

Rain threatens worse damage in Corralitos

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CORRALITOS — Roadways are buckled, landslides threaten to dam the roaring creek and Browns Valley Bridge is out.

It looks and sounds like the winter storm of 1982.

But the damage, of course, was caused by last week's massive earthquake.

Heavy rain early Monday just compounded the problems and threatened to make matters much worse for people who live in the upper reaches of Eureka Canyon Road.

The state Department of Forestry moved two fire engines and a bulldozer up to Camp Corralitos to handle problems Monday night should a large, unstable slide about a quarter-mile below the school on

Eureka Canyon Road worsen because of the rain and isolate about 100 homes.

"We put the engines up there to show the people that they won't be alone," said Tony Akin of CDF.

The main concern of firefighters and county road crews was to keep access open to the mountain community.

Giant redwoods were perched precariously in a slide above as a county road crew filled in a giant crack on Rider Ridge Road.

Supervisor Robley Levy, who toured the area for the third time since the earthquake, reported that a door-to-door survey by CDF showed that of 1,032 homes, 152 suffered major damage and 52 were destroyed.

Residents of this rural community were closest to the epicenter of last Tuesday's quake. In fact, the San Andreas Fault reportedly crosses right under Hazel Dell Road. Homes on that road, as well as on Buzzard Lagoon and Rider Road suffered heavy damage.

An A-frame house on Hazel Dell reportedly was lifted off its foundation and moved three feet. But not a single window broke.

David Gradone was philosophical as he poked through the wreckage of his home on Upper Highland. "Someone asked me if I was surprised. I said, 'No, everybody in

California expected this to happen some day,'" he explained.

He said his worst fear now is that the county won't allow him to rebuild on the property.

One of the strangest results of the earthquake was that Corralitos Creek, which normally is dry this time of year, began running last Wednesday.

Fed by a little bit of rain, the creek was moving rapidly Monday afternoon.

Jon McHaley of CDF said it is believed fissures in springs up through the mountain caused water to be channeled into the creek. McHaley is from the Fresno-King's County ranger unit and is one of dozens of out-of-county firefighters helping out.

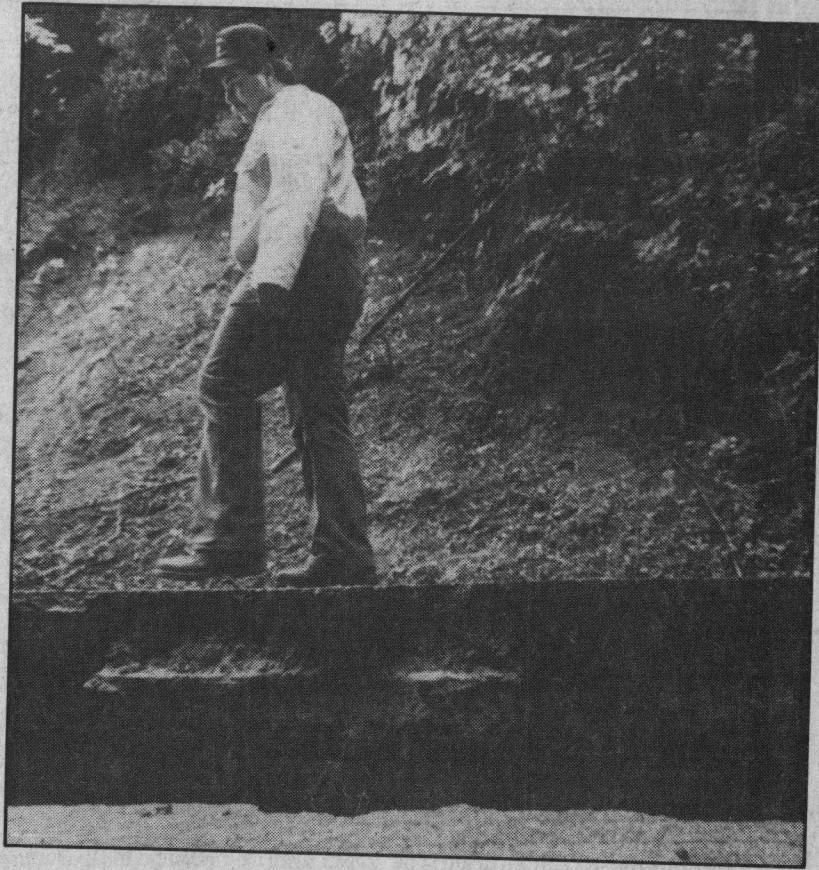
Residents, worried about their wells, have been drinking water trucked into the area. Residents have been filling jugs from a tanker truck parked near the Corralitos Market.

Market owner Joe Cutler continued to wipe up the mess on the shelves of his store Monday. He figured he suffered \$8,000 to 10,000 worth of damage to his stock.

But he said he was thankful to the county and to CDF, who sent inspectors out on Sunday, and to repairmen who spent the day shoring up the front of the store.



Jack Meyers of Woodland helps Don Campbell fill up with drinking water at the Corralitos Market Monday.



Photos by Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel

Tony Akin of the forestry department walks on the upper level of a crack on Eureka Canyon Road.