

Rain slows, but flooding still threat in Southeast Texas (Update)

June 4 2016



Homes surrounded by floodwaters are shown in this aerial view, Saturday, June 4, 2016, in Rosharon, Texas. Parts of Texas have been inundated with rain in the last week, and more than half of the state has been under flood watches or warnings. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)

The heavy rain that's been hovering over parts of Southeast and Central Texas and caused deadly flooding began to lift Saturday, but officials said the flooding emergency near the Gulf Coast was worsening and Army officials kept up their investigation of a training exercise that turned deadly at Fort Hood.

Only the wheels of an Army transport truck were visible after swift floodwaters washed the 2½-ton vehicle from a low-water crossing on Thursday, killing nine soldiers, Coryell County emergency medical services chief Jeff Mincy told the Killeen Daily Herald. Mincy said he arrived at the scene about 11:30 a.m. Thursday, and that firefighters had already pulled the three surviving soldiers from the rushing waters of usually dry Owl Creek.

"I can't estimate how fast it was flowing, but it was faster than I would have felt comfortable putting anything into the water," Mincy said. "When we did find the vehicle, we could see the tires sticking up out of the water, so in that position where the vehicle settled, it had to have been about 8 feet deep."

The bodies of five soldiers from the Central Texas post were recovered Thursday and four were found Friday, while the three surviving soldiers were discharged Friday from Fort Hood's hospital and returned to duty.

Late Saturday night, Fort Hood officials released the names of eight of the nine soldiers who died. They identified them as Staff Sgt. Miguel Angel Colonvazquez, 38, of Brooklyn, New York; Spc. Christine Faith Armstrong, 27, of Twentynine Palms, California; Pfc. Brandon Austin Banner, 22, of Milton, Florida; Pfc. Zachery Nathaniel Fuller, 23, of Palmetto, Florida; Pvt. Isaac Lee Deleon, 19, of San Angelo, Texas; Pvt. Eddy Raelaurin Gates, 20, of Dunn, North Carolina; Pvt. Tysheena Lynette James, 21, of Jersey City, New Jersey; and Cadet Mitchell Alexander Winey, 21, of Valparaiso, Indiana.



An evacuated Texas Department of Criminal Justice prison surrounded by floodwaters is shown in this aerial view near Lochridge, Texas, Saturday, June 4, 2016. Parts of Texas have been inundated with rain in the last week, and more than half of the state has been under flood watches or warnings. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)

Officials with the post say the name of the ninth soldier who died won't be released until family can be notified.

In Southeast Texas, water levels began to recede Saturday along upstream portions of the Brazos River, but the peril increased downstream as the water churned toward the Gulf of Mexico. Emergency officials in Brazoria County warned residents in East Columbia, Bailey's Prairie and Bar-X to be prepared to evacuate their homes.

The Brazos River stood at 52.55 feet near midday Saturday at Rosharon in northern Brazoria County, which is 9.55 feet above flood stage. It is

expected to crest at 52.8 feet late Sunday morning—third-highest crest on record at that gauge.



Horses walk through floodwaters, Saturday, June 4, 2016, in Rosharon, Texas. Parts of Texas have been inundated with rain in the last week, and more than half of the state has been under flood watches or warnings. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)

The weather ranged from drizzle to bouts of heavy rain, Brazoria County spokeswoman Sharon Trower said. About 2,000 homes have been ordered evacuated in the Rosharon area, about 30 miles south of Houston, and emergency shelters were filling, she said. No injuries have been reported in the county from the flood. Three prisons in the area have been evacuated since last week.

Except for widely scattered showers in Central and East Texas, the bulk of the rain Saturday was confined to the upper Texas Gulf Coast and the southern tip of Texas.

In Fort Bend County, just southwest of Houston, emergency officials reported seeing slightly improved conditions in flood-struck areas. And while the rain-swollen Brazos has ceased to rise, County Judge Robert Hebert said, some neighborhoods remain cut off by floodwaters and many local streets remain impassable.



A home surrounded by floodwaters is shown in this aerial view, Saturday, June 4, 2016, in Rosharon, Texas. Parts of Texas have been inundated with rain in the last week, and more than half of the state has been under flood watches or warnings. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)



Rescue personnel wade through floodwaters, Saturday, June 4, 2016, in Rosharon, Texas. Parts of Texas have been inundated with rain in the last week, and more than half of the state has been under flood watches or warnings. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)



A man carries a bicycle on his head as he walks through floodwaters Saturday, June 4, 2016, near Holiday Lakes, Texas. Parts of Texas have been inundated

with rain in the last week, and more than half of the state has been under flood watches or warnings. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)



A woman walks through floodwaters Saturday, June 4, 2016, near Holiday Lakes, Texas. Parts of Texas have been inundated with rain in the last week, and more than half of the state has been under flood watches or warnings. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)



The Brazos River flows out of its banks Saturday, June 4, 2016, in Simonton, Texas. Parts of Texas have been inundated with rain in the last week, and more than half of the state has been under flood watches or warnings. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)



A military helicopter joins in the search efforts Friday, June 3, 2016, for 6 missing soldiers from Fort Hood, Texas. (Rusty Schramm/The Temple Daily Telegram via AP)



A home surrounded by floodwaters is shown in this aerial view Saturday, June 4, 2016, near Holiday Lakes, Texas. Parts of Texas have been inundated with rain in the last week, and more than half of the state has been under flood watches or warnings. (AP Photo/David J. Phillip)

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Citation: Rain slows, but flooding still threat in Southeast Texas (Update) (2016, June 4) retrieved 19 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-06-threat-southeast-texas.html>

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