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### **1925 Storm Wreaks Havoc**

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The Corte Madera Creek has overflowed its banks 25 times in the last 100 years with the floods of 1925, 1955, 1982 and 2005 causing the most damage. In this 1925 photograph a vintage automobile navigates downtown Ross during the flooding when more than seven inches of rain fell in the Ross Valley between sunset of February 10<sup>th</sup> and sunrise of February 11<sup>th</sup>. Poplar Ave. is to the right of the vehicle and the Corte Madera Creek to the left of the buildings. The rainfall total combined with a high tide inundated the valley, and residents living near the creek were awoken in the middle of the night to flooded streets and homes. Ross Fire Chief E.C. Shumacher began rescue efforts at 4 a.m. that morning to carry stranded families to higher ground as the water level along Kent Avenue had crested at six feet. Boats were sent by mayor Bowman of San Rafael to help in the effort. Damage to Northwestern-Pacific Railroad's line between Sausalito and San Rafael to West Marin and Sonoma County included washed out bridges, flooded tracks, an overturned commuter train, and more than a mile of track washed away in nearby Kentfield.

At the time, newspapers called the flooding, "the worst in 50 years" and 1925 is still considered one of the worst flood years in Marin's history. The devastation was widespread as the counties of San Francisco, Alameda, Contra Costa, Sonoma and Sacramento all suffered terrible flooding and millions of dollars in damage to homes, businesses and roads. A 2017 study published in the scientific journal, *Climate Dynamics*, attributed the extreme flooding of 1925 around the Pacific Ocean to one of the

three most intense El Niño events of the twentieth century. As our rainy season begins to intensify this December, we can all breathe a sigh of relief for the much-needed precipitation with hopes that the severe conditions of 1925 will not be repeated.

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