

Red River flash floods hit S. Manitoba

by UPI

WINNIPEG, Manitoba -- At least 30 families were forced to flee their homes north of Winnipeg, Manitoba, as ice packs caused flash floods from the Red River.

States of emergency were declared in several communities Wednesday night as crews worked at breaking up the ice in streams and culverts to speed the water's northward flow, the Winnipeg Free Press reported Thursday.

Volunteers were filling and stacking sandbags, along with water-filled plastic tubes, throughout the region, the report said.

Wednesday in Winnipeg, the river was at 13.9 feet and was expected to reach 20 feet by Thursday evening, the Winnipeg Sun reported.

The seasonal thaw runoff has been enhanced by snow and rain storms and plummeting temperatures that create restrictive ice jams.

To the south, the U.S. National Weather Service forecast the Red River would crest Saturday at 41 feet in the Fargo, N.D., area. Wednesday night, U.S. President Barack Obama issued a federal disaster declaration for 34 North Dakota counties.

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