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## Blue Ridge Live Steamers Slowed by Flood Damage

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Reporter: David Tate

Franklin Co., VA - Many people were affected by this week's flash flooding. And while a lot of folks have cleaned up and moved on, others need a little extra time to pick up the mess.

A group of train enthusiasts based in Franklin County lost more than half the track they use to run their large scale replicas.

The Blue Ridge Live Steamers have called Burnt Chimney home for 25 years now, which is where they relocated after a natural disaster ruined their first home.

Large model trains have been a part of much of Jim Humphrey's adult life. In fact, his company makes them for customers all over the world. He's even turned his rural Franklin County property into a large train set that is the backdrop for a club of train enthusiasts dubbed the Blue Ridge Live Steamers.

It's a passion that literally washed away before Humphrey knew what happened.

"Actually did not know it was happening until it was over and saw some activity outside late at night and realized we had a major flood. It was a flash flood so it came up quickly and

went down quickly. Very typical flash flood. And then I saw the damage late at night," said Humphrey.

Humphrey has been here before. The club used to be located at Wasena Park in Roanoke, and ironically the flood of '85 ended that chapter.

"The flood of '85 was completely devastating and completely wiped out the whole facility," said Humphrey.

So in 1987, the club moved to Franklin County where they have run ever since. Which is what made this week's 8-inch downpour most of it within two hours such a game changer.

"We have never had an incident like this so we were surprised that we had this type of damage," said Humphrey.

And like before, they plan on rebuilding. The inspiration is found in the silver lining.

"So we're looking at it positively in terms of we are now going to replace the track and it will be good for another 25 years instead of old track that needs maintenance," said Humphrey.

The club was not insured and estimated damages are between \$20,000 and \$40,000. They expect to be back in action no later than next year.

Get more information on the [club's website](#).



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