

Ohio County residents stranded on island of hope after bridge washes out

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Nearly two weeks after devastating flash floods swept through Ohio County, some residents remain stranded because of a collapsed bridge that once connected their neighborhood to the outside world.

OHIO COUNTY, W.Va. — Nearly two weeks after devastating flash floods swept through Ohio County, some residents remain stranded because of a collapsed bridge that once connected their neighborhood to the outside world.

The bridge's destruction has left at least five homes isolated, turning the area into an island.

"Our bridge, which is the only way to access that side of the creek, is right here and now it's completely demolished," said Josh Berka, who, along with his pregnant wife and two children, has been unable to return home since June 14.

<https://wtov9.com/news/local/ohio-county-residents-stranded-as-flood-damaged-bridge-remains-unrepaired-ohio-county-flood-damaged-bridge-residents-stranded-collapsed-bridge-repair-efforts-fema-assistance-community-coping-isolation>

The family initially stayed in a hotel for a week and is now residing with relatives as they await the bridge's repair.

"It's difficult, that's all I can say, it's been difficult," Berka said. "Our vehicles are still up there, so we've had to find some cars to borrow and get around as best we can."

Dave Patterson, Triadelphia's volunteer fire chief and a resident of the affected hillside, noted the community's efforts to cope with the situation.

"The neighbor, he's got a zipline set up to help send some supplies over, but other than that, that's all we got," Patterson said.

Patterson has been exploring ways to rebuild the bridge, but the estimated cost is over \$1.1 million. FEMA's assistance is projected to be around \$30,000 per household, which Patterson said is insufficient.

"That's only about \$200,000, if that. And labor's not cheap, so I don't know how we're going to cover it," he said.

Officials have yet to determine when the bridge will be repaired, leaving residents in limbo.