

= Tropical Depression One (1979) =

Tropical Depression One brought severe flooding to Jamaica in June 1979 . The second tropical cyclone of the Atlantic hurricane season , the depression developed from a tropical wave to the south of Grand Cayman on June 11 . Tracking generally northward , the depression passed west of Jamaica . On June 12 , the depression peaked with maximum sustained winds of 35 mph (55 km / h) , never having reached tropical storm status . The following day , it made landfall in Cuba , where minimal impact was recorded . Early on June 14 , the depression emerged into the western Atlantic Ocean and then moved parallel to the east coast of Florida for a few days . The depression made another landfall in South Carolina on June 16 and dissipated shortly thereafter .

The slow movement of the depression to the west of Jamaica resulted in torrential rainfall , peaking at 32 in (810 mm) in Friendship , a city in Westmoreland Parish . Throughout western Jamaica , about 1 @, @ 000 homes were destroyed or severely damage , while up to 40 @, @ 000 people were left homeless . The city of New Market was submerged for at least six months . Crops , electricity , telephones , buildings , and railways also suffered damage during the disaster . There were 40 deaths and approximately \$ 27 million (1979 USD) in damage . The depression also brought heavy precipitation to Cuba and the Bahamas , while farther north , light rainfall and rough seas plagued the East Coast of the United States . One individual in South Carolina went missing and was later presumed to have died after their boat was torn loose from its mooring .

= = Meteorological history = =

A tropical wave emerged into the Atlantic Ocean from the west coast of Africa on May 30 . Minimal development occurred as the wave tracked westward across much of the Atlantic and Caribbean Sea . However , by June 11 , the system began to interact with a stationary trough of low pressure in the western Caribbean Sea . Based on ship and land observations , a tropical depression developed at 12 : 00 UTC that day while located about 230 miles (370 km) south of Grand Cayman . Initially the depression was forecast to move northwestward at about 5 mph (8 km / h) ; instead , it drifted to the northeast . Minimal intensification occurred , as satellite imagery , weather stations , and a reconnaissance aircraft indicated the depression remained below tropical storm status . Around 18 : 00 UTC on June 12 , the depression attained its maximum sustained wind speeds of 35 mph (55 km / h) .

Early on June 13 , satellite and weather radar showed heavy rainbands moving across Jamaica and eastern Cuba . Due its interaction with the two islands , the depression weakened slightly . Later on June 13 , the storm made landfall near Venezuela , Cuba with winds of 30 mph (45 km / h) . Moving northward , it emerged into the Atlantic Ocean near Cayo Santa María early the next day . Around 12 : 00 UTC on June 14 , the system re @-@ strengthened and again attained its maximum sustained wind speed of 35 mph (55 km / h) . Despite moving back over open waters , the depression failed to intensify further . Operationally , the system was thought to have made landfall in east @-@ central Florida , but later analysis revealed that the center remained over water . The depression continued northward until striking near Charleston , South Carolina late on June 16 , still with the same intensity . It degenerated into a remnant low pressure area about six hours later . Its remnants continued northeastward across the Southeastern United States , the Mid @-@ Atlantic , and New England until dissipating fully on June 18 .

= = Impact = =

The depression 's slow movement resulted in torrential rainfall on the island of Jamaica . Precipitation peaked at 32 inches (810 mm) in Friendship , located in Westmoreland Parish . As the flooding began , several shelters were open in the parish . Residents in the Savanna @-@ la @-@ Mar area were forced to evacuate by boats or makeshift rafts . The flooding also ruined crops . Sugar cane , which was already 70 ? 80 percent harvested , suffered about \$ 2 @. @ 25 million (1979 USD) in damage . It was estimated that 4 million lb (1 @. @ 8 million kg) of bananas were

lost , worth nearly \$ 1 million . In total , agricultural interests incurred \$ 5 @. @ 89 million in damage , chiefly f which was in Westmoreland Parish . The storm affected an estimated 300 mi (480 km) of roadways impacted , with about 2 @, @ 000 ft (610 m) of highway completely washed out . Three bridges collapsed , while 10 others sustained damage .

The increasing height and volume of the Bluefields River led to debris flow and created a colluvium ? an unconsolidated deposit of sediments ? near the mouth of the river . In the valley areas , temporary lakes were formed and small dams were overtopped . The cities of Chigwell , Enfield , Exeter , Leamington , and New Market were all submerged during the flooding . New Market was inundated with as much as 80 ft (24 m) of water during the disaster , which did not completely recede until more than six months later . This resulted in extreme damage to or complete loss of crops , livestock , and household possessions . Extensive impact to property was reported , including to electricity , telephones , buildings , and railways , with a " conservative " estimate of \$ 39 @. @ 3 million in damage . At least 1 @, @ 000 homes were severely damaged or destroyed . As many as 40 @, @ 000 people were left homeless . Overall , there were 40 deaths and approximately \$ 27 million in damage .

Following the storm , Hanover , Saint Elizabeth , Saint James , and Westmoreland parishes were considered disaster areas . A task force was established by the Prime Minister Michael Manley for reconstruction efforts . About 7 @, @ 758 families , a total of 36 @, @ 391 people , required assistance with food supplies for over 13 weeks . The Housing Task Force called for the construction of 582 new houses , 300 of which for those left homeless . The houses constructed for the people rendered homeless were prefabricated by the Ministry of Housing and then erected by the local authorities , under the guidance of the Ministry of Local Government . In response to the disaster , the Government of Jamaica established the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management in July 1980 .

The depression and its remnants also brought rainfall and high tides to the eastern United States . In South Carolina , precipitation peaked at 6 @. @ 89 in (175 mm) in Cheraw . Along the coast , waves reached 13 ft (4 @. @ 0 m) in height , strong enough to tear a boat from its mooring at Surfside Beach . One person was listed as missing and later presumed to have died .