

On Minnesota Side

Vulnerable River Area Flood Defenses Tightened

The Minnesota side of the flooding Mississippi seems destined to be hit hardest near the north part of the Sunday News area, the center, and south area, should the floods be as severe as predicted.

Lake City, with its wide expanse of Lake Pepin, still tight with some 20 inches of ice, wards off floods pretty well.

However, trailers were being moved from the Point Friday because it is expected this protrusion from about the center of town, protecting the boat harbor, will be flooded. Ice jams could ruin trailers more than floodwaters if left on the point.

It appears that the water will have to rise another 4 to 5 feet before flooding begins. Friday water hadn't reached the bathhouse wall.

In 1932, water came up to where the old Balsford Lumber Co. stood, one block uptown from the harbor. The level of the lake will have to rise 8-10 feet to reach the 1932 level, residents say.

WABASHA was getting ready for high water Friday as the Mississippi River was rising 1/2 of an inch an hour. Water was coming up over the bank at the north end of town, headed for the Minnetonka Boat Works, owned by the city.

It was up five feet above normal Friday. Residents were removing motors from basements and installing pumps.

The river rose one foot Thursday night, and 9/10 of a foot Friday night.

Saturday it was moving over the street leading to the Wabasha Marina.

No paper or plastic-lined sandbags were available Friday. People were attempting to get bags from a bag company in

Minneapolis, apparently the only source.

City crews were building up the dike at that point. If the water rises the three or four feet higher than the 17 feet it reached in 1932, water would likely flow into Main Street.

If it gets higher than in 1932, it also will flood over four or five blocks of Highway 61 from the area of Goltz's truckstop restaurant westerly toward the Milwaukee Railroad overpass. It could rise to within two blocks west of the county jail and courthouse and the higher midtown area.

THE SOUTH part of town, a slough area, gets flooding first when water comes in directly from the river and backs up through the old Zumbro river bed.

Three blocks south of the stoplights below the truckstop on 61, Highway 60 crosses a bridge over the old streambed. Ordinarily a dry run, it is now filled with water from the Zumbro River and is 12 to 15 feet deep in some places, Sheriff Ed Lager said.

The dry run runs north toward Highway 61, under the road, and into a slough area that was dredged two years ago in a Jaycees project to create a park, thence to the Minnetonka harbor and the river or the north river.

The old Zumbro streambed also leads south and crosses under Highway 61 about three miles south of Wabasha via the old Amerland bridge, where it flows down to the river. This is where the flooding backwater comes in.

IN 1932, the overflow flooded four or five blocks between Highway 61 and the railroad tracks in the slough area, six blocks west of the river. During high water 13 years ago, it reached north from this point almost to the stop lights at the junction of Highways 61 and 60.

The backwater could extend far up the old streambed toward the Zumbro, although this river, flooding periodically this spring, now is going down.

Smaller boats have been moved to higher ground from the harbor at Minnetonka Boat Works. Larger boats in the marina were plugged, anchored, and left to float.

If high water does come, Wabasha will be an island surrounded on the west by the old Zumbro bed, south by the slough, and north and east by the Mississippi. It may be cut off temporarily from travel on both Highways 61 and 60.

Downriver, most of Upper and Lower Sand Prairie is under water. Kellogg stands high and dry, and so does Weaver.

WEST NEWTON, the old lumber camp now a summer resort, will be flooded — it's predicted that nine out of 10 cottages will be surrounded by water. Camp Watopa will have water. Highway 61 in low spots between Weaver and Minneiska is surrounded by water from Whitewater River overflow.

Minneiska, standing on a hillside will be above water. So will Minnesota City. Merrill Holland, who lives there, said he's already getting refugees

from the lowlands — there were two pheasants in his yard this morning.

Deer may come too — they fled the bottomlands for the higher ground of Minnesota City in 1932.

Garvin Brook, flowing through Minnesota City, may get backwater — it has before, and overflowed in a portion of town.

Highway 61 upriver from the junction with 248 probably won't be under water this year as it was in 1932, because the road has been raised.

Flooding in Winona is told elsewhere.

Homer village is high and apparently out of danger.

Like others with cottages downriver, Ray Jones says his summer place may have water on the first floor. He lives permanently farther up the hill and expects water in the basement. He lives two miles downriver from Lamolle.

Summer cottages on the lower level in Dakota will be in the water line if the high flood comes. Elmer Bernadot, who's lived here all his life, says he's never seen the river so turbulent with whitecaps, but chunks of ice are receding. Cottages near the river at Dresbach already are getting water.

Burton Morris, assistant lockmaster at U. S. Lock & Dam No. 7, La Crescent, Rt. 2, commonly known as the Dresbach dam, said Saturday afternoon ice was no longer a problem — he's primarily concerned now with predicted water rise. It came up 4 1/2 of a foot in the 24 hours prior to noon Saturday.

Shore Acres residents fronting the river at La Crescent got 10,000 sandbags from Winona Saturday to protect their road — water had risen to within a foot of it.

Mrs. James D. Hill and seven children were to move today from their residence at their boat livery in the north part of Shore Acres to the home of friends in La Crescent.

The Hills have moored to trees their 35 boats loaded with ice chests and summer furnishings and left them to ride out the flood. Hill will stay there as long as it's safe to prevent vandalism, reportedly already started.

MANY RESIDENTS of Shore Acres have parked their cars at River Junction of Highways 61-14-16 for easy exit. This is where railroad employes get off to board trains.

Residents of the area recall water so high in homes in the south end of Shore Acres during the 1932 flood they saw water pouring in and out of windows. Trailer houses there have been put up on blocks.

The area gets some protection from a wall along the river.

Highway crews were busy picking rocks from Interstate 90 in the Dresbach area last week, apparently loosened by warm weather and moisture. They removed a large mud slide covering old Highway 61 between Dresbach and Dakota Friday.

Four-foot dikes were being built around Lee's Auto Body, Deep Rock Oil Station and the Twillite Zone in La Crescent Saturday. They're on the dike road.

According to a report, state

highway men examined the dike road Friday and were considering sandbagging. It was sandbagged in 1932, but has been built higher since.

Hudson Service Station operator near the West Channel bridge at the Minnesota end of the dike said Saturday the channel now is running free of ice.

Holiday Lanes were sandbagging the river bank and around the alleys Friday.

Water from the Mississippi may back up into the Root below the junction of 16-28 and do some flooding below Hokah.

Downriver, Brownsville village proper is high and presumably free from flooding but there's a tavern on the shore across Highway 26 that might feel it, and all along the river down from Brownsville boat-houses and boats are being secured.

Whitehall Chamber

WHITEHALL, Wis. (Special) — Quentin Koxlien, new owner of the former Gilbertson Heating & Sheet Metal shop, was a guest of the Chamber of Commerce Wednesday night. President Kenneth Swenson said Miss Diane Berg, 1964 Beef and Dairy Day queen, will participate in the annual celebrations at Arcadia, Osseo and Eleva during early summer. Named to select a chairman for this year's Beef and Dairy Day celebration were Donald Pearson, Robert Guinn, Maynard Clipper and Roy Harnisch. Quinn Risberg, treasurer, reported a balance of about \$4,000.

CONFIRMATION SERVICE

LA CRESCENT, Minn. (Special) — The Church of the Crucifixion will observe the

sacrament of confirmation today at 4 p.m. administered by the Most Rev. George Speltz, Ph. D., Auxiliary Bishop of Winona. Confirmation will be administered at Mass.



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