



The Great Flood of 1889 (Johnston Flood)

Event Details

- **Date:** July 1889
- **Precipitation:** 19 inches in 2 hours and 10 minutes
- **Flood Type:** Summer Thunderstorm
- **Fatalities:** 19
- **Main Impacted Streams:** Tucker Creek, Right Fork Tucker Creek, Left Fork Sandy Creek, Nesselroad Run
- **Location:** Wirt, Jackson, and Wood counties (WV)

Mitigation Efforts

- **Stream Gauges Installed:** 2 (Ohio River and Little Tygart Creek)
- **No Mitigation for 89.47% of fatalities**

Risk and Impact Analysis

- **Flood Zone Classification:**
 - 57.9% Zone A
 - 26.3% Unmapped
- **Cause of Death:**
 - 100% by drowning
- **Fatality Locations:**
 - 15 in structures
 - 4 in water

Demographics of Victims

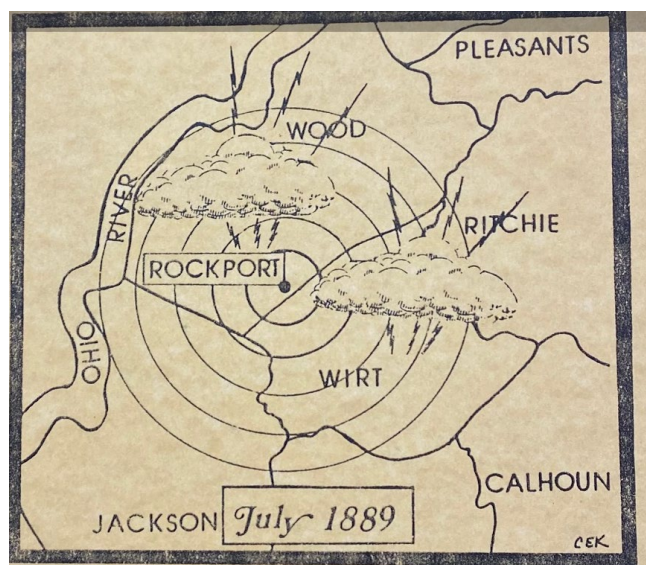
- **Age Groups:**
 - 7 fatalities (Ages 0–12, Children)
 - 4 fatalities (Ages 19–39, Young Adults)
 - 1 fatality (Ages 40–70, Middle-Aged Adult)
- **Gender Distribution:**
 - 10 female
 - 7 male

Mass Casualty Events:

- 73.7% of fatalities occurred in mass casualty events

Multimedia & Sources:

- [Disastrous Flood in Wood, Wirt, and Jackson Counties \(AbeBooks\)](#)
- [Clio Entry](#)
- [Wheeling Register, Jul 22, 1889](#)



The Tucker District is one of the seven magisterial districts that was formed in 1848, before West Virginia was a state. The area was named Tucker due to the creek named Tuckers Creek that ran through most of the district to the Little Kanawha River. The first land grants for this area of land were given in 1802 and continued for six years. After the Civil War, over fifty families moved into this area. Most people that lived here during the peak of the Tucker District lived in log cabins, but some lived in frame houses near the end of the century.

Morristown was the center of the Tucker District and was a thriving town after the Civil War. It began on a plot of land that had been sectioned off into smaller lots for houses and business. In this town, there were timber and flour mills, a Blacksmith shop, many merchandising stores, a post office, a packing house, a bonnet shop, a tobacco warehouse, churches, many schools, and many residences. Morristown was a self-sustaining, fully-functioning town before its demise.

On July 18, 1889, a great flood wiped away most of the town. Since the town was located right along the creek, it was always at great risk for floods. The flood was very sudden and ruined much of the community. Four houses were swept away in the water along with the bonnet shop, packing house, post office, and three merchandise stores. Many of the crop fields that sustained community members were ruined in this flood. Several people and families of the community were killed in the catastrophe.

After the flood, since many residences and businesses were washed away, the town began a drastic decline. Both the Bethel United Brethren Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church lasted into the 20th century. Four other smaller churches functioned in this area in the early 1900s. The last functioning school was Morristown School which closed in 1982.

Today, Morristown and the Tucker District are drastically different than they in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Morristown is unincorporated with the only non-residential structure remaining being a two-room community building that was previously the Morristown School. The community building is used for the Morristown Mountaineers 4-H and can be rented by members of the community for parties and events.