

Two Drown in Wilson's Creek Deluge

Written by Steve Frank

Saturday storms led to the deaths of a 10-year old girl and a 48-year old man, both swept down Wilson's Creek in far western Caldwell County. The two were in a two-family group that came up from the Charlotte area to the Wilson's Creek gorge, settling in near the 'bathtub' formation on the swift water. And swift it was, the girl, Delilah Lovett, 10, of Charlotte and Juan Alberdi, 48, of Huntersville, were almost immediately swept downstream around 6:15 Saturday evening. With no cell service in the area, family members had to drive several miles to report the two as missing, and as rescuers gathered near Brown Mountain Beach, kayakers found the young girl, dead. The search for Alberdi went on into Saturday night, then crews from across the region—including the High Country—gathered at 8 Sunday morning to continue the search. It was around 2:30 that those crews found the body of Juan Alberdi some distance downstream. Meanwhile, the rains that hit hard early Saturday and through the day moved east into the foothills and western Piedmont, areas still dealing with the flooding, road wash-outs, and evacuations—Catawba and Lincoln Counties particularly hard hit. Water is still rising today, with flood stages exceeded on a number of streams and rivers, flooding even downtown Cramerton with water backing up from the South Fork River.

Photos: WSOC-TV