

FROM PAGE 1A

HELENE

North Carolina mountains on Thursday morning, according to the company outage map. Most were in the Asheville and Hendersonville areas, and 1,000 were in Franklin.

In the Carolinas' mountains, "catastrophic flash-flooding is expected along numerous streams, with potentially historic flooding near the Blue Ridge Escarpment," the NWS said on X, the former Twitter.

"Landslides/debris flows expected through at least Friday," the NWS said.

Thursday morning, Helene became a category 2 hurricane, "with significant additional strengthening expected before landfall in Florida," according to a National Hurricane Center bulletin.

A STATE OF EMERGENCY

Gov. Roy Cooper declared a state of emergency on Wednesday, activating the National Guard and deploying swift-water teams in advance of Helene.

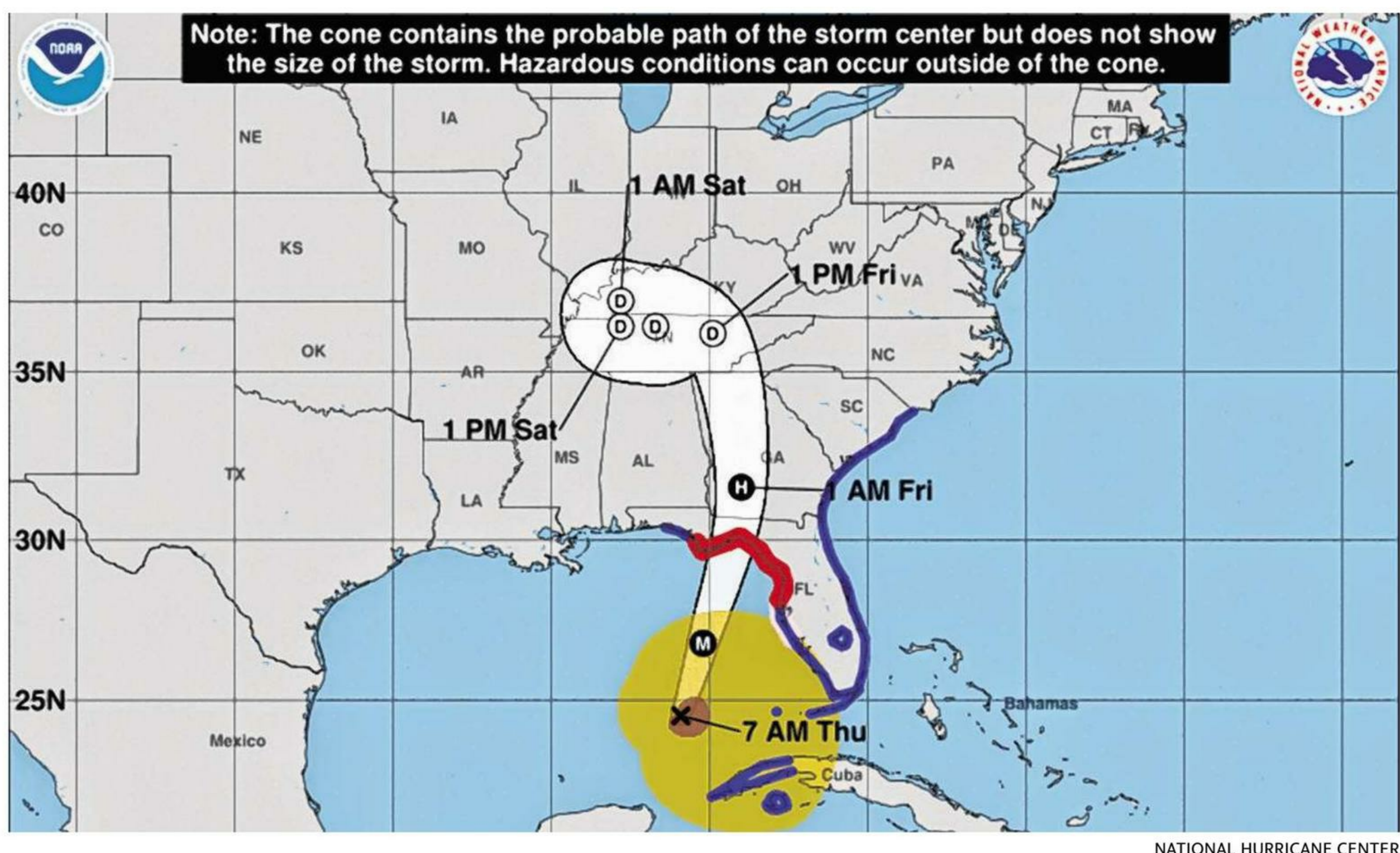
“Helene threatens heavy rain, flash flooding, landslides, and damaging winds to the mountains and Piedmont areas of our state,” Cooper said in a statement. “Now is the time for North Carolinians to prepare, make sure emergency kits are up-to-date and pay attention to the weather alerts in your area.”

Charlotte officials said crews are preparing for heavy rain and strong gusts knocking down trees and limbs.

Call 911 immediately if a tree or part of a tree has fallen and blocks a road, officials said.

Duke Energy called in power line and tree crews from other states. Wind damage and flooding could delay restoring power, but its crews will do so "as quickly and safely as possible," according to a company statement Thursday morning.

Charlotte Motor Speedway opened its campgrounds Wednesday for Helene evacuees from across the Southeast. Evacuees should check in at



Hurricane Helene showers arrived in Charlotte on Thursday morning as the mountains braced for up to 20" of rain and "catastrophic flooding."

the Camping World Racing Resort office at 6600 Bruton Smith Blvd. in Concord.

Caldwell County also declared a state of emergency. Haywood County in the mountains urged residents to prepare for possible evacuation due to flooding from Helene.

SCHOOL CLOSURES

SCHOOL CLOSURES
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools officials canceled in-person classes.

The district will move to remote learning on Friday, with classes to be completed asynchronously, meaning there won't be any face-to-face instruction, according to a weath-

er alert posted on the CMS website.

- **Fort Mill Schools:** All schools and district facilities will be closed on Friday. The district will transition to e-learning for the day.
- **Catawba County Schools:** Closed for students on Friday. It will be

an optional workday for all teachers, replacing the previously scheduled elementary/middle school workday.

*Observer staff writer
Evan Moore contributed to
this story.*

Joe Marusak:
704-358-5067, @jmarusak

FROM PAGE 1A

BIDEN

colleagues on both sides to support it.

The House earlier on Wednesday had voted 341-82 to pass the measure under suspension of the rules, which requires a two-thirds majority of those present and voting. There were zero defections on the Democratic side, while Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., comfortably secured the support of a majority of the majority of his conference.

With lawmakers eager to get back home and

Hurricane Helene set to make landfall in Florida, Senate Majority Leader Charles E. Schumer, D-N.Y., and Senate GOP leaders on Tuesday night locked in a time agreement to vote on the bill Wednesday after no more than two hours of debate, with no amendments.

“Americans can breathe easy that because both sides have chosen bipartisanship. Congress is getting the job done,” Schumer said earlier Wednesday. “We will

keep the government open. We will prevent vital government services from needlessly coming to a halt."

The bill is mostly just a clean extension of current spending levels to Dec. 20, though many GOP conservatives believe those existing spending levels are already too high.

Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, an influential House Freedom Caucus member, pointed out lawmakers' consistent inability to pass individual spending bills to fund the government on time, while continually adding more debt to the national credit card.

"What are we doing?"

Roy said during the House debate. "It's absurd. And the American people look at us and say, what on earth is wrong in Washington?"

Conservatives also wanted tough voter ID measures attached to the bill, but last week enough Republicans refused to vote for a six-month stop-gap bill that included the proof-of-citizenship legislation that it was defeated on the floor. That left Johnson with few options but to cut a bipartisan deal.

Speaking to reporters after the House vote, Johnson blamed the Senate for not passing appro-

priations bills and reaching no agreement on topline spending.

"So we've had no choice, but I want to assure everyone, and I've said this multiple times this week, we are not going to return to a Christmas omnibus spending tradition, and that's significant," Johnson said. "We worked very hard to break that tradition."

House Appropriations
Chairman Tom Cole during a floor debate applauded Johnson's efforts, saying he made the best of a difficult hand.

“Like most, my preference would be to pass full-year appropriations

bills through regular order, but we are out of time," Cole, R-Okla., said during the debate. "We cannot afford a shutdown, which would be greatly damaging to our national security, to critical government programs, and to the American people."

The Senate's unusually quick action allows members to hit the campaign trail for an extended October recess. The December end date will allow lawmakers to see where the electoral chips fall before deciding whether they want to attempt to wrap up the fiscal 2025 spending bills this year.

THE BATH AUTHORITY

Elegance, Quality, & Style

FREE INSTALLATION!

ON YOUR NEW SHOWER OR BATH

3 YEARS

INTEREST FREE FINANCING

Terms and conditions apply. ENDS 09/30/24

Safety Accessories
Easy to Clean
Low Barrier Entry

SCAN HERE TO LEARN MORE

SCHEDULE YOUR FREE ESTIMATE TODAY!

(980)-221-0265

TBASale.com/BetterBath182

Not valid with any other offers or discounts. Terms, conditions, and restrictions apply, call, or see website for details. Financing available to those who qualify. Subject to credit approval. Loans for the GreenSky® consumer loan program are provided by Synovus Bank Member FDIC, NMLS #408043, without regard to age, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or familial status. GreenSky Servicing, LLC services the loans on behalf of your lender, NMLS #1416382, nmlsconsumeraccess.org. GreenSky® is a registered trademark of GreenSky, LLC and is licensed to banks and other financial institutions for their use in connection with that consumer loan program.

GreenSky Servicing, LLC is a financial technology company that manages the GreenSky® consumer loan program by providing origination and servicing support to banks and other financial institutions that make or hold program loans. GreenSky, LLC and GreenSky Servicing, LLC are not lenders. All credit decisions and loan terms are determined by program lenders. GreenSky.com. Free installation is equal to 15% off the total retail price, minimum purchase amount of \$13,000. HIC - NJ0450766458, PAPA448897 MD: 109183

**Great Day
Improvements**

The Bath Authority is part of the Great Day Improvements family of brands.



UNLOCK

Business Growth with AI-Powered Solutions.



McClatchy & **TRENDHUNTER**
CREATE THE FUTURE

Ready to spark new ideas?

McClatchy Innovations, in partnership with Trend Hunter, is embracing AI and cutting-edge technologies to enhance our lead generation efforts, streamline operations, and deliver unparalleled advertising solutions.

Reach out to a McClatchy expert now and explore how our cutting-edge, AI-powered solutions can propel your business to new heights.




WORLD SUMMIT TORONTO | Oct 1-3, 2024

"The Best Innovation Conference!"



SPONSORED BY
FUTURE FESTIVAL

Learn Why Starbucks, Netflix, Samsung, NASA, Lego & Google rely on Trend Hunter AI + Future Festival.

97% rate it the "best innovation conference"



Scan the code to get festival tickets, schedule a consult, and download Trend Hunter GPT.