



Two girls splash in front of a home on 11th street in Tillamook during high water Tuesday. Flooding swept most of the county as rivers reached record highs.

# Torrential rains cause flood

Tillamook, land of many waters, lived up to its name Tuesday as torrential rains and melting snow drove creeks and rivers over their banks throughout the county. Flooding came quickly after almost eight inches of rain were dumped in extreme northern and southern portions of the county and five inches in the central area. Most of the major rivers and streams were several feet above flood stage before cresting at mid afternoon. Water continued to rise pushed by the tide which peaked 9 p.m. Tuesday.

Highway 101 and most secondary roads were blocked by noon on Tuesday and at press time Wednesday water is still standing on 101 in Tillamook and areas around Cloverdale and Hebo in southern parts of the county. According to

reports from northern parts of the county, flood waters are subsiding after being under water for most of the afternoon and night Tuesday.

County commissioner J. F. Brennan said the entire area will be surveyed to see if the county can be declared a disaster area. Commissioners had already declared a state of emergency Tuesday at the height of the flooding.

Schools were closed throughout the county around 10 a.m. Tuesday when flooding problems became evident, remained closed Wednesday, but will re-open today. Several families were driven from their homes by the rising water and some required rescue by boat. In Tillamook, the 4-H building was set aside for housing and according to officials about

twelve families stayed the night there.

Two bridges were washed out in the south part of the county and several were threatened by debris in other areas. A bridge on Brooten road near Pacific City was knocked out as was a privately owned bridge near Beaver. A slide on the Wilson river blocked traffic on highway 6 at milepost 13 for a short time until passage for one lane traffic was opened. Numerous slides along the Trask river road have blocked the highway there.

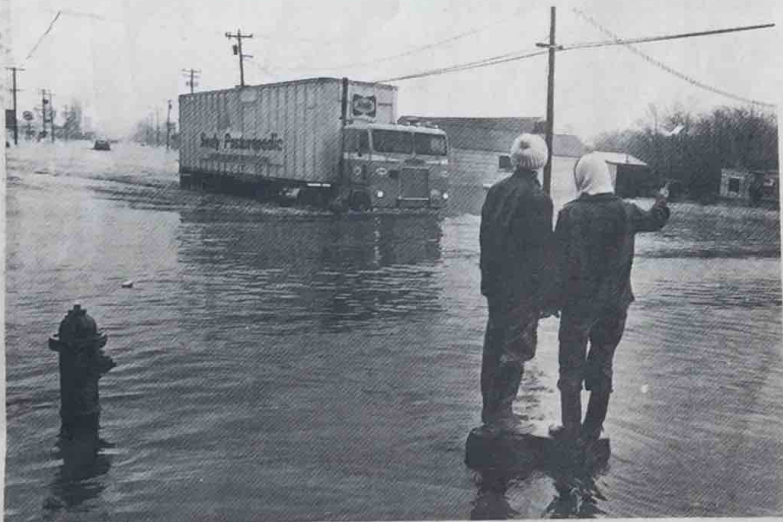
Rising waters of the Trask river also threatened patients in the Tillamook Convalescent home and forced their evacuation to Tillamook hospital Tuesday night. According to Sheriff's deputies who assisted in the transfer, water was already three to

six inches deep in the home before the patients were removed.

No injuries or drownings have been reported. There appears to be no great loss of stock, although some farmers in Cloverdale in south county and along Goodspeed road in Tillamook have had to rescue some of their cows from the flooded fields.

Crews worked throughout the night Tuesday sand bagging and aiding stranded residents as the Wilson river crested at 15.61 feet, 5 1/2 ft. above flood stage. Nehalem river reached 22.62 ft. before starting down, almost a full ten feet above flood level. Nestucca river crested at 19.2 ft., slightly above its 18 foot flood mark, but high enough to spread what some area residents claim is the most water they have seen during

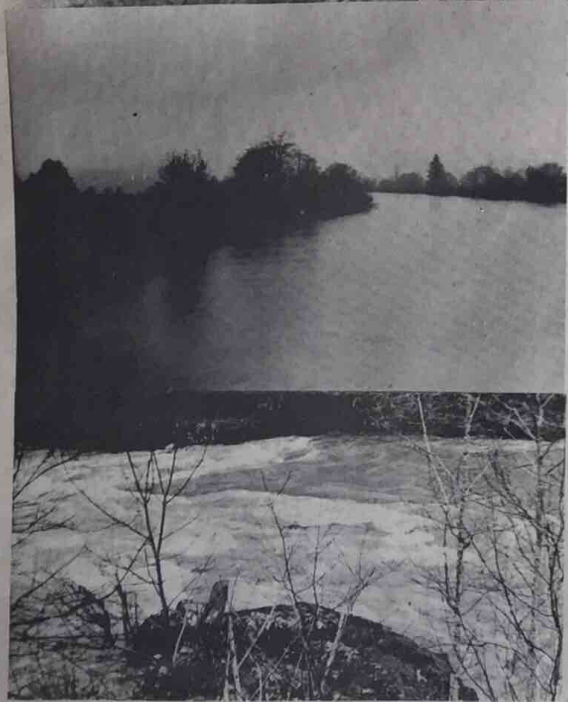
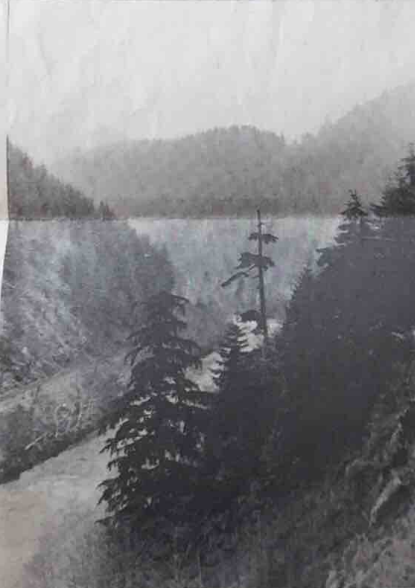
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These enterprising young ladies have figured out one good way to get from one side of the water covering highway 101 to the other; hitch a ride with a truck. Record high water levels brought quick flooding throughout the county Tuesday.

since 1888

# THE RIVER IN WINTER



The barometer dips as the great low pressure center moves down from Alaska. Pushed by the ever-present jet streams aloft, the great mass moves into British Columbia and northern Washington state.

But the trailing front of the low extends hundreds and hundreds of miles to the south, a long column of dark, low clouds heavy with moisture gathered over thousands of miles of the North Pacific.

The massive barrier of the Coast Range, its streams already swollen with melting snows from earlier storms, stands in defiance, barring the way to the passage of the new storm.

The storm gathers in a darkening pall, the winds begin to lash the waves of the ocean, which begins to boil and crash with ever-increasing violence at the base of Mount Neah-Kahnie, at Cape Mearns and Tillamook Head. The sea appears to be reaching long, vicious fingers across the smooth sand strands at Rockaway, Bayview, Cannon Beach and Manzanita.

The deceptively gentle spectacles of mist swirl around the heights of Onion Peak and into the damp canyons of the mountains. The rain begins, so gently at first, but the winds come to rise and the rain-drops become cold, icy, pointed things that rip and tear at the hemlocks and cedars and whip the great spruce limbs savagely on the mountain heights.

The water shakes from the trees, runs down the trunked rivulets, onto the already sodden ground. The rich earth absorbs no more, and every depression becomes a bog, every crevice the beginning of a stream, every drop-off is a newborn waterfall. The once-laughing mountain creeks of summer become the angry channels of winter's swollen run-off of water attacking the sharp zones of the creek bed only to be disemboweled into the death-white spray of the rapids it falls.

The mountains weep, their tear joining in the saddle, form cascades which fall on downward toward the valley and once peaceful river.

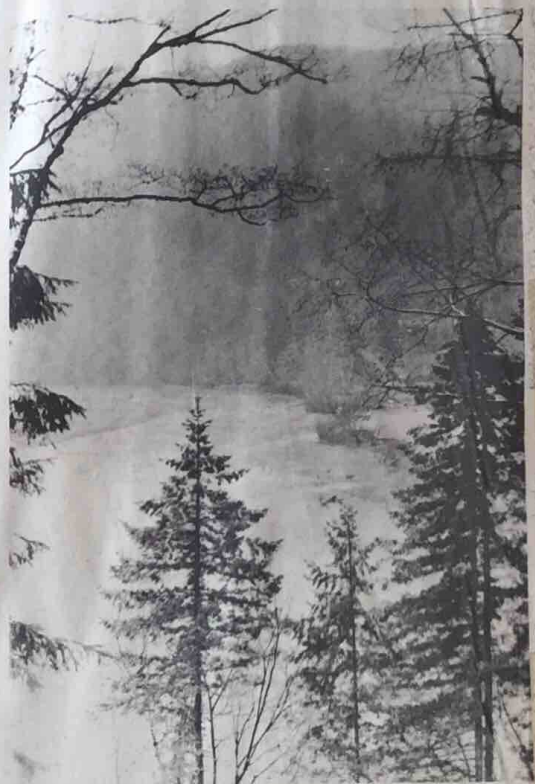
The gentle Nehalem is no longer the bucolic avenue the angler and boatman, but instead becomes the torn jug-vein of the north coast, pouring the life blood of the mountains in torrents towards the sea.

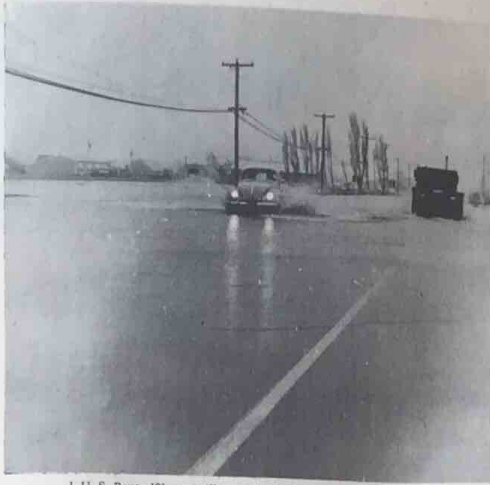
Trees, whose only misfortune was to have been spared so close to the banks, are uprooted and tossed into the ed. The angry river chews and undercuts the soil of the riverbank and the great slides rumble into the river as if asking to deny it passage.

The river roars from the mountain confines out onto its valley plain and surges over the banks to engulf the farms, cut man's puny roads, and threaten the bridges which man has sought to gird the river.

Storm and river meet in open combat now as the river fights toward the sea. The west wind and the tide pressures of the sea seek to push back the Nehalem into its mountain fastnesses, but the river will not be stayed. It overflows its banks along the coast, it submerges the usually dry marshy islands, and as the tide turns, the river water is locked in fierce embrace with sea water, the muddy residue of land dissolving in the saline fluid of the ocean.

The winter storm of the north coast, faint yet majestic in scope, strike terror and awe in the puny human observer, reminding him of the universal forces that have moved for millions of years before he began, that move in total disregard of his existence, and will continue to move the millions of years after he is vanished, even as a memory.

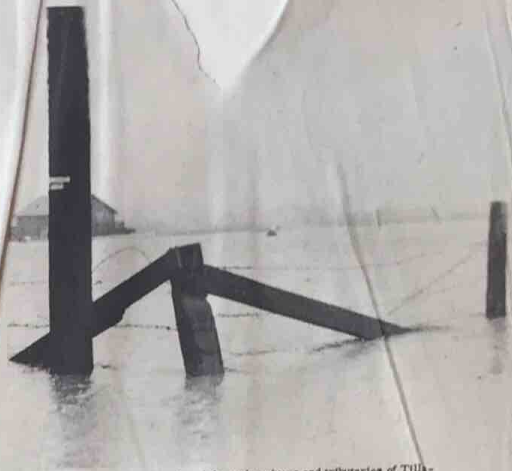




1. U. S. Route 101 was still passable in the early hours of the day, but by nightfall it would be cut in at least three places.

# Tues. Jan. 11, 1972

by  
*Jim Perneti*



2. Morning found the major rivers and tributaries of Tillamook County rising from their beds into the fields.



3. The Tillamook River became the father of lakes that rose and began surrounding homes.



4. Homes became isolated by the rampaging rivers.



5. Dwelling places became Venetian Villas, but minus a fleet of pretty gondolas.



6. The Kilchis River lifted itself over the dikes and poured across the surrounding countryside.



7. The Nehalem River was no longer a river but a great sea of melted snow and excess rain run-off.



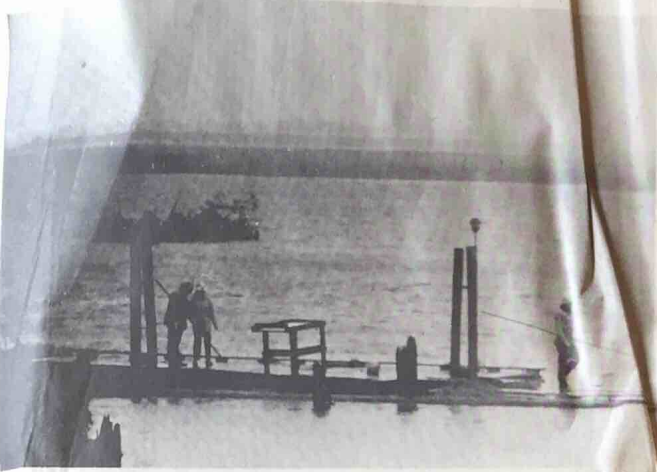
8. The riverbeds and the mountain walls could no longer contain the rivers of Tillamook by noon 1st Tuesday.



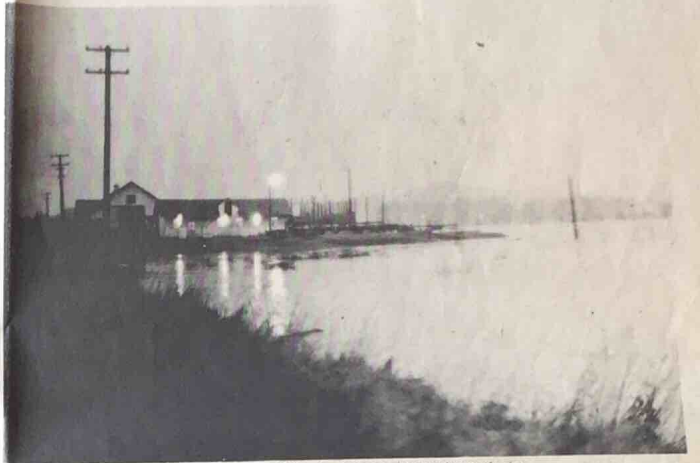
9. The waters of the Nehalem were rising at nearly two feet an hour by mid-afternoon.



10. Uprooted trees and the debris of collapsed jetties and minor trestles began to choke the furious rivers.



11. In Wheeler, pier-owners began watch to push away debris that threatened their landings.



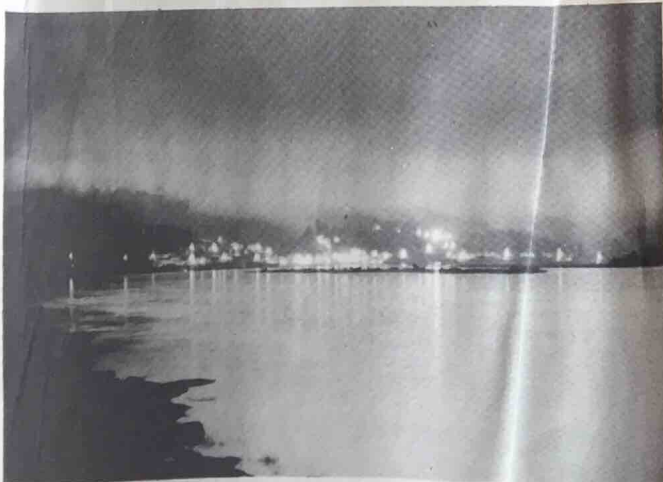
12. Farms near Mohler fearfully sat watching the steady rise of the waters.



13. County road crews took up alert at the bridges in an attempt to ward off dangerous damming by logs and debris.



14. At 5:30 p.m. the County Commission declared the area in a State of Emergency.



15. The lights of an apprehensive Wheeler glittered across the swollen Nehalem as it raged towards the sea.



16. The evening tide pushed the river back, piling it even higher in the City of Nehalem forcing closure of its main street.