

HIDALGO COUNTY, TEXAS HURRICANE ALEX-RIO GRAND RIVER FLOODING

DATE AND TIME COVERED: 15/JUL/2010 20:00 hrs

16/JUL/2010 20:00 hrs

SUBJECT: HURRICANE "ALEX" ROUND 2 – RIVER & ASSOCIATED FLOODING

1. CURRENT SITUATIONS: Regional and Local Impacts

A. HCID1/IBWC LEVEE EVENT (PENITAS)

- A section of federally-owned IBWC levee that had not undergone improvements along with the rest of the system a few years ago experienced erosion due to the rise in the Rio Grande on Monday, 12/JUL/10.

Photos: Courtesy of USACE



- The section, located next to the Edinburg Pump Station at Penitas, was reinforced with rip rap on 13/JUL/10 using local resources and contractor McAllen Construction, in coordination with the USIBWC and US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE).

Background: The USIBWC just last week had awarded a construction contract to relocate the levee for 0.2 miles around the pumping station and construction of a gated crossing at the pump's intake channel; however, construction had not yet begun. The work will enhance flood protection for the pumping station, which is part of Hidalgo County Irrigation District No. 1, and other property on the landside of the pump. Constructed in 1925 and still used today, the Edinburg Pumping Station at Penitas is considered a historic structure that is potentially eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

- Emergency levee repairs were completed in the early morning hours of 14/JUL/10. The emergency repair widened the levee from 8 feet to about 20 to 25 feet. The operation took 120 loads totaling 14,000 cubic yards of fill.

Photos: Courtesy of USACE



- On 14/JUL/10, local emergency management officials and elected officials expressed concerns about how the repair would be able to withstand increased water levels and about the structural integrity of the pump house. The repairs may place increased pressure on the pump house.
- U.S. Army Corp of Engineer inspector Gary Chow inspected the levee and said he felt comfortable with the reinforcements; however recommended additional erosion control actions. A 213 Resource request was submitted to the state for slope protection and rip rap cover (see 213 requests below). A USACE structural assessment team was also ordered via 213 to do an inspection/structural assessment at the pump station. After a phone call with TDEM Chief Nim Kidd, an additional 213 request for a structural assessment team via Tx Task Force One was sent to the SOC for approval.
- On 15/JUL/10 @ 1 p.m., USACE re-inspected the emergency repairs and the structure. Earlier in the day, Hidalgo County Irrigation District No. 1 had a private structural engineer w/ Melden and Hunt inspect the building. Melden and Hunt identified the need for steel plate reinforcements on the east wall of the building. USACE did not render an opinion.
- Due to continuous tension about the levee repairs and pump house holding up to the rising levels of the river, a series of calls with the USIBWC upper management was initiated and a team of engineers from McAllen Construction, Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1, City of Mission, IBWC and HCID No. 1 developed a contingency plan for a temporary “horseshoe-shaped berm” to be placed between the pump structure and the surge well (located 30 feet north of the structure). It would serve as secondary flood control structure in case the first were to fail under increased pressure.
- IBWC Commissioner Edward Drusina approved the use of the current contract, awarded to McAllen Construction, to construct the emergency berm inside of the irrigation district property at 1700 hrs, pending a letter of authorization from the HCID No. 1 to allow the USIBWC project on their property.
- An authorization was drafted and sent. USACE will be in charge of Quality Assurance. McAllen Construction is the contractor and Godfrey Garza, Hidalgo County Drainage District No. 1 manager, was appointed as the Point of Contact to the USIBWC on the project.
- Construction to begin at daybreak on 16/JUL/10.

- The integrity of this structure must be kept to maintain supply of water to various municipal treatment plants.
- Penitas continues to be under a voluntary evacuation order; however FM 1427 has reopened.

B. LOS EBANOS

- Mandatory Evacuation of the township of Los Ebanos in western Hidalgo County was ordered by Hidalgo County Judge Rene A. Ramirez at 4:35 p.m. 12/JUL/2010. It came on the heels of a voluntary self-evacuation issued on 09/JUL/2010. Mandatory evacuation remains in effect for Los Ebanos. Ingress/egress security post continues to be maintained by HSCO and Constable Precinct 3.
- Ground inspection and aerial inspection show that water has risen here by about a foot and a half.

C. UNITED IRRIGATION DISTRICT (MISSION)

- United Irrigation District's pump was in jeopardy of flooding on 13/JUL/10, which would cause flow into various irrigation ditches supplying the Mission area's municipal water supply to be interrupted.
- Late in the evening on 13/JUL/10, various agencies were mobilized to place a berm of fill dirt and sand bags around the pump. Dump trucks began to demobilize from the Penitas site and were re-routed to United Irrigation District at approximately 2000 hrs, loading up with fill dirt and dumping near the intersection of Bentsen Palm and Military Hwy.
- Lights were set up in the area and construction of the dirt berm continued throughout the night.
- Construction of the berm was completed at 0830 hours on 14/JUL/2010.
- On 15/JUL/10, additional releases from Falcon spurred crews to increase height by an additional four feet. Road height along the canal will also be raised.
- The structural integrity of United site is imperative to maintain drinking water supplies.

D. DONNA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

- Inspected by Edinburg VFD Chief Shawn Snider @ 1430 hrs on 14/JUL/2010 for seepage and damage.
- Recommended request pump from City of Donna and removal of pump engines or motors if supervisors feel necessary.
- Met with Donna, Weslaco and Pct. 1 leadership.
- Additional inspection of structure by Texas Task Force One on 15/JUL/2010.

E. GRANJENO

- Many calls placed to Hidalgo County Sheriff's Office at approximately 2230 hrs on 14/JUL/2010 regarding a "leak" in the IBWC levee south of Granjeno.
- Deputies and emergency management officials responded and met with residents. Hydraulic engineers with Dannenbaum and IBWC also inspected the structure.
- It was determined that "seepage" was occurring, not a "leak." The water table is being squeezed upward and what is being seen in groundwater.

- Residents advised to remain vigilant and maintain situational awareness.
- No pumps deployed at this time, because the change in pressure could destabilize the ground.
- Emergency management officials and hydraulic engineers will continue to monitor the area.

F. SOUTH of PHARR

- Voluntary Evacuation issued at 1400 hrs. due to increasing river waters.
- Impacting about 15 to 20 homes.
- Chief Guzman, Pharr FD, assisting with these voluntary evacuations.

G. WESLACO/MERCEDES/LA VILLA/EDCOUCH/ELSA

- Interior floodway continues to fill but still has capacity. Water is moving into eastern Hidalgo County and through Willacy.
- No breaches in structure have been reported.
- There has been some seepage and ponding in areas.
- Pump request submitted to state for additional pumps to remove standing water.

Additional Situational Awareness:

Increased releases from Falcon Dam, located at Falcon Heights, Texas-Nueva Ciudad Guerrero, Tamaulipas began yesterday, 14/JUL/2010 at noon. Releases into the Rio Grande increased to 60,000 cubic feet per second (1700 cubic meters per second). Releases are expected to remain constant for 24 hours, as per the 1630 conference call. Falcon Dam has not yet peaked yet, as per Carlos Garcia with IBWC. IBWC reports that levels have broken past records. At approximately 2:00 a.m. CDT, the reservoir elevation surpassed 308.1 feet above mean sea level (93.910 meters), the record established on October 19, 1958 just five years after the dam was constructed. The reservoir is still rising as floodwaters continue to enter from the Rio Grande and Salado River, a Mexican tributary.

This water will flow downstream into the Lower Rio Grande Valley where the Commission has a system of flood control levees, diversion dams, and floodways in the Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project that extends from Peñitas to the Gulf of Mexico. Residents will see a significant increase in flows in the U.S. interior floodway in the next 1-2 days due to diversion of water at Anzalduas Dam. The U.S. Section of the Commission expects floodwaters to rise approximately 3-5 feet along the interior floodway levees, which average 12-14 feet in height. Diversion of waters into Mexico's interior floodway at Retamal Dam, located near Donna, TX-Rio Bravo, Tamaulipas, will also continue.

Because of these upstream diversions, the Commission will continue to control floodwaters in the Rio Grande downstream from Retamal Dam to approximately the same levels seen for the past few days. The U.S. interior floodway includes channels known as the Banker Floodway, Main Floodway, North Floodway, and Arroyo Colorado through portions of Hidalgo, Cameron, and Willacy Counties.

2. WEATHER OUTLOOK

Tropical Development

No tropical cyclones expected within the next 48 hours.

Warnings and Watches
Flood Warning in effect for Starr County
Flood Advisory in effect for Hidalgo County

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN BROWNSVILLE HAS EXTENDED THE

* HYDROLOGIC ADVISORY FOR FLOODING OF POOR DRAINAGE AREAS IN...
SOUTHERN HIDALGO COUNTY IN DEEP SOUTH TEXAS.
THIS INCLUDES THE CITIES OF...LOS EBANOS...HIDALGO...CUEVITAS...
HAVANA...LA JOYA...PENITAS.

THIS ALSO INCLUDES LOCATIONS WITHIN AND NEAR THE LOWER RIO GRANDE
FLOODWAY SYSTEM INCLUDING PORTIONS OF LA VILLA...MERCEDES...
PROGRESO AND WESLACO.

* UNTIL 145 AM CDT FRIDAY

* THE SOUTHWEST PORTION OF HIDALGO COUNTY NEAR THE LOWER RIO
GRANDE RIVER...AS WELL AS LOCATIONS WITHIN AND NEAR THE LOWER RIO
GRANDE FLOODWAY SYSTEM...WILL CONTINUE TO EXPERIENCE FLOODING DUE
TO VERY HIGH WATER LEVELS IN THE RIVER. THESE HIGH RIVER LEVELS
AND FLOODING OF AREAS NEAR THE LOWER RIO GRANDE RIVER WILL LIKELY
CONTINUE OR WORSEN OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS AS THE RELEASES FROM
FALCON RESERVOIR CONTINUE. A MANDATORY EVACUATION ORDER REMAINS IN
EFFECT FOR THE TOWN OF LOS EBANOS. A VOLUNTARY EVACUATION
CONTINUES FOR THE CITY OF PENITAS. THE CHIMNEY PARK RV RESORT NEAR
MADERO...OR ABOUT 3 AND ONE HALF MILES SOUTH OF MISSION...
CONTINUES TO FLOOD AND ALL REMAINING RESIDENTS ARE URGED TO SEEK
HIGHER GROUND IMMEDIATELY.

FLOOD WATERS CONTINUE TO RISE RAPIDLY IN THE LOWER RIO GRANDE FLOODWAY
SYSTEM. THIS SYSTEM BEGINS NEAR THE ANZALDUAS DIVERSION DAM JUST WEST
OF THE CITY OF HIDALGO...CURVES EAST AND CROSSES NORTH SOUTH
HIGHWAY 281 NEAR PHARR...THEN MOVES GENERALLY EAST TOWARD PROGRESO
BEFORE CURVING NORTH BETWEEN MERCEDES AND WESLACO...CONTINUING
NORTH TO INDIAN HILLS AND LA VILLA. WATER HAS RISEN TO HALFWAY UP
THE LEVEE IN SOME PLACES...INCLUDING AN ESTIMATED 6 TO 8 FEET
ABOVE GROUND LEVEL NEAR THE BRIDGE ON FARM TO MARKET ROAD 1015.
AT LEAST FIVE RESIDENCES WITHIN THE FLOODWAY SYSTEM WERE IMPACTED
THUS FAR...AND MOST ROADS LEADING TO THE PROGRESO INTERNATIONAL
BRIDGE WERE NOW CLOSED.

ADDITIONAL FLOWS DOWN RIVER FROM UPSTREAM DAMS WILL CONTINUE TO RAISE
WATER LEVELS. STAY TUNED FOR CONTINUING UPDATES ON WATER LEVELS AND
POTENTIALLY MORE SERIOUS FLOOD ISSUES LATER THIS WEEK AND WEEKEND.

Weather forecast:

HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE BROWNSVILLE TX
501 AM CDT THU JUL 15 2010

TXZ248>257-152130-
ZAPATA-JIM HOGG-BROOKS-KENEDY-STARR-HIDALGO-INLAND WILLACY-
INLAND CAMERON-COASTAL WILLACY-COASTAL CAMERON-
501 AM CDT THU JUL 15 2010

THIS HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK IS FOR DEEP SOUTH TEXAS.

.DAY ONE...TODAY AND TONIGHT.

HEAT: THE COMBINATION OF TEMPERATURES IN THE 90S WITH FAIRLY HIGH HUMIDITY WILL MAKE IT FEEL LIKE 103 TO 107 DEGREES THIS AFTERNOON. RESIDENTS...PARTICULARLY THOSE WORKING OUTDOORS INCLUDING PERSONS HELPING WITH RIVER FLOOD MITIGATION EFFORTS...SHOULD BE SURE TO TAKE FREQUENT BREAKS...DRINK PLENTY OF WATER...AND WEAR LIGHT WEIGHT LOOSE FITTING CLOTHING.

.DAYS TWO THROUGH SEVEN...FRIDAY THROUGH WEDNESDAY.

HEAT: THE COMBINATION OF TEMPERATURES AND HUMIDITY WILL MAKE IT FEEL LIKE 100 TO 105 EACH AFTERNOON THROUGH THE WEEKEND. RESIDENTS AND WORKERS SHOULD CONTINUE TO PRACTICE HEAT SAFETY FOR THE NEXT SEVERAL DAYS.

THUNDERSTORMS: ISOLATED LATE MORNING AND AFTERNOON THUNDERSTORMS ARE EXPECTED ESPECIALLY ACROSS THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY SATURDAY THROUGH WEDNESDAY. OCCASIONAL LIGHTNING...A BRIEF DOWNPOUR...AND WIND GUSTS TO 25 MPH ARE POSSIBLE WITH ANY STORMS.

3. Shelters: NONE OPEN IN HIDALGO COUNTY. STANDBY LOCATIONS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED.

4. Resources/Assets:

Located at staging area in Mission:

- 3 brush trucks (Mission Fire 1, Edinburg Fire 2)
- 2 Evacuation Units (Edinburg CISD)
- Hygiene Trailer (Hidalgo County Health and Human Services)
- Communications Trailer (HCHHS)
- 6 buses (Hidalgo County Head Start)

Water Rescue / Swift Water Rescue – Mission FD and Weslaco FD; via DDC-TPW, USBP (CBP), TxTF1 boat crews en route

Medical Team

Weslaco
County Health & Human Services

COMMUNICATIONS:

Com-L: City of McAllen & Co Fire Marshal's Office
Radio Cache – City of McAllen
Sat-Link – towed Health & Human Services
ACU1000 – self contained mobile – City of Pharr, City of Weslaco
ACU1000 – towed Sheriff's Office

AIR ASSETS – DPS Air Wing via DDC, CBP Air Support via OIM/BIC; 2 Blackhawk helicopters at Weslaco Airport

RGV Regional Public Works Response Team – dewatering, public water & sanitary sewer. City of McAllen – lead agency. – all equipment, communications, all disciplines.

City of Mission – equipment, pumps
City of Pharr - equipment, pumps, low boy.
City of Edinburg – equipment, pumps, personnel, vector truck, law enforcement
City of Donna – equipment, personnel
City of Weslaco – equipment, personnel, vector truck
City of Mercedes - equipment
County of Hidalgo – Precincts 1,2,3,4., pumps, equipment, backhoe, personnel
County of Hidalgo Planning – P.E. Support and operations
County of Hidalgo OEM – logistics, liaison, & coordination support.
County of Hidalgo HHS – logistics, medical and health support

Cameron County – has some assets which may activate via Pilar Rodriguez.

EVACUATION SUPPORT: on standby status

High Profile Vehicles

Edinburg FD – 2, an additional 5 from EISD via Edinburg FD

Mission – 1

McAllen PW – 2

Hidalgo County Headstart – 3 buses

All Fire Departments will provide additional manpower – coordinated through EMC or Co. Fire Marshal's Office.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Constable's Office Pct 1, 3, have been contacted for immediate support.

Sheriff's Office – Manpower, and high profile vehicles available.

Tx DPS (via DDC) – traffic control.

Other cities will provide mutual aid upon request.

213 Requests for 14/JUL/10 WERE ALL APPROVED by SOC

- 2 Boat Squads Tx Task Force One – ongoing flooding issues in Hidalgo County (Arrived @ 1800 hrs 15/JUL/10)
- Various pumps to assist with pumping for flooded areas in Hidalgo County from Anzalduas Dam west to the county line (Arrived, Staged at Mission FD staging area)
- 1 USACE structural assessment team (arrived and completed assessment)
- Install approximately 5000 sq. feet of geo-mat slope protection and rip-rap cover at Hidalgo County Irrigation District No. 1 pump station at Penitas to protect repair work – change of plan (see Section under Penitas Pump)
- Tx Task Force One structural assessment team – arrived, checking on Donna Irrigation Pump

213 Requests for 15/JUL/10

- 5,000 supersize sandbags from USACE for reinforcements at various pumping structures – in purchasing process
- DPS aerial flyover (completed)
- Various pumps: 10 6", 4 8", and 4 12"

5. PROJECTED ACTIONS FOR THIS REPORTING PERIOD:

- Continuous surveillance and monitoring of communities on watch list.

- Maintain security checkpoint north of Los Ebanos.
- Monitoring of various pumping structures.
- Construction of horseshoe berm at Penitas.
- Host 11 a.m. press conference @ County EOC
- Additional Road Closures
- Various pumping activities in flooded areas of county

6. ADDITIONAL RISKS

A. Tampering with floodgates: IBWC reports several incidents. Have coordinated with HCSO for enforcement of state laws. Hidalgo County Public Affairs released a statement to the media:

State law provides that any interference with public duties regarding operations to divert water on an international stream is a Class B misdemeanor which is punishable by a fine not to exceed \$2,000, 180 days in jail, or both. Local law enforcement officials have been asked to closely monitor the situation and to prosecute any violators. Federal law also provides that any person who unlawfully opens, breaks or destroys any gate or fence enclosing lands of the United States reserved for public use, shall be subject to a fine, imprisonment of up to one year, or both. Therefore, those who unlawfully open or tamper with the gates or fences utilized within the IBWC flood control project may be subject to federal prosecution.

B. Driving around barricades: An Alamo man was arrested at about 0530 14/JUL/10 after prompting a water rescue going around traffic barricades.

All county agencies, departments, and offices are asked to report any situations that they feel could have adverse affects to Hidalgo County to Emergency Management at the following email address: HCOEM@hidalgocountyjudge.com

7. COUNTY AGENCIES CURRENT ACTIVITY:

AREAS AFFECTED DURING THIS REPORTING PERIOD:

All Precincts

RESPONDING AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS:

- a) County Judge's Office
- b) Office of Emergency Management
- c) Planning Department.
- d) Right of Way
- e) Pct 1 Commissioners
- f) Pct 2 Commissioners
- g) Pct. 3 Commissioners
- h) Pct 4 Commissioners
- i) RGV Regional Public Works Response Team *NOTE: The RGV Regional PWRT is composed of public works assets from Mission, McAllen, Edinburg, Pharr, San Juan, Alamo, Weslaco, Mercedes, and Hidalgo County and some cities from Cameron County. Only Hidalgo County based entities are participating in this response. Lead agency is McAllen Public Works & Hidalgo Co. Planning and has the support of the State of Texas and is a deployable asset for the State.*
- j) Drainage District 1
- k) Budget & Management
- l) County Executive Office-Public Affairs
- m) Purchasing

- n) Health and Human Services
- o) Constables Pct 1 and 3
- p) Sheriff's Office
- q) State Agencies – DDC/RLO all other state agencies are reported in the SOC Executive Summary
- r) TxDPS Highway Patrol
- s) Texas Task Force One
- t) TCEQ – Harlingen
- u) IBWc
- v) Army Corps of Engineers
- w) Irrigation Districts 6,16, 1, & United

8. CASUALTIES: *Normal conditions - no casualties / injuries to report.*

County	City/Are a	Injured	Dead	Missing
Hidalgo		0	0	0

9. DAMAGES (Cumulative) *DSO is complete and was submitted to RLO/DDC on 10JUL2010 via email. The State's Public Assessment (PA) Team will be looking at Roads and County/City Property. They will arrive tomorrow morning and stay through Saturday.*

The Individual Assessment (IA) Team will be looking at Homes and Businesses. They will bring two teams and arrive on Saturday morning. The teams will make the final determination as to what and when they will visit.

10. EVACUATIONS: *Mandatory Evacuation of Los Ebanos, TX, voluntary evacs for La Joya, Penitas, and South of Pharr (south of Military Hwy on Doffing Road – 15 to 20 residences)*

11. HIGHWAY CONDITIONS: *Any and all highways and roadways that traverse the IBWC Floodway at its base or do not have a "high-bridge" are currently impacted or will soon be impacted by high water and have been closed off with the exception of Shary Road in Mission, 23rd & 10th Sts in McAllen, So 281 in Pharr, and Business 83 in Harlingen.*

Road Conditions

11:00 am

Willacy County

FM 507 NEW

FM 507 from FM 508 to FM 1018 in Willacy County is closed due to flooding

FM 2629

FM 2629 from FM 507 to US 77 in Willacy County is closed due to flooding.

FM 1420

FM 1420 from FM 1018 to FM 508 in Willacy County is closed due to flooding.

Hidalgo County

FM 1425

FM 1425 from FM 2629 to SH 107 in NE Hidalgo County is closed due to flooding.

FM 886

FM 886 from US 83 leading to the Community of Los Ebanos in south west Hidalgo County is closed due to the Rio Grande River rising.

SH 107

SH 107 from FM 491 North of Mercedes to FM 1425 near the Hidalgo/Cameron County Line is closed until further notice- due to flooding

FM 491

FM 491 from Mile 9 to Mile 10 in Mercedes - closed due to flooding.

FM 1015

FM 1015 from Mile 5 Road to Gonzalez Road in Weslaco/Progreso area- closed due to flooding.

FM 493

FM 493 from US 281 (Military Highway) to Mile 12 1/2 North south of Donna - closed due to flooding.

FM 907

FM 907 from FM 3072 to Hall Acres south of Alamo - closed due to flooding.

FM 2557 (Steward Rd)

FM 2557 from Juan Balli to Hall Acres south of Pharr- closed due to flooding.

FM 2061 (Jackson Road)

FM 2061 from Ridge Road to Dicker Road in South Pharr- closed due to flooding.

Cameron County

US 77 NEW

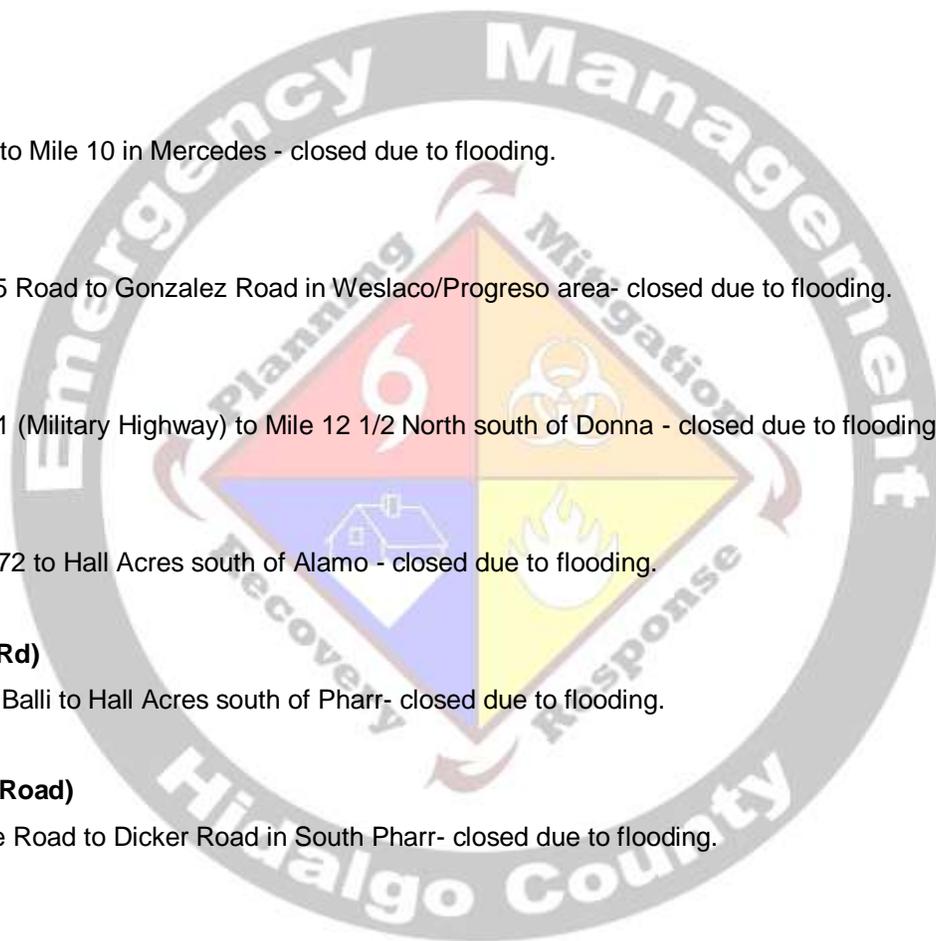
US 77 Frontage Road Eastbound from Orphanage Road to Business 77 in Sebastian & US 77 Frontage Road Westbound from Orphanage Road to the flood way in Cameron County are closed due to flooding.

FM 506

FM 506 from FM 2556 to FM 2629 in Cameron County is closed due to flooding.

FM 2556 (Jo-Ed Road)

FM 2556 from south of Business 83 to north of US 281 in Cameron County is closed due to water over the floodway bridge.



FM 800

Low water bridge on FM 800 between Business 83 and FM 3067 in Cameron County is closed to traffic.

Don't move, tamper with or drive around barriers blocking a low-water crossing. Penalties range from \$200 to \$1,000 &/or 2 yrs in jail. The barriers are there for the safety of the traveling public.

12. CONFERENCE CALL INFORMATION:

Daily 09:00 – operational call for local EMC's – for information sharing and status reporting
16:00 – if needed for same purpose.
Media is not allowed on this call.

Participants: All Hidalgo County based EMC's, Starr, Cameron, & Willacy Co. EMCs if available. American Red Cross, and La Joya ISD EMC for shelter support, DDC/RLO Constables Pct3, Pct1, Pct4, Sheriff's Office, and any other agency/organization that may provide a response/support role in this ongoing incident.

State 10:30
16:30

13. OTHER:

- Eduardo Olivarez, Health Department Director, met with DSHS Regional Director Dr. Brian Smith and Dr. James Morgan, asst. Commissioner of Health for the state, to discuss public health issues. Tour of United project and Penitas.
- Press conference to be held at 11 a.m 16/JUL/2010 at Hidalgo County EOC.
- County Emergency Operations Center opened at 1400 hours 15/JUL/2010.

Rene A. Ramirez, County Judge / EM Director

PREPARED BY: Cari Lambrecht, Hidalgo County PIO for Carlos Moreno – Hurricane Alex
Hidalgo County IC

Hidalgo County Office of Emergency Management 15/JUL/2010 @ 20:30 hours