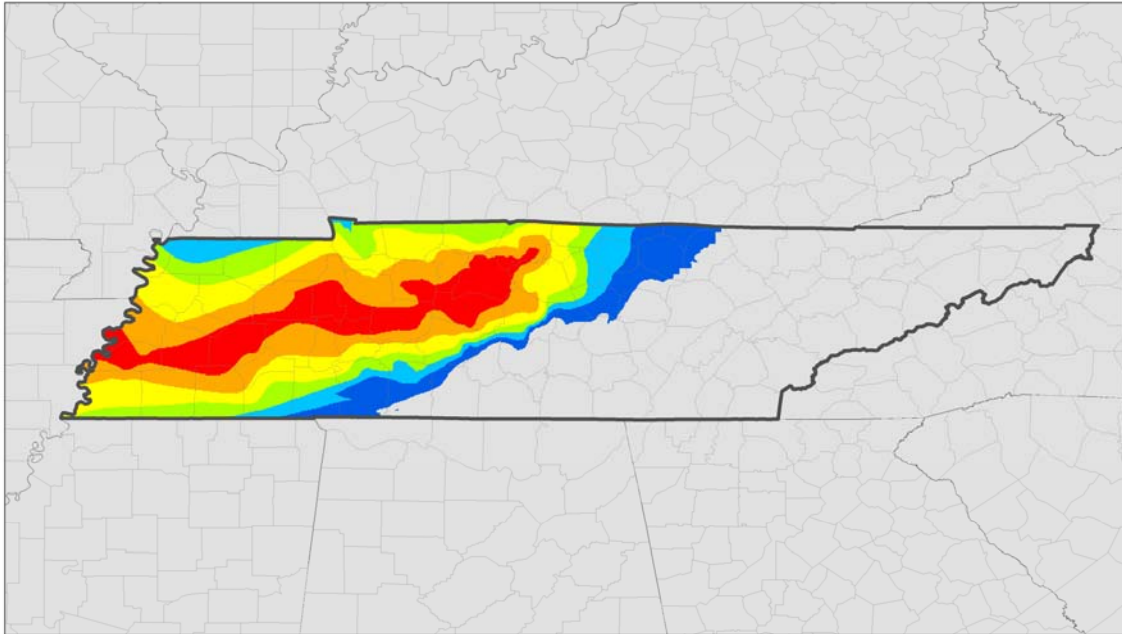


Flood Damage to Tennessee Heritage Assessment, May 27, 2010

Van West, director, MTSU Center for Historic Preservation

General: Almost four weeks after one of the state's most significant natural disasters find Tennesseans of all ages and backgrounds working together, with now tens of thousands of volunteer hours in the till, to build back their neighborhoods and lives. One positive from this disaster is the recognition that several of these groups are now receiving for their cool, measured yet compassionate response to all of the needs created by the storms, the tornados, and the flooding.



Tennessee Extreme Event of May 1-2, 2010
Average Recurrence Intervals (ARI) for 48-Hour Duration



0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Decimal Degrees

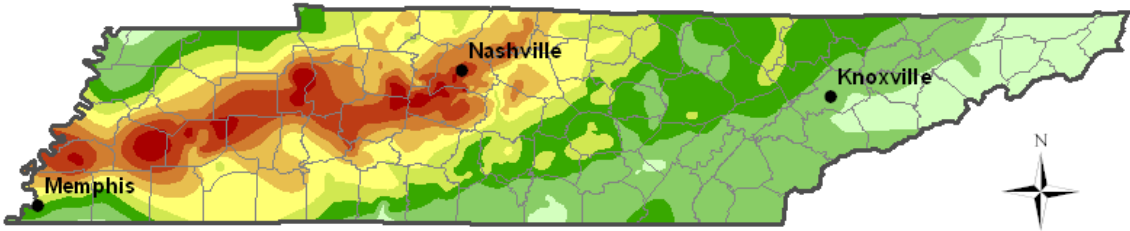
Created by Hydrometeorological Design Studies Center
Office of Hydrologic Development
National Weather Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

ARI (years)	
< 10	200 - 500
10 - 50	500 - 1,000
50 - 100	> 1,000
100 - 200	

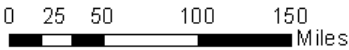


Do not be misled by early assessments that the damage was minimal. Four weeks later we do understand better the tremendous amount of damage recorded so far but also the amount of damage that we do not yet know.

Weekend Rainfall Totals - May 1st & 2nd, 2010 Tennessee



Source: CoCoRaHS



Precipitation Contours	
In Inches	
0.01" - 2.00"	8.01" - 10.00"
2.01" - 4.00"	10.01" - 12.00"
4.01" - 6.00"	12.01" - 14.00"
6.01" - 8.00"	14.01" - 16.00"
	16.01" - 20.00"



This map is an interpolation of actual reported values, but should be considered an estimation only.

Created by the National Weather Service Forecast Offices Nashville, Tennessee & Louisville, Kentucky

An important fact to keep in mind that our heritage may often still be stored away in buildings or places that by themselves are not "historic." Then, we have lost many heirlooms and historic documents from families who lost their homes through the disaster area. This photo below from near Erin from the Tennessean, is only a graphic reminder of the losses thousands have sustained, on top of the truly disastrous lost of vintage and heritage instruments in the flooding of the Soundcheck facility in Nashville.



The historic event of the 2010 storm will impact Tennessee's heritage for years to come. Here is my updated list, with more details in several areas.

Nashville

Grand Ole Opry House (1974)—extensive damage to one of the Nashville's major modernist landmarks and performance hall with significant historical associations to all realms of American popular music in the late twentieth century. With the buzz in historic preservation circles this decade about the value of the Recent Past, this building should be getting substantial attention from the heritage community. The nearby Acuff Museum also suffered extensive damage to its invaluable collections.

Fort Nashboro (c. 1930) and the downtown riverfront—the reconstructed historic site of Fort Nashboro has been forgotten, or taken for granted, in many ways for many years, but flood damage at this venerable downtown institution, one of the most significant efforts of women-led heritage preservation and interpretation in early 20th century Nashville. The 1st and 2nd Avenues area received moderate to severe flood damage, but due to their central role in the city and state tourism, together with the early CMA Music Fest, these buildings have received substantial attention and repair; many are open already. The Wildhorse Saloon, a 1990s infill in the district, is still closed but will be open by early June. Symphony Hall, a magnificent modern interpretation of classical revival design, will remain closed for sometime yet. The Country Music Hall of Fame was re-opened within days of the water receding from the streets.

Residential historic districts. We have a more full picture of the damage from flooding to several neighborhoods, to the east, west, and south of downtown. The Tanglewood National Register historic district, which some of the Center for Historic Preservation (CHP) graduate students worked on in the 1990s, suffered significantly. Current graduate students who live in East Nashville have reported (in some cases about their own homes) damage in Lockeland Springs and Inglewood neighborhoods. East Nashville was hit pretty hard, and there you have many early to mid-20th century homes. Another former graduate student, Phil Thomason, who has employed many other CHP students over the years, lost a good bit of his project archives once the basement in his West Nashville home flooded.

These stories have multiplied over the week, with thousands of homes being impacted. And, of course, only a small portion of the pre-1960 neighborhoods had been adequately surveyed and assessed for potential National Register eligibility. For example, the devastated W. Hamilton Drive neighborhood in north Nashville is a good example of a post-Brown v. Board of Education African American middle class neighborhood—mostly ranch houses from that time period of the mid-1950s to the mid-1960s. Another area hard hit by flooding along Richland Creek was “The Nations” neighborhood—many mid-twentieth century frame tract homes—where the danger now is that so many homes received severe flooding that demolition is being seriously considered.

Historic Sites, Parks. Almost immediately The Hermitage reported on its damage and Belle Meade Plantation put up on the web photos of its basement flooding, which damaged collections, and the damage to its stone wall and roads. The Parthenon at Centennial Park had basement flooding that was promptly addressed. The Warner Parks, on the National Register, had immediate flood damage and later mudslide damage tied to the heavy rains. Bicentennial Mall State Park, where a new exhibit under construction was flooded. Newsom Mill, Bellevue. This National Register city park on the Harpeth River but its stone walls from the Civil War era could take a lot of

punishment.

Churches. St. George Episcopal (1949). A Belle Meade landmark. Damaged but restorable and congregation is at it. Holy Trinity Episcopal (1850s). This major South Nashville landmark has had some flooding as well as water damage due to the heavy rains. Rose of Sharon P.B. Church. A North Nashville landmark that received extensive damage.

Cameron School (basement flooding), Nashville. This New Deal school, designed by noted Nashville architect Henry Hibbs, is listed in the National Register.

Middle Tennessee

Williamson County

Franklin Battlefield National Historic Landmark. A historic outbuilding (springhouse) on the Carnton section of the battlefield was inundated and partially demolished. Fort Granger at Pinkerton Park was surrounded by flood waters and inundated.

Franklin downtown historic districts. The Reconstruction- era Hardbargain neighborhood had flooding around the historic Primitive Baptist church. The commercial district came off fairly well, surprisingly so, but the downtown historic cemeteries suffered heavily from the waters and need to be cleaned, desperately. The Hincheyville neighborhood also had some flooding. Fleming Hall at Battle Ground Academy (historic campus) also had significant flooding damage.

Leiper's Fork historic district suffered from flooded homes and basements. Boyd's Mill Road, a historic corridor into the village, also suffered considerable damage.

Hickman County

Here the damage might be the most extensive of any Tennessee community because Hickman not only had high water, it received a blow from an EF2 tornado. While the county seat of Centerville, located mostly on high ground, came through in fair shape, the rural areas of the county were hit hard. The Pinewood community, where the old historic farm and mill village was the subject of a recent CHP heritage study, was particularly hard hit. Primm Springs, an early settlement and 19th century resort site, had high water, washing away many properties along Primm Springs Road. The county mayor said: "it's going to take years to fully recover," which is no overstatement. Still today many county roads are closed or barely passable. The heritage properties already documented with damage include two rural churches, Little Rock Church of Christ (c. 1900 building) and Pinewood Church of Christ (c. 1940 building).

Wilson County

Water reached beyond the first floor of the downtown Lebanon historic square buildings. Clean up and repair got underway almost immediately, and early indications that all of the impacted buildings can be preserved and reopened later in the year.

Maury County.

In Columbia the historic downtown African American neighborhood, "The Bottoms," flooded, with the Mt. Lebanon Missionary Baptist Church (National Register) receiving a good bit of water. The church was repaired immediately. Businesses are open. State

Route 7 to Santa Fe had extensive damage and is closed.

Montgomery County

McGregor Park Museum, Riverwalk, Clarksville. This museum took 5 to 6 feet of water and remains closed. All of Riverside Drive and the riverwalk access to the Cumberland and its many stories were totally covered by high water, as documented in the photo below from the Clarksville Leaf-Chronicle.



Cheatham County

The 1898 Pratt truss bridge in Kingston Springs suffered damage but its approaches did not wash out. Considerable high water also occurred in the Shacklett community. In Humphreys County, the road and bridge associated with the entrance to the Loretta Lynn Farm (on National Register) suffered serious damage.

Dickson County

Flooding was heavily in the Cumberland Furnace community (a large National Register historic district).

Perry County

County officials have estimated that 40% of the residents received damage. Historic farms are especially hard hit, and the more recent Amish and Mennonites farm families will address their issues independently as much as possible. Farms along the Buffalo River suffered the most.

Sumner County

Rock Castle and Wynnewood, two historic house museums of the nineteenth century experienced significant flooding, Rock Castle got hit twice by rising waters. The access

road to Cragfont, another historic house museum, has been partially swept away..

West Tennessee

The most important news here is how the floods and tornados impacted family farms—one estimate has that 22% of the region's farms had severe damage to their corn crops.

Dyer County.

Dyersburg experienced a record flood, even greater than the historic and famous 1937 flood. South Main Street is a key artery into the downtown business district—a place of several mid-20th century roadside buildings and garages, and it has received high flood waters. as the photo below from the Dyersburg State Gazette shows.



Extensive damage in the commercial was extensive—old historic roadside properties like Courthland Square (a old Art Deco styled motor court) and Plaza Food Center (c. 1940s) received severe damage. But the flood waters extended into the adjacent residential area, which is largely a early 20th century neighborhood of small bungalows and typical worker cottages. The flood damage to historic farms and churches in the county may be even higher.

Madison County

Bemis Historic District, Jackson. A potential serious impact on residences and industrial

buildings associated with one of the most significant company towns in Tennessee history. Listed in the National Register, Bemis is also covered by an entry in the Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture. For the entire county, the county government that the flood damage is almost equal to the tornado damage from 2003.

Shelby County

Millington Naval Air Station. A key chapter of Tennessee's Cold War history is embodied in the buildings at the air station and most of it suffered significantly from the storm. The Commercial Appeal has several excellent photos of the damage.

McNairy County

Bethesda Presbyterian church and cemetery, and other possible damage, Purdy. This town is a key spot to tell the Unionist story in West Tennessee during the Civil War.

Home to the Hurst Nation, the village is the location of the Col. Fielding Hurst house, which was in poor condition before the tornado. Damage from the storm also impacted Selmer, the county seat.

Pocahontas, a historic railroad town on the Tennessee-Mississippi line, received a direct hit from a tornado. It has scattered historic buildings within its boundaries, but impact from the storm is unknown outside of significant damage to the NR listed Pocahontas school from the tornado, Patrick McIntyre, Tennessee SHPO has confirmed the damage to the school.

Historic Bridges

Martha Carver of Tennessee Department of Transportation has reported that, "For non-highway bridges (bypassed as ruins or used on trails), the news is not good. We know that the 1889 Parker truss bridge at Linton in Davidson County washed out as did the downtown Centerville Bridge, a 1913 two-span Pratt truss bridge. The 1911 Pratt truss bridge in the National Register listed Hurricane Mills District also completely washed out. The nearby 1903 two-span Camelback truss Tanksley Bridge lost one of its spans. Both the 1898 Double Intersection Warren truss bridge at Belle Meade and the 1898 Pratt truss bridge in Kingston Springs suffered damage to their approaches but did not wash out. "

Last notes:

The good news is that we have an experienced small-town volunteer from the Mississippi Gulf Coast willing to help. Brent D. Anderson is the recovery manager for the City of Waveland, Mississippi, and he knows what a bear but also how helpful the federal agencies can be to recovering communities. He is willing to help; his contact information is 228-466-2549 or bldgofficial@mchsi.com.

Also, the Center for Historic Preservation has received a donation of \$1200 from the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area. We will more than match that to \$2500 and will select one of the properties discussed above to receive these monies next month.