

HIDALGO COUNTY, TEXAS

Situation Report 22

DATE AND TIME COVERED: 22/JUL/2010 20:00 hrs

23/JUL/2010 00:00 hrs

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

1. CURRENT SITUATIONS: Local and Regional Impacts

Riverine flooding is still occurring and ongoing in those areas that are adjacent to and in close proximity of the Rio Grande River. All persons who have interests that may be affected by river overflows are asked to maintain situational awareness in and around their homes and properties. This event is expected to continue for the next 20 to 25 days or so. Continuous controlled and orchestrated releases of water from the dams and reservoirs that are upstream on both sides of the border are taking place and will continue to occur until such time as all of the reservoirs reach conservancy levels. A natural formed reservoir on the Mexican side is still feeding uncontrolled amounts of rainwater into the stream and river beds and subsequently into the Rio Grande River. River levels will continue to rise and fall as those releases occur, and until such time that the water empties from the IBWC floodway completely conditions are ripe for flood events. All roadways that traverse the floodway at base level will continue to be affected. All persons are advised to take proper precautionary measures that will insure their safety. We continue to receive reports of persons driving around barricades on roadways and levees, which is not only illegal but unsafe. As of the preparation of this report, pumping operations have ensued or will ensue in the next 24 hours, that will alleviate storm drain run-off from most of the cities within Hidalgo County. Persons are asked not to drive around barricades where the pumping operations are occurring and not drive over hoses that are pumping water over roadways, and levees. These actions damage the hoses and pumping operations must be stopped in order to replace those hoses. It is important that these warnings be heeded as criminal charges may be filed against those persons causing damages and interfering with pumping operations. Entry into flood waters is not recommended as the river and associated overflows are carrying bacterial contaminants from upstream sanitary sewer plant releases. Snakes and other wildlife have been spotted in many flooded areas. Any fish taken from these waters should be considered contaminated and should not be consumed. In several areas water is standing still and is becoming stagnant. Mosquito problems are being seen in many areas. A fly-over of the river and adjacent flooded areas was conducted and water levels are slowly receding. The floodway was also flown over and the unrestricted flow of water downstream was observed. Floodway berms (walls) are holding up well. Weather forecasts are indicative of rainfall events in the 48 hours for the region in amounts of 1 to 2 inches, with potential "pockets" of 2 to 4 inches. It is unknown where these rainfalls will occur. We will continue to monitor these potential events and respond accordingly to avert any potential nuisance flooding.

AFFECTED COMMUNITIES: (West to East)

A. LOS EBANOS / CUEVITAS

The Mandatory evacuation order for Los Ebanos, was lifted at 1700 hrs on 20/JUL/10. A voluntary evacuation is still in effect. Residents are urged to maintain situational awareness, and continue to monitor the river rises around their community for sudden rises and potential flooding. Those persons reside that reside and/or have interests on the river side or the creeks feeding into the river are urged to remain vigilant of the waters and the dangers they might contain.

B. HAVANA

The south side of Military Road still has several houses that are being impacted by flood waters. Military road between Havana and La Joya is flooded and vehicular access is restricted.

C. Irrigation District 1 – electrical motors at the river pump were removed prior to the flooding event and were stowed away from the area to prevent damage. Electricity was also disconnected. On Wednesday, District personnel with the assistance of Texas Parks & Wildlife boat crew accessed the pump house (riverside) and were able to photograph the exterior damage. The electrical pole has toppled over near the building and there is a strong water current surrounding the building as water re-enters the river. On Friday, additional repairs will be made at the Irrigation District 1 canal area, on Military road to assist the District with gaining land and vehicular access to their pump site. District personnel installed several “gator” pumps to start pumping water into the main canal.

D. LA JOYA

The South side of La Joya is still experiencing flooding that is affecting homes and access to the homes. The area south of military road and the adjacent rail-line has flood waters flowing through it. Livestock in that area has been removed. Leo Street is barricaded and military road is impassable due to high water to the East and West at Military Road.

E. PENITAS

The South side of Military road – The area west of where the IBWC floodway begins and west of the city has standing water south of Military road. Livestock was removed from the area shortly after the flooding was detected. The newly constructed secondary flood control structure is holding in place well.

F. UNITED IRRIGATION DISTRICT (MISSION)

The earthen berm that was reinforced around the pump structure is holding any water from entering the premises. Texas Parks & Wildlife provided watercraft to irrigation district personnel for an evaluation of the riverside pumps to evaluate the pumps for operations. Reports indicate that the actual pump was not approachable.

G. MISSION

Pumping operations are underway to discharge storm drain water.

H. Hidalgo (City)

Pumping operations are underway to discharge storm drain water.

I. McAllen

Pumping operations are underway to discharge storm drain water and sanitary sewer affluent.

J. PHARR & South of Pharr in rural areas.

Voluntary evacuation remains in effect for the fifteen to twenty residences within the main floodway south of Military highway and "I" Road.

K. San Juan – no report.

L. Alamo

Pumping operations are underway to discharge storm drain water and sanitary sewer affluent.

M. City of Weslaco/Donna - is pumping affluent discharge over the IBWC levee.

N. Mercedes – no report

O. Progreso / Progreso Lakes – no report.

Additional Situational Awareness:

The International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, continues to reduce the release of floodwaters from Amistad Dam, located at Del Rio, Texas-Ciudad Acuña, Coahuila. Releases will be reduced at 7:00 p.m. CDT on July 21 from 13,000 cubic feet per second (370 cubic meters per second) to 8500 cubic feet per second (240 cubic meters per second). Releases from Amistad Dam peaked July 6-10 at a rate of 35,000 cubic feet per second (1000 cubic meters per second), the greatest releases from the dam since 1974.

Inflows to the dam have dropped considerably and the reservoir elevation is declining. The reduced releases will positively impact downstream communities that have been affected by Rio Grande flooding and will reduce the inflow to Falcon Reservoir.

Falcon Dam discharges are expected to continue at a rate of 60,000 cubic feet per second over the next five days.

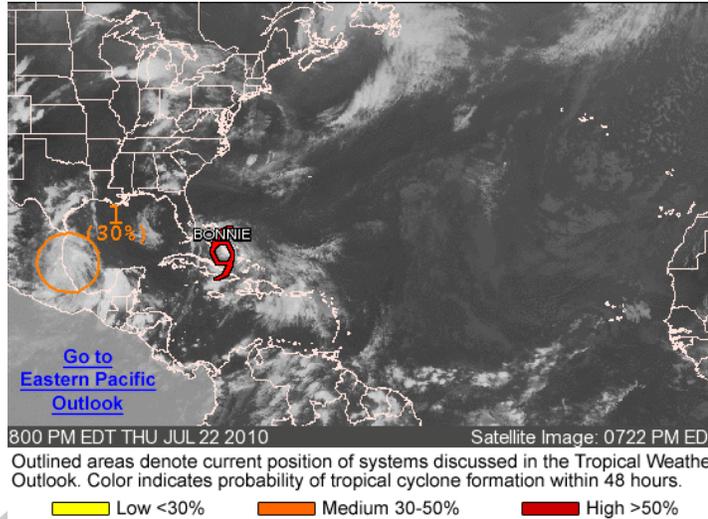
2. WEATHER OUTLOOK

Tropical Development

97L – is now Tropical Storm Bonnie – **No expected impact our region – all computer models indicate that this storm will affect Southern Florida and subsequently NE Texas near Orange, Tx.**



Graphical Tropical Weather Outlook
National Hurricane Center Miami, Florida



98L - Bay of Campeche – Monitoring this system for potential development and impact to our region/area. There is a potential for rainfall associated with this storm to affect our area, although it appears to be headed into Mexico. This is – “look-out” situation

ZCZC MIATWOAT ALL TTAA00 KNHC DDHMM
TROPICAL WEATHER OUTLOOK NWS TPC/NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER MIAMI FL
800 PM EDT THU JUL 22 2010

FOR THE NORTH ATLANTIC...CARIBBEAN SEA AND THE GULF OF MEXICO...

THE NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER IS ISSUING ADVISORIES ON NEWLY FORMED TROPICAL STORM BONNIE LOCATED ABOUT 165 MILES SOUTHEAST OF NASSAU IN THE BAHAMAS.

1. SHOWER AND THUNDERSTORM ACTIVITY ASSOCIATED WITH A BROAD AREA OF LOW PRESSURE IN THE WESTERN BAY OF CAMPECHE HAVE DECREASED THIS AFTERNOON. DEVELOPMENT OF THIS SYSTEM IS LESS LIKELY SINCE THE LOW IS GRADUALLY MOVING INLAND OVER NORTHEAST MEXICO. THERE IS A MEDIUM CHANCE...30 PERCENT...OF THIS SYSTEM BECOMING A TROPICAL CYCLONE DURING THE NEXT 48 HOURS.

ELSEWHERE...TROPICAL CYCLONE FORMATION IS NOT EXPECTED DURING THE NEXT 48 HOURS.

PUBLIC ADVISORIES ON TROPICAL STORM BONNIE ARE ISSUED UNDER WMO HEADER WTNT33 KNHC AND UNDER AWIPS HEADER MIATCPAT3.
FORECAST/ADVISORIES ARE ISSUED UNDER WMO HEADER WTNT23 KNHC AND UNDER AWIPS HEADER MIATCMAT3.

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FORECASTER KIMBERLAIN
NNNN

Warnings and Watches

FLOOD STATEMENT
TXC427-221410- /O.CON.KBRO.FL.W.0001.000000T0000Z-000000T0000Z/
/RGDT2.3.DR.100708T1920Z.100710T2345Z.000000T0000Z.NO/
910 PM CDT WED JUL 21 2010

THE FLOOD WARNING CONTINUES FOR

THE RIO GRANDE RIVER AT RIO GRANDE CITY

* UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE OR UNTIL THE WARNING IS CANCELLED.

* AT 8 PM WEDNESDAY THE STAGE WAS 55.6 FEET (16.9 METERS).

* MAJOR FLOODING IS OCCURRING AND MAJOR FLOODING IS FORECAST.

* FLOOD STAGE IS 50.0 FEET (15.2 METERS).

* THE RIVER WILL REMAIN NEAR 55.6 FEET (16.9 METERS) THROUGH MIDNIGHT TOMORROW THEN BEGIN VERY SLOWLY FALLING TO 55.0 FEET (16.8 METERS) THROUGH THE WEEKEND INTO EARLY NEXT WEEK...WHICH IS 2.0 FEET (0.6 METERS) ABOVE MAJOR FLOOD STAGE.

* AT 53.0 FEET (16.2 METERS)...MAJOR LOWLAND FLOODING DAMAGES IRRIGATION PUMPS, EQUIPMENT, ROADS AND THREATENS LIVESTOCK - BRIDGES IN THE FLOOD PLAIN ARE SEVERELY FLOODED AND BECOME DANGEROUS - THE RIVER BACKS UP ON THE ARROYO LOS OLMOS AND FLOODS

THE LOWEST HOMES NEAR HIGHWAY 83 AND FM 755 AS WELL AS FLOODS THESE ROADS.

* THIS CREST COMPARES TO A PREVIOUS CREST OF 54.3 FEET (16.6 METERS) ON SEPTEMBER 20TH 1971 RESULTING FROM THE RAINFALL RECEIVED FROM HURRICANE FERN, WHICH MADE LANDFALL NEAR CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS AROUND SEPTEMBER 10TH 1971 AND MOVED ACROSS NORTHERN PORTIONS OF DEEP SOUTH TEXAS INTO NUEVO LEON IN NORTHEAST MEXICO BY SEPTEMBER 13TH 1971.* UNTIL 500 AM CDT WEDNESDAY

Special Weather Statement

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE BROWNSVILLE TX

Locally Heavy Rainfall Through July 23

More Torrents for Mexico Mean High River Levels into August

Current Situation

After nearly two weeks of dry weather across the region, showers and thunderstorms have returned and will continue periodically into Friday, July 23rd.

Aiding the storm developing are a series of upper level disturbances moving from east to west across the Southern and Central Gulf of Mexico into South Texas. The precipitation will first develop over the coastal sections of Deep South Texas during the early morning hours, then move inland and tend to increase in coverage through the day. Daytime heating combined with lift from the disturbances will produce widespread event totals of 1 to 2 inches, with pockets of 3 to 4 inches or more where stronger cells or persistent bands move across.

Heavy rainfall will easily cause flooding of low lying locations and areas with poor drainage, especially within and near the Lower Rio Grande Valley Flood Control Project (Floodways), since many drainage and irrigation gates remain closed due to the continued flooding on the Lower Rio Grande and downstream of the diversion dams which distribute water into the Floodway.

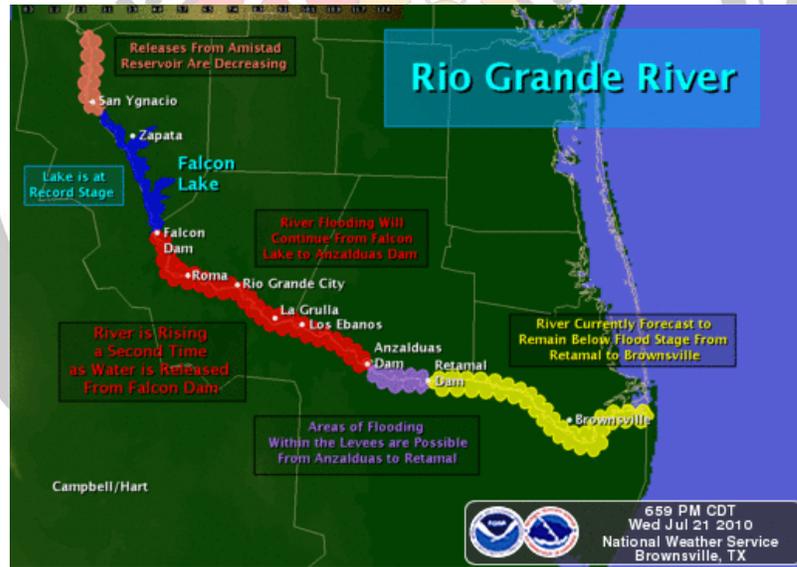
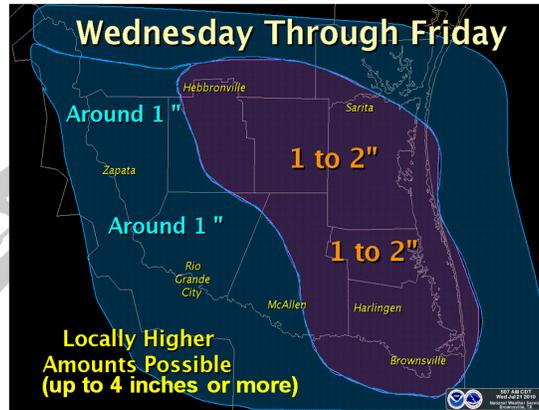
Exactly where these bands or cells form is impossible to determine hours or days in advance, so stay tuned to this website, your local media sources, or NOAA Weather Radio for continuous updates.

Future Evolution: Northern Mexico

Current forecast data suggest a several day period of very heavy rainfall moving into the central and northern Sierra Madre Oriental, including across areas which received several feet of rainfall from the remnants of Hurricane Alex and Tropical Depression #2. These areas include portions of the Mexican States of Nuevo Leon and Coahuila, perhaps extending northwest into Chihuahua. Another 10 to 20

inches of rain is possible into early next week in these areas; such rainfall would eventually flow into the system of reservoirs and dams in Mexico and along the Rio Grande, ultimately reaching the Lower Rio Grande. Such a situation, if it develops, would result in continued high water and some degree of flooding along and near the River and associated Floodways through the end of July and into the first weeks of August.

Much more information will be available from this website as conditions evolve over the next several weeks. Remember to [stay safe](#) if living or working along or near the Rio Grande and Floodway system.



Weather Forecast:

HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK...UPDATED NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE BROWNSVILLE TX
940 PM CDT THU JUL 22 2010

TXZ248>257-231100- ZAPATA-JIM HOGG-BROOKS-KENEDY-STARR-HIDALGO-INLAND WILLACY-
INLAND CAMERON-COASTAL WILLACY-COASTAL CAMERON- 940 PM CDT THU JUL 22 2010

THIS HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK IS FOR DEEP SOUTH TEXAS.
.DAY ONE...REST OF TONIGHT.

ISOLATED TO SCATTERED SHOWERS AND THUNDERSTORMS WILL LINGER ACROSS THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY TONIGHT. THE BEST RAIN CHANCES WILL BE NEAR THE COASTAL COUNTIES OF KENEDY...WILLACY AND CAMERON COUNTIES LATE TONIGHT. THERE IS A MODERATE RISK OF RIP CURRENTS AT THE BEACHES OF SOUTH PADRE ISLAND AND BOCA CHICA.

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

SCATTERED TO NUMEROUS SHOWERS AND THUNDERSTORMS...WITH LOCALLY HEAVY RAINFALL AND POSSIBLE NUISANCE FLOODING IN LOW LYING AND POORLY DRAINING AREAS...ARE FORECAST FOR THE RIO GRANDE VALLEY FRIDAY. A MODERATE TO HIGH RISK OF RIP CURRENTS IS POSSIBLE AT THE LOCAL BEACHES FRIDAY AND SATURDAY.

.SPOTTER INFORMATION STATEMENT...

SKYWARN SPOTTERS SHOULD REPORT AN OBSERVATIONS OF FLOODING TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OR THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE IN BROWNSVILLE.

3. Shelters:

PSJA North High School, which opened at 1800 on 19/JUL/10, for residents seeking shelter from flooded areas was put on standby at 1930 20/JUL/10, according to the American Red Cross, because of a zero population.

La Joya High School, 604 N. Coyote Dr., is in stand-by status.

4. Resources/Assets:

Mission – pumping supplies and equipment is being staged at the Mission FD. Staging area is currently being re-evaluated and supplies/pumps will be re-inventoried on 22JUL10, by OEM Personnel. 18 Additional pumps that were ordered on Thursday via SOC started arriving by mid-morning and by this evening the entire shipment had arrived. They have been given assignments and will be picked up early Friday morning.

Located at staging area in Mission:

- 3 brush trucks (Mission Fire 1, Edinburg Fire 2)
- 2 Evacuation Units (Edinburg CISD)
- 6 buses (Hidalgo County Head Start)

Sandbag Strike Teams

- City of McAllen – 2 trucks @ 600 super sandbags each
- City of Edinburg Public Works
- Precinct 3 – 1 team with supplies and equipment.
- Precinct 1 – 1 team with supplies and equipment

PUMPING AND DEWATERING OPERATIONS

(PUMPING OPERATIONS ARE BEING RE-EVALUATED AND A REPORT WILL BE SUBSEQUENTLY ISSUED ON 23/JUL/10 UNDER SEPARATE COVER THAT WILL COVER

ALL PUMPING OPERATIONS IN HIDALGO COUNTY REGARDLESS OF OPERATING ENTITY)

Water Rescue / Swift Water Rescue – Mission FD and Weslaco FD; via DDC TPW, USBP (CBP)

Texas Military Forces is maintaining a presence and are on standby, they will be mobilized on Friday to assist with two operations at the United Irrigation and Irrigation District 1 sites.

Texas Task Force One boat crews are demobilized as of 21/JUL/2010 and as of 06:45 were on the way to their home base. Boat crews arrived safely at the College Station Home Base. TTF1 Members were demobilized from that site to return to their respective home bases.

RGV Regional Public Works Task Force – is mobilized and actively participating in all facets of pumping, dewatering, and sandbag operations. They are operating under the umbrella of the SOC PWRT. The FCE from the State PWRT has demobilized and returned to his home base on 21/JUL/10.

Texas Forest Service – air support coordinating element remains in place. Will be conducting daily flyover flooding assessments with support of Texas DPS Air-Wing and reporting directly to DDC/EMC.

Medical Team

Weslaco FD – on standby – personnel & equipment available for regional deployment.
County Health & Human Services – personnel available for regional deployment.

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
- At 1200 pm on 19/JUL/10, 2 Blackhawk helicopters were demobilized.
- 2 CH47 (Chinooks) stationed at Weslaco Airport – will not be available on Friday, they will be flying to their home base for crew/aircraft relief team and will return to the area late afternoon.

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.
TEEX – support, evaluations and response elements in the area and readily available.

EVACUATION SUPPORT: local assets only and on standby status

LAW ENFORCEMENT: on standby status

5. PROJECTED ACTIONS FOR THIS REPORTING PERIOD:

- Continuous surveillance and monitoring of communities and rising elevations of the interior floodway by various state agencies.
- Monitoring of various pumping operations across Hidalgo County
- Monitoring for possible deployment of sandbag strike teams.
- Public information dissemination regarding public health risks of floodwaters.

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

6. 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 – McAllen Region 3a
- s) Texas Task Force One
- t) TCEQ – Harlingen
- u) IBWC
- v) Army Corps of Engineers
- w) Irrigation Districts 6, 16, 1, & United
- x) Texas DPS – Air Wing
- y) Texas Forest Service
- z) Texas Military Forces

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

County	City/Area	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 arrived 16/JUL/10 and to looking at Roads and County/City Property. They will 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:

The following evacuations remain in effect: Voluntary evacuations for Los Ebanos, Havana, and river-adjacent areas of 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 (from TXDOT website 20/JUL/10)

Hidalgo County

District: Pharr
County: Hidalgo
Condition: Flood
Roadway: FM2061
Direction: Northbound and Southbound
Time: 2010-07-09 2:11 PM to 2010-07-30 6:00 PM
Limits: FM 3072 (Dicker Rd) to Hall Acres

Description: Water over roadway
 Travel discouraged
 Motorists should expect delays

North and South bound lanes are closed on FM 2061 Jackson Rd due flooding Motorist should not travel on FM 2061
Motorists should expect delays and detours (Delay / Detour)

District: Pharr
County: Hidalgo
Condition: Closed
Roadway: FM0493
Direction: Northbound and Southbound
Time: 2010-07-09 10:43 PM to 2010-07-30 6:00 PM
Limits: US 83 Military Hwy to Mile 12 1/2 North

Description: The roadway is closed due to flooding
The roadway is closed due to high water

FM 493 is closed due to flooding (Delay / Detour)

District: Pharr
County: Hidalgo
Condition: Closed
Roadway: FM0907
Direction: Northbound and Southbound
Time: 2010-07-09 10:37 PM to 2010-07-30 6:00 PM
Limits: FM 3072 to Hall Acres Rd

Description: The roadway is closed due to flooding
The roadway is closed due to high water

FM 907 Alamo Rd is closed due to flooding (Delay / Detour)

District: Pharr
County: Hidalgo
Condition: Closed
Roadway: FM2557
Direction: Northbound and Southbound
Time: 2010-07-09 5:44 PM to 2010-07-30 6:00 PM
Limits: Juan Balli to Hall Acres

Description: Motorists should expect delays

Steward Road is closed from Juan Balli to Hall Acres north and south bound lanes Motorist should expect delays and should use alternate routes (Delay / Detour)

District: Pharr
County: Hidalgo
Condition: Closed
Roadway: FM1425
Direction: Northbound and Southbound
Time: 2010-07-13 3:10 PM to 2010-07-28 5:00 PM
Limits: FM 2629 to SH0107

Description: The roadway is closed due to flooding

Road closed due to flooding

District: Pharr
County: Hidalgo
Condition: Closed
Roadway: FM0491
Direction: Northbound and Southbound
Time: 2010-07-19 9:15 AM to 2010-07-29 0:00 AM
Limits: Mile 9 to Mile 10

Description: The roadway is closed due to flooding

Road Closed due to water over road (Delay / Detour)

District: Pharr
County: Hidalgo
Condition: Closed
Roadway: FM0491
Direction: Northbound and Southbound
Time: 2010-07-19 9:18 AM to 2010-07-29 12:00 PM
Limits: Bu. 83 to US 281

Description: The roadway is closed due to flooding

Road closed due to flooding Motorist should expect delays use alternate route (Delay / Detour)

12. CONFERENCE CALL INFORMATION:

Local coordination conference call that was DDC sponsored was discontinued on 21JUL10

13. OTHER:

- County Emergency Operations Center was open from 0800 hours and closed at 1900 hours on 22/JUL/2010.
- Hidalgo County's 24-hour Public Emergency Hotline continues to field calls from the public on flooding issues, road closures, and evacuations and shelters.

IBWC REPORTS

RELEASE OF FLOODWATERS FROM FALCON DAM CONTINUES; DIVERSIONS CONTINUE INTO U.S. INTERIOR FLOODWAY IN THE LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY

The International Boundary and Water Commission, United States and Mexico, continues to release floodwaters from Falcon Dam, located at Falcon Heights, Texas-Nueva Ciudad Guerrero, Tamaulipas at the rate of 60,000 cubic feet per second (1700 cubic meters per second); releases were increased to this rate on July 14. According to provisional data from the U.S. Section of the Commission, Falcon Reservoir reached a record elevation on July 17 of 309.3 feet (94.277 meters), more than a foot greater than the previous record of 308.1 feet (93.91 meters) set in 1958. The reservoir elevation is currently declining slowly.

Downstream in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, the Commission has a system of flood control levees, diversion dams, and floodways that extends from Peñitas to the Gulf of Mexico. Diversion of floodwaters continues into the U.S. interior floodway at Anzalduas Dam, located near Mission, Texas-Reynosa, Tamaulipas, and into the Mexican interior floodway at Retamal Dam, located near Donna, Texas-Rio Bravo, Tamaulipas. 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 several days.

Residents in the Rio Grande Basin should continue to monitor National Weather Service warnings and forecasts for updated information and river forecasts concerning flood conditions; they should also heed any guidance from local emergency management officials.

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. Staff from the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission's Lower Rio Grande Flood Control Project remain in Flood Fight Operations. During this phase of response, crews patrol flood control levees 24 hours per day to identify and respond to any problems that arise such as erosion along the levees, freeboard encroachment, or seepage on the land side of the levees. All drainage and irrigation structures that pass through USIBWC levees have been closed to prevent floodwaters from the Rio Grande and interior floodways from flowing into adjacent communities. Because the structures are closed, drainage from the land side of the levee that would normally flow into the river or floodways will be blocked so any local storm water flows will need to be pumped over the levee by the community or drainage district responsible for local storm water management. Residents who tamper with drainage structures during flood operations could be subject to criminal prosecution.

The Commission manages its flood control infrastructure taking into account safe operation of the reservoirs, existing flood conditions in parts of the Rio Grande and its tributaries in the United States and Mexico, impact to property, and forecasts for additional rainfall in the basin.

For more information: Sally Spener IBWC

Rene A. Ramirez, Hidalgo County Judge / EM Director
Tony Pena, Hidalgo County EMC/Hurricane Alex IC
Hidalgo County Office of Emergency Management 23/JUL/2010 @ 00:39 hours

