

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Ghost Ranch Education & Retreat Center suffers extensive damage from sudden, severe storm

All guests and staff are accounted for and safe

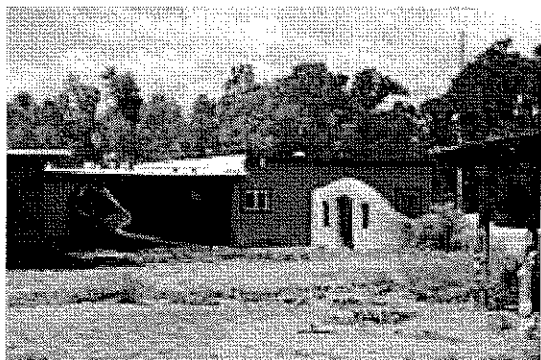
July 8, 2015

Abiquiui, N.M.

A sudden storm passing through Abiquiui, N.M., at approximately 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 7, produced raging and destructive waters that swept through the arroyos on Ghost Ranch's extensive property causing massive damage to the national education and retreat center of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Debra Hepler, executive director, says that all guests and staff are accounted for and safe.

"The staff worked as a tremendous team through the evening, moving people to higher ground, keeping the dining hall open to about 10:00 p.m., keeping the guests—especially the children—calm," says Hepler. "Our college staff worked all evening and afterwards taking sheets, towels, and supplies to all of our guests and checking every guest room. The contracted roofers and wranglers all pitched in with our staff to clear the roads; propane tanks were kept from exploding, and—thanks be to God—everyone is safe and sound."



Several buildings were damaged and destroyed.
—Ghost Ranch Staff



Flooding swept through the arroyos on Ghost Ranch's property causing massive damage. —
Ghost Ranch Staff

Presbyterian News Service

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Hepler reports that Ghost Ranch has lost the following areas and facilities: Pot Hollow, Short House, Pole Barn, the Low Ropes Course and equipment shed, and the brand new Fiber Arts Studio. "One of our volunteers, Maureen Fitzgibbon, literally alerted and evacuated everyone to safety from the Fiber Arts studio at the last minute, including a sight-impaired woman and her service dog," she adds.

As a result of the flood damage, all of the guests in Pottery, Art Welding, Stained Glass, and Fiber Arts have all been moved to other courses. Staff are working today to contact those who have enrolled in those classes in the coming months to alert them to the loss of those facilities and to make arrangements to transfer

them to other courses.

The Ranch's insurance adjustor is currently on the premises inspecting the extent of the damage. In the meantime, all of the affected areas have been taped off with staff in place to prevent people from entering those

areas.

“Although we have flood insurance, I’ve had so many people here offering money, help, and lots of encouragement, says Hepler.

“We held a special worship service this morning, and our chaplain is offering counseling to those who are affected by memories of other losses.”

Hepler reports that arroyos have been raging all through New Mexico, including at Philmont Boy Scout Camp, which lost a young boy several weeks ago. “Please keep all of those families in your prayers,” Hepler asks. “All is well here, praise be to God.”

Because Ghost Ranch has a \$100,000 deductible on its flood insurance policy, all gifts are welcome. Visit the Ghost Ranch website to make an online gift.



Arroyos have been raging all through New Mexico as a result of the severe storms. —*Ghost Ranch Staff*