie will increase the county's tax base.

At a September meeting between county leaders and the Daufuskie Island Council, state Sen. Tom Davis said he was working with U.S. Rep. Mark Sanford to update the federal maps designating the coastal areas.

The prospect was raised of using county accommodations tax money or a proposed capital sales tax commission to pay for the dredging. Property owner Len Pojednic said the Melrose association had already invested \$85,000 on the beach.

"We don't expect Beaufort County to solve all of our problems," he said, according to meeting minutes.

Please see EROSION on 11A

EROSION

Continued from 1A

EXPENSIVE FIX

Short-term or long term, none of the erosion-control options is cheap.

Harbor Island residents Tricia and Lew Gardner shelled out \$30,000 for 150, 1-ton sandbags last year, Tricia Gardner said. Those bags were tossed around within six months, the couple said.

The Gardners then wrote Gov. Nikki Haley and Sanford, asking what could be

done. The couple was directed to a wave dissipation system, the subject of a study at The Citadel.

State law restricts the use of sea walls, bulkheads and similar measures for the effect on the surrounding beach. The wave dissipation system was presented as a permeable alternative.

The wall of heavy-duty pipe works to break up waves before they reach homes and to trap sand as water recedes.

The Gardners paid \$60,000 to install the system, which several neighbors also now employ. They thought it was working well until the water level cleared the wall during historic high tides and rain this past weekend.

DHEC has not reached any conclusions about the system's effectiveness and will evaluate data at the end of the study, Beasley said.

Mike Ricci, the Gardners' neighbor, also installed the system to keep waves from

crashing into his house. Ricci left his home during the storms after the footings on his pilings were exposed.

He said the system has not been in place long enough to judge its effectiveness.

"In fairness, it's too early to tell," he said. "It certainly helped me in the storm; there's no doubt about that."

The Harbor Island Owners Association board of directors discussed the possibility of restoring the beach in 2011, board member Den-

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nis Nolan said. But association rules say its funds can only be used for association property.

That does not include the beachfront owned by the homeowners, said Nolan, a retired law professor. He

noted the limited options available under state and federal laws.

The board will hold its regular meeting today and will discuss options of what can be done, president Craig Aull said.

“We’re all very sympathetic,” said Nolan, whose home is on a part of the beach not affected by erosion. “We certainly want the beach to be healthy and all the owners to have their places protected. But some-

body has to make a proposal to do something.”

Follow reporter Stephen Fastenau at twitter.com/IPBG_Stephen.

Title: **Assessing roads 'a changing target'**
 Author: BY ANDREW SHAIN ashain@thestate.com
 Size: 40.45 square inch
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



RICHLAND COUNTY

Assessing roads 'a changing target'

Assessments are finding more damage as waters recede from historic rain

Richland accounts for a third of all road and bridge closures statewide

Work begins Saturday to fix bridges on a closed section on Interstate 95, state's top priority

BY ANDREW SHAIN
 ashain@thestate.com

State transportation officials have started assessing some roads in Richland County after Sunday's historic rainfall, discovering more damage as flood waters recede.

"It's a changing target a little bit for us," said Christy Hall, acting director of the S.C. Department of Transportation. "We're still very much in the response mode somewhat."

Hall did not have a timetable for finishing the state's assessment of road damage. That assessment

must be completed before repairs can begin.

Richland, which received more than a foot of rain on Sunday, accounts for a third of all road and bridge closures statewide.

About 125 roads and bridges were closed Friday in the county of the state capital, with more than 50 washed out. Both tallies were slightly higher than the day before.

County leaders said Thursday they would ask for 35 temporary bridges to help make some roads passable.

Gov. Nikki Haley said the state Transportation Department has contract road and bridge engineers ready to work.

Soon after the storm, state transportation crews worked to make sure interstates around Columbia were open because they are being used as a detour around a closed stretch of Interstate 95.

A 13-mile stretch of Interstate 95 in Clarendon County continues to be closed after engineers discovered foundation

problems in 33 spots on 18 bridges, Hall said.

Investigations found rivers washed away areas around the bridge foundations, she said.

Traffic is being diverted off I-95 onto I-20 and I-26. Interstate 77 between I-20 and I-26 is part of that detour.

A contractor will work from "daylight to dark" to fix I-95, Hall said, calling it the state's top road priority.

She did not have a timetable when the main interstate artery along the East Coast would reopen.

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TRACY GLANTZ tglantz@thestate.com

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

Title: **S.C. farmers look at devastating losses as flood rolls downstream**
 Author: BY ADAM BEAM AND SUSANNE M. SCHAFER Associated Press
 Size: 170.65 square inch
 Rock Hill, SC Circulation: 34688



SOUTH CAROLINA FLOODING

S.C. farmers look at devastating losses as flood rolls downstream

Estimates show crop losses could total more than \$300 million in the state's \$3 billion-a-year agriculture industry

Interstate 95, vital to the East Coast economy for trucking, remains closed over a stretch of 13 miles

Columbia is fighting to keep its water system running while people have to boil tap water before drinking it.

BY ADAM BEAM AND
SUSANNE M. SCHAFER

Associated Press
BRANCHVILLE

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Just a week ago, the 2,500 acres Wimberly farms with his partner, Jonathan Berry, baked in a drought that wiped out his corn crop. Now, his fields 60 miles south of Columbia in Branchville are filled with water. Moisture is trapped in his peanuts, creating mold and other toxins that make them unfit for humans and animals to eat.

He expects to lose as much as \$1 million this year, as crop insurance only covers a portion of market prices. It paid out only about \$120 an acre for his corn, which he estimated he could have sold for \$300 to \$400 per acre.

"That's the life of a

farmer. You put your heart and soul into the ground, then something devastating happens like this and you are done," Wimberly said. "Farming is gambling."

Across South Carolina, the misery continues: Preliminary estimates show crop losses could total more than \$300 million in the state's \$3 billion-a-year agriculture industry. Interstate 95, vital to the East Coast economy for trucking, remains closed over a stretch of 13 miles, forcing travelers to take a massive detour. The capital city is fighting to keep its water system running while people have to boil tap water before drinking it.

And even more rain could be on the way. A storm system will stall near the coast this weekend, bringing as much as an additional inch of rain to some areas, according to the National Weather Service. The heaviest rain

is expected Saturday, although forecasters said it shouldn't be enough to flood any additional areas.

"Underneath that water is the South Carolina we remember. Underneath that water is that state that is so beautiful - that is damaged, but we have to fix it," said Gov. Nikki Haley, who warned that any final damage estimates could still be weeks away. "We'll get there."

Floodwaters continue to move toward the sea, although authorities don't expect the devastating damage that happened in Columbia when up to 20 inches of rain fell over two days last weekend.

Haley continued to urge people in Georgetown County and other coastal areas to be vigilant. No

one has had to be evacuated yet, though, and there was some hope the worst could be over.

The Waccamaw River has crested and the Black River is near crest,

Georgetown County Administrator Sel Hemingway said Friday afternoon. It will take days or maybe more than a week for the rivers to go below flood stage, but the water should start dropping.

"Crested - I've been waiting for that word to be expressed here for a week," Hemingway said.

It isn't just South Carolina residents who are inconvenienced. The foundations under some of the 18 small bridges that crisscross two rivers and swamps on a 13-mile closed stretch of Interstate 95 have been washed away and must be repaired before the highway can be re-opened, S.C.

Department of Transportation Secretary Christy Hall said Friday.

A contractor will begin working on the bridges 24 hours a day starting Saturday, said Hall, who had no estimate when the road - which carries 30,000 vehicles a day - could reopen. In the meantime,

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Weathers promised to seek federal aid for farmers.

Back in Branchville, Wimberly and Berry have lost up to 75 percent of their peanuts, cotton and soybeans. The tractors and combines and Wimco farms sit idle, unable to get out into the swampy fields. The only thing in abundance is anxiety, the hope that some assistance will ease the sting.

“We might not have a

foot of water standing out here, but this is worse,” he said. “It's not only the farm, or the money part of it, it takes a toll on your life. The stress. You're worrying about trying to make your bills, you worry about making sure your family is taken care of.”

Associated Press writers Jeffrey Collins and Jack Jones in Columbia and Bruce Smith in Charleston contributed to this report.

“

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Thad Wimberly, farmer

“

UNDERNEATH THAT WATER IS THE SOUTH CAROLINA WE REMEMBER. UNDERNEATH THAT WATER IS THAT STATE THAT IS SO BEAUTIFUL – THAT IS DAMAGED, BUT WE HAVE TO FIX IT. WE'LL GET THERE.

Gov. Nikki Haley

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JASON LEE AP

Nasir Linen, 10, holds Tristan Richards, 5, as his family is evacuated from rising floodwaters in the Dunbar Community near Georgetown on Friday.

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ADAM BEAM AP

Thad Wimberly, left, and Jonathan Berry inspect the damage to a field of peanuts following record rainfall and flooding in Branchville on Friday. Wimberly, co-owner of Wimco Farms, said he expects to lose 75 percent of his crop.