



STANISLAUS COUNTY AMATEUR RADIO EMERGENCY SERVICE

2023 Flood Operations After Action Report

January 23, 2023

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Stanislaus County had significant rain fall (approximate combined total of 8 inches) in December 2022 and January 2023. Rivers and streams were at capacity and the ground was saturated. New Melones reservoir on the Stanislaus River and the Don Pedro reservoir fortunately had room for the water. There was flooding down-stream from Don Pedro on the Tuolumne River, San Joaquin River, Dry Creek in Modesto, Del Puetro Creek in Patterson, and Orestimba Creek in Newman. Along with the rain there were winds from 15 to 30 mph with gusts from 40 to 50 mph. Due to the impact of the flooding a local emergency had been declared. 157 people were evacuated from their homes and up to this point approximately fifteen million dollars in damage has been estimated. Two shelters were opened, Yolo School in Newman and the Salvation Army in South Modesto.

Stanislaus ARES was activated by Ruben Wegner, Emergency Services Manager, Stanislaus County Office of Emergency Services, on Saturday January 14, 2023, to support the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department and the Office of Emergency Services 2023 Flood Operations. ARES was assigned to operations and reported to Ruben Wegner Deputy Operations Chief and Chris Pernell, Stanislaus County Fire Warden, Operations Chief. We activated 10 ARES members and staffed 6 to 8 positions each day. The following ARES members volunteered their time:

Paul W6UHF
Mark N6ARP
Ed KF6FIR
Steve N5QC
Jim KK6CPN
Patrick KG6AZZ

Scott KN6OQW
Mike KM6MHT
Derrill W7LTM
Lucian KF6NPG

Our primary mission was to monitor fixed and semi roving positions at various locations in the Newman, Patterson, Grayson, Laird Park, and the 9th/River Road area in Modesto. This freed up Deputies and other personnel to perform evacuation notices and other priority duties. The ARES operators provided voice reports, photos, and videos of the flooding conditions in those areas to the Net Control Station, which passed the appropriate traffic to Operations.

No antenna drop could be located, and it is unknown if there is a functioning ARES antenna drop at the Sheriff's Operations Center. A temporary Net Control station was set up in the hallway next to a sliding door to the parking lot which provided access to run in antenna coax. This location worked well under the circumstances.

The pictures and videos were sent in via cell phone text. Patrick KG6AZZ has a drone and sent in one picture of his area using his drone. We did practice some limited use of winlink and one member Mark N6ARP sent a picture to net control using winlink. The activation ended Tuesday January 17, 2023, after ARES members logged 261 hours of volunteer time.

I notified John K6JRO, Stanislaus ARES Emergency Coordinator and Dan WL7COO, the Section Emergency Coordinator of the activation. Dan readily offered any assistance that we may need. He in turn notified John NZ6Q, Section Manager and the ECs in the north part of the SJV section. I want to thank each of them for the feedback on our nets and the offer of assistance that we may have needed. Situation reports were sent out at the end of the day.

I would like to especially thank the Turlock Amateur Radio Club. During our activation the commercial power went down on Mt. Oso on Monday at 0457 hrs. This is the repeater site for the SARA club 145.390 repeater, which we were using for the disaster response. The repeater has battery backup and fortunately lasted until the end of the day when the power was restored around 1615 hrs. Not wanting to be without a backup plan I called Spencer KJ6ART the TARC repeater trustee. I explained the situation and asked permission to use the TARC repeater system if needed. Spencer said, "whatever you need." That certainly took a big load off my mind knowing that we had a backup plan for communications.

I want to thank the Stanislaus Amateur Radio Association (SARA) for the use of the WD6EJF repeater system during the ARES activation. Thanks to all the SARA club members for their patience as the repeater was limited to emergency/priority traffic during that time.

The overall activation went very well. The e-mail notification and follow up phone calls to members went as expected and sufficient ARES members were available for duty each day. The regular participation in weekly nets, monthly training, community events, and Simulated

Emergency Tests (SETs) paid off. Each member reported on time, prepared for deployment, looked professional, and the radio voice traffic was conducted professionally.

Observations/Suggestions:

Repair or establish an ARES antenna drop in the operations room at the Sheriff's Department. Work with OES and Sheriff's Department for NCS location within the operations room/antenna drop.

Check a reported ARES antenna drop at Patterson Fire Station 52.

Have dual headset jack for the net control station. Would be useful for in high noise area and would accommodate two net controls.

Design a sign that could be used for the NCS table to identify ARES and the NCS station.

Design a uniform emergency communications magnetic sign and vendor.

Investigate HAM TV for use in an activation.

Evaluate use of APRS.

Review use of GMRS radios would be useful to communicate directly with CERT.

Follow up to see that all members have the new ARES identification card.

Follow up to see that all members have emergency vest.

Suggest presentations to EOC staff on ARES capabilities.

Discuss use of drones.

Refresher training on field programming of radios.

Update and republish ARES frequency list.

Training and practice on use of and setting up cross band station.

Continue training and evaluation on use of winlink during deployments.

Evaluate the Gopher Ridge Repeater for back up use in the I-5/Westley area. 147.015 pl. 114.8.



NCS at Sheriff's Department



NCS temporary antenna drop.



Shilo Road across from Camp Taylor



Dry Creek La Loma Bridge at Morton under-pass



Highway 33 North of Orestimba Creek



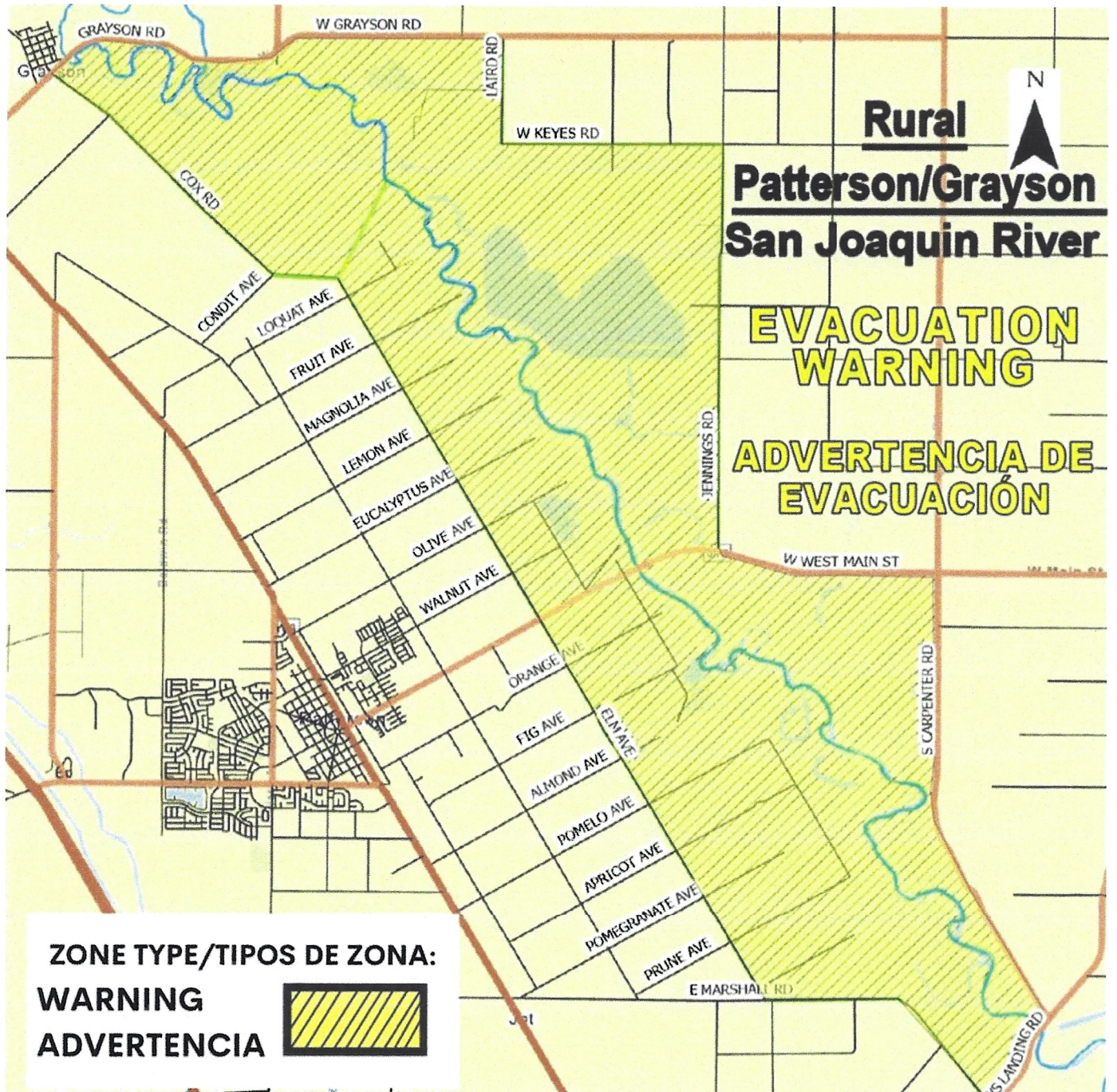
Trailer Parks on River Road next to Tuolumne River Modesto



Loquat and Vineyard, Patterson



Drone view at Old Las Palmas Fishing access, Patterson



Patterson area evacuation map