

Flood project targeted for 1999

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
For the Headlight-Herald

North Tillamook businesses are located in what could be described as a large swimming pool with no drainage. Many believe that for an estimated cost of \$300,000 and a few weeks of work the "swimming pool drainage" could be installed to lesson flood problems before next winter.

Organization of a non-profit corporation by area landowners is under way with the goal of hiring Leo Kuntz to complete the flood mitigation project he has proposed. Kuntz, owner of Nehalem Marina, is currently in the process of completing a Project Impact flood mitigation effort in the lower Trask River Drainage District.

North Tillamook landowners want to implement Kuntz' plan in the last six months of 1999. More than 60 business and property owners met on June 16 to dis-

cuss details and financing of the effort. Landowner Hayden Hauptert said, "The worst thing we can do is nothing," as the majority of those present agreed to proceed with the proposed flood mitigation plan.

The goal of the project is to reduce flood waters by at least two feet under normal flood conditions. Kuntz presented a basic plan developed from his findings. Kuntz has studied flooding in the area and has documented water depth and flow in the flood plain. His plan includes stream connectivity work, new and bigger tide gates, dike repair, flood-friendly fencing and a gated spillway for outgoing water. The plan also considers fish habitat and solutions to erosion problems. A proposed natural area west of U.S. 101, which borders on Hoquarton Slough and Daugherty Slough/River would serve as a filtering system for surface water prior to its entering the main water system. It could also

Please see **FLOOD PROJECT**,
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FLOOD PROJECT

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serve as a park accessible to the public during summer months.

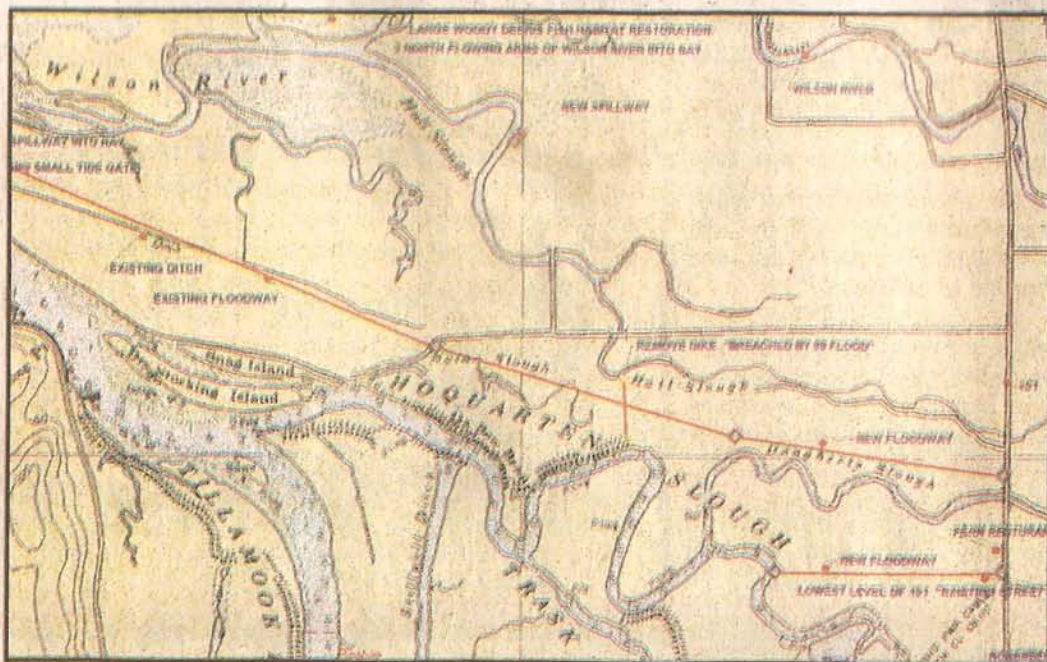
Joining land and business owners in a multi-strategy approach are Tillamook County, the City of Tillamook and flood control groups. The county has agreed to sponsor an Army Corps of Engineers advanced measures program application. Another possibility is the current Army Corps plan, now in planning stages. As part of that plan, special local projects in the Tillamook Bay Watershed ecosystem will be targeted.

The advanced measures program funds 100% of its projects and the Army Corps option involves Corps funds matched with non-federal funds. In addition, there are at least two funding options through the

Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA). First would be through the Project Impact Program which requires matching funds. Finances could also come from a hazardous mitigation funding program which currently holds \$.5 million for raising of structures in flood areas.

The affected business area north of Tillamook has assessed property value of \$50 million. A special tax district could provide funding for implementation and maintenance of proposed non-profit corporation projects. This option could benefit businesses which have capped their FEMA insurance collections, which are set at 25-50 percent of property value.

The red line on this map shows the projected flood drainage area for the flood plain north of Tillamook.



TSUNAMI HAZARD ZONE



IN CASE OF EARTHQUAKE, GO TO HIGH GROUND OR INLAND

Taking Tsunamis Seriously: Mitigation Tools for Coastal Communities

Tsunami Hazards are Real! Coastal communities interested in becoming Project Impact communities should not forget to include tsunamis in their list of hazards. Geological evidence shows magnitude 8 to 9.5 West Coast earthquakes generate tsunamis every few hundred years. The interval between events can be greater than 1,000 years or as short as 150 years. The last event occurred 300 years ago. Events in Alaska are much more frequent and can send fatal tsunamis to the West Coast as in 1964. New mitigation tools are being developed to assist communities to become more tsunami resistant through the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP).

An Existing Partnership Can Help! The NTHMP is a partnership of Federal and State agencies (NOAA, FEMA, USGS, NSF, Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon and Washington) led by NOAA and formed to reduce loss of life and property. NOAA is working to improve warning information through installation of deep-water buoys that can detect tsunamis long before they reach the coast. USGS is working to enhance regional seismic networks to improve information about whether an offshore earthquake is likely to generate a local tsunami. FEMA coordinates the Mitigation Subcommittee, which includes the States. The States have developed State and Local Tsunami Work Groups to provide opportunity for county and community emergency managers and other State and Local agencies to input their priority needs into the State Tsunami Program activities. Activities and products include inundation mapping, education and awareness materials, tools for emergency managers, and development of local guidance products.

To find out more about the NTHMP, visit the web site at: www.pmel.noaa.gov/tsunami-hazard/ and contact your appropriate area member or call Chris Jonientz-Trisler at (425) 487-4645.

Celebrating Successes In Tillamook County

Tillamook County was one of those damage/repair/damage kind of places up through the 1996 floods. That is when the Performance Partnership and the push for preventing additional damages took root in the form of elevating buildings, constructing cow pads and other mitigation efforts. To help the County celebrate the successes made possible by working together, FEMA Director James Lee Witt took part in the community's May 25 Tillamook County Project Impact MOA Signing Ceremony. "There are two obvious differences since last time I was here; this time it is dry and people have worked hard to prevent future losses" he said.

The City of Nehalem, one of the worst hit areas in the 1996 floods served as the showcase for community success. Ken McGough, owner of the Three Village Gallery, said "I was happy to work together with FEMA to protect my investment from future floods". That cooperation was part of a concentrated HMGP project that elevated virtually every structure in that part of the city.

During the community's Signing Ceremony, the 30 original signatories of the community's Performance Partnership reaffirmed their commitment to natural disaster damage prevention and other initiatives addressed by the agreement. Additionally, 25 new partners volunteered commitments ranging from warning system funding assistance by Safeway to field survey work by Nehalem Marine. "Project Impact is the first time I have been able to work with the government and really feel like I was making a difference" said Leo Kuntz, owner of Nehalem Marine.

For more information contact Tom Manning at 503-842-3412



FEMA Director, James Lee Witt (L) tours the elevated Nehalem business district -- now elevated above flood levels.

Broadcasting Success: KOMO Partners with King & Pierce Counties

Project Impact of King and Pierce Counties has reached agreement with KOMO ABC4 (Fisher Broadcasting) to promote its Computer Seismic Tie Down campaign this fall, with a kickoff at KOMO Kids Fair August 14th. In the spirit of creating disaster resistant communities, KOMO has offered a number of in-kind contributions to the project.

KOMO will produce and air public service announcements, educating residents about creating disaster resistant communities. Weatherman Steve Pool will be the spokesman for the campaign. The vignettes will relate to the Computer Seismic Tie Down campaign, which encourages residents and business people to secure their computers to desktops in the event of an earthquake. One goal of the campaign is to expand the original computer tie down message to examining and eliminating earthquake hazards in the home. KOMO and Project Impact will work together to include third-party partners in the campaign.

KOMO has also agreed to produce and air a three part news series specifically designed to promote disaster preparation and, when possible, they will report on Project Impact stories that affect the community.

During the tie down campaign, KOMO will provide a "hot link" to the King and Pierce Counties Project Impact website, and create its own "Project Impact" page to inform viewers about disaster preparation.



Kenai Peninsula Borough to Sign MOA

The KPB's new Project Impact Coordinator, Kathy Scott, has jumped feet first into working with the community to develop the Borough's Project Impact effort. High on her list of priorities is the upcoming Memorandum of Agreement signing ceremony on July 7, 1999. Private sector partners including UNICAL are participating in this exciting event.

Due to the wide spread beetle kill of spruce trees, the wild-land fire threat to people and property has drastically increased. The Borough intends to showcase its' efforts to reduce the consequences of that and other threats as it works to become a more disaster-resistant community. The Alaska Youth Corps will also be showcased in the KPB's signing ceremonies for its' commitment to help implement non-structural mitigation project for the Borough's senior and homebound population.

For further information call Kathy Scott, (907) 283-6714 at the Kenai Peninsula Borough.

Drainage project completed

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
For the Headlight-Herald

After only 11 months, the Lower Trask River Drainage District, located between the Tillamook and Trask Rivers, has completed a flood mitigation project intended to help drain standing water from a total of 3,000 acres valued at more than \$19 million. There were lots of congratulations and many thanks for those attending the rainy, July 14 ribbon cutting ceremony at a new pump station on Tone Road. The project was first proposed to the Tillamook County Flood Control Group by board member and dairy farmer, Leon Vellinga. Six months later it was approved and 75 percent funded (\$86,500) by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through Project Impact. The drainage district paid the remaining 25 percent of project costs or \$259,500 of the \$346,000 total cost through district taxes and a bank loan.

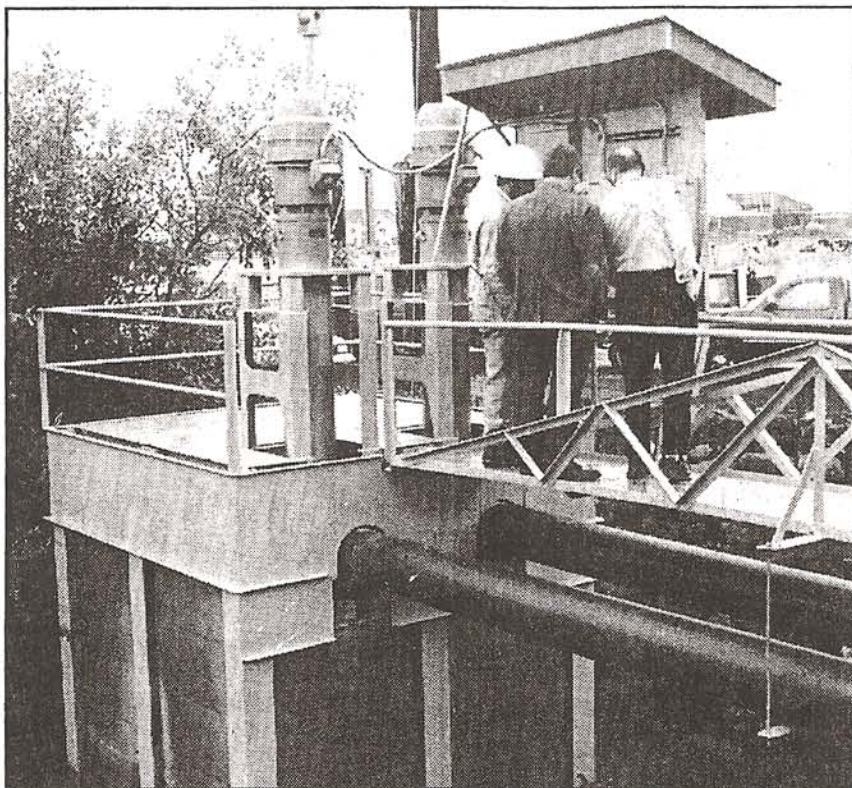


VELLINGA

Lower Trask River Drainage District board members, Vellinga and Marty Blaser persevered in securing the district's flood mitigation project after the 1996 floods in which about 100 cows

drowned and approximately 12 homes were flooded.

"Flooding and standing waters are and will get worse with the bay and mouths of the rivers plugged," Blaser said, in support of the project. He also noted, the fact that Tillamook River is now two feet higher than the district's tide/flood gates, a definite factor in pursuing the drainage project.



KYLE ODEGARD/Headlight-Herald

Tillamook County Commissioner Tim Josi (center) looks over the new pump station on Tone Road with others at the ribbon cutting for the project on July 14.

Leo Kuntz of Nehalem Marina, installed two 15 horsepower pumps capable of pumping 7.5 thousand gallons of water per minute at the district site. He also built a floodway to go along with existing drainage ditches and tide/flood gates.

Morrie Barackman, Ernst Hardware Irrigation sales representative from St. Paul, explained how the system works during the ribbon cutting ceremony. "There are floats in screens that turn on the pumps automatically when a certain water level is reached," Barackman said. "The water is first pumped into the slough where the pump station stands and then into Tillamook River. The special pumps work prior to flooding."

"Prior to 1996 we never missed a milking," Vellinga said. "Since the

1996 floods, milkings have been missed because of standing flood water in the barn. In the 1998 floods alone, three milkings were missed. With the new system it is hoped that no milkings will be missed in the future."

Though property owners in the area can't stop the rivers from rising, they can now mitigate floodwaters by draining the land more quickly.

A total of eight homes have been elevated on Tone Road and one cow pad added since the flooding of 1996. The efforts have paid off in a loss of damage to the involved properties during subsequent winters. The drainage district's work since 1996 has raised property values for future generations in an area which was once facing declining property value.

Businesses eligible for pre-disaster loans

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
for the Headlight-Herald

Because Tillamook County is one of 118 designated FEMA Project Impact "disaster resistant communities" in the nation, local businesses are eligible for pre-disaster loans during the fiscal year 2000-01. Up to \$50,000 can be borrowed at a maximum fixed interest rate of 4 percent per annum.

The loans, through the Small Business Administration (SBA) are available to small businesses that have no other available credit. The business must be located in a special flood hazard area (SFHA) and must have been in existence for a minimum of one year. Loans are being administered on a first come first serve filing basis.

The loan program will enable

small businesses in flood hazard areas to borrow funds to protect their property from future disasters. More than \$50,000 can be borrowed if the business can cover the excess in non-SBA funds. The SBA will consider loans for relocation outside the flood zone but they must remain in the community.

Tillamook County Department of Emergency Management Director, Tom Manning said, "The cost of rebuilding after flood disasters continues to rise and many small business owners in the county never recover. Thanks to the commissioner's and Project Impact, local entrepreneurs will now have an opportunity to protect their investment before disasters strike."

The pilot loan program, authorized by congress in 1999, is an effort to move away from emer-

gency response and recovery to preparedness. Examples of disaster preparedness measures covered by the SBA loan are retaining walls, sea walls, grading and contouring land, relocating utilities and modifying structures.

Details on the program can be obtained from Tillamook County Department of Emergency Management at (503) 842-3412, local banks or Tillamook Bay Community College Small Business Development Center.

Pumps may provide some flood relief

Drainage district official says real control will come with bay dredging

By LEEANN NEAL
For the Capital Press

TILLAMOOK, Ore. — Members of the Lower Trask River Drainage District are hinging hopes for flood relief on two recently installed water pumps.

However, they don't expect the pumps — placed near a dike on the Tillamook River — to function as a long-term solution.

"It's not going to do anything for flood control because we are in a flood plain," said Leon Vellinga, drainage district secretary/treasurer. "It's just a Band-Aid until they dredge the bays." A lifelong native of Tillamook County, he lives on Tone Road, the site of the effort.

Installation of the 15 horsepower pumps and a 5-foot drainage tube, along with creation of a 20-by-3-foot spillway, cost \$120,000, Vellinga said. However, Project Impact, an offshoot of the Federal Emergency Management Administration, covered \$87,000 of the bill.

"We had no idea how much they were going to give us," he said.

Acquisition of the pumps, tube and spillway, which took roughly 11 months, "was a real joint effort of a lot of different people," Vellinga said.

Those who assisted included residents of the drainage district, the Tillamook County Board of Commissioners — "they did a tremendous amount of work behind the scenes" — the Division of State Lands, the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The drainage district approached Project Impact officials about the pumps following the Christmas flood of 1998, said Vellinga. He had heard about the program through his involvement with local members of Performance Partnership.

The holiday flood of last year was the straw that broke the camel's back, said Vellinga. Flooding has worsened over the last few years, he said. While the 1996 flood dealt

Tillamook County farmers and residents a devastating blow, deluges that followed were nearly as bad. "The flood we had last year should not have been a major flood." Meanwhile, "there was water in the pastures from November until May."

Vellinga attributes increased flooding in large part to a build-up of silt in area rivers and Tillamook Bay. "The accumulation of silt is not allowing us to drain out after floods," he said.

Acquisition of equipment was a joint effort.

Until dredging is done, the pumps may take the edge off from flooding, Vellinga said. "Our idea is to shorten the duration of the flood," he said. An existing dike on the Tillamook River was designed to keep a 10-foot tide out while allowing flood water to drain, he said. However, recent flooding has not drained as expected. With the new design, "we're hoping that within 12 hours the water will have efficiently moved because of the spillway," he said.

When the water moves into the spillway, the pumps will kick in. Within 24 to 48 hours floodwaters would recede.

Pumps may also help dry pastures well after flood events, Vellinga said. "We're also hoping that, come next spring, we can pump our ditches out and get rid of standing water, let the grass grow."

The pump-tube-spillway configuration was designed and installed by Leo Kuntz, a salvage diver, beef producer and self-made flood master from the Tillamook County's Miami-Foley area. "He had done enough work around this district that he was very familiar with it," Vellinga said.

Vellinga remains optimistic about the possibility of dredging within the next few years. The fact that the United States Army Corps of Engineers participates in Performance Partnership activities has "speeded up some of the process," he said.

Members of the drainage district held a dedication ceremony for the pumps on July 14.

Funding for estuary plan secured

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
For the Headlight-Herald

Trimmed by six months, the Army Corps of Engineers feasibility analysis for the second phase of the corps' comprehensive plan for the Tillamook Bay Watershed and Estuary is on schedule for August.

Representatives from the corps and the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife (USDFW) met with local representatives July 20-21 concerning the proposed Corps Project Study Plan (PSP). Several people spent a day touring the central Tillamook waterways under study and/or half a day discussing plan details.

The Miami, Kilchis, Wilson, Trask and Tillamook Rivers and Tillamook Bay were toured. Shown were watershed ecosystem restoration projects on the Miami and Kilchis Rivers. Tree abutments, rock structures (barbs), and willow post planting are being used to address erosion problems on those rivers. ODOT's proposed Wilson River Loop flood detour project was visited along with the new Tone Road pump station and the U.S. 101 business corridor where flood mitigation is targeted. Tillamook River, particularly at its intersection with Trask River was studied. Tillamook Bay and oyster beds were seen at low tide.

Corps members have been meeting since May 1999 with the Tillamook County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and a task force appointed by the Tillamook County Performance Partnership (TCPP). Work has centered on ways to find an environmentally sound, cost effective flood mitigation program and analysis possible.

The State of Oregon Economic Development Office contributed \$30,000 in non-federal match funding for this fiscal year. The total estimated cost of the project which has been trimmed to 2.5 years instead of three, is \$3 million (excluding a 10 percent contingency fund for project changes). This is half of a million dollars less than earlier projections.

Chuck Mason, Portland District Corps of Engineers Project Manager said, "We have been plodding and methodical in our Tillamook plan because we want to get it right the first time." He also stated that four locally-completed studies were used for the plan basis in order to save duplication. Corps efforts are being coordinated with a related plan being done by USDFW.

Unique parts of the proposed PSP include the Geographic Information System (GIS) hydrodynamic model

and flood warning system. Tidal influence on local water ways will be charted and its effects predicted for more accurate problem solving efforts during flooding episodes. The Division of State Lands (DSL) and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) partnerships and data input will also be used in the plan implementation and modeling.

The proposed PSP is a two-year Corps of Engineers working plan which was adopted by SWCD on July 22.

With adoption of the plan, three months of photogrammetry will begin, including two or three weeks of aerial photography in August. The data gathering, paralleled by development of the hydrodynamic model, will be a year-long project.

Matching funds contributed by county businesses and citizens in the "905b Fund" at Western Bank in Tillamook provide additional non-federal match that makes it feasible for the 2.5-year project(s) to progress smoothly. Contributions to the fund are still being accepted. Information on the fund and its uses in on-going flood mitigation projects is available from SWCD at (503) 842-2240.

Plans for North Tillamook will highlight flood meeting

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
for the Headlight-Herald

The lower Wilson River drainage district and emergency flood mitigation will be discussed at the Sept. 2 meeting of the Tillamook County Flood control Group (TCFCG).

The 7:30 p.m. meeting will be held at Tillamook PUD in the Carl Rowe room. Landowners in the proposed district are encouraged to attend the meeting to determine

what the public and private sectors can do together to mitigate flood waters prior to the winter of 1999-00.

Working with the State of Oregon Emergency Management Department, the Army Corps of Engineers Emergency Management Operations and their construction & readiness division, county commissioners and local emergency management personnel will evaluate three emergency flood mitigation

measures in central Tillamook County.

The lower Wilson River watershed and floodplain maps will both be on the agenda.

Property owners, officials, agencies and volunteers have been working with **Nehalem Marine** and Army Corps Emergency Management to find cost-effective ways to mitigate flood waters and reduce flooding costs before the winter of 1999-00.

North Tillamook: The flood fight goes on

FROM MY PERSPECTIVE

Last fall and winter I was asked by Tillamook landowners to confront the worsening local flood problem.

In the Tone Road area with a superb effort by members of a Trask Drainage District, Tillamook County Emergency Management (Tom Manning), Project Impact, Region 10 FEMA (Andrew Hendrickson), Tillamook Flood Control Group and countless others we were able to evaluate the problem, propose solutions, fund, permit and complete construction all in a six month window. When we became mired in the bureaucracy the Performance Partnership stood up and reminded players that Tillamook County is no longer doing "the business as usual that created these problems." Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's Chris Knutsen and Rick Klumph, became team players. While imposing some harsh regulation, they came forth with funding to implement those regulations as well as aiding in the permit process. The Tone Road Project's ultimate success was obtained by all who contributed to the process, compromising and working together.

Out of complete frustration with available information I embarked on my own study (on behalf of my customers) of North Tillamook. I tracked floodwaters, and with cooperation of Tillamook County surveying crew was able to set up a flood monitoring system that immediately began yielding "real information" on the lower Wilson, Trask and Tillamook drainage. A picture quickly emerged of a system that had been quietly maintained for over 100 years by a few farmers, net fishermen and towboat operators. With the extinction of the net fishermen and towboats the job fell completely on the farmers and the

few people who still salvaged drifting timber. These people conducted this service to the benefit of the growing business district, homeowners and upriver farmers until environmental regulations forced them to stop. Almost simultaneously these same regulators forced almost a complete shutdown of the upriver gravel harvest which also became a huge contributor to the breakdown of the system. North Tillamook's free ride had come to an end.

I continued my study, spending days and days on the lower estuary and bay measuring and recording levels — before, during and after flood events. I quickly zeroed in on a few small key problems that were causing massive results. These problems are merely "hairballs in the drain" and don't constitute a major failure. What is evident is just general lack of maintenance in a few points. I don't advocate dredging the bay or any shotgun, large-scale approach. I believe that we can obtain some real results by a few small projects that actually enhance fish habitat, stabilize farmland erosion and restore the drainage system. I also advocate the use of some new facilities — pump stations, bigger tide gates and gated spillways that compensate for deterioration of the system.

In working almost daily with regulators it becomes apparent they have very little concept of the lower estuary. They rely on information created in an office in Portland or somewhere else and policy that is based on these misconceptions. I recently watched one of our main regulators key on information from some professor from the valley, who probably has never ever seen the estuary, while ignoring the ground facts provided by Bub Boquist who walked into the meeting with 70 plus years experience on the estuary. In the days that followed the professor's views were referred to many times while the local input was

ignored. I felt a sense of pride in our community as I watched our three county commissioners stand shoulder to shoulder and confront these same regulators on behalf of our community.

The result of my work is the North Tillamook Flood Mitigation Plan. Tillamook County has recently taken the reins on the plan that was conceived by local people, with local information for local relief. On every floor of the courthouse as well as at emergency management, the fight to make this plan happen continues. Doug Rosenburg and his neighbors have appealed to the North Tillamook population to form a unified front to take over the management of the drainage. This new district is the most important component in the salvation of North U.S. 101. Without this district there is very little we can do to aid your situation. This district could also act as a forum for you to settle local issues at a local level before they kill any aspect of federal or state aid. There is almost no funding available for individuals but, as a united front, the dollar doors begin to open.

A continuation of the evaluation of the North Tillamook area draws some very distressing pictures if you continue to not maintain your system. You are relying on water passages that are blocked with gravel and large woody debris, a system of failing dikes that no one is maintaining or monitoring and a system of tide gates that are too small for the job and rapidly failing due to age. Winter is around the corner and without some key work being accomplished the outlook is grim. The destiny of North Tillamook lies with the businesses and residents that inhabit this flood plain and you must take control of your own destiny as a united front.

Leo Kuntz
Nehalem Marine

Approach of winter speeds mitigation efforts for U.S. 101

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
for the Headlight-Herald

Representatives of the county's Emergency Management Department and the Army Corps of Engineers will be contacting property owners in the lower Wilson River watershed concerning flood losses in the last storm season, property easements and some right-of-ways in preparation for flood mitigation activities this fall.

Landowners in the floodplain along U.S. 101 North Tillamook City will be affected by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers planned attack on flooding. Property owners most affected are those where the Wilson River and Dougherty Slough/River split east of the Sollie Smith Bridge, those at the mouths of the Wilson, Tillamook, and Trask Rivers and along the banks of the Wilson and Tillamook River.

While the county and state are

doing what they can for disaster preparedness in Tillamook County before this winter, budget shortfalls do not leave funding for some key projects. The Army Corps has been delegated by Congress to carry out the measures if a benefit-to-cost ratio can be shown. For every dollar spent, one dollar or more has to be gained.

The estimated total cost for the proposed flood mitigation project is \$408,000. It has to be shown that the benefit to taxpayers for the mitigation will be in excess of the estimated \$408,000 cost. There is no cost to the county or landowners for the Corps to do the emergency project.

Corps engineers will determine whether or not temporary or permanent measures will be undertaken. In cases of temporary measures, permanent measures can be undertaken once they are proven to be a long term solution. Environmental

concerns and regulations are major considerations in the project work.

In Project 1 the goal is to revert water back to the Wilson River and keep Dougherty a slough, lessening the amount of water and giving 101 N. landowners more time for response to flood waters.

In Project 2, because of insufficient drainage a bathtub effect is created west of 101 N causing back-flooding onto properties. Currently there is one 4 foot tide gate to handle excess waters. The proposed project would create modified breaches and debris clearance to allow for more efficient flood water flow.

In Project 3 relocation of woody debris at the big and small cut of the Wilson River would allow greater river flow into Tillamook Bay. The same situation exists at Tillamook River near the Tillamook River Bridge, paralleling Tillamook River Road.

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FEMA spends nearly \$6.6 million

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES

For the Headlight-Herald

Including the floods of 1996 through today, FEMA estimates show \$6.67 million has been spent in Tillamook County. About \$5 million has been spent on response and recovery, \$1 million on elevations, \$300,000 each on flood grants and Project Impact, and \$70,000 for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

National Weather Service Warning Coordination Meteorologist Dan Keeton, in a letter to Tillamook County Emergency Management (TCEM) Director Tom Manning, said, "...we may reasonably expect that rainfall during the upcoming fall and winter will exceed long-term averages.

"While we cannot say that a major flood

is definitely going to occur, we can say that there is an increased risk for flooding. For this reason, I encourage you to take reasonable mitigation actions to prepare for an active flood season."

Flood insurance is one of many actions local property owners can take 30 days before flooding in order to receive compensation for losses this flood season. Insurance agents can direct you to the only flood insurance carrier in the U.S., the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

NFIP is a FEMA program, and FEMA is actively pursuing congressional support now for funds to buy out repetitive flood loss properties, to modernize FEMA mapping, and for pre-disaster mitigation. Flooding is the nation's No. 1 natural disaster, costing an estimated \$5.1 billion in

damages annually, according to the Federal Insurance Administration.

Considerations for property owners in flood areas, whether presently insured or not, are FEMA's proposals concerning repetitive loss structures which is defined as "any building with two or more flood losses greater than \$1,000 in any 10-year period since 1978." Currently, 1-2 percent of repetitive loss properties account for 36 percent of all NFIP claims.

FEMA is specifically targeting repetitive loss properties built before Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM's). Those older properties (pre-FIRM properties) would carry prohibitively expensive insurance premiums if they were not being subsidized by the government. Since the 1980's the subsidies have been reduced from 70 percent to 30

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in Tillamook County

percent of the policies, because of turnovers, ratings and coverage changes. To date the subsidy is about 38 percent of the full risk premium. The economic impacts of actuarial rates on pre-FIRM buildings are being studied now in an effort to reduce the subsidy further, to stop the cycle of repetitive loss.

Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) or property buy outs are an alternative to the repetitive loss cycle of subsidies.

A Repetitive Loss Strategy is being developed by the FIA to be approved by Congress. The first step is under way, development of a national repetitive loss properties list. The list being compiled consists of 10,000 plus properties with four or more losses or two-three large losses which cumulatively exceed the building value.

Secondly, effective May 1, 2000, all new policy applications and renewal requests will be referred to one facility for better information gathering. Thirdly, education of local communities and property owners on NFIP grants will be offered to the worst repetitive loss properties.

The fourth strategy is currently open to public comment. A rule has been proposed to Congress in which an owner identified on the repetitive loss properties list who declines an offer to mitigate flooding by relocating, elevating, or flood proofing, would have to pay full-risk premiums upon the next policy renewal.

On average flood mitigation costs for buy outs and elevations are repaid within seven to nine years.

Six flood projects under way

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
Special to the Headlight-Herald

Six flood mitigation projects are scheduled for completion this fall in the lower Tillamook Bay Watershed, primarily in the Wilson River watershed and U.S. 101 N area. Three advanced measures projects "fast tracked" by the Corps of Engineers (COE) Emergency Management Office, at an estimated cost of \$700,000, are happening simultaneously (Sites 1-3). ODOT's one year Wilson River Loop Road "Flood Detour" project is under way and on schedule for installation of three bridges (Site 4). Tillamook County Performance Partnership is completing its ODEQ-OWEB tide-gate project (Sites 5a-5h). (See story and picture below). A private flood mitigation project in the U.S. 101 business corridor is the sixth project (Site 6).

COE Emergency Management Director Les Miller said, "This is the first time our Portland office has secured a multi-complex project through the USCOE. Because of the magnitude of the proposal, it took longer, and took lots and lots of extra work to secure the contract and funding to do the three Tillamook County flood projects." Usually a COE office applies for one project in an area. The Tillamook Bay Watershed flood problems necessitated the multi-project approach.

The three-pronged COE temporary flood projects involve "plugging" one area (Site 1) and "unplug-

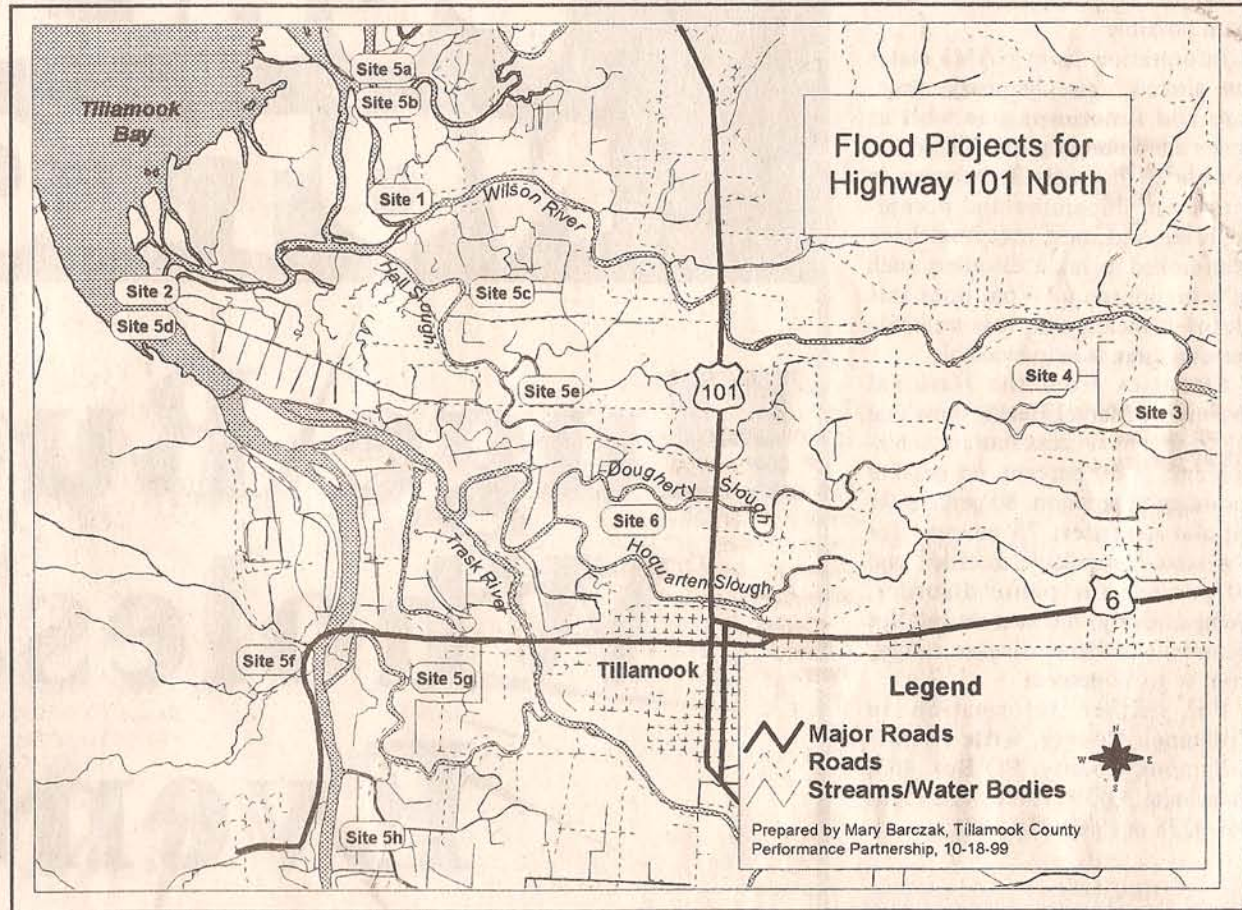
ging" another area of the Wilson River, and installing tidegates along the Tillamook Bay dike (Site 2). The headwater of the Dougherty Slough is being "plugged" with an engineered "logjam" of large stacked spruce trees (Site 3). The north and west forks of the Wilson River are being "unplugged" of woody debris and sedimentation. Twelve, six-foot, temporary tidegates are being installed in the

Tillamook Bay and Hall Slough levees for quicker drainage of flood waters. C.J. Excavating of Tillamook secured the COE contract, The COE and ODFW (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife) will be over-seeing the work.

The private landowner project (Site 6) involves clearing debris in an existing drainage ditch west of Highway 101 N on the south side of Northport Plaza. A one-half mile

equipment wide swath is being made to better connect the ditch with Hoquarten Slough.

None of the flood abatement projects will increase flooding in adjacent areas and will not encourage development in the floodplain. U.S. Fish and Wildlife and the National Marine Fisheries Departments conclude that the projects have no effect on federally listed species.



Early '50s tidegates being replaced

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
Special to the Headlight-Herald

Tillamook County Performance Partnership (TCPP) has targeted some 30-40 mid-century tidegates for replacement as funding becomes available through grants and partnerships with businesses and agencies.

The first TCPP project is a Oregon Department of Environmental Quality-Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board grant project. Through the Fish Passage Improvement and 319 Clean Water Act Funds, \$94,400 has been awarded. Installation of the tidegates has been contracted out through a public bidding process to Nehalem Marine.

At a cost of about \$11,000 per gate installed, eight new fish friendly, water enhancement tide gates are being installed in the lower Tillamook Bay watershed. The old dysfunctional four-foot tidegates are being replaced with five-foot tidegates. There are four slough, three river, and on creek tidegates being installed.



Leo Kuntz installs a new tidegate, which will help juvenile fish habitat by allowing fish movement. Many tidegates in the county from the early '50s are being replaced.

The number one consideration in this tidegates program is juvenile fish habitat. Project grant writer and consultant Don Reynolds said, "We monitor the area before and after placement. Before installing a new tidegate I have seen just a few juvenile fish in the area behind the tidegate. Within a 24-hour period there can be more fish than I can count.

Water quality is also monitored. The locally manufactured tidegates are designed and placed to reduce water temperature behind the tidegates, to increase dissolved oxygen in the water, and to reduce turbidity, or dirtiness, of the water. A third effect of these replacements is to allow pooled flood waters to escape from the fields back into the rivers.

Application for replacement of

six additional gates is being made through FEMA's Project Impact program. The Corps of Engineers Advanced Measures project includes 12 gates on the Tillamook Bay dike to be installed this fall. Because of the COE's Advanced Measures and private funds are being used to complete the U.S. 101 North flood abatement projects, Project Impact funds are freed up for other drainage improvements in the floodplain with an emphasis on flood water reduction.

Different kinds of gates are used in different areas of the watershed. Fish friendly gates are used in juvenile fish habitat areas. All tidegates support water quality enhancement by allowing a better exchange of water to some degree. Tidegates are installed to keep brackish tide waters from destroying agricultural land while allowing pooled water after storms an avenue to drain to the rivers. Tidegates used to enhance drainage after flooding are less sophisticated than the fish friendly models and are installed to promote rapid movement of the flood water back into the river systems.

Six floodplain mitigation projects are

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES

Special to the Headlight-Herald

Four flood mitigation projects "fast tracked" for completion early fall are on schedule. The projects are in the lower Tillamook Bay Watershed, primarily the Wilson River watershed and U.S. 101 N area.

Three of the projects are Corps of Engineers (COE) Emergency Advanced Measures projects. One completed project is 250 feet of rip-rapping (rocking) on the Wilson River-Dougherty Slough bank.

Layers of spruce trees have been placed and anchored instream near the mouth of the Dougherty Slough. Downstream, at the mouth of the Wilson River, a second COE project, is completed.

The third COE project is installation of 12 tidegates. Two of the tidegates have been installed at Hall Slough near Makinster Road. The remaining 10 tidegates are being installed at the Tillamook Bay dike.

The COE emergency projects are simple temporary measures designed to lessen immediate flood

problems while permanent long term solutions are being sought through another COE office and county partners. The estimated cost of the COE advanced measures projects is \$400,000, not the original \$700,000 estimate previously reported.

Project Engineer Dwight Gill said, "Local cooperation and contract work has been good. We are feeling the pressure of having to work without the usual preparations, because of the late start, which makes work more confusing

than usual."

The fourth project is a half-mile swath that has been cleared along the dike near Northport Plaza on Highway 101 N. The project is a private flood mitigation project designed to reopen the flood path to Hall Slough. The goal is to drain flood waters more quickly.

The Tillamook County Performance Partnership tidegate project, the fifth project, has five of its eight fish friendly tidegates installed. The other two remaining gates will be installed as tides and

right on schedule

weather allow entry into the area at Squeedunk Slough and Kilchis River. The sixth project is the ODOT Wilson River Loop Road "Flood Detour" project, scheduled for completion Sept. 1, 2000. The

road bypass is completed and open to traffic. The old road is being removed and preparations made for installation of bridge pillars. Riprap is being placed for scouring holes under the bridges.

Flood control projects worked

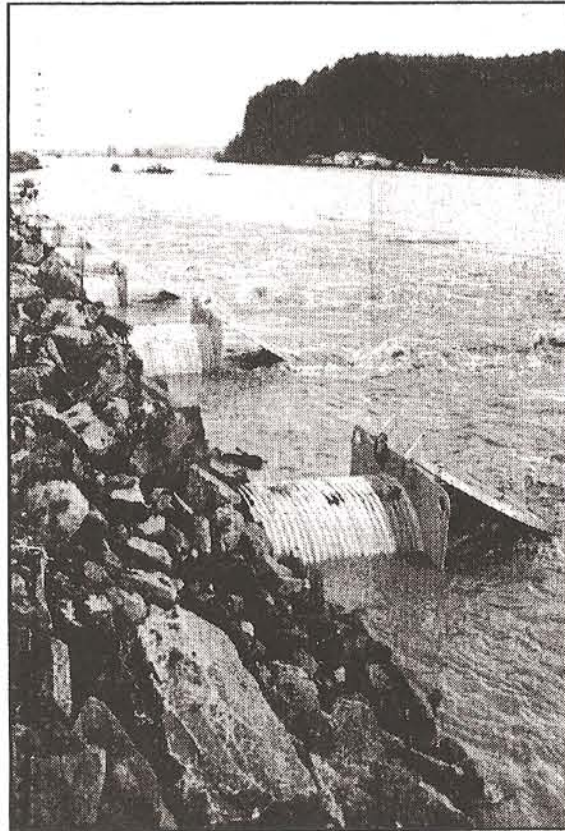
BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
Special to the Headlight-Herald

Flood control measures, including the installation of tide gates, operated as they were intended during the Thanksgiving Day 1999 flood, according to officials with the the Tillamook County Flood Control Group (TCFCG).

"From the information I have, we had twice as much rain this time as last year's flood," said TCFCG spokesman Don Coleman. "In my business in the U.S. Hwy. 101 N corridor, I had 30 inches this flood versus 35 in December 1998 and 36 inches in February 1996. I was open for business the next day. I attribute the difference to the flood mitigation projects done this fall, the new tidegates and spillway."

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See MEASURES on Page A13



DON BEST/Courtesy Photo

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MEASURES

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1999 Thanksgiving flood movies, pictures, and stories will be on the agenda at the monthly Tillamook County Flood Control Group meeting at 7:30 p.m., Dec. 2, at Tillamook PUD, the Carl Rawe Room. The community is invited to share flooding information and make plans for the future.



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Flooded out ... again

Rains, slides take toll on homes, roads

BY KYLE ODEGARD
Headlight-Herald staff

A stunned Tillamook County assessed damage and cleaned the mud and debris left behind by the Thanksgiving flood of 1999. The Nehalem, Wilson, Trask and Nestucca rivers and various tributaries raged, entering homes uninvited during dinnertime, spilling over roads, closing highways and isolating communities.

County commissioners, who declared a county state of emergency on Nov. 26, are busy finding funds to help homeowners pay for

damages, as well as seeking a declaration of emergency from Governor John Kitzhaber.

In South and Central Tillamook County alone, 66 homes were damaged by the floods, according to American Red Cross preliminary data supplied by Tillamook County Emergency Management Center. Those figures could rise as surveys continue in the south and move north into the Nehalem Bay Area.

South County was hit especially hard by the flooding, with Pacific City engulfed in water on Thanksgiving Day. Early reports

See FLOOD on Page A3



Leo Kuntz, in red at left, helps a family from Pendleton move to higher ground during the holiday flood. Many visitors, and locals, were forced to change their holiday plans as a result of the third, "100-year-flood" to hit the county in the last three years. (Photo by Don Best)

Flood control projects worked

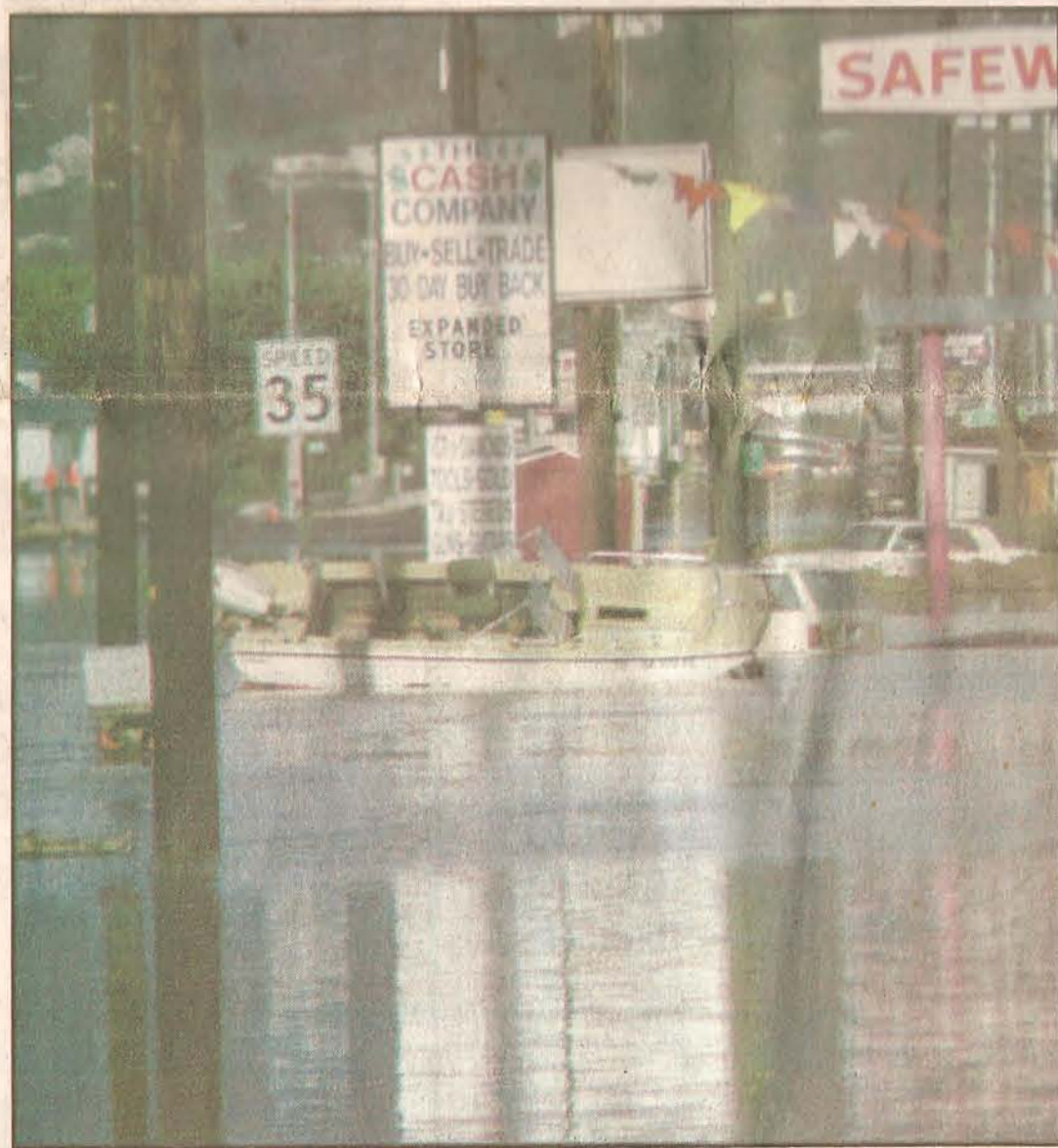
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See MEASURES on Page A13



A boat floats along U.S. 101 during the high waters that ravaged Tillamook County over the Thanksgiving holiday. (Photo by Tim Parsons)

U.S. 101 businesses face another cleanup

BY LINDA L. EDIGER
Headlight-Herald community editor

Here we go again. In a repeat of the flood of 1998, the rains came down, and U.S. 101 businesses took a hard hit, though many business owners said they were better prepared this time.

On Nov. 27, Doug Rosenberg was still looking at a foot and a half of water in his store's parking lot.

Rosenberg, owner of Rosenberg Builders Supply Inc., 2 Main Ave., said crew, family and friends — some arriving via boat — were busily cleaning up the store's interior.

"Once the mud dries, it's like paint," he said.

The store lost a minimal amount of inventory and the credit goes to the new tide gates, according to Rosenberg.

"This year we had time to get ready," he said, remarking on the loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars in the December 1998 flood. "The 10, six-foot state-of-the-art tide gates were just finished a week ago and worked perfectly. They just couldn't handle the fast rise of the Dougherty breaking through the Wilson River."

As of Nov. 29, an estimated 30 vehicles were towed by Burden's Muffler and Towing either from flooding or road slides,

according to Linnea Burden.

"Thanksgiving afternoon we were concerned about the water rising on the site," Burden said, "but we were able to get our storage vehicles to higher ground."

The water historically gets into the shop's muffler-pits, but pumps were utilized and there was no extensive damage, she said.

Jane's Fabric Patch, located south of town, was one of the luckier businesses.

"We had water up over our second-step, and obviously weren't able to open our store on Friday," said Jane Wise, owner. "We suffered no inventory damage, but it made a real mess in the yard."

Don Best, a member of the Tillamook County Flood Control Group, said he contacted various businesses and completed an informal survey of flood water heights.

"It looked like the north side of town was down by 4 inches from the 1998 flood and 6 inches from the 1996 flood," said Best. "Except for SC Paving. For some reason, it was hit really hard." Best said in 1996, the business recorded 38 inches of water; 39-inches of water in 1998 and 49 and a half inches during the recent flood.

Tillamook Rental reported to Best that 36 inches hit in 1996; 35 inches in 1998

See BUSINESSES on Page A13

Area dairies suffer heavy losses

BY JACKIE EDWARDS
Headlight-Herald staff

"We have lost hay and cattle and it is not looking too good," commented Dan Leuthold, president of Tillamook County Farm Bureau. "Fields are filled with wood and mud and there has been major damage to hay and cattle. As long as these rivers are plugged up, the water won't get out ... this happens every year. It is getting routine. Some other guys farther west, I don't know how they can do this year after year. Some of them are going to quit; I know I couldn't handle it."

Across the county, farmers are working in the aftermath of the devastation. Many farmers spent their Thanksgiving holiday in fields and barns.

Leuthold, whose farm is located on McCormick Loop by the Railroad Bridge on the Trask River, said that on Friday morning (Nov. 26) he had tried to build dikes but that they broke at 9 that night, allowing water to surge into hay barns.

Leuthold continued, "When hay gets wet, when it gets warm, it will catch on fire in a week or two if you don't remove it. You

worry about yourself first and then you spread out and help neighbors. Some neighbors have so much water that they can't even move out their hay yet."

Farmers were also helping each other by collecting cows for their neighbors.

Steve Neahring, on McDonald Road two miles outside of Nehalem, said, "We have six of our neighbor's heifers which swam back here."

Neahring continued, "It has been quite a Thanksgiving for us all. As far as our milk cows go, they were fine. We built a cow pad

in 1996 and put a milk parlor on it and a barn to milk in and for the cows to feed and sleep. However, some of our heifers were out in the field and got stranded on a dike. We went after them right at the height of the flood. They decided to go swimming. We finally got them up on top of a hill. When the water went down this morning we went out to them ... it has been pretty busy here. Right now we have just mud and debris, wood and such as that. We also have people's burn barrels because we have summer homes along here.

See DAIRIES on Page A14

Smoke detectors alarm family of mobile home fire

Four residents of a mobile home on Hwy. 22 outside of Hebo were awakened at 2:30 a.m., Nov. 24, when smoke detectors went off. They escaped their smoke-filled home and fled to neighbors to call 911.

Nestucca Rural Fire Protection District responded to the call with five engines, two rescue units and 24 firefighters.

The residents had been having difficulty with a circuit breaker

going off for some time but, unable to locate the difficulty, were turning the breaker back on. The faulty cord was located in a water heater closet on the outside of the mobile. The extension cord, which ran across a metal edge, had worn through, causing the fire. On the day before the fire, a burning odor had permeated the home, but residents were unable to locate the problem.

See FIRE on Page A2

A homecoming for managing editor

Ken O'Toole, new managing editor of the Headlight-Herald, effective today, is excited about his job. It brings him home to Tillamook County, home to where he grew up in a cabin outside Nehalem.

"This is the area that means the most to me, as far as being part of it, and covering what's going on," said O'Toole.

"I was thinking that it would be really great to get back to this area at some point. I was glad I could do it before retirement. It's ideal. This is what I have been waiting for," he added.

Before returning to Tillamook,

O'Toole was the managing editor of the South Idaho Press, a 5,500 daily in Burley, Idaho.

He has also served as the managing editor of three other dailies, The Orange Leader (Texas,) the Ketchikan Daily News (Alaska) and, for nearly eight years, The Ashland Daily Tidings.

He worked as a reporter for several newspapers in Washington and Alaska, and received his master's degree in journalism from the University of Oregon.

O'Toole is looking forward to getting input from the public regarding news and how the



O'TOOLE

Headlight-Herald can better report the news.

Flood news inside

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• Tide gate photo
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• More photos
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• Weather
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• A 'serial' flood?
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FLOOD

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indicated that 55 homes were damaged by floodwaters by the Nestucca River, 10 with major damage.

Tillamook had five homes that suffered major damage, four homes that suffered minor damage, and one home that was destroyed.

Initial assessments pegged county road damage at \$350,000, according to Jon Oshel, director of Tillamook County Public Works.

More than 16 inches of rain fell in 48 hours between the night of Nov. 24 and the morning of Nov. 26. Rivers crested over their banks, peaking more than 4 feet above flood level on the Nehalem and Wilson, the only county rivers where such measurements are available. Floodwaters started receding on Nov. 26.

Instead of enjoying the long holiday weekend, Jan Oden and many of her neighbors in Pacific City spent it removing mud from inside their homes.

Oden said 4 inches of brown muck inundated her house. She was living in a camper as the cleanup continued.

Residents said flooding in Pacific City was higher than ever before.

Mitigation efforts helped make the flood easier to handle in central and North Tillamook County. Downtown Nehalem was under water again this year, but didn't suffer significant damage, as homes and businesses there were raised after the devastating floods of 1996.

Tidegates worked well in central county, slowing the incoming water so that businesses north of downtown Tillamook could embark on a solid, prepared flood fight, according to County Commissioner Tim Josi. "When the water comes in, it comes in slower, and when it goes

out, it goes out quicker," said Josi. "The amount of water was pretty comparable to the '96 event, but you don't see a lot of damage and hundreds of cows lost," he added. Other mitigation measures include floodways and cow pads.

Oshel said that the flood of 1996 was much worse for the county.

"It lasted so much longer. That was a three-day event. This lasted a day and a half."

County emergency shelters harbored 102 residents and stranded motorists, including 17 people evacuated from their homes, and 39 residents forced to leave Tillamook Care Center because of the rising water. Hebo Christian Center became an unofficial shelter after it opened its doors to 20 people, mostly stranded motorists, on Thanksgiving night.

Oregon Emergency Management will tour the county to see if it qualifies for the governor's declaration, which could bring a federal disaster declaration and 10 days of free assistance from the Army Corps of Engineers. Before Tillamook County gains federal assistance though, it must pass \$5 million dollars worth of damage, before insurance, according to Tom Manning, director of Tillamook County Emergency Management Center.

A flood warning was issued by National Weather Service at 3 p.m., Nov. 24, and flooding started that night. Unfortunate motorists were caught in high water on the Miami-Foley Road. By Thanksgiving Day, numerous points on U.S. 101 were closed, by high water at the north and south entrances to Tillamook, by slide south of Beaver, and by high water and mudslide at Cascade Head south of Neskowin. Wilson River Loop was closed due to high water as well. State Route 22 was

also closed by high water just west of Grande Ronde.

Tillamook was isolated due to the closure of State Route 6, shut down by partial washout and landslide 13 miles east of the city.

Marla Oshel, 23, was traveling to her parents' home in Tillamook for Thanksgiving when she got caught in the State Route 6 slide at approximately 9 a.m. on Nov. 25. A department of transportation worker went through an initial slide area with a snowplow, and Marla followed him through, only to have a second slide rush across the east-bound lane of traffic and pile halfway up her driver's side window. Marla wasn't hurt, and her car wasn't badly damaged, but she was "very scared, petrified, hysterical."

Marla waited in her car for five minutes before getting out the passenger door, and waited another hour-and-a-half for her car to be towed out.

"I was just thankful my car held on the highway and didn't sweep down the river," said Marla. "Once I got to my parents' house, it was a very thankful Thanksgiving."

The Little Nestucca Highway, State Route 130, was closed by multiple slides and downed trees late in the night of Nov. 25.

By 1:30 p.m., Nov. 26, the Beaver and Cascade Head slides were cleared, and water had receded enough to open the south entrance to Tillamook. State Route 22 reopened as well. Late on Nov. 26, the north entrance to Tillamook opened. The morning of Nov. 27, State Route 130 was opened, and State Route 6 followed that evening. Miami-Foley Road opened late Nov. 29.

Foss Road was the only road in the county still closed due to the floods at press time.

PUBLIC FORUM

Tide gates and flood gates put to the test

To county commissioners, National Estuary Project (NEP): Don Reynolds, Army Corp of Engineers; Performance Partnership, Leo Kuntz:

The tide gates and flood gates installed this fall were put to the test this Thanksgiving 1999.

People do not realize the advantage of drainage that has occurred. Makinster and Goodspeed Roads were able to drain ... fast.

We were flooded terribly fast, but water was dispersed faster through these gates. Highway 101 North should now realize the economic value of these floodgates.

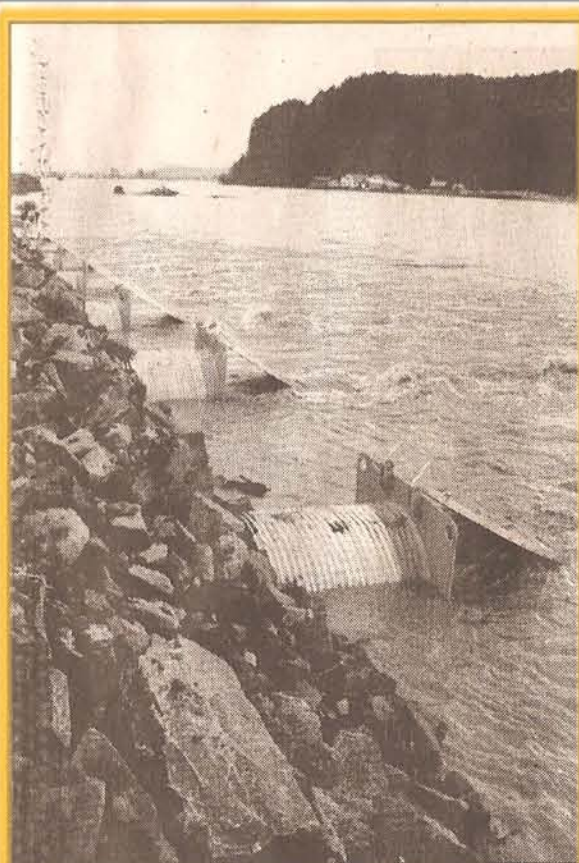
RSC Dairy was three feet under-water in the barns and eight feet under water in the fields. We were thankful that the water had left this time. In 1996 and 1998 the water remained for two months in our fields.

We wish that bureaucracy would demand and proceed with better drainage, lowering the rivers, deepening the channels. Just maybe people could live in Tillamook safely!

Richard Chelone
RSC Dairy, Tillamook

Headlight-Herald

Wednesday, December 1, 1999



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MEASURES

Continued from Page A1

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BUSINESSES

Continued from Page A1

and 30 inches in 1999. Safeway experienced approximately 4 inches this year, compared to 18 inches of water inside the store and 26 inches outside the store in 1998. In 1996, with no sandbags, there was 38 inches inside the store.

Tillamook Farm Store had 6 inches of water in the front of the store this year; in 1998, 8 inches and in 1996, 12 inches.

Iles Schwab Tire Center was surrounded by a foot and a half of water, but only a minimal amount gained entry to the store, according to Mike St. Clair, the manager.

"We lost some tires out by our bullpen (storage area) on the south side," he said. "Actually, the giant loader tires just floated away."

"Of the six tires, five ended up in a nearby field, with one, valued at \$2,000, being lost in the bay.

"We were only closed just about three and a half days," said Safeway's public affairs director for Oregon and Southwest Washington stores, Bridget Flanagan. "We were able to reopen our pharmacy at 11 a.m. on Nov. 28 and opened the full store at the regular time of 6 a.m. as of Nov. 29."

Flanagan said there were minimal

amounts of water in the store — approximately 4 inches.

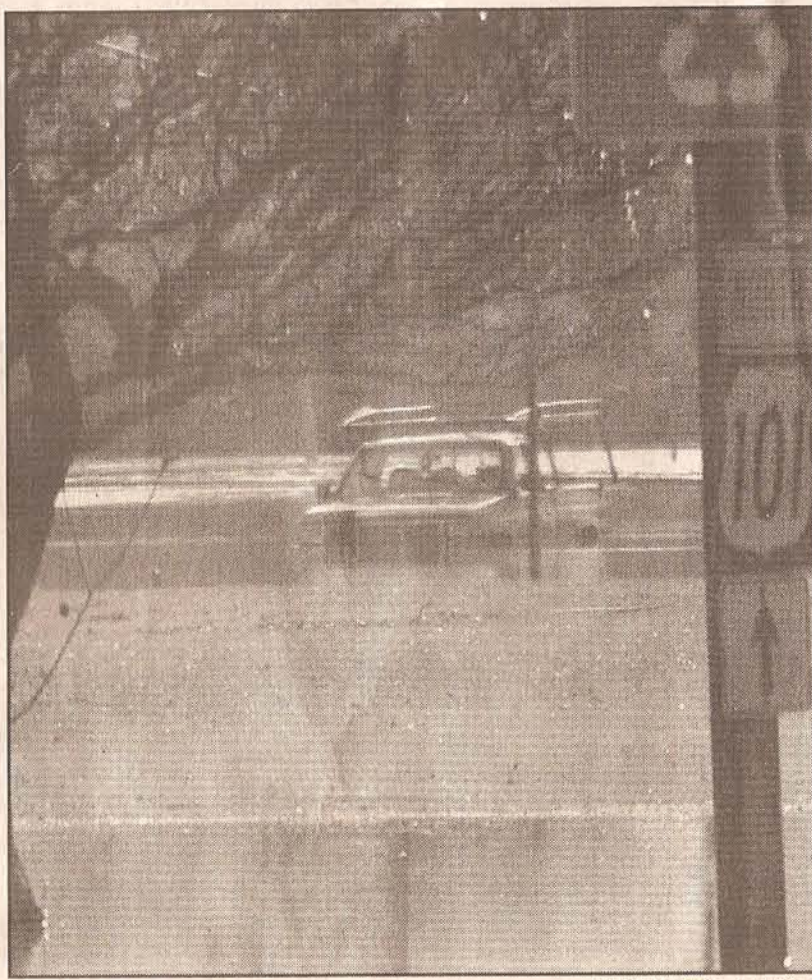
"We experienced minimal contamination. The store had been visited by the health department a number of times asking how we were planning to approach the cleanup and gave us a stamp of approval on Nov. 28," she said.

"As soon as they (the employees) saw the water was really rising — we closed the store and put barriers across the entrance to the lot and relocated employee cars to higher ground," said Flanagan.

Safeway had 22 employees who worked in the store Thanksgiving Day until about 5 p.m., when 13 departed for home. Nine employees pitched in until 9 p.m.

"We're basically back to normal now," said Flanagan. "We're still counting our losses — \$30,000 worth of product damage with no equipment damage."

Flanagan also credits a flood gate by the back loading dock, which helped reduce the amount of water that entered the store. "We also keep three trucks in the back during flood season to off-load any product from the back room to minimize destruction."



Businesses along U.S. 101 reported that flood control measures minimized damage to their buildings and equipment.

DAIRIES

Continued from Page A1

We have lost some hay and straw ... the next thing that we have to build on our cow pad is a hay barn."

Those farms with cow pads had fewer difficulties with the water. Cow pads, as the locations were coined, are areas of higher ground for animals. With fill taken from slides around the county when a place was needed for the rock and dirt cleared from roads, fill was hauled to dairies in the area.

Matt and Joan Marti, whose farm is in Nehalem, lost their home after the Feb. 96 flood and a windstorm the following April and now have a manufactured home on fill about five feet above the 96 flood benchmark.

About this flood, Joan Marti commented, "We had about 8 inches at the low spots inside our barn which was nothing for us. It was nerve racking but no damage. Maybe they had to walk through ankle deep water to be milked but otherwise it was very non-eventful for us." Marti continued, "Typically this would compare with a little bit worse than last Thanksgiving. It is similar to the April flood in 1996 — not the Feb. 1996 flood when we lost cows ... I'm sorry for the people that did get hit hard but I feel lucky that we didn't."

Blake Myers of Myers Brothers Dairy off of Hwy 53 has been collecting his cows from neighbors and even from the surf of Rockaway Beach. Myers said, "We had 25 head that somehow entered the river. They weren't even surrounded by water. Something spooked them at night. They hit the river and some followed."

Most are now recovered, the most notorious being the cow that "took the current all the way out through the breakers and washed ashore."

Myers said, "Friday morning I was sitting here listening to the scanner. Heard a sheriff asking another about a cow in Rockaway Beach. The ear tag number rang a bell. We called up and told them we are on our way. It was our cow. There were several cattle spread all over — three in Wheeler, three in Nehalem. I got a call last night that one was spotted at Dean's Point in Nehalem."

Keeping a sense of humor about it all, Myers remarked, "They went shopping; one of them even went surfing. But," he continued, "our cattle weren't even standing in high water. I think something must have spooked them. When one starts in, the rest will follow. We still haven't been able to get in to where the cattle are (at the end of McKimmens Road on Hwy 53 that borders the property). There has been high water but we should be able to get in today (Monday, Nov. 29)."

Myers said, "Several other dairymen have some of our heifers in their barn. Everyone pitched in and helped. That was a good deal. We appreciated their help. We really are thankful to all of the community."

While farmers helped one another, feelings regarding the reasons for the heavy flooding were high. Jack DeSwart whose farm is located at Milepost 3 on the Trask River said, "The flood waters we have up here are not from the rivers. They are from the creeks. The farmers down below are flooded because everything is flooded. Rivers are so plugged up with rock that they won't hold water anymore."

DeSwart expressed frustration with the present situation. "They used to harvest rock from the rivers back in the '30s. Fish and Wildlife said that could no longer be done and that is just devastating to us." DeSwart compared the rivers to a 5-gallon bucket that, when filled with mud, won't hold as much water.

He adds, "Our impact is mostly erosion on river banks themselves. The bank of the river falls in and makes the river bigger and takes the field away. It erodes all the banks away and makes the river wider and wider. The river is so full of debris that the water has to go someplace. Anyplace where the banks are soft, it cuts into it something fierce. Then it comes over the sides. The rivers are choked full of junk. The bay is full, too."

Concurring with these comments, Todd Leuthold, who works with his father at a farm on McCormick Loop commented about his neighbors, "They had cows up to their bellies in water. It was pretty bad. If they don't dredge the bays, the water has no place to go. There was a heck of a log jam at Railroad Bridge. The water was coming back behind Trask View Farms which we have never seen before. The jam was in place and the water couldn't go down. The gravel bar on the river bed is just huge. Something definitely needs to be done with these rivers ... we have had another 100-year flood in three years."

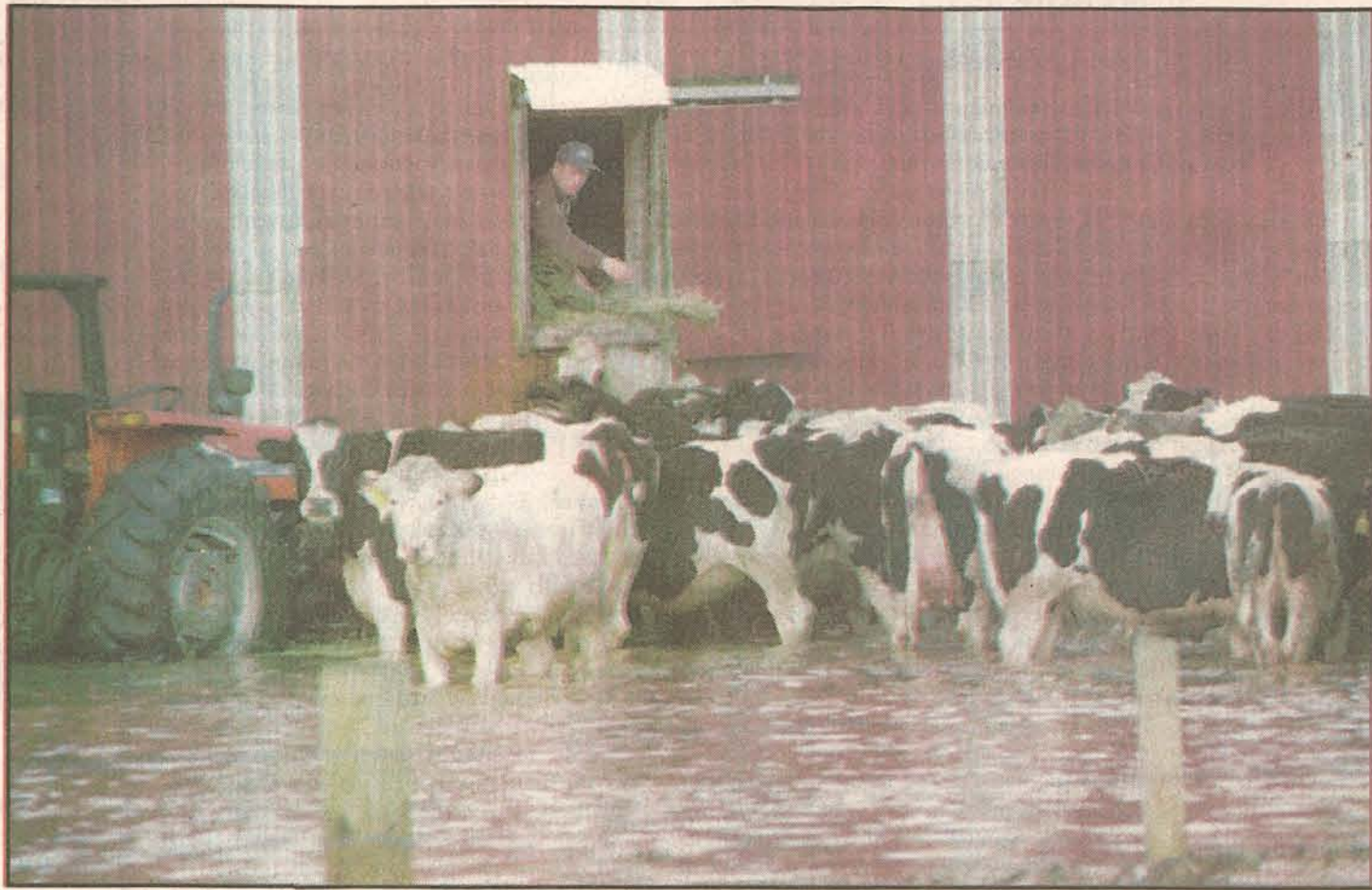
Todd added, "My neighbor had a black angus on a log jam that had been walking around on it for 24 hours. There were 20 of us trying to pull her out but she fell through."

Continuing, he commented, "Engineers need to listen to the old-timers. Guys that are book smart aren't necessarily common-sense smart. They haven't been through the experience. All the models they build aren't going to show exactly what is going to happen. Up in a hill somewhere, some log jam that has been there for years can blow and take half the mountain."

A concern of many farmers is that, though they didn't lose cows, the problem is not yet over. Animals, after such a bout, can contract pneumonia, and animals in the water may end up having a lot of mastitis problems. Also troublesome is that there can be a loss of production because of stress, animals dying later on down the road or 'not being as good as they were to begin with.'

In this flood, some people couldn't milk for 36 hours or more because they couldn't get to their cows. Stated Todd, "It is getting old. Something needs to be done."

"But," he continued, "one good thing about this community is that neighbors help neighbors. I love this community dearly. I wouldn't trade it for anything else in the world."



Marty Blaser, who farms on Tone Road, found it necessary to feed his herd through a window in his barn. Dairy farmers throughout the county suffered heavy losses as a result of the recent flooding. (Photo by Don Best)

Thanksgiving flood of '99



At right, water levels along Tone Road in Tillamook County were higher than in years past, according to flood officials. (Photo by Don Best)



"The water was coming back behind Trask View Farms which we have never seen before. The jam was in place and the water couldn't go down. The gravel bar on the river bed is just huge. Something definitely needs to be done with these rivers ... we have had another 100-year flood in three years."
- Todd Leuthold

At left, Butch Schriber wades through his driveway as high water inundates the home and barns. (Photo by Don Best)



At right, two youths face a lake formerly known as U.S. 101. (Photo by Tim Parsons)

Holiday 'serial storm' takes bite out of turkey day (again)

BY MICHAEL O'BRIEN
Headlight-Herald staff

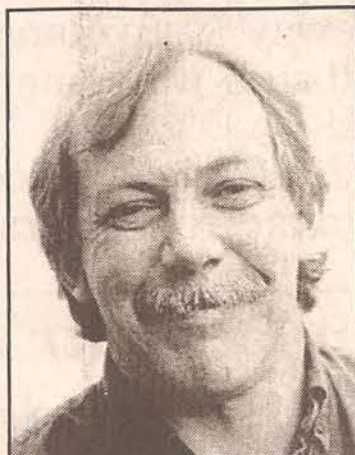
Not wishing to alarm residents or leap to any panic-inducing conclusions, it seems clear that it is time to address the very real possibility that the dreaded words "serial storm" may have to be uttered due to successive Thanksgiving upheavals in Tillamook County.

In successive 1998-99 Thanksgivings, a considerable portion of the residents of Tillamook County have been deprived, as a group, of one-half of their annual dose of the relaxing amino acid tryptophan, found in cooked turkeys that are, in more agreeable climates, gathered around by families and friends and devoured on the popular holiday known as Thanksgiving. How this reduction in the calming amino acid will play out over the next few months in this normally peaceful county is yet to be seen. I know I'm a little grumpy, having now gone two consecutive years without a whiff of turkey with back-to-back gathering days

disrupted.

While authorities connected with local law enforcement and the National Weather

Bureau will neither confirm or deny the existence of a "serial storm", suspicion is mounting in numbers stemming from local residents who have now gone "0-for-the-late-nineties" in attending food-filled gatherings due to excessive storm disruption. Let's look at the facts. In 1998, the west-



ern branch of central Tillamook County was huddled in darkness around makeshift hibachis trying futilely to discern how to properly cook a 30 pound bird as the storm raged and dangling power lines provided a fun-filled holiday for local PUD employees.

In 1999, a different attack was mounted as less than 36 hours before the magic day, a deluge began that shook hands with the highest tides of the season, turning U.S. 101 north of Rosenberg's into Lake GoHomeandEatToastforDinner. In case travelers had the endurance to drive north via State Route 6 and cut back on 26, or the notion to go to Portland, a slide occurred at the 14-milepost of the Wilson River and trapped the earnest drivers like yams, forcing them back to their empty nests.

This reporter will readily admit to some "attitude" about these storms. In 1998, my family made the attempt to gather from all over the Northwest on the day after Thanksgiving, allowing for travel and dual-family obligations. A sister traveled from

Portland and was stymied at the Cape Meares junction, past which there was no access to the family house, where hours earlier, the scent of roast turkey was beginning to send zephyrs of pleasure through the air. We met, five miles from said house, unable to get closer due to downed trees and power lines, I answered as best I could her questions; ("What level hurricane is this?") and she eventually gave up and returned to Portland. Hours later, I made it to the "family gathering" after driving through a thrill-filled obstacle course of downed lines, trees and a swamp at the end of the drive that poured around the door handles of my vehicle.

Home, was unfortunately without power, along with a quarter-cooked bird that was not-ready-for-human-consumption and feeling less than ambitious by this time, I gave up and went to bed as the dark house rocked in the storm.

1999 offered a glimpse of hope as people talked jovially about their holiday plans two days ahead of the day and I had

a list of options that included Netarts, Manzanita, Portland or Spokane for nice dinners and visits with special friends or family.

The rain began 36 hours before the holiday and word began to spread as the travel day approached that U.S. 101 now "slept with the fishes", the Wilson River road was kapoot and in my little corner, you needed a jet ski to get past the estuary at the entrance to Cape Meares. The Thanksgiving-mocking serial storm (there, I said it), had struck again.

Coincidence? I don't think so. All I know is that it is now mid-afternoon on Thanksgiving, people all over America are perched around tables with family and friends and it's another no-birder here. Back to back deprivation of tryptophan. I'm not bitter though. Like so many others, those smells from the kitchen and good company, that only arrive biannually never did a thing for me. After two years, it's just a distant memory.

Tillamook delegation bound for D.C.



Tillamook County Project Impact Summit, Washington, D.C., delegation includes (back row, from left) John Coopersmith, Greg Sands, Rich Felley, Sue Cameron, Shirley Kalkoven, Jim McGinnis, Bob McPheeters. (front row, left to right) Mark Gervasi, Val Folkema, Denise Claussen, Tilda Chadwick Jones. Not pictured: Leo Kuntz, Tom Manning, Tim Josi.

(Photo by Tilda Chadwick Jones)

Project Impact Summit Dec. 12-16

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
Special to the Headlight-Herald

TILLAMOOK — For the second year, a Tillamook delegation of citizen volunteers, business and agency representatives, and officials will be attending the FEMA Project Impact Summit in Washington, D.C. The summit is set for Dec. 12-16.

In addition to the 14 county representatives, the Tillamook Junior High School jazz band will be attending the summit for two days to play at two events. The Jazz Band is playing at the request of FEMA Director James Lee Witt, who personally invited the band when visiting Tillamook earlier this year. FEMA funds, donations, and fundraisers are paying for the group of 28 students and adults. The group will pay back its FEMA trip funding through Project Impact education and community service projects.

Tillamook County is a designated FEMA Project Impact community dedicated to disaster resistance. Through the federal designation the county has been able to fund drainage projects such as the pump station and spillway in the Lower Trask River Drainage District on Tone Road.

More than 1,000 participants from around the country will be networking on "building disaster resistant communities." Commissioner Sue Cameron and Economic Development Director Val Folkema will be workshop leaders at two of the many summit workshops. Workshops include, "Tips for Safeguarding Your Business,"

"Animals in Disasters," "Mitigation for Homeowners," "Community Emergency Response Teams," and "Getting the Most Out of Public-Private Partnerships: Tips on Working Effectively with Government."

Tillamook County is participating in the summit tradeshow by displaying its signed Project Impact banner, with scrapbooks showing local disasters and disaster-resistant projects.

*Headlight-Herald,
Tillamook, Ore., Wed.,
December 8, 1999*

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'The bay has yet to flood'

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
Special to
the Headlight-Herald

TILLAMOOK —
"The bay has yet to flood" — that is what
Leo Kuntz of Nehalem
Marine told the
Tillamook County
Flood Control Group at
its Dec. 2 meeting.

Kuntz went on to
share differential data
he gathered during the
Thanksgiving flood.
Kuntz measured
Safeway at a 12-foot
gvd (geodetic vertical
datum), the Hall Slough
area halfway between
Safeway and the bay
drop to 10.3 feet gvd,
the 10 new tidegates in
the bay dike dropped to
9.3 feet gvd, and the bay
point was the lowest
point at 6.3 feet gvd.

See FLOOD, Page A11

FLOOD

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Continued from Page A1

Interpreted, that means "the bay has yet to flood." The bay can hold 6 more feet of flood waters. There is a place for more water sooner, for less flooding in the lower watershed.

Business owners, citizens, farmers, and agency people shared such flood information and then discussed solutions to further lessen flood damages in Tillamook County.

Tom Manning, Tillamook County Emergency Management, reported that Oregon Department of Transportation is assessing the massive railroad bridge logjam on the Tillamook River at the Port of Tillamook Bay and the threatened bridge near

KTIL/KMBD east of Tillamook City on the Netarts-Oceanside road. Under Corps of Engineers emergency measures the culvert plug at Cape Meares Lake that threatened to flood the beach properties was cleared.

A new contract with the COE emergency measures office makes it possible to correct the engineered logjam at Dougherty Slough in order for the slough to stay a slough and not a river.

In the Thanksgiving Flood the COE advanced measures project blew out and Dougherty Slough became a river once again. The COE emergency work on the big cut of the Wilson River to clear the logjam and reopen the river will be done this week.

"Structures in south county that had been previously raised by owners were not raised enough and flooded in the Thanksgiving flash flood," Manning said, adding that 320 homes in Tillamook County have reported storm damages thus far.

Tillamook County Department of Community Development has allocated all present FEMA funds for raising of structures and is seeking further funding to continue the program.

Mark Labhart, Oregon Department of Forestry, distributed data supporting a record 18-inch rainfall in conjunction with a high 10-foot tide in a 72-hour period.

Kuntz pointed out three dike

breaches in the U.S. 101 N Tillamook City area, two of which need repair and the third one widened and made permanent.

Another consideration is the lowering of the bay dike to allow flood waters to over-top the bay dike instead of collecting in the U.S. 101 N area. Data and documentation is being done to support deepening of the river mouths in addition to the current projects of debris removal.

Signatures are being gathered in support of short-and long-term flood mitigation projects. Call Rosenberg Builders Supply for further information at 842-4325.

Dredging up support

Petition boosters seek to ease flooding, help fish

BY KYLE ODEGARD
Headlight-Herald staff



KYLE ODEGARD/Headlight-Herald

Clarence 'Bub' Boquist stands on the bank of the Kilchis River, which he says is twice as wide as it used to be due to the bank erosion. "This bank should be out there at least 50 feet," said Boquist. "There's a gravel bar on the other side pushing water across. There never used to be one there at all." Boquist puts trees in the water, top down, and anchors them to shore with cables, hoping to stabilize the bank. He has also signed a petition that seeks to gather support of gravel dredging and debris removal to unplug lower rivers, and ease the flooding in Tillamook County.

TILLAMOOK — A grass-roots, informal petition has citizens of Tillamook County signing in support of unplugging lower rivers choked with sediment, gravel and wood to promote both flood mitigation efforts and fish habitat.

The Tillamook County Flood Control Group-authorized document suggests restoring lower rivers through gravel dredging and debris removal.

Signatures were to be sent to Washington, D.C., for this week's Project Impact Summit, which will deal with flooding issues.

Doug Rosenberg of the flood control group hopes that 2,000 signatures will eventually be collected, and used to establish government contacts. He said he doesn't know of any instance where someone has opposed the petition.

"The petition is designed to get the opinion of which the overwhelming majority of citizens hold, and get that logged," said Rosenberg, who added that hydrologists and fish biologists have worked with the flood control group, and support its approach.

County Commissioner Tim Josi was among those who signed the petition. "Those rivers are filling and they are getting wider. As a result, the banks are falling in, and the dairy farmers are losing a lot of land. Silt is falling in rivers as well, hurting fish, and filling in our bay," summarized Josi.

According to Josi, the county is trying

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PETITION

Continued from Page A1 to quantify the fact that the lower rivers are plugging up, and find a way to unplug them. "This petition will help," said Josi.

Rosenberg said that debris and gravel deposition in lower rivers, the latter stemming from a lack of historical gravel harvesting, which stopped in 1997, is increasing both the frequency and level in flooding. According to the petition, after floodwaters recede, thousands of smolt are trapped in ponded areas, and adult salmon are left to rot in fields.

Rosenberg identified the Wilson,

Trask and the Kilchis as rivers which could be dredged and have debris removed from them.

"The mouth of the Kilchis is almost entirely blocked off and is reportedly dry on a 3-foot tide," said Rosenberg.

Josi agreed with Rosenberg that the Kilchis River needs immediate attention.

Clarence "Bub" Boquist of Tillamook, a retired dairy farmer, said that he had lost a minimum of two acres, "maybe closer to three" of land due to eroding banks.

"On part of it, a section at least 300 feet long, the river is over

twice as wide as it used to be," said Boquist, who estimated that his farmland is worth more than \$2,000 an acre.

The riparian areas lost along riverbanks have trees to shade the river, and keep water temperature down, also improving fish habitat, according to Josi.

The petition also requests for assistance the early release of part of \$30 million of approved feasibility dollars set aside for mitigation measures, and contingent on a study by the Army Corps of Engineers.

The study may not be done for years

however, according to Rosenberg, who said that he spoke with the Army Corps of Engineers. "2002? 2003? 2004? Well, we can't wait until then to do other flood projects. Some of us aren't going to survive that long," said Rosenberg. Rosenberg said that local landowners care about fish runs as much as anyone, maybe even more so. After all, many of the residents have seen the differences in the rivers, and the change in and disappearance of, the fishing holes they used to frequent.

Copies of the petition are available at Rosenberg's Builders Supply and other businesses in Tillamook. For more information, call (503) 842-4434.

Flood control group meeting to review goals

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
Special to the Headlight-Herald

TILLAMOOK – Oregon State University Professor Court Smith will be the guest speaker at the Tillamook County Flood Control Group (TCFCG) meeting at noon Dec. 22, at the Tillamook County Courthouse, second floor, the commissioner's chambers/meeting room.

It is a brown-bag lunch meeting, with beverages and holiday cookies provided by TCFCG.

Smith last spoke to the TCFCG in January. He is an anthropologist working on "A Tillamook Bay

Watershed Integrated Land Use Study." The study incorporates local knowledge with scientific information to help in land use decisions.

Smith's January presentation included helping the TCFCG prioritize five areas of pursuit for 1999.

They are:

1. Do flood mitigation projects that benefit all of Tillamook County
2. Reduce silting of rivers, particularly river mouths
3. Protect citizens lives and property
4. Promote simplification of the bureaucratic process
5. Include flood considerations in all planning activities

TCFCG plans to continue with these five priorities in 2000, especially item #2.

Data and information is being gathered in the community to deepen and reduce the silt build-up in the mouths of the rivers. Projects such as dredging of the rivers mouths are being considered along with barbs and gravel removal projects and other projects. The other four items are intended to be a part of accomplishing item #2.

Those with an interest in helping set priorities or have helpful information in accomplishing TCFCG goals are invited to attend the meeting.



Building a Disaster Resistant Community
**PROJECT
IMPACT**

25



activities, programs, and ongoing statewide initiatives are impressive and noteworthy.

West Virginia

Nominated by: Randolph-Tucker Partnership for Disaster Mitigation and Recovery

The State of West Virginia, from the West Virginia Office of Emergency Services to the West Virginia Governor's office, is committed to disaster mitigation. Project Impact is a successful, ongoing initiative here.

Outstanding Citizen

Bruce Smith

*Centerville, UT
Nominated by: Steve H. Thacker, City Manager*

Bruce Smith donated 400 hours over a 12-month period as volunteer leader of Centerville's community education and training activities. He directed the work of more than 200 citizen volunteers who, in total, donated 1000 hours in disaster preparedness activities. An estimated 4000 citizens participated. Bruce is project leader for Centerville's Project Impact Action Plan. Bruce engaged public support through a series of questionnaires, newsletters, and surveys. This led to the development of specific public participation activities which together establish a well-rounded program of neighborhood, family and personal preparedness.

Roger Faris

*Well Home Program Coordinator, Phinney Neighborhood Association Seattle, WA
Nominated by: Ines Pearce, Project Impact Coordinator, Seattle Emergency Management*

Roger Faris, Phinney Neighborhood Association, is a distinguished and

constant partner with Seattle Project Impact. Roger has trained 940 homeowners and 157 contractors. He contributed to the Home Retrofit prescriptive standards and expansion of retrofit training into the Region. We thank Roger for every minute of applied expertise and commitment provided.

Leo Kuntz

*Tillamook, OR
Nominated by: Thomas Manning, Director Tillamook County Emergency Management*

Mr. Kuntz has distinguished himself by contributing hundreds of hours of work; during, before and after last years floods in the Tillamook area. Leo, at great risk to himself, monitored the areas swollen rivers by boat and along the riverbanks to gather high-water marks at numerous locations in the floodplain. In between the high tide periods, Leo was instrumental in clearing two logjams, which threatened to cause major damage to local infrastructure.

Dr. Steve Meinhold

*Chairman, Project Impact Public Information/Human Services Committee
Nominated by: New Hanover County (NC) Department of Emergency Management*

Steve is Chairman of the Project Impact Public Information/ Human Services Committee, and has shown the leadership and volunteered his time to enhance public education and awareness programs. In addition, Steve chaired the largest disaster preparedness expo of its type; the 1999 Project Impact Hurricane Preparedness Expo with over 6,000 attendees.

Building a Disaster Resistant Community
**PROJECT
IMPACT**

Summit 1999

15

Some summit delegates return early

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
Special to the Headlight-Herald

TILLAMOOK — Of the 14 Tillamook delegates at the second FEMA Project Impact Summit in Washington, D.C., Dec. 12-16, five flew home after a few days, in response to the flooding in Tillamook County.

In all, 1,200 participants from 200 FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) Project Impact communities in the U.S. attended the summit. Tillamook County became a designated Project Impact community in 1998. It was a pilot program in the first 50 communities to join and received \$300,000 to use for disaster resistance. FEMA, county, city, and private funds paid for the delegates' summit trip, at a cost totaling \$14,000.

The summit is held once a year to recognize and reward individuals, businesses, and communities working to save lives and reduce community damage from disasters. This year's participants stayed at the impressive Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, in downtown Washington, D.C. It is the largest hotel, with the largest kitchen in D.C. Two of the five presidential inaugural balls are held in the hotel's two ballrooms.

James Lee Witt, FEMA director, officially opened the summit by talking about changing "heartbreak to hope" in U.S. communities. Witt sees Project Impact as a "terrific opportunity to improve our commu-

nities. We may not be able to prevent disasters, but we can prevent becoming victims of disasters," said Witt.

A community potluck the night before the summit opening allowed participants to share food from different communities, everything from cheese and sausage to Cajun and Hawaiian food. A long table display of Tillamook County information with the Tillamook Community Quilt hung alongside, and the sale of raffle tickets kept proud Tillamook delegates busy.

FEMA sponsored the summit, but Project Impact communities presented the workshops and seminars. From the first event Sunday afternoon through the following Thursday morning, there were numerous workshops, daily professional group seminars, displays, and a final trade show offered. Examples of workshops included topics such as getting private and public sector working together, the media and telling the story, even website start-up for communities and Project Impact.

Flooding is the number-one disaster in U.S. communities, but different regions of the U.S. are prone to different disasters. Community disasters shared at the summit included wildfires, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tornadoes, nor'easters, tsunamis, hurricanes, thunderstorms, ice storms, and the newest one, terrorist threats.

The professional group seminars were divided into groups for build-

ing code officials, city and county administrators, emergency management providers, planning commissioners, educators, business professionals, and not-for-profit organization volunteers. Commissioner Sue Cameron was one of four hosts for the elected officials seminar and Val Folkema, Tillamook County Economic Development Council (EDC) director, and two others hosted a seminar for economic development officials.

The final full day of the summit began with a two-hour region meeting. FEMA has divided the 50 states into 10 regions. Tillamook County is in Region X, headquartered in Seattle, Wash. It was a chance for region staff and community members in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska to meet and discuss regional strategies and to share Project Impact stories.

After the region meetings the professional groups met a last time, followed by a formal lunch in the Marriott Ballroom. Every detail was orchestrated for the grand lunch, including the doors being thrown open to the live music of the Tillamook Junior High School Jazz Band. Washington, D.C., is a jazz city and the summit participants were both appreciative and awed by the maturity of the students' jazz music. The band played Christmas music with a jazz beat.

The jazz band returned for an evening performance at the Awards Gala Social Hour prior to the final evening formal banquet. The music

was a half-hour of lively danceable jazz music. Project Impact Awards were given in 16 categories. Tillamook County nominees **Leo Kuntz of Nehalem Marine** and Val Folkema, EDC, were finalists in the categories of "Outstanding Citizen" and "Livability Award - Economic Development," respectively.

Disaster preparedness funds are being distributed to the regions, states, and communities (a one-time sum of \$300,000 to Tillamook County), where partnership and matching funds have been used for individual community needs under the supervision of region staff, Region X staff for Tillamook County. A community meeting was originally held to select three areas of use for the money in Tillamook County, about \$70,000 of which is left for drainage projects. Early on, Project Impact became a task force of the Tillamook County Performance Partnership (TCPP).

Project impact money was matched with county money to initially hire Emergency Management Director Tom Manning, one year ago; to update the proposed FEMA county floodplain maps in the Wilson River basin that will make the floodplain a floodway if steps are not taken otherwise; and in partnership with the Lower Trask River Drainage District for a pump station and spillway. The remaining \$70,000 is expected to be appropriated by the TCPP Project Impact Task Force Drainage Committee by Feb. 1 for project completion by

D.C. ... and all that jazz

TJHS Jazz Band students make impact, enjoy sights during trip to nation's capital

BY TILDA CHADWICK JONES
Special to the Headlight-Herald

TILLAMOOK — Twenty-nine Tillamook Junior High School Jazz Band students and chaperones made a three-day trip to Washington, D.C., to play at the second annual Project Impact Program Summit, Dec. 12-16.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Project Impact Program Summit was held to recognize and reward individuals, businesses, and communities for their work on disaster resistance.

The TJHS Jazz Band played for a formal luncheon and evening awards gala banquet Dec. 15. The students were the sole performers invited by FEMA Director James Lee Witt. The TJHS jazz band music was much applauded in the jazz city of Washington, D.C.

The group left Tillamook for D.C. after 4 a.m. on Dec. 14, in a school bus bound for the Portland Airport. A flight change in Denver going and coming, made for two long travel days before and after the summit performances.

The group was met at Baltimore Washington International Airport by a tour guide and bus from Educational Field Studies and Tours. The first D.C. stop was Armand's Pizza Parlor, followed by a Night View Tour of the Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, and the Vietnam Wall.

The performance day started with a 5:15 a.m. wake-up call and special tour of the White House before rehearsal at the performance hall.

The jazz band performances were in the Marriott Ballroom of D.C.'s largest hotel, the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel. Lunch guests entering the ballroom were awed by the students' room-filling Christmas music, with its jazz beat. Every detail of the luncheon was overseen by a banquet coordinator who gave the nod for the music to start and the ballroom doors to be thrown open precisely at noon.

During election years, U.S. presidents dance in the ballroom in rounds of nighttime inaugural ball celebrations.

There were 1,200 guests at the sitdown formal lunch in a room that can accommodate 3,195 people. The size of the ballroom necessitated the use of television screens to see speakers at the opposite end from the band.

In the afternoon, the students visited Arlington National Cemetery for the changing of the guard. A laying-of-the-wreath ceremony was performed with a wreath inscribed "Tillamook Junior High School" placed at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

That evening, the students played 30 minutes of music in the Marriott Ballroom prior to the Project Impact Awards Gala Banquet. The



Courtesy photo
Members of the TJHS Jazz Band in Washington, D.C. this month include: (front) Chris Beyer, Victor I Bofill, Allen Kaste, Tara Tolford, Sean Morris, Calvert Jones, Aaron Nice, (back) Curtis Christensen, John Hammond, Molly Bedford, Sarah Henderson, Chris Kleeman, John Roberts, (the group's host) FEMA Director James Lee Witt, Micah Casteel, Rachel Richardson, Zane Grout, Tony Bates, Jeff Widmer. The group is in the Marriott Hotel lobby.



Courtesy photo
Four members of the Tillamook Junior High Jazz Band present a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. From left are Tara Tolford, Sarah Henderson, Molly Bedford and Rachel Richardson.

evening's performance began with the dramatic opening of the doors and the guests rushing in to the TJHS jazz band's lively big band dance sound.

The group's day concluded with a Night View Tour of the Jefferson Memorial. A special breakfast buffet the next morning was followed by more touring. On the final day in D.C., Dec. 16, the group had a tour of the Capitol. The last afternoon was spent at the Smithsonian Museums.

The jazz band is made up of seventh and eighth graders. Students become members of the jazz band through tryouts, and must be committed to group practices every morning before school and individual practices during nonschool time.

It was eighth and ninth graders, however, who performed at the summit. One of the students had traveled weekly from Washington state for practices.

The group that played in D.C. did so at the personal invitation of James Lee Witt, who heard the band during the Tillamook Project Impact signing in a spring visit and tour to Tillamook County. The students who performed for Witt at the local Project Impact spring signing went on to perform in D.C. after special weekly practices that began this fall.

To pay for the D.C. trip, students and parents held fund-raisers, received donations from the Kiwanis, and earned money from FEMA by joining the Oregon State

University (OSU) Natural Resources 4-H Program, through the Tillamook OSU Extension Office.

A work day prior to the D.C. trip consisted of harvesting 4,000 willow cuttings and planting them at Mill Creek for riparian stream habitat restoration.

Chaperone and parent Jody Christensen said, "This group of students was well-behaved, courteous and respectful, enthusiastic about learning American history, and lots of fun."