

Horses rescued after storm floods pasture

State workers go 'above and beyond' duties

By **KAREN GRIFFITHS**
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CLALLAM BAY — Tanya Hull's three horses are dry and well after being rescued from chest-deep floodwater with the help of a state Department of Transportation worker and a State Patrol trooper last week.

When Hull, 24, saw her pasture near Clallam Bay inundated with water from the Clallam River and no sign of her horses on Tuesday night, she called out their names — Pete, Raz and Sis — and heard what she thought was a muffled whinny.

She grabbed a flashlight, pulled on her father's oversized hip boots, and telephoned Brady Bradshaw, who recently joined the state DOT's local center.

Within minutes of Hull's phone call about 9:45 p.m.,

Bradshaw was sloshing through freezing cold pasture water with her.

The light from their flashlights picked out the horses huddled in the middle of the pasture, and too frightened to move.

Bradshaw and Hull plunged in for the rescue.

Cold and deep

"The water was over my belly button, and so cold it took my breath away," Hull said. "I was surprised at how deep it was — well over my hip boots."

Her boots grew heavy with water.

"As we walked, we were breaking through ice and snow floating on top of the water," she said.

"Underneath, the current was really strong. It was exhausting."

State Patrol Trooper Allen Nelson, who was cruising state Highway 112 to check for hazardous road conditions after the day's heavy rain, saw two small lights flickering in a pasture.



STATE PATROL TROOPER ALLEN NELSON

Three horses, Pete, Raz and Sis, stay warm in a garage with Department of Transportation worker Brady Bradshaw after being rescued from chest-deep water.

He stopped his car, shined his spotlight over the field, and saw two people struggling to move through waist-deep water and ice.

Beyond them, shivering, wild-eyed horses stood in water up to their chests.

Said Hull: "Pete is the leader of the three, so I knew if I could get him to follow me the others would follow him.

"I pulled his halter from side to side, just trying to get him to step in one direction, until finally he loosened up and started walking after me."

Bradshaw pulled a halter around Raz, who willingly followed Pete, while Sis walked behind, eager to stay close to her companions.

The pasture gate was deep under water. Nelson and

Tammy Hull, Tanya's mother, broke the fence boards at a place that offered the most direct line for the horses to walk out.

All the horses were shivering, and Nelson said that at least one, Sis, showed signs of hypothermia.

"I knew the DOT had one heated bay in its garage and was the closest facility," Nelson said.

"I told Tanya to get her horse trailer and made the decision to take her there."

Heated DOT garage

Once the horses, who'd also received minor cuts and bruises, were safe and eating hay inside the heated DOT garage, Nelson phoned Bill White, DOT supervisor.

"Allen called me and said, 'Hey, one of your guys just helped rescue some horses, so I had him put them in the shop for awhile until they could find another place to put them,'" said White, who, along with Bradshaw and other DOT workers had already put in a long day

clearing the highways of falling trees, debris and mud slides.

"It was 12:30 in the morning, but I told him to bring the horses to my house, and we'll put the horses in my barn."

With his patrol car lights flashing, Nelson escorted Hull and her horse trailer over Highway 112 to the Whites' barn on U.S. Highway 101.

They will remain there until the Hulls, whose barn full of hay was lost to the flood, have a safe place to keep the horses.

"My wife's been feeding the horse alfalfa and grain," White said. "Each is happy and doing well, and we were happy to help."

"I owe everybody big time, especially Brady," Hull said. "They've all gone above and beyond the call of duty."

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