= Hurricane Paul (2006) =

Hurricane Paul was a hurricane that ultimately struck Mexico as a tropical depression in October 2006 . It developed from an area of disturbed weather on October 21 , and slowly intensified as it moved into an area of warm waters and progressively decreasing wind shear . Paul attained hurricane status on October 23 , and later that day it reached its peak intensity of 105 mph (165 km / h) , a strong Category 2 hurricane on the Saffir @-@ Simpson scale . A strong trough turned the hurricane to the north and northeast into an area of strong vertical shear , and Paul weakened to a tropical storm on October 24 . It accelerated northeastward , and after passing a short distance south of Baja California Sur the low level circulation became decoupled from the rest of the convection . Paul weakened to a tropical depression on October 25 a short distance off the coast of Mexico , and after briefly turning away from the coast it made landfall on northwestern Sinaloa on October 26 .

Paul was the third hurricane to threaten western Mexico in the season , the others being Hurricanes John and Lane . Rough surf killed two people along Baja California Sur , while flooding was reported in Sinaloa . Damage totaled more than $ 35 million (2006 MXN , $ 3 @.@ 2 million 2006 USD) .

= = Meteorological history = =

A tropical wave moved off the coast of Africa on October 4 . It moved westward across the Atlantic Ocean without development , and entered the eastern Pacific Ocean on October 18 . The next day , it combined with a previously existing area of disturbed weather , resulting in a large area of convection extending northward into southern Mexico . The broad and disorganized system moved westward at 10 ? 15 mph (16 ? 24 km / h) . On October 20 , the system developed an area of low pressure , and began to show signs of organization . It continued to organize , and developed into Tropical Depression Seventeen @-@ E on October 21 while located about 265 miles (425 km) south @-@ southwest of Manzanillo . Upon forming , the depression possessed a small , tight low @-@ level circulation beneath a well @-@ defined mid @-@ level circulation . Easterly wind shear initially restricted upper @-@ level outflow as the cyclone moved to the west , a motion due to a subtropical ridge to its north .

The cloud pattern of the depression quickly became better organized as a curved band developed around intensifying deep convecltion , and it is estimated the system intensified into Tropical Storm Paul just six hours after forming . Easterly wind shear exposed the low level circulation to the east of the area of deep convection , though Paul continued to intensify as it moved through an area of warm waters and progressively weakening wind shear . The low level circulation gradually became more embedded within the convection as the cloud pattern improved . Computer models had troubles in forecasting the future of the storm early in its life ; the GFDL model forecast Paul to reach winds of 119 mph (191 km / h) , while global models expected the system to dissipate in 48 ? 72 hours . Early on October 22 , wind shear began to decrease , which coincided with an increase of outflow on its eastern side . The storm temporarily degraded in appearance as it turned to the northwest . However , shear sharply abated over Paul late on October 22 , resulting in the storm quickly gaining organization and intensifying . An eye began to develop within the convection , and Paul intensified into a hurricane early on October 23 .

Located in an area of warm water temperatures and light wind shear , Hurricane Paul continued to intensify and organize ; its well @-@ defined eye was surrounded by a ring of deep convection while outflow remained strong to the north and south . On October 23 , while located 465 miles (750 km) south @-@ southwest of Cabo San Lucas , Paul reached its peak intensity of 105 mph (165 km / h) , a Category 2 hurricane on the Saffir @-@ Simpson Scale . A large trough located off the west coast of California turned the hurricane to the north @-@ northwest , and later to the north . The combination of increasing shear and dry air quickly weakened Paul to a tropical storm on October 24 as its low @-@ level circulation became detached from the diminishing convection . The storm then turned to the northeast after passing near Socorro Island . Despite increasing wind shear of over 50 mph (80 km / h) , Paul remained a tropical storm while its circulation remained on the southwest

side of its developing deep convection . Early on October 25 , the storm passed about 100 miles (160 km) south of the southern tip of Baja California . The circulation briefly became involved with the deep convection as it accelerated northeastward , though as it approached the coast of Sinaloa , the center again decoupled from the upper level circulation . Later that day , Paul weakened to a tropical depression a short distance off the coast of Mexico , and turned to the north . Early the next day , the depression , devoid of any deep convection , made landfall near Isla Altamura in northwestern Sinaloa . Hours later , the National Hurricane Center issued the last advisory on the dissipating tropical depression .

= = Preparations = =

As Paul became a hurricane , the government of Mexico issued a hurricane watch for Baja California Sur from Agua Blanca on the west coast to La Paz on the east coast . When a weakening trend was evident as the storm turned to the northeast , the hurricane watch was replaced with a tropical storm warning . 45 hours before the storm struck land , the government of Mexico issued a tropical storm watch from Mazatlán to San Evaristo along the coast of Sinaloa . When Paul was expected to weaken to a tropical depression before landfall , the tropical storm watch for mainland Mexico was discontinued . When Paul retained tropical storm status for longer than expected , and was now expected to make landfall as a tropical storm , a tropical storm warning was issued from Mazatlán to Atlata , which was later discontinued as Paul weakened to a tropical depression .

Emergency officials near the southern tip of Baja California closed schools , while rescue workers ordered for the evacuation of more than 1 @,@ 500 people from shanty towns . Local police officers went door @-@ to @-@ door to inform the potentially affected residents . Buses carried the evacuated citizens to schools temporarily set up as shelters . A hotel in Cabo San Lucas informed its guests of the approaching storm , and organized indoor activities for those that stayed . Several tourists ended their vacations early and left through local airports . The threat of the storm closed the port at Cabo San Lucas , causing delays in a local fishing competition . In Sinaloa , authorities evacuated over 5 @,@ 000 families in risk of flooding .

= = Impact = =

The National Hurricane Center noted that the precursor disturbance had the potential to drop heavy rainfall which could result in life @-@ threatening flash flooding or mudslides in Oaxaca and Guerrero . However , no damage reports were received there .

In southern Baja California , a fisherman slipped off rocks due to strong seas , while an American tourist was swept out to sea due to rough surf ; both were killed . Two others were killed in Sinaloa when their truck was swept away by a swollen river . Paul was the third hurricane in the year to threaten Los Cabos , the others being John and Lane . The hurricane caused little damage in the area , only producing gusty winds and some rainfall . Paul dropped moderate rainfall across mainland Mexico , including a 24 @-@ hour total of 2 @.@ 3 inches (58 mm) in Mazatlán , Sinaloa and over 8 inches (200 mm) in isolated locations . The rainfall led to flooding , the worst of which occurred in Villa Juarez . There , a canal overflowed , while the rainfall flooded streets with up to 3 @.@ 3 feet (1 m) of water . 5 @,@ 000 houses were damaged from the flooding , displacing 20 @,@ 000 people . The storm damaged more than 3 @,@ 700 acres (15 km2) of crop lands , primarily beans and corn . Damage totaled more than $ 35 million (2006 MXN , $ 3 @.@ 2 million 2006 USD) .