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The Awesome Power of Water - Floods

Floods are just one of many events that take place in the natural world. They represent one of the physical processes that help create and maintain a healthy river and bring all sorts of ecological change within a watershed. It is when floods and man collide that the problems and danger arise. With the arrival of Spring, yet another season begins - Flood Season. Each year floods cause substantial property damage and loss of life throughout the United States. According to the National Weather Service, in the long term, floods kill more people in the US than other types of severe weather. Hopefully the following information will help you and your family remain safe.

Many people underestimate the awesome power of water. Floods can tear out trees, destroy buildings and bridges, and can even roll cars. Just 6 inches of fast moving water can knock you off your feet.

Only 2 feet of water is needed for your vehicle to be swept away. Unfortunately most people think that being in their vehicle will protect them from the raging waters. Almost half of all flash flood fatalities occur in vehicles. In addition to sweeping your vehicle away, water can erode the road bed, creating unsafe driving conditions. A good rule to remember is, When you approach a flooded roadway, **TURN AROUND AND GO ANOTHER WAY!**

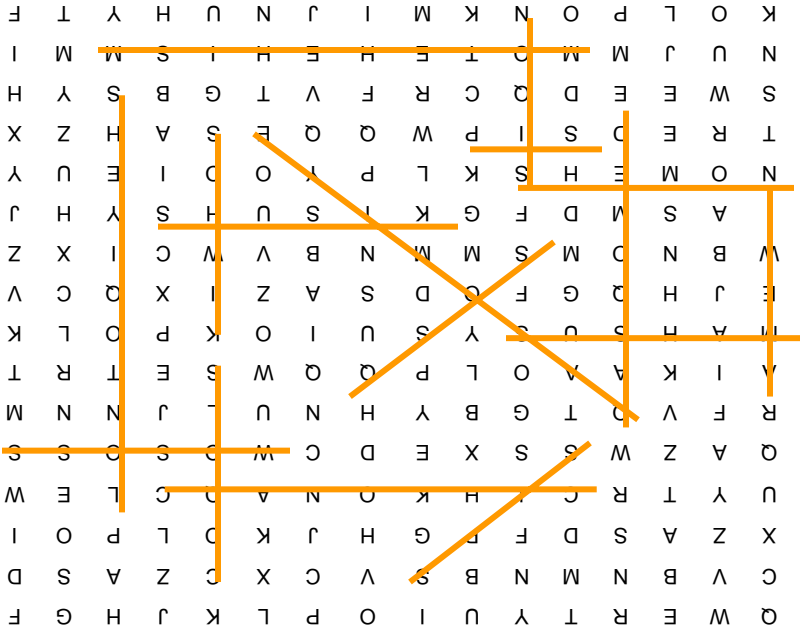
So just what is a flash flood? By definition, it is a rapid rise of water along a stream or low-lying urban area. Most of the flash flood damage and fatalities occur in areas immediately adjacent to a stream or arroyo. They are most often caused by a combination of heavy rain, dam break, levee failure, rapid snowmelt and ice jams. Flash floods also occur when slow moving or multiple thunderstorms take place over the same area.

Where you are plays a big role in whether you are at risk for a flood or flash flood. Areas with steep hills or mountains tend to produce rapid runoff and quicker stream reaction. Clay soils and rocks don't allow the waters to soak into the

(cont'd on page 4)

Answers Spring Word Games

- AMEWIN - fisherman
- CIHKONAQC - turtle
- COQOLS - frog
- KISUHS - sun
- KIWHOS - muskrat
- LONTOQIYEHS - wood duck
- MAHSUS - fiddle head
- MOTEHEHISM - black duck
- NOMEHS - fish
- QASQOMEDE - thaw
- QASOMIYE - melts
- SIP - river
- SIPS - bird
- SIQON - Spring
- SOSQ - mud
- WOSOSS - nest



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Meduxnekeag River overflowing her banks after freak Summer storm
Highland Avenue public boat launch

Gray Wolf Retains Endangered Species Protection

By Cara Ellis Water Resources Specialist

Within the contiguous United States, gray wolves once ranged from coast to coast and from Canada to Mexico. The population became nearly extinct in the early part of the 20th century, when they were pursued with the intent of eradication. By the time the wolves were finally protected by the **Endangered Species Act of 1973**, they had been exterminated for the lower 48 states, except for a few hundred that inhabited extreme northeastern Minnesota. Once estimated in the hundreds of thousands, they now stand at an estimated 3,700 individuals.

Today about 2,200 wolves live in the wild in Minnesota, fewer than twenty on Lake Superior’s Isle Royal, about 120 on Michigan’s Upper Peninsula, 120 in Wisconsin, and about 240 in the northern Rocky Mountains of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. Wolves are currently being re-introduced to Arizona and New Mexico. An occasional wolf is seen in Washington State, North and South Dakota.

The Endangered Species Act

On April 1, 2003, the US Fish and Wildlife Service issued a Final Ruling to reduce protection for the Gray Wolf by down-grading it from an “endangered” species to a “threatened” species in the Northeast Region. The Final Ruling, which went into effect on April 1, 2004, intended to reduce federal protection under the Endangered Species Act and authorize more opportunities for lethal control of the wolves by private citizens. It also was a step towards de-listing the wolf completely from any protection under the ESA for wolves in the Eastern U.S.

Distraught by the reclassification, a coalition of 19 conservation and animal protection groups (including the Humane Society of the US, Defenders of Wildlife, and the Center for Biological Diversity) filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Department of the Interior. The lawsuit challenged the Final Rule issued by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). On January 31, 2005, a Federal Judge ruled in favor of the Wolves, and upheld the integrity of the Endangered Species Act.

The Opposition

The USFWS stated that they were “disappointed with the court’s ruling”. Defender’s of Wildlife and other wolf advocates viewed the USFWS downgrade as a politically based decision. The Defenders successfully blocked the attempt by the federal government to satisfy those who

want to see protections for the wolves removed regardless to the potential harm to the species. These decisions need to be rooted in science, not politics.

Their Future

After 30 years of protection, wolves still remains absent or exceedingly rare throughout most of its historic range. As a result of the court’s decision, the USFWS will be required to follow Endangered Species Act guidelines in any future attempts to downlist the Gray Wolf, ensuring the species is no longer facing extinction throughout its historic range.



Sources:

- 1. US Fish and Wildlife Service: Gray Wolf - Canis lupus <http://training.fws.gov/library/Pubs/graywolf.pdf> Wolf Lines. The Bulletin of Wolf Council. February 11, 2005

<http://www.defenders.org/wildlife/wolf/wolfupdate/issues/2005/021105.html>

Wolves Win: Federal Judge Upholds Endangered Species Act Protection

http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/wildlife_news/wolves_win_federal_judge_upholds_endangered_species_act_protections.html



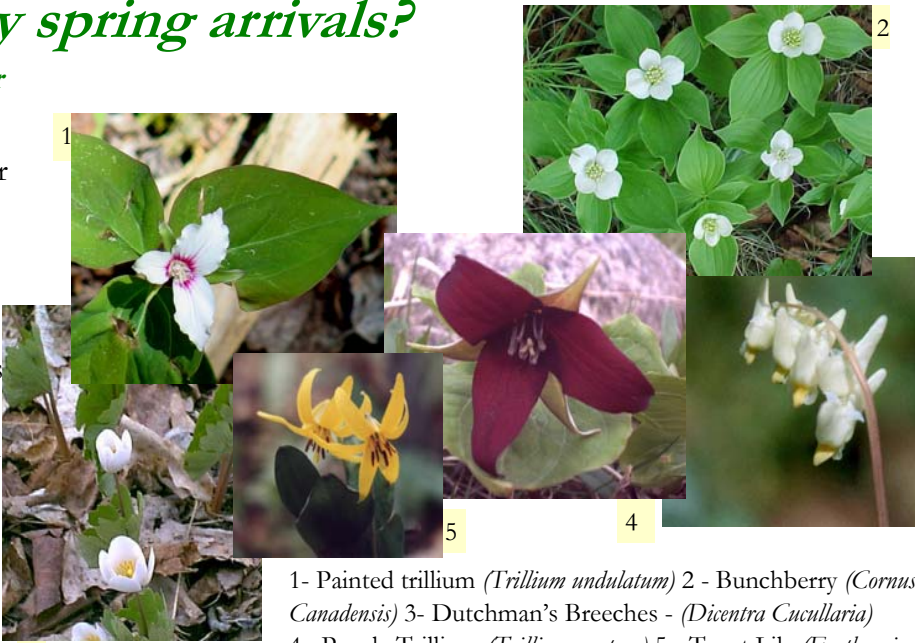
Remember -

Turn your clocks ahead 1 hour Sunday April 3 for daylight savings

Do you know these early spring arrivals?

Spring has sprung, the grass is riz, I wonder where the flowers is?

This childhood rhyme comes to mind every year at this time. Even though Spring has officially arrived according to the calendar, it’ll still be awhile before we see it here in Northern Maine. But Spring really is coming, flowers will begin to emerge, and these are some of the first plants to bloom in Maine each Spring. How many have you seen? How many can you identify? A number of these plants have multiple common names, such as the Purple Trillium; it’s sometimes called a Wake Robin or Stinkin’ Benjamin. The Trout Lily is often called the Dogtooth Violet. Keep your eyes open; it won’t be too much longer until Spring is truly upon us! ☺



1- Painted trillium (*Trillium undulatum*) 2 - Bunchberry (*Cornus Canadensis*) 3- Dutchman’s Breeches - (*Dicentra Cucullaria*) 4 - Purple Trillium (*Trillium erectum*) 5 - Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*) 6 - Bloodroot - (*Sanguinaria Canadensis*)



Spring Word Games

FIND THE UNDERLINED WORDS IN THE PUZZLE

Then match them with their meaning

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1) <u>AMEWIN</u> | a) Bird |
| 2) <u>CIHKONAQC</u> | b) Black duck |
| 3) <u>COQOLS</u> | c) Fiddlehead |
| 4) <u>KISUHS</u> | d) Fish |
| 5) <u>KIWHOS</u> | e) Fisherman |
| 6) <u>LONTOQIYEH</u> | f) Frog |
| 7) <u>MAHSUS</u> | g) Melts |
| 8) <u>MOTEHEHISM</u> | h) Mud |
| 9) <u>NOMEHS</u> | i) Muskrat |
| 10) <u>QASQOMEDE</u> | j) Nest |
| 11) <u>QASOMIYE</u> | k) River |
| 12) <u>SIP</u> | l) Spring |
| 13) <u>SIPS</u> | m) Sun |
| 14) <u>SIQON</u> | n) Thaw |
| 15) <u>SOSQ</u> | o) Turtle |
| 16) <u>WOSOSS</u> | p) Wood duck |

Q	W	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	L	K	J	H	G	F
C	V	B	N	M	N	B	S	V	C	X	C	Z	A	S	D
X	Z	A	S	D	F	P	G	H	J	K	O	L	P	O	I
U	Y	T	R	C	I	H	K	O	N	A	Q	C	L	E	W
Q	A	Z	W	S	S	X	E	D	C	W	O	S	O	S	S
R	F	V	Q	T	G	B	Y	H	N	U	L	J	N	N	M
A	I	K	A	A	O	L	P	Q	Q	W	S	E	T	R	T
M	A	H	S	U	S	Y	S	U	I	O	K	P	O	L	K
E	J	H	Q	G	F	O	D	S	A	Z	I	X	Q	C	V
W	B	N	O	M	S	M	M	N	B	V	W	C	I	X	Z
I	A	S	M	D	F	G	K	I	S	U	H	S	Y	H	J
N	O	M	E	H	S	K	L	P	Y	O	O	I	E	U	Y
T	R	E	D	S	I	P	W	Q	Q	E	S	A	H	Z	X
S	W	E	E	D	Q	C	R	F	V	T	G	B	S	Y	H
N	U	J	M	M	O	T	E	H	E	H	I	S	M	M	I
K	O	L	P	O	N	K	M	I	J	N	U	H	Y	T	F

Floods - (continued)



Spring runoff
Meduxnekeag River
Cary's Mills,

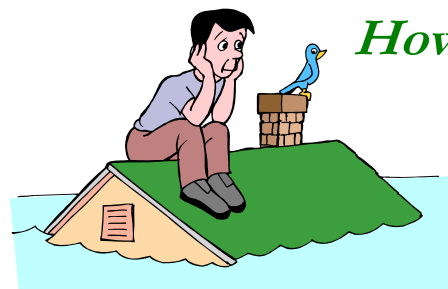


ground. On the contrary, saturated soil can also lead to flash flooding. River floods are usually caused by rain from tropical systems, persistent thunderstorms, combined rainfall, snowmelt and ice jams. Here in Aroostook County, the Aroostook River in Fort Fairfield is often visited by flood waters in the Spring as the result of major ice jams.

The National Weather Service relies on a network of approximately 10,000 stream gage stations to monitor the height of the streams and rivers throughout the country. The majority of stream gages are maintained by the U.S. Geological Survey, (USGS), the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and the Dept. of Agriculture (USDA). HBMI's Water Resources Department has been working with USGS on the 2 stream gages on the Meduxnekeag River. You can access this information 24 hours a day by logging on to

<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/me/nwis/current/?type=flow>

Under the St. John River basin you will find 2 stations for the Meduxnekeag River. For more information about these stations please contact Cara Ellis at 532-4273 ext 212.



How to Respond to Flood Watches and Warnings

When you receive a **FLOOD WATCH**

- Be aware of potential flood hazards.

or cooking in case power is interrupted.

- Be sure to keep first-aid supplies and medications on hand.

When you receive a **FLOOD WARNING**

- If advised to evacuate - DO SO IMMEDIATELY! Families should use one vehicle to avoid becoming separated and to reduce traffic jams.
- Don't drive if you don't absolutely have to.
- Get out of areas subject to flooding. Do not attempt to cross moving streams.
- Never try to walk, swim, drive or play in flood water. You may not be able to see how fast the water is moving or debris submerged in the water.
- Do not camp or park your vehicle along streams and washes especially during threatening conditions.
- Be extra cautious at night - flood dangers are harder to recognize.

Continued on page 6

- Have an evacuation plan in place. Head for higher ground before water becomes too deep.
- Be sure to keep a NOAA Weather Radio or battery operated radio available, as well as emergency cooking equipment and flash lights.
- Have a professional install check valves in your plumbing system to prevent flood waters from backing up into the drains of your home.
- Fill your vehicle's gas tank. If the electricity is cut off, gas stations may not be able to pump fuel.
- Store drinking water in food grade containers. Water service may be interrupted or water quality may become compromised.
- Keep food on hand that does not require refrigeration



10 Commandments for a Healthy Yard

Excerpted from *Audubon Guide for a Healthy Yard & Beyond*

1 - Go Organic

- Just say NO or limit exposure to toxic chemicals

2 - Make Your Turf Tough

- Use grass varieties developed for your area.
- Use sharp blades to mow grass 3 to 4 inches high. Short clippings decompose faster to add nitrogen instead of thatch.
- Water deeply only when needed and aerate for dense deep roots.

3 - Go Native

- Native plants means less care, less time, less money
- The more native plants in your yard, the more healthy habitats for birds and other wildlife.

4 - Know Your Enemies

- Get a field guide to identify insects.
- Match control to pest.
- Use only if a high number of pests exist.
- Learn life cycles so that you do not treat unnecessarily.

5 - Treat Only When Necessary

- Use non-toxic methods first.
- Pick off and dispose of insects, vacuum, prune out infestations or hose off garden plants.

6 - Pick Your Pesticides

- Not all chemicals are created equal
- "Shotgun" killers harm beneficial insects
- Look for EPA toxicity ratings: **caution (least toxic)** **warning, poison (most toxic)**

7 - Use Biological Controls or Biopesticides

- Most have very little environmental impact, decompose quickly and affect only the target pest.

8 - Follow Directions and Protect Yourself

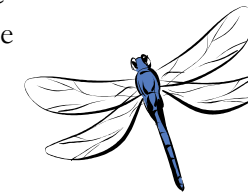
- Read labels before you buy or use a product.
- Always wear protective clothing while mixing and applying.
- **Never** use more than recommended. Remember - LESS IS BEST for survival of beneficial insects!
- Do not apply pesticides in windy conditions, near water sources, people, pets or wildlife habitat.
- Learn signs of pesticide poisoning.

9 - Respect Your Neighbor's "Right to Know"

- Notify your neighbors before using pesticides that could drift, remain active on lawn area, or settle in water. Children and pets are easily exposed and can take residues into homes.
- Ask neighbors and lawn services to do the same.
- Contact local municipalities to learn what, where and when chemicals are used.
- Ask decision makers to consider safer alternatives

10 - Teach Tolerance and Be Tolerant

- Create Natural Yards with a variety of pests, predators, weeds, wildlife and native plant species.
- Plant bird and wildlife habitat.
- Enjoy controlled untidiness, not time-consuming lawn maintenance.
- Show by doing.
- Encourage Neighbors to build continuous habitat from yard to yard.



How to Respond to Flood Watches and Warnings (cont'd)

- Do not attempt to drive through a flooded road. The depth of water is not always obvious. The road bed could also be washed out under the water, trapping you.
- If your vehicle stalls, leave it immediately and move to higher ground. Remember 2 feet of water can sweep your vehicle away.
- Children should NEVER play around, high water, storm drains, viaducts or arroyos. They can easily be swept away by fast moving water.

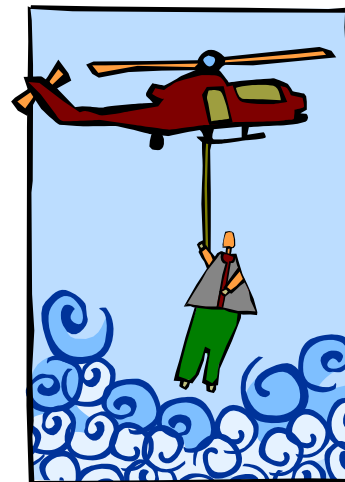
For more information on how or what to do if you are advised to evacuate contact the American Red Cross. Valuable information is available on their website

www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/evacuation.html

For more information about flooding contact

National Weather Service www.noaa.nws.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) www.fema.gov



*Plan ahead -
don't let this be
you!*

BIA Sponsored Training Available

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is now accepting applications for their all expense paid Water Resources Technician training program. This training will be held in New Mexico June 5 to July 1, 2005. Students who successfully complete this training program will receive a voucher good for a one year temporary, paid, full time position in HBMI's Water Resources program.

If you are a registered HBMI tribal member, have your high school diploma or GED and are planning to pursue higher education or career development we'd love to hear from you.



Please contact Cara Ellis ext. 212 or Dave Joseph ext. 216 at (207) 532-4273 for more information or an application packet. Or email ogs1@maliseets.com

Application deadline April 8, 2005.

All participants must sign a pledge to be alcohol and substance free during the program.

Spring Practical

Who: Attendees of the firefighting training

What: Spring Practical

Where: Meet at Houlton Fire Department, practical is in Hodgdon

When: April 16th, 2005

Time: 8:30 am

Other: - Be prepared to work outdoors

Wear appropriate footwear & clothing
(see workbooks from class)

Lunch is not provided, however,
there will be a break for lunch

Questions?? call David at 532-4273 x 220



FLOODS - Myths & Facts

MYTH - A 100 year flood occurs only once every 100 years

FACT - The 100-year flood is a climatic average. There is a 1% chance that a 100-year flood will occur in any given year.

MYTH - Flash floods mainly occur in the eastern United States

FACT - Flash floods occur in all 50 states including Alaska and Hawaii

MYTH - Flash Floods occur only along flowing streams

FACT - Flash floods can occur in dry arroyos and urban areas where no streams are present.

MYTH - Flash floods occur mainly in the later afternoon and evening

FACT - Many flash floods occur at night

MYTH - Homeowners insurance policies cover flooding

FACT - Unfortunately, many homeowners do not find out until it is too late that their policies do not cover flooding. Contact your insurance company or agent to buy flood insurance.

MYTH - You can't buy flood insurance if your property has been flooded.

FACT - You are still eligible to buy flood insurance after your home, apartment or business has been flooded, provided your community is participating in the National Flood Insurance Program

MYTH - Larger vehicles such as SUVs and pickups are safe to drive through flood waters

FACT - Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including SUVs and pickups.

Spring Activities for the Family

April 17 - 23 National Wildlife Week

For more information check out

www.nwf.org/nationalwildlifeweek

April 22 - Celebrate Earth Day

for ideas check out

www.earthday.wilderness.org

www.epa.gov/earthday

April 29 - National Arbor Day

For ideas check out

www.arborday.org

www.arbor-day.net

April 30 - Meduxnekeag River Canoe Race

9:30 am start in New Limerick

for more info call Peter Blood 532-2577

FIDDLEHEADS & FISHING !

National Wildlife Federation Projects

Frogwatch USA

Through the Frogwatch USA program you can learn how to identify frogs and toads by their markings and by their calls. You can also register your local pond or lake and report what frogs you see and hear to help scientists track populations across the country.

For more information go to www.nwf.org/frogwatchUSA

Backyard Wildlife Habitat

Create a home for wildlife. It doesn't matter where you live you can always make a place for wildlife. From apartment balconies to farms, you'll find great ideas and projects for all ages.

Once you've provided the basics - food - water - cover - places to raise young and sustainable gardening practices you'll can register your habitat along with over 25,000 others across the country. For more information go to www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat

