

= Tropical Storm Becky (1970) =

Tropical Storm Becky was the second tropical cyclone and named storm of the 1970 Atlantic hurricane season . Becky formed from a tropical depression that was designated on July 19 . The next day it organized over the Yucatan Channel and became Tropical Storm Becky . Initially thought to have attained minimal hurricane status , Becky reached peak winds of 65 mph (100 km / h) , but the storm began to deteriorate shortly thereafter . The storm made landfall on the Florida Panhandle on July 22 , and rapidly weakened over land . Overall , damage was related to heavy rainfall that caused flooding in Tallahassee , Florida ; 104 families suffered flood @-@ related losses . About \$ 500 @, @ 000 (1970 USD) in damage was attributed to the storm . Further north , the heavy rainfall swelled rivers . Becky may have been partially responsible for spawning tornadoes that destroyed or damaged several houses .

= = Meteorological history = =

On July 16 , 1970 , a large disturbance separated from the Intertropical Convergence Zone near Panama . The broad area of convection dominated the region between Swan Island and western Cuba by July 18 . Some sources state that the area of convection was joined by a low @-@ level vortex that entered the area , eventually forming a depression . Others believe that the origins of Becky can be tracked back to a tropical wave that moved off the coast of Africa on July 9 . A tropical depression formed on July 19 , 1970 . As the depression moved through the Yucatan Channel , the convective cloud system became better organized . On July 20 , in light of data from a Reconnaissance Aircraft flight , the depression was upgraded to Tropical Storm Becky .

The storm moved roughly northward under the influence of the Bermuda High to the east and a low pressure area over Mexico . Reports from a Reconnaissance flight indicated that Becky was disorganized , with a minimum barometric pressure of 1 @, @ 008 mbar (29 @. @ 8 inHg) . Although a fairly strong low @-@ level circulation developed , there was insufficient warming of the center to produce a significant drop in barometric pressure at the surface . Late on July 20 , a ship reported a minimum pressure of about 1 @, @ 003 mbar (29 @. @ 6 inHg) , and another ship reported sustained winds of 65 mph (100 km / h) , which would be Becky 's peak intensity . A Reconnaissance flight and weather radars suggested the development of an eye feature , and initially it was believed that the storm attained minimal hurricane status . Later it was later confirmed that Becky remained a tropical storm , and the previously forming eye failed to persist .

On July 21 , the storm deteriorated in organization as it continued northward . The lack of banding features indicated that by early on July 22 , Becky was barely a tropical storm . The storm made landfall near Port St. Joe , Florida shortly thereafter , and weakened rapidly as it moved inland ; as a rainstorm , it progressed northward into the Midwestern United States and completely dissipated over Michigan .

= = Preparations = =

Offshore , Shell Oil removed some workers and equipment from offshore platforms . A hurricane warning was issued from Fort Walton , Florida to Port St. Joe , Florida . Similarly , a gale warning was posted for coastal areas of Alabama and Florida . A hurricane watch was issued for locations in Mississippi and Louisiana . On July 22 , a tornado watch was posted for northern Florida . Tornado warnings were also issued , and a flash flood watch was declared for parts of western North Carolina . Gale warnings were posted from Panama City , Florida to St. Marks , Florida , with the expectation of winds to 50 mph (80 km / h) . Heavy rainfall of up to 8 inches (200 mm) was predicted , and tides of 2 to 4 feet (0 @. @ 61 to 1 @. @ 22 m) forecast . Isolated tornadoes were possible as the storm made landfall .

Thousands of residents were evacuated from the Panhandle of Florida , including Santa Rosa Island and Destin , as well as other low @-@ lying locations . Some residents evacuated to storm shelters that were set up in various cities along the coast . A store in Destin reported increased

sales in hurricane @-@ related supplies such as canned goods and flashlights . Florida Governor Claude Kirk ordered health units and law enforcement to operate on emergency alert . Small craft in the northeastern Gulf of Mexico were advised to remain in port until the high seas subsided .

= = Impact = =

Upon making landfall , a barometric pressure of 1007 mb accompanied the storm . Along the coast of the Panhandle , gale @-@ force winds and tides of 3 feet (0 @.@ 91 m) above @-@ normal were reported . Tallahassee , Florida received 8 inches (0 @.@ 20 m) of rainfall ; due to the heavy precipitation , serious flooding occurred . At Anna Marie Island in Florida , heavy rainfall and squalls accompanied by winds of 56 miles per hour (90 km / h) were reported . In South Carolina , heavy precipitation led to rivers approaching flood stage . Locally heavy rainfall caused rivers to rise in North Carolina , though they remained below flood stage . Along the Cape Fear River , a boat ramp was washed out . Farther towards the north in Georgia and Alabama , the rainfall helped to relieve persistent drought conditions .

According to the Red Cross , 104 families in the Tallahassee region suffered flood @-@ related losses , and two injuries were reported . There , winds gusted to 44 miles per hour (71 km / h) . Flood waters were knee @-@ deep around a county courthouse at Crawfordville , Florida . In low @-@ lying areas , flooding damaged homes , and to the southwest of Tallahassee , 4 feet (1 @.@ 2 m) of water forced the evacuation of 15 homes by rowboat . Over 100 cars were stranded in the flooding . As precautionary measures , a few secondary roads were closed in the region . Damage from Becky in the state totaled \$ 500 @,@ 000 (1970 USD) , mostly in Leon and Wakulla counties . Two injuries were reported .

Several tornadoes were reported . Near Panacea , Florida , a tornado destroyed a house and damaged two others . Another tornado in Emanuel County , Georgia killed one person and demolished two homes . However , due to the conditions that spawned the tornadoes , they are not directly attributed to Becky .