

= Tropical Storm Leslie (2000) =

Tropical Storm Leslie was a weak , short @-@ lived tropical cyclone that was never well @-@ organized ; however , its precursor was costlier than any other tropical cyclone in the 2000 Atlantic hurricane season . The twelfth named storm of the season , Leslie formed on October 4 over eastern Florida as a subtropical cyclone , out of a trough of low pressure . Strengthening over open waters , it attained enough tropical characteristics to be reclassified as Tropical Storm Leslie on October 5 . The storm reached peak winds of 45 mph (75 km / h) before wind shear weakened it , and on October 7 transitioned into an extratropical cyclone over the open Atlantic Ocean . Leslie lasted three more days before losing its identity .

The precursor to Leslie produced torrential rainfall across Florida , peaking at 17 @.@ 5 in (440 mm) . The flooding damaged thousands of houses and caused three indirect deaths . Damage in southern Florida totaled \$ 950 million (2000 USD) , around half of which was from agricultural damage . After the flooding , portions of south Florida were declared a disaster area . Because of the limited impact as a tropical cyclone , the name Leslie was not retired in the Spring of 2001 .

= = Meteorological history = =

On September 27 , a tropical wave entered the eastern Caribbean Sea , believed to be the same that spawned Hurricane Isaac . It moved generally westward , and remained weak with sporadic thunderstorm activity . The wave traversed around the periphery of Hurricane Keith , and by October 2 , the system produced a mid @-@ level circulation just south of western Cuba . It continued to organize , prompting a reconnaissance aircraft to investigate the area . The system lacked a surface circulation center and remained an elongated trough of low pressure . The tropical wave interacted with an approaching frontal trough , while its mid @-@ level center turned to the northeast and made landfall near Sarasota , Florida on October 4 .

While over land , a surface circulation developed near Orlando , and the National Hurricane Center designated the system as Subtropical Depression One . The subtropical designation was because the convection was far @-@ removed from the center . Additionally , an upper @-@ level trough provided outflow , instead of an anticyclone as found in tropical cyclones . The subtropical depression moved to the east @-@ northeast , and steadily organized as deep convection developed closer to the center . Initially , the strongest winds were 175 mi (280 km) from the center , but by the morning of October 5 , the distance decreased to 85 mi (135 km) . Based on its organization and winds of 40 mph (65 km / h) , the system was re @-@ designated as Tropical Storm Leslie .

The National Hurricane Center initially forecast further intensification to 60 mph (95 km / h) , although the agency also noted that the circulation could dissipate , due its fast forward motion toward the east @-@ northeast . Ultimately , wind shear prohibited significant strengthening , and Leslie attained peak winds of 45 mph (70 km / h) . The storm interacted with an approaching cold front and became extratropical on October 7 , 375 mi (600 km) north of Bermuda . It accelerated to the northeast and passed over Newfoundland on October 8 . The remnants of Leslie turned to the east , then southeast , strengthening to near @-@ hurricane @-@ force winds before losing its identity near Ireland on October 10 .

= = Preparations = =

The National Hurricane Center predicted the trough of low pressure to drop very heavy rainfall across western Cuba and Florida . The National Weather Service in Miami issued a flood watch for southern Florida , stating that the system could produce flooding on roads and in low @-@ lying areas . In general , however , there was little warning for the flooding in South Florida . While Leslie was moving east @-@ northeastward , it posed a threat to Bermuda , prompting officials to issue a tropical storm watch at 0300 UTC on October 6 . Six hours later , tropical storm watch was upgraded to a tropical storm warning . However , the storm passed well to the west , and the warnings were

dropped by late on October 6 .

= = Impact = =

The precursor disturbance of Leslie dropped heavy rainfall across central and western Cuba , peaking at 8 @. @ 25 in (210 mm) in the province of Havana . Numerous other areas reported over four in (100 mm) , as well . In southern Florida , the disturbance produced torrential rainfall , with a maximum of 17 @. @ 5 in (440 mm) in South Miami . Two areas , one to the south of Lake Okeechobee and the other being the Miami area , received over 10 in (255 mm) of rain . The torrential rainfall was described as similar to Hurricane Irene one year prior . The system produced two weak F0 tornadoes in Miami @-@ Dade County , one of which tore off a roof of a fire station in Hialeah .

The torrential rainfall in Florida flooded about 93 @, @ 000 homes , affecting 214 @, @ 000 residents in Miami @-@ Dade County . An incomplete damage survey of Miami @-@ Dade County indicated the flooding destroyed 1 @, @ 005 houses , severely damaged 1 @, @ 358 , and caused minor damage to 3 @, @ 443 . The flood waters , which were four ft (1 @. @ 2 m) deep in places , stranded many in their houses , forcing them to use canoes or inflatable rafts to move to higher grounds . All schools in the Miami area were closed , and all non @-@ essential Miami @-@ Dade County employees were asked to stay home . Numerous flights in Miami International Airport were canceled or delayed , although the airport remained opened . The flooding , which was greatest in Sweetwater , West Miami , Hialeah , Opa @-@ locka , and Pembroke Park , lasted up to a week in areas . The extreme flooding damaged electrical stations , leaving more than 27 @, @ 000 without power . The flooding indirectly killed three people , two from drowning as a result of driving vehicles into deep water , and one when a man fell from a tall building while trying to unclog a roof drain . Property damage totaled \$ 450 million .

Flood waters in Miami @-@ Dade County covered about 40 @, @ 000 acres (160 km ²) of farmland . The damage was worsened since the flooding occurred at the beginning of the planting period for the winter season . Flooded nurseries and fields resulted in about \$ 500 million in agricultural damage , including \$ 60 million in tropical fruit and \$ 397 million in ornamental crops . The U.S. Department of Agriculture declared 16 Florida counties , including Miami @-@ Dade , Collier , and Palm Beach , as primary disaster areas due to flooding , making farmers and their families there eligible for USDA emergency farm loans . The same agency made 22 other counties , including Broward , eligible for loans due to their proximity to the disaster areas .

As an extratropical storm , Leslie produced winds of around 40 mph (65 km / h) while making landfall in Newfoundland . It also caused waves of up to 16 ft (five m) in height , and brought up to one in (30 mm) of rain . The overall impact in this region was minor .

= = Aftermath = =

In the immediate aftermath , cleanup workers could not work until the flood waters receded . In addition , abandoned cars blocked the path of utility workers . Following the storm , President Bill Clinton declared Broward , Collier , Miami @-@ Dade , and Monroe Counties as disaster areas , allowing for the use of federal funds for the disaster victims . In addition , Miami @-@ Dade and Broward Counties were declared eligible for Federal Infrastructure Assistance , which provided for 75 % of the debris removal cost and the repairing or replacement of public roads , buildings , parks , and treatment plants . By ten days after the storm , government agencies distributed 105 @, @ 000 meals , 141 @, @ 000 US gal (530 @, @ 000 L) of water , and 357 @, @ 000 lb (162 @, @ 000 kg) of ice . Thousands visited the five Disaster Recovery Centers , where information on disaster @-@ related issues was given . By around two months after the flooding , over 51 @, @ 000 people applied for federal aid , with assistance totaling to more than \$ 170 million .