

# Flood/Storm Damage

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest - USDA Forest Service

## Updated Summary

Record October rainfall produced some of the most severe storm damage seen on Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest lands in many years. During a 24-hour period, more than six inches of rain fell in forest lowlands and up to 10 inches in higher elevation areas. Damage assessments are still being calculated on washed out roads, bridges, trails, recreation sites and other facilities. Hardest hit National Forest lands are in eastern Snohomish, Skagit and Whatcom Counties. Most impacted are roads, trails, recreation sites, and watersheds that drain from Glacier Peak, Mt. Baker and the headwaters of the Skagit River system.

Total damage exceeds \$10 million. Many areas of the Darrington and Mt. Baker Ranger Districts are expected to be inaccessible into 2004 and beyond. Repairs, depending on funding, will be a multi-year effort. Forest managers submitted formal requests for road repair monies under the Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads (ERFO) program. However, ERFO funds are not anticipated for trails, recreation, and watershed restoration. Without additional funding very little can be accomplished to restore these critical resources.

- **Roads:** More than 40 roads or road segments totally or partially washed out or damaged; several bridges and bridge abutments lost or damaged; many mud or rock slides, some blocking major public access routes; many plugged culverts.  
**Estimated damage/loss: \$ 8.0 million**
- **Trails:** At least 15 recreation trails and 20 trail bridges damaged or destroyed. Includes about 30 miles of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (including major bridges over Upper White Chuck and Suiattle Rivers); Whitechuck Trail, Suiattle River Trail, Baker Lake Trail (five bridges); major hiking bridges also lost on Milk Creek, Elbow Lake, Park Butte and South Cascade Trails.  
**Estimated damage/loss: \$ 4.2 million.**
- **Campgrounds and other facilities:** 17 of the Forest's 40 campgrounds damaged (many along the Mountain Loop Highway, Snohomish County; others in Skagit, Whatcom and Pierce Counties). Picnic tables, fire pits and toilet facilities washed away or covered with mud, rocks and silt. Kennedy Hotsprings, Kennedy Cabin and a nearby backcountry camp (Snohomish County) were all destroyed by mud and debris. Historical cabins in Monte Cristo area also damaged or destroyed. Most will be open summer 2004.  
**Estimated damage/loss: \$300,000**
- **Watershed and Fish Habitat:** There are significant impacts on Forest aquatic resources. Flood recovery needs to protect and restore watershed health and ESA-listed fish habitat include: (a) repair/replace, protect/secure, or relocate affected fish habitat sites (log jam complexes, off-channel rearing channels/ponds); (b) construct additional structures to protect eroding channel banks near and adjacent to damaged roads and recreation facilities; (c) salvage accumulations of large woody debris for future channel and floodplain restoration work. Impacted sites are on the Nooksack, Upper Skagit, Cascade, Stillaguamish, Suiattle, Sauk, White Chuck, and Skykomish Rivers.  
**Estimated cost for assessments, planning, repair/construction: \$2.5 million**

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