

## Quick River Rise Surprised Residents, But Cut Damage

The quick rise of the Skagit river, which caught many valley residents so completely by surprise that they were unable to remove their personal belongings, and in many cases even their cars and trucks, from the path of the swirling water, also had its advantages, according to Sheldon Williamson, American Red Cross representative who has been surveying damage in the area. It is impossible to estimate the damage total as yet, he said.

The sudden flood, which subsided almost as quickly as it rose, deposited less silt than most residents had feared and damage to homes was in most cases confined to water-soaking, he said.

Mr. Williamson found new evidences of structural damage on a survey tour of the Hamilton flood area yesterday.

This morning he plans to go into the Conway-Fir island area, which has already been surveyed by Lee Wright but is now more accessible, and this afternoon he and Mrs. Clio Baldrige, Skagit valley chapter executive secretary, plan to drive to Marblemount to check on up-river damage. Chapter President A. B. Loft is also checking the lower Skagit area.

Reports on property damage and requests for assistance have already come in from several parts of the flooded areas of the county, according to Mrs. Baldrige.

Persons whose property was damaged by the flood are invited to contact the Red Cross in Mount Vernon if they are in need of rehabilitation assistance.

Immediate emergency aid is given at once in providing food, clothing and bedding and funds will be made available by the national Red Cross headquarters for use in repairing flood damage to homes, in cases where the owner is unable to finance the work.

The national office has assured the local chapter that money and supplies will be available as needed. The funds come from the contributions of local chapter members throughout the country in the annual drive.

On his trip yesterday Mr. Williamson found 35 homes in Hamilton had been flooded, some to a depth of five feet, but the water had subsided and most families are now moving back and going about the job of cleaning up the flood debris and damage.

OLYMPIA, Nov. 29 — (UP) — The state highway department today reported all highway passes through the Cascade mountains open.