

Northwest mops up from mud, floods

by UPI

SEATTLE -- Officials in Washington state have blame at least five deaths on a monster storm that inundated the Pacific Northwest with water, mudslides and avalanches. Interstate 5, a major west coast highway resembling a muddy lake in some locations, is expected to be closed until at least Thursday, reopening only if it didn't sustain serious damage, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer reported Wednesday. "I've lived here 26 years, and I've never run a jet boat down I-5 before," said Adam Boehm, a volunteer helping get supplies to people who need them. Mudslides blocked Amtrak passenger train service between Seattle and Portland, and Portland and Vancouver, B.C. Gov. Chris Gregoire toured some of the areas by helicopter, saying she saw "huge areas of nothing but brown water ... (then) we'd see the tiny roof of a home." In Oregon, people took advantage of receding waters Tuesday to go to gas stations to fill vehicles and gas cans, The (Portland) Oregonian reported Wednesday. Others scoured stores for batteries, food and other equipment. Gov. Ted Kulongoski visited areas hard-hit in Oregon. "We will continue doing whatever it takes to help these communities recover and rebuild," Kulongoski said. "We're all in this together."

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Northwest mops up from mud, floods by UPI