

Storm leaves chaos in wake



Kurt Ellison

Dr. Stuart Simon paused to watch rain-swollen Corralitos Creek rush under the Browns Valley Road Bridge this morning. The bridge was one washed away in storms of 1982.

Creeks, rivers near flood stage

JAN 13 1993

By BOB SMITH
STAFF WRITER

It rained and rained and rained last night. And then the winds blew.

The result was havoc, with trees uprooted, power lines and poles smashed to the ground, and roiling water pouring down Santa Cruz County's rivers and streams.

Thousands of Santa Cruz County residents were without power this morning at the first light of day.

The San Lorenzo River was at flood stage in Santa Cruz

this morning. Soquel Creek was at the five-foot mark on the Soquel Drive bridge this morning. The creek begins to flood at the 10-foot mark.

Aptos Creek was running bank-to-bank this morning through the Rio del Mar Flats.

The storm that hit Monterey and Santa Cruz counties yesterday and last night was moving inland today but the National Weather Service said there's another storm forming up in the Pacific, heading for Central California.

The forecast calls for showers

tonight and Thursday with 25 knot winds tonight diminishing to 10-20 knots Thursday.

After six years of drought and near-drought conditions in the Monterey Bay area, heavy rains this season have left the ground so saturated with water that trees are being uprooted by the strong winds and blown across roads and into power lines.

County roads and state highways were closed this morning by mud and rock slides.

PG&E reported more than 25,000 customers, including 10,000 in Aptos and Rio del Mar,

were without power in Santa Cruz County at dawn this morning.

Spokeswoman Staycee Sciranka said that as of 9:30 a.m., 10,000 customers were still out of power in Aptos, Scotts Valley, the San Lorenzo Valley and Bonny Doon.

Power went out in one Rio del Mar neighborhood with a flash and double-bang early this morning when a large Monterey pine in the 400 block of Palmer Avenue fell with a crash across high voltage lines. The weight of

See STORM page 2 ►



JAN 1 3 1993

Caught by surprise, driver was unable to slow before hitting flooded East Lake Avenue at Coleman.

STORM

► From Page 1

the tree snapped two power poles, leaving a tangled mass of poles, insulators and wires along the roadway.

Maura and Trent Engle, at 434 Palmer Ave., consider themselves fortunate this morning. Neighbors had just paid to have 30 feet trimmed from the tree's top. If the top hadn't been removed, Mrs. Engle said this morning, it might have smashed into the bedroom where their daughter was sleeping.

Lines also went down on Soquel Drive near the Aptos Tool and Crib store. Most of the 10,000 Aptos area customers had power restored by 7:30 a.m.

Another 200 customers on Eureka Canyon Road were blacked out this morning, PG&E said.

The utility company hopes to have power restored to most of its customers by 6 p.m. tonight but warned that homes and businesses in isolated areas of the Santa Cruz Mountains may not have electricity until Friday.

The highway patrol this morning said Highway 152 was closed east of Watsonville and there were numerous slides on Highway 129 through Chittenden Pass.

Landslides were also reported this morning on Highway 17 but the highway remained open for the morning commute. Highway 9 was reopened this morning after being closed last night, the highway patrol spokeswoman said.

The Santa Cruz County Public Works Department this morning said the following roads were closed because of slides, trees or power lines across them:

Eureka Canyon at Rider Road; Highland Way, 3 miles from Spanish Ranch Road; Bear Creek, ¼ mile from Highway 9; Freedom Blvd. between Day Valley and Macdonald Roads; W. Park Drive in Boulder Creek; Redwood Drive off Stewart Avenue in Boulder Creek; Rider Road, ½ miles from Eureka Canyon Road; 400 Palmer Road.

A gray tabby cat checks out the debris left by a fallen Monterey pine and downed PG&E lines this morning in the front yard of Trent and Maura Engle, 434 Palmer Ave., Rio del Mar.

Bob Smith

