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## USA – Homes Destroyed as Rain and Snowmelt Cause Flooding in Idaho

23 MARCH, 2017 BY [RICHARD DAVIES](#) IN [NEWS](#), [USA](#)

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Parts of [Idaho](#) have seen flooding and landslides over the last few days, caused by persistent rainfall and snowmelt. At least 2 homes have been destroyed and around 100 damaged.

Idaho Governor C. L. "Butch" Otter has signed State Disaster Declarations for seven north central and northern Idaho counties currently managing flooding- related issues associated with snowmelt and ongoing precipitation.

Residents in Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Clearwater, Kootenai, Latah and Shoshone counties are preparing for, or responding to, flooding, landslides and avalanches.

Water levels along the Coeur d' Alene River , the St. Joe River, and numerous other bodies of water within each of the counties in the state declaration, have risen dramatically, causing widespread flooding, mudslides, water over roads, damaged levees and flooding of homes and basements.

Other areas have also seen some flooding and a total of 25 Idaho counties currently have local (not state) declarations related to either snowfall or flooding -related events.

Two homes have been totally destroyed; one in Minidoka, where a further 66 houses suffered damage, and one in Twin Falls, where 22 homes have also been damaged. Flooding and landslides have also damaged homes in Washington, Canyon and Gooding counties.

The Idaho Office of Emergency Management (IOEM) said that it continues working with the US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) and our state agency partners to ensure that requests for assistance from the counties affected are met quickly and efficiently.

The Idaho Emergency Operations Center (IDEOC) remains activated at Heightened Awareness due to widespread spring flooding destruction.



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### Further Rain Forecast

In a report of 22 March 2017, IOEM said that wet weather is expected through the week and the weekend.

“Flooding issues will also persist through much of the week in the absence of a prolonged period of dry weather. Expect near seasonal temperatures. There is a possibility of isolated thunderstorms this week.

“Flooding issues on small streams and poorly drained low spots will continue. Mainstem rivers will continue to run high with several rivers running above flood stage.

“There is an increased concern for potential landslides. Residents with homes on or at the base of hillsides should watch for trees leaning in unusual orientations, water and mud seepage where not expected and other signs of potential ground movement.”

Photo: Mudslide over Harmony Heights Road near Orofino in Clearwater County

In its [Spring Outlook 2017](#), NOAA said that central and southeastern Idaho in the Snake River basin has a moderate flood risk.

The area received its second highest snowfall on record this winter. NOAA said that “rapid snowmelt from rain storms on top of snowpack has already caused flooding at lower elevations of this region. How long the flooding could last and how intense it will be depends on future precipitation and temperatures.”

### Washington State

Meanwhile in neighbouring Washington, Governor Jay Inslee has signed an emergency proclamation to free up state resources in the event of flooding or other weather-related damage in anticipation of extremely wet weather in eastern parts of the state.

In a statement on 20 March, the Governor said:

“The continual rain showers and early snow melt creates the potential for rising waters, destructive landslides and damage to our critical infrastructure, including our power grid and transportation system,” Inslee said. “This is a proactive move to ensure that state agencies are able to do everything reasonably possible to help communities recover quickly in the event major damage occurs.”

The proclamation covers 20 Eastern Washington counties, to include Adams, Asotin, Benton, Chelan, Columbia, Douglas, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Whitman, Walla Walla and Yakima Counties.

Flood warnings were issued in more than a dozen locations over the weekend. State emergency management officials have been responding to requests for assistance including dispatching Washington Conservation Corps crew members to the City of Sprague for help filling sandbags on Saturday and locating pumps to manage flood waters. 40 Washington National Guardsmen are scheduled to arrive today to assist with sand bagging efforts.

### Flood Summary

Last updated: March 23, 2017

Event

Idaho, USA, March 2017

Date

March 16, 2017

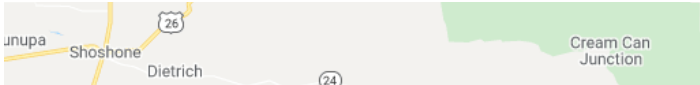
Type

River flood

Cause

Long-term rainfall

Locations



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floodlist.com/america/usa/rain-snowmelt-flooding-idaho-march-2017

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Google

A - Twin Falls  
B - Minidoka

Magnitude

|  |
|--|
| <div><div>River level</div><div>21.9 metres</div><div>Coeur d'Alene River, Enaville - March 16 to March 16, 2017</div><div>71.86 feet. Flood stage is 71 feet.</div></div> |
| <div><div>River level</div><div>11.71 metres</div><div>St. Joe River, St Maries - March 19, 2017</div><div>38.42 feet. Flood stage is 31 feet.</div></div>                 |
| <div><div>River level</div><div>14.06 metres</div><div>Coeur d'Alene River, Cataldo - March 16 to March 16, 2017</div><div>46.13 feet. Flood stage 42 feet</div></div>     |

Damages

|  |
|--|
| <div><div>Buildings destroyed</div><div>2 buildings</div><div>Minidoka and Twin Falls - March 16 to March 23, 2017</div></div> |
|--|

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Richard Davies

Richard Davies is the founder of floodlist.com and reports on flooding news, flood insurance, protection and defence issues.

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