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# Chevy Chase Canyon to Get Flood Channel

By AVERY KEENER  
News-Press Staff Writer

A flood control channel will be built in Chevy Chase Canyon in three years.

The proposed channel, presently in County Flood Control plans and budget, will be built beneath Chevy Chase Drive, and will handle runoff from numerous branches of Sycamore Canyon.

Until then all canyon runoff will continue to be dumped into Chevy Chase Drive, the river street of the rainy season.

"Chevy Chase Drive was originally built with county funds as a flood control channel," Public Works Director William Martini said today.

The county can't begin the underground construction until there are more access roads into the area, he says, because the physical site of the project would necessitate closing Chevy Chase Drive to traffic.

One new access is the proposed Ridge Road, which will tie into the future freeway and canyon subdivisions.

Land developers must show plans to connect to access roads before subdivision plans in the area are approved by the city.

"Construction of the new drain pipe is at least three years away," Martini said, "but we wouldn't want the county to start until we had the other roads. Even then some residents may not be able to reach their driveways for awhile during construction."

Chevy Chase Drive, which was originally built with high curbs to act as a storm drain for the branching canyons, is adequate to handle all water that comes its way, Martini says, but not with traffic.

And the traffic to and from canyon homes is increasing every year. Although average traffic flow decreases east of

Sinclair, nearly 5,000 cars pass through the Chevy Chase gates each day.

During storms, even with much less rainfall than the last two weeks, portions of this flood control channel and main access road are closed to traffic.

"A storm as bad as this last one comes once every 25 or 50 years," says Martini.

So he and other officials see no need to hurry the traffic-blocking underground construction before other access roads are available.

When asked about other possible water routes Martini explained why the storm drain must follow Chevy Chase Drive.

"Due to the terrain of the area there is no other natural way out for the mountain runoff," he said.

"Also state laws prohibit us from diverting water from its source and natural flow

course. We can't divert our problems to someone else."

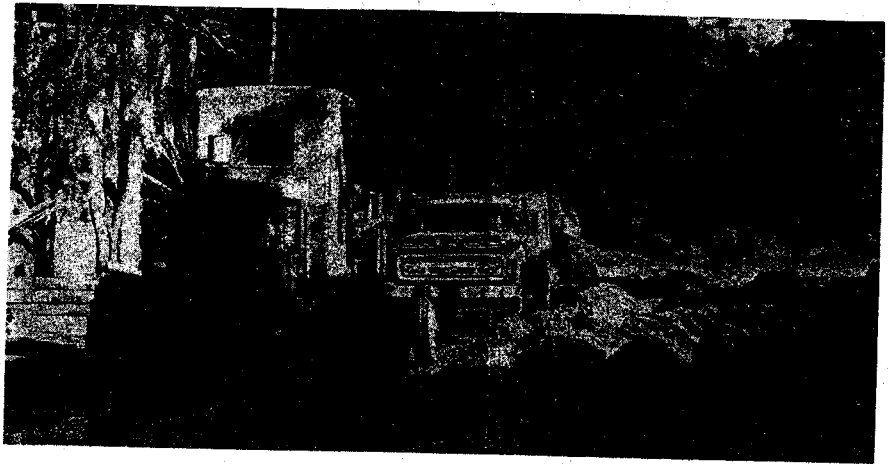
Meanwhile city crews continue to work in the canyon to "mop up" after the latest storm.

Crews worked all day Thanksgiving in the area and moved tons of silt and sand. The road was passable but motorists were forced to repeatedly ford the gentle stream which meandered down the street and around sandbars, piles of debris and rock.

At the top of the canyon, on Golf Club Drive and Sheridan, a large pile of dirt and a deep puddle of water remained in the intersection as a reminder of Wednesday's flash flood which roared down Sheridan for about a half hour.

One flood control project, however, will begin immediately. A drain pipe will be installed to replace one that

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CLEANUP—City crews with graders, trucks and loaders attack the piles of silt clogging Chevy Chase

after roaring floodwaters swept the roadway this week. Crews worked Thanksgiving in canyon. —News-Press Photo

## Flood Channel

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collapsed last week on Golf Club Drive. Force of the water gushing through the area undermined the hillside home of Richard Butler, 1616 Golf Club Drive. Butler's home, a neighbor's yard and a sizable section of the street collapsed into a ravine dug by the water flow.

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