

FLOOD EVENT OF 10/15/1942 - 10/17/1942

POTOMAC BASIN

Site	Flood Stage	Date	Crest	Flow	Category	Basin	Stream	County
Cumberland, MD	17.0	10/15/1942	24.04	50,500	Major	Potomac		Alleghany
Cumberland, MD	10.0	10/15/1942	15.14	23,300	Major	Potomac	Wills Creek	Alleghany
Dawsonville, MD	7.5	10/16/1942	8.31	3,620	Minor	Potomac	Seneca Creek	Montgomery
Fairview, MD	10.0	10/16/1942	12.17	11,100	Moderate	Potomac	Conococheague Ck	Washington
Frederick, MD	15.0	10/16/1942	16.97	19,700	Minor	Potomac	Monocacy	Frederick
Hancock, MD	30.0	10/16/1942	36.63	155,000	Major	Potomac		Washington
Harpers Ferry, WV	18.0	10/16/1942	33.80	missing	Major	Potomac		Washington
Leesburg, VA	12.0	10/16/1942	22.90	35,600	Major	Potomac	Goose Creek	Loudoun
Little Falls, MD	10.0	10/17/1942	26.88	447,000	Major	Potomac		Montgomery
Moorefield, WV	10.0	10/15/1942	10.53	12,800	Minor	Potomac		Hardy
Paw Paw, WV	25.0	10/16/1942	38.36	111,000	Major	Potomac		Allegany
Point of Rocks, MD	16.0	10/16/1942	40.43	418,000	Major	Potomac		Frederick
Shepherdstown, WV	15.0	10/16/1942	32.68	201,000	Major	Potomac		Jefferson
Springfield, WV	15.0	10/16/1942	21.09	46,000	Moderate	Potomac		Hampshire
Williamsport, MD	23.0	10/16/1942	36.10	missing	Major	Potomac		Washington

RAPPAHANNOCK BASIN

Site	Flood Stage	Date	Crest	Flow	Category	Basin	Stream	County
Culpeper, VA	14.0	10/16/1942	30.30	58,100	Major	Rappahannock	Rapidan	Culpeper
Fredericksburg, VA	18.0	10/16/1942	42.60	missing	Major	Rappahannock		Spotsylvania
Remington, VA	15.0	10/16/1942	30.00	90,000	Major	Rappahannock		Fauquier

SHENANDOAH BASIN

Site	Flood Stage	Date	Crest	Flow	Category	Basin	Stream	County
Cootes Store, VA	15.0	10/15/1942	25.30	50,000	Major	Shenandoah		Rockingham
Front Royal, VA	12.0	10/16/1942	34.80	130,000	Major	Shenandoah		Warren
Lynnwood, VA	16.0	10/15/1942	27.20	80,000	Major	Shenandoah		Rockingham
Millville, WV	13.5	10/16/1942	32.40	230,000	Major	Shenandoah		Jefferson

Strasburg, VA	17.0	10/16/1942	31.20	100,000	Major	Shenandoah		Warren
Waynesboro, VA	9.5	10/15/1942	14.30	14,500	Major	Shenandoah	South	Waynesboro
JAMES BASIN								
Site	Flood Stage	Date	Crest	Flow	Category	Basin	Stream	County
Bremo Bluff, VA	19.0	10/16/1942	29.20	95,000	Moderate	James		Fluvanna
Cartersville, VA	20.0	10/16/1942	27.14	135,000	Major	James		Goochland
Palmyra, VA	17.0	10/16/1942	36.50	78,000	Major	James	Rivanna	Fluvanna
Richmond, VA	12.0	10/17/1942	19.80	119,000	Moderate	James		Henrico
Scottsville, VA	20.0	10/16/1942	23.00	95,200	Moderate	James		Albemarle

Weather Summary

The remnants of the eight tropical storm of the year moved into the Mid-Atlantic on the 13th after making landfall as a tropical depression in the Carolinas. The slow moving remnants of the tropical system dumped a few inches of rainfall over the area until the system was swept out of the region by a cold front a few days later. The long duration of widespread heavy rain resulted in major flooding across much of Virginia and parts of the Virginias.

October 1942: Torrential rains fell from October 12-16 in Northern Virginia causing the **worst river flood** in the history of the state. The hardest hit was the mid portion of the Rappahannock River and the Shenandoah River. On the Rappahannock, damages came to \$2.5 million (1942 dollars) and most of that was in Fredericksburg, where the river rose to 41 feet (27 feet above flood stage). On the Shenandoah River, a stage of almost 50 feet was reached at Riverton on the morning of the 16th. Flood stage is 22 feet and it broke the record set by the March 1936 flood by 12 feet! Flood losses on the Potomac River were \$4.5 million. The Potomac at Washington reached 17.6 feet (flood stage is seven feet). Areas of Alexandria and Arlington were seriously flooded. Flooding was not quite as serious on the James River, yet the flood crest in Richmond reached 16 feet above flood stage. Ten to 12 inches of rain fell from Fredericksburg to Warrenton. Seventeen inches were recorded in Front Royal. In Shenandoah National Park, along Skyline Drive, rainfall totals reached 18 to 19 inches! To the south, Nelson County received 16 inches. Another maxima of 12 to 16 inches fell from near Paw Paw, West Virginia south along the mountains into Highland and Bath Counties of far western Virginia. Highways and bridges were washed away. Over 1,300 people were left homeless in Albemarle, Spotsylvania, Stafford and Warren Counties. Miraculously, only one person died. Transportation was interrupted for three days. Severe damage occurred to Virginia crops: peanuts, cotton, sweet potatoes, soybeans, shocked corn and late hay. The heavy rains caused a million bushels of apples to drop before they were picked. From NWS Sterling, VA office.

Crest Statistics/Flood Information

Crests occurred 10/15/1942 - 10/17/1942

First flood of 1 that occurred in October, 1942 that we could find.

Eleventh flood of 12 that occurred in 1942.

Number of Floods at MARFC Forecast Points - **29**

Number of Floods Cresting in **Minor** Range - **3**

Number of Floods Cresting in **Moderate** Range - **5**

Number of Floods Cresting in **Major** Range - **21**