



WIMBERLEY STRONG

***2015 MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND FLOOD
WIMBERLEY, TEXAS***

City of Wimberley Profile

- **Population:** *2,626 residents*
- **Area:** *Nine (9) square miles*
- **Housing:** *Approximately 1,500 homes*
- **Economic Base:** *Tourist based economy*
- **Natural Resources:** *Blanco River and Cypress Creek*
- **Average Rainfall:** *39.5 inches per year*
- **City Brand:** *“Wimberley...A Little Bit of Heaven”*

Saturday, May 23, 2015

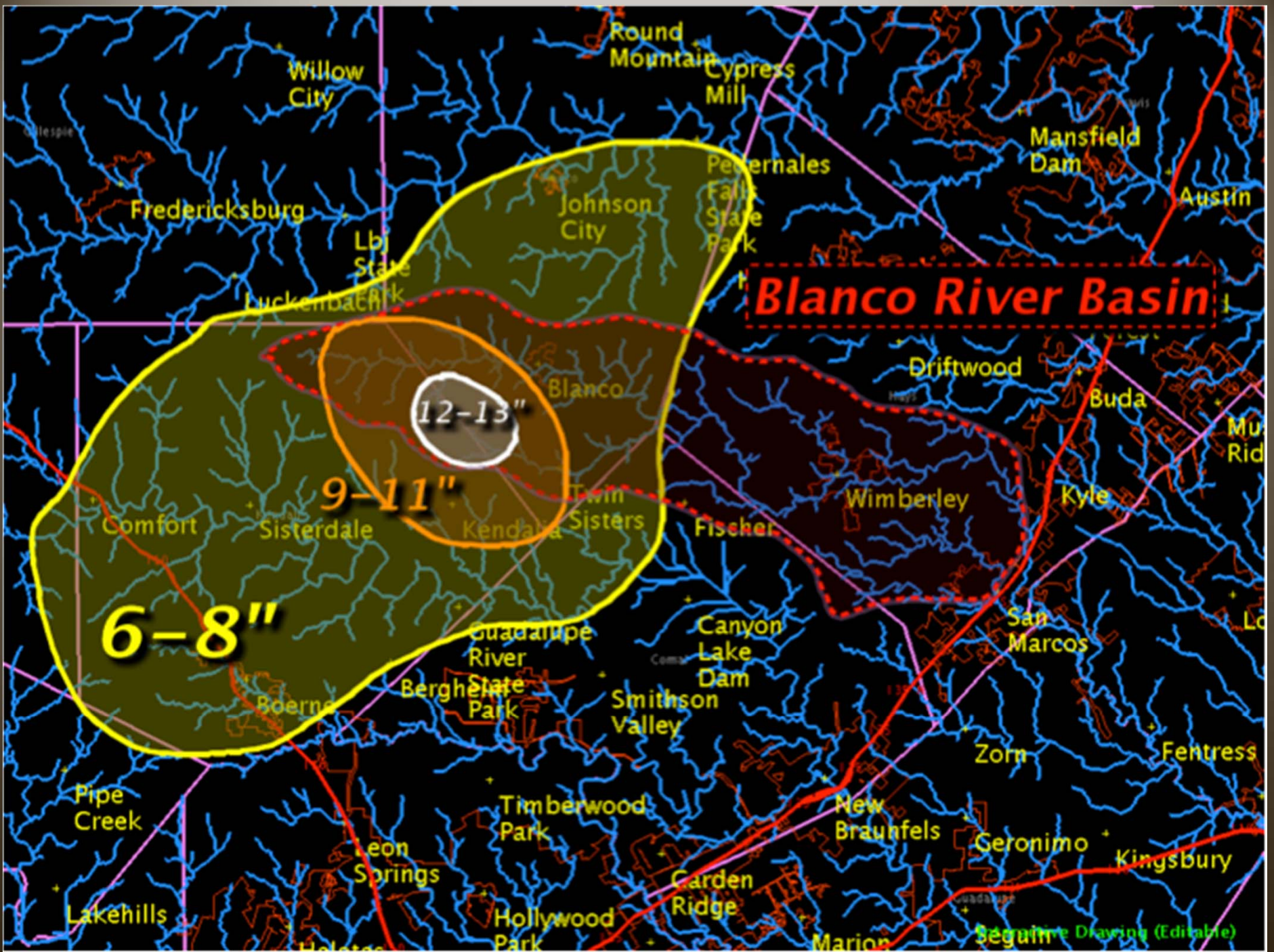
“...The day a community with “A Little of Heaven” met “A Little Bit of Hell””

Saturday, May 23, 2015

- **The first day of the Memorial Day Weekend – the traditional start of the summer tourist season in Wimberley**
- **The Wimberley Valley's more than 75 vacation rentals were booked solid**
- **Business was brisk at downtown restaurants and shops**
- **It was the typical start to a busy holiday weekend in Wimberley, despite weather forecasts calling for heavy rains and potential flash flooding**

Saturday, May 23, 2015

- During the day, widespread showers and thunderstorms soaked the Wimberley Valley, dumping more than two (2) inches of rain
- Vastly different conditions were reported west of Wimberley in Blanco County
- Late in the afternoon, six (6) to eight (8) inches of rain fell near Blanco and ten (10) to twelve (12) inches of rain fell southwest of Blanco near the community of Kendalia



Saturday, May 23, 2015

- “Old Timers” in Blanco County reported flood waters from the Blanco River going where they have never gone before and they were heading toward Wimberley
- Based on reports and historical knowledge of the Blanco River, the Wimberley Fire Department and City of Wimberley, in conjunction with Hays County Emergency Management, initiated a coordinated response to safeguard the more than 10,000 residents and visitors calling the Wimberley Valley “home” this long holiday weekend
- Protective actions were initiated more than two (2) hours before flood waters arrived

Saturday, May 23, 2015

- **Low water crossings over the Blanco River were gated**
- **River Road – a scenic heavily traveled roadway on the Blanco River – was closed**
- **City issued the first of three (3) city-wide phone calls to more than 1,500 households in the community warning of a significant rise on the Blanco River**
- **Fire Department gathered swift water rescue teams and prepared for deployment**
- **Door-to-door evacuations were initiated in vulnerable, low lying areas**

9-1-1 calls began to paint a picture
of what was to come....



In Wimberley, the Blanco River began to
“truly” rise around 9 p.m.



As the level of the Blanco River rose, so did the calls for help...

Dispatcher: Hays County 9-1-1. Do you need Police, Fire or EMS.

Caller: We just saw a car float by the low water crossing... we don't know if anyone was inside...

Dispatcher: Hays County 9-1-1. Do you need Police, Fire or EMS.

Caller: We need rescue. Water is coming the house and my parents are elderly...

Dispatcher: Hays County 9-1-1. Do you need Police, Fire or EMS.

Caller: We need emergency rescue. The river has flooded around the house...we are running out of breathing room...hurry.



Saturday, May 23, 2015

- **In four (4) hours, the Blanco River in Wimberley rose from 5' feet to near 41'**
- **At one point, the Blanco River was rising at a rate of 5' every fifteen (15) minutes**
- **Flood waters topped the Ranch Road 12 Bridge over the Blanco River at Wimberley by 4'**
- **As the Blanco River rose, tributaries such as the Cypress Creek and Wilson Creek, quickly back filled with flood waters**

As residents and visitors fled to higher ground, debris-laden flood waters quickly filled and shattered homes and claimed 11 lives in its path



Break.com





At sunrise on Sunday, May 24, 2015, the death and destruction of the night before became apparent

































Homes elevated above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) suffered less damage





The debris load left behind by the floodwaters was “enormous”



The remnants of flood-damaged homes blocked access to many neighborhoods on the Blanco River, requiring heavy equipment to clear the roadways













From the air, a quarter mile wide path of destruction was visible







Flood waters took more than homes and lives

















Flood waters took a toll on local roads, bridges and low water crossings



Fischer Store Bridge





FM 165 Bridge






Ranch Road 12 Bridge





Hidden Valley Low Water Crossing



**Power, phone and cable
lines were torn down**

**Roadways were heavily
damaged**









And in the days that followed....

News media from across the nation converged on Wimberley

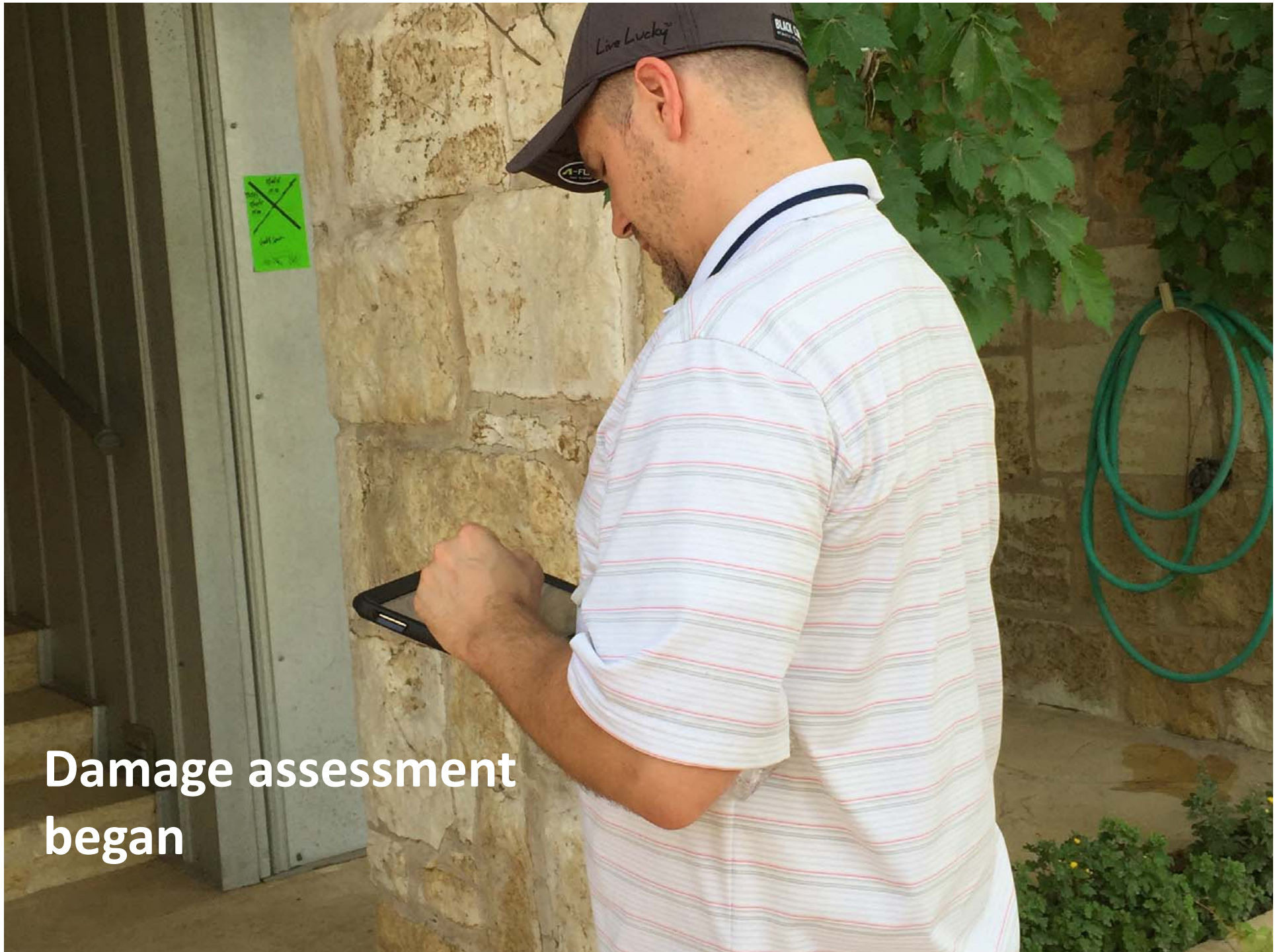


State and City officials gathered flood survivors to start addressing their needs



FEMA rolled into town...





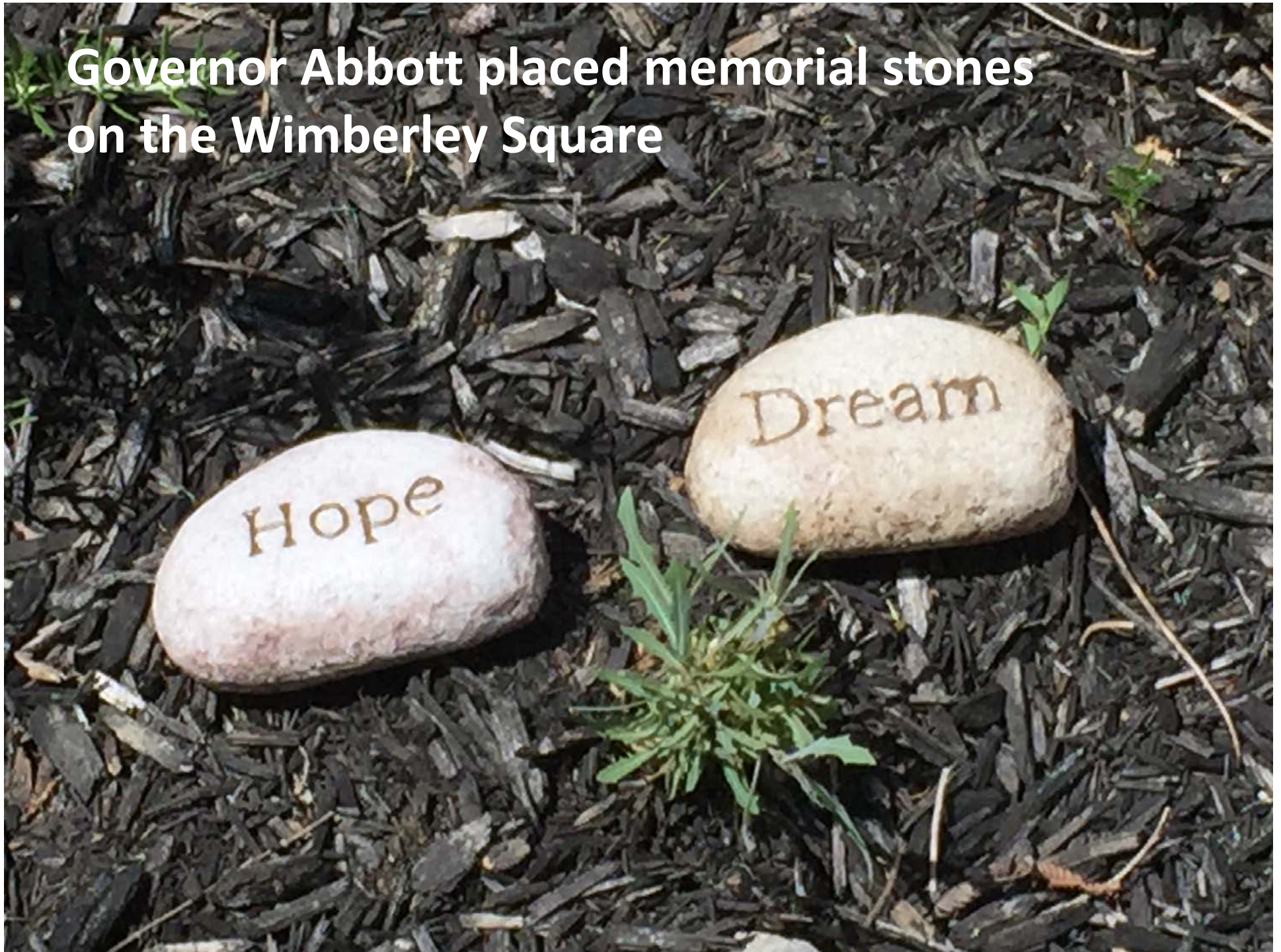
Damage assessment
began



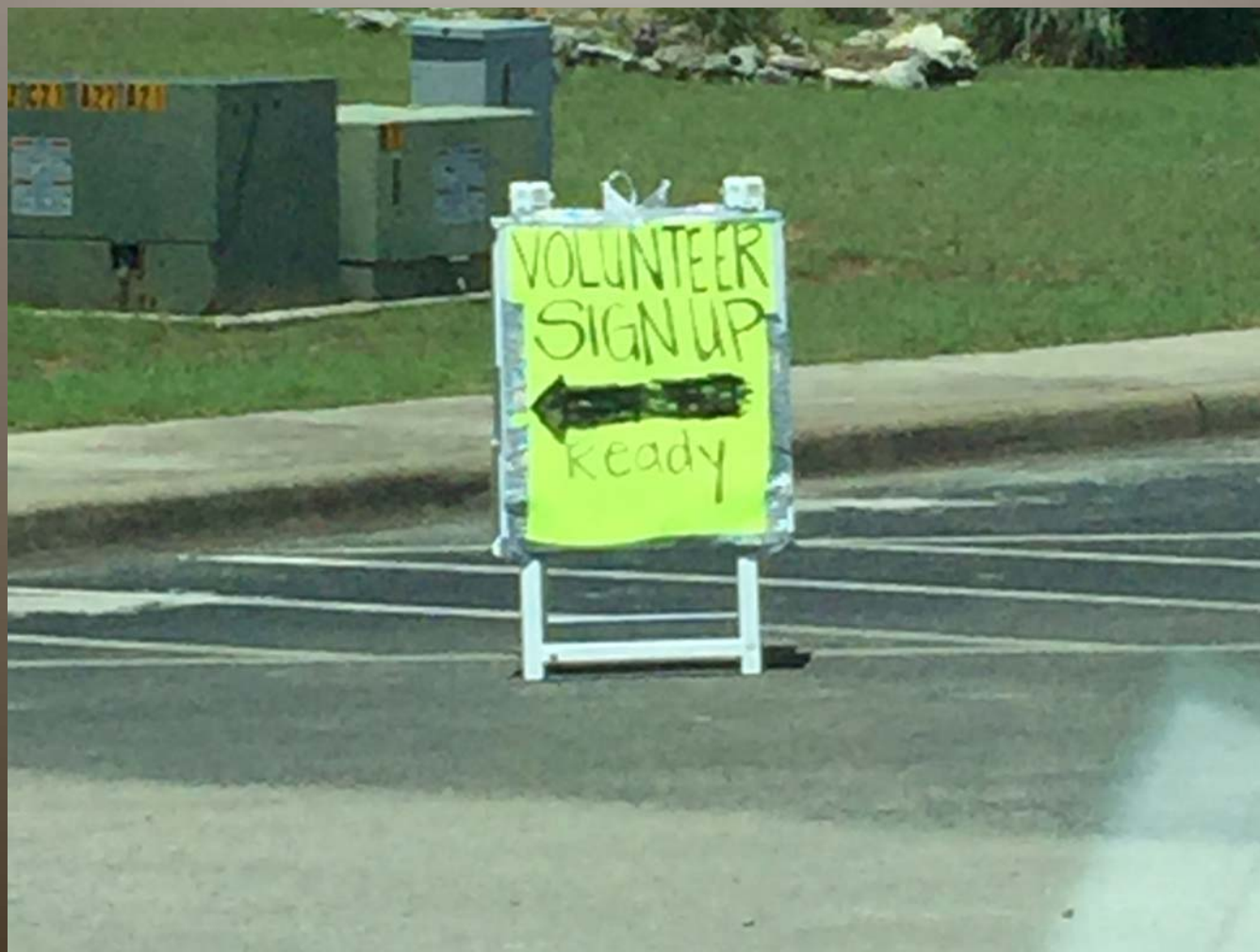


**Federal and State leaders
toured the disaster area**

**Governor Abbott placed memorial stones
on the Wimberley Square**



Donations and volunteers poured into the community















A photograph of a hand-drawn sign on a road. The sign is white with black text and arrows. It is supported by several wooden stakes. The background consists of dense green trees and a utility pole with wires. The foreground shows a paved road and some grass.

DONATE →
← RELIEF
CENTER





Homes were mucked out and the clean up began







1824
Weberville
Will Survive!











Please let
us go through
our mess.
DO NOT TAKE
ANYTHING

More than \$1 million was raised locally for recovery from corporations to children



The City's July 4th Parade recognized City and County leaders along with flood survivors and volunteers







Unusual occurrences



See anything unusual with
this house?



Anything unusual
here?





The house was demolished but
the table was left standing





And let's not forget the tree...

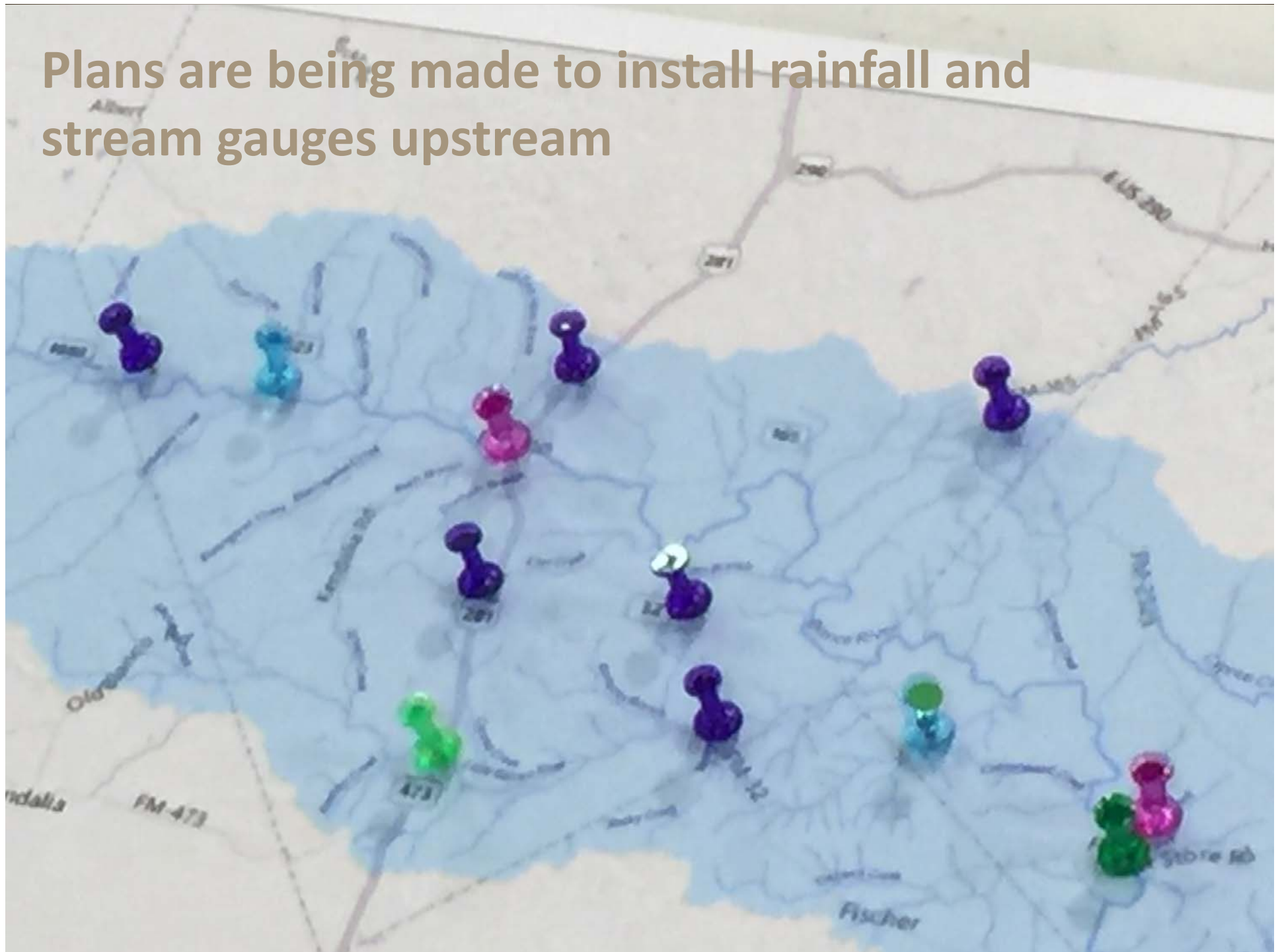


What's next for Wimberley...

First responders are
being honored...



Plans are being made to install rainfall and stream gauges upstream





Reconstruction of flood damaged homes is underway



MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND FLOOD WIMBERLEY, TEXAS

- + Eleven (11) lives lost**
- + More than 100 swift water rescues**
- + 350 homes damaged or destroyed**
- + More than 15,000 trees lost**
- + Estimated property damage more than \$30 million**
- + Record flood height of 44.9 feet**
- + 195,000 acre feet of water passed through Wimberley**
- + This amount of flood water would have filled AT&T Stadium 82 times**
- + More than 6,000 volunteers put in more than 400,000 hours of time**

