



# F.J. Sayers Dam Managing Flood Risk

## U.S. Army Corps of Engineers



## Sayers dam held back 28 more feet of water

BLANCHARD — The Sayers dam was releasing water this morning, but the water impounded behind the dam had fallen very little from the peak reached at 2:45 p.m. Sunday.

No trouble was experienced at the dam, and there was never any danger of any collapse.

Water did go over the spillway, and was still going over the spillway this morning. The spillway, not too far from Route 220, is designed specifically to

release water when it reaches a certain level so that pressure on the dam is automatically minimized.

Bert Smith, dam tender, reported that the 9:20 a.m. stage was 658.12 ft. above sealevel. The normal summer pool is 630 ft., which means that more than 28 additional feet of water was impounded behind the dam. The peak was 658.41 ft. yesterday afternoon.

The water goes over the spill-

way at 657 ft.

With the stage this morning, 1.12 feet was still running over the spillway. In addition, the dam tenders, on instruction from the Army Engineers, had begun to release water. Two gates were open 3½ feet. This is the customary procedure of releasing impounded water as soon as possible.

Mr. Smith said the water backed up behind the dam covered several roads, but most of the land in the dam pool is leased by the Corps of Engineers.

Howard borough suffered no flood problem except that the causeway to Route 220 was cut off. Access to the community was still possible by going south over the hills to the Jacksonville road.



## Bush, Stevenson dams held water

RENOVO — Both the dams north of here, which impounded tremendous amounts of water all through the flood emergency, were releasing steady but relatively small amounts of water this morning. Water at the Bush Dam was going down about .2 feet per hour.

The West Branch at Renovo was holding around the 12 ft. mark. For that reason the release of water from both the Bush Dam on Kettle Creek and the Stevenson Dam on the First Fork of Sinnemahoning was taking place on a minimal basis.

John Kocian, dam tender at the Bush Dam, reported that at the peak impoundment Monday the reading was 919.13 feet above sea level, topping all previous impoundment marks by six feet. This was still 18 feet below the spillway.

At these flood control dams, water runs over the spillway automatically at certain levels in order to release the pressure of the water being impounded and preventing it rising high enough to go over the dam.

Both the Bush and Stevenson dams functioned without fault in the manner in which they had been designed.

When the Bush Dam was at its peak, it was impounding 79.13 ft. of water at the dam face. The normal pool is 840 feet above sea level.

When the dam gates were shut at 1:40 p.m. on Thursday, June 22, the dam stage was up only slightly at 843.46 ft. At that time, the river stage at Renovo was 8.32 ft. In the past the dam gates generally have not been shut until the river stage at Renovo

reaches 10 ft., but the potential run off into the dam pool, was such that the Army Engineers ordered the gates to be shut.

Reports from the Stevenson Dam were that the maximum level reached 1,013 ft. The normal pool is 920 ft. above sea level. This means that the dam was impounding 93 feet of water at the peak.

This was 11 ft. below the spillway.

There was some delay in releasing water at Stevenson because there was a slide below the dam which partially blocked the channel for a time. This did not directly affect the dam. Communications at the dam from Lock Haven were not re-established until this morning. Telephone calls since last Thursday had not gone through.

Mr. Kocian reported that the phone lines to the dam were out for several days. Radio communication with the Army Engineers was maintained except for one four-hour period. Mr. Kocian managed to make repairs.

This break in communications had led to some apprehension in the area that some crisis had occurred at the dam, but this was not the case.

Mr. Kocian reported that two officials of the dam system were killed in a helicopter crash at Hornell, N.Y., when they were on a tour of inspection. They were the chief of maintenance for the dams and one of his aides.

In addition, Mr. Kocian's brother, who lives in another heavily flooded area, Wilkes-Barre, died during the weekend.

## Area busy with flood clean-up

LOCK HAVEN — The area continued to clean away flood debris today. Superficially the downtown business section looked better than early yesterday since a lot of the debris which had been piled along the curbs had been removed. Most store windows were either boarded up or protected by heavy wire.

The clean-up also continued in Mill Hall, Renovo, Jersey Shore and other communities which were hit by the floods of the West Branch of the Susquehanna and its tributaries.

The river continued to fall slowly with a stage of 15.35 ft. at the Jay St. bridge at 7 a.m. today. It held yesterday around the 16 ft. mark, about half the crest of 31.3 ft. which was reached about 1:30-2:30 p.m. Friday.

The upriver dams — Bush and

Stevenson — were releasing water slowly today as the river stage at Renovo this morning was 8.25 feet. Both the dams had impounded large amounts of water during the flood emergency. In neither case, however, did water reach and go over the spillway as it did at the Sayers Dam on Bald Eagle Creek. When water starts over the spillway it means that the dam reservoir is full and no more water can be impounded.

Preliminary estimates — largely rather wild guesses — of the flood damage here to business and industry were made yesterday to the Susquehanna Economic Development Association (SEDA), which was gathering statistics for Gov. Shapp. Those preliminary estimates will probably need com-

please turn to page 8

## People endure and go on after flood

By DENNIS KULCHYCKI  
Express Staff Writer

LOCK HAVEN — The flood waters have receded now, leaving behind a sea of mud that threatens to become a cloud of choking dust, and leaving incalculable millions in damage and misery.

Gone too with the flood waters is that look of hopelessness and total despair in the faces of the flood vic-

timaries as a small wheelbarrow-load of ruined clothing and curtains and other articles to a pile of gooey debris in front of her home on E. Water St.

She pauses for a moment to rest and catch her breath and stare at the murky river that ravaged her home.

Up and down the street she sees people working like ants throwing out stoves, chairs, rugs, a life's work that cannot be evaluated in terms of dol-



PICKING UP DEBRIS IN THE BUSINESS DISTRICT — The initial loads of debris moved from the East Main St. store to the curb sides were picked up Monday by loaders and graders employed by the city. The debris was being taken to

the city's landfill east of town. The photo gives some idea of the store wreckage and mud on the streets as the clean-up efforts got under way in Lock Haven and other communities hard hit by the "100-year flood." (Express Photo)

## Hurricane Agnes

- Summer 1972
- First Category 1 hurricane in Atlantic basin to have name retired
- Took more than 120 lives
- Worst urban flooding occurred in Elmira, NY, and Wilkes-Barre, PA
- Caused more than \$2 billion in damages



Lock Haven, Pa.  
Vol. 91, No. 101  
16 Pages

Tuesday, June 27, 1972

## THE EXPRESS

With The Jersey Shore Evening News

Since its completion in 1969 with a price tag of just over \$30 million, Sayers Dam has prevented  
**~ \$212.6 million in flood damages**