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Chelsea Meier navigated a drone from the back porch of her family’s home as floodwaters continued to rise and they waited for rescue on Sumas Prairie, November 16. They were eventually picked up by good Samaritans and ferried to the Whatcom Road overpass, and then again to higher ground on the other side of Marshall Creek. *CHELSEA MEIER*

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# Catastrophic flooding

KATE AYERS

ABBOTSFORD – Unexpected. Unprecedented. Catastrophic. These are a few of the words officials have used to describe the rains and flooding that hit southern BC in November. The intensity of the weather system that dumped more than 100 mm of rain on Abbotsford on November 14 set a new record, and saw the province rank the storm as the worst in a century.

But for brothers Karl and

Rudi Meier, who with their families run U&D Meier Dairy Ltd. just off Hwy1 on South Parallel Road, the dangers are well known.

Their properties sit on the bed of Sumas Lake, drained in the 1920s to provide additional farmland, and the Meiers know flooding is possible during periods of heavy rain. Just 12 years after their parents bought the property, the 1983 flood showed them what was possible. When meteorologists forecast a

powerful atmospheric river to hit November 13, they paid attention.

But nothing prepared them for what followed.

When water levels began rising November 15, Karl and his wife Chelsea along with Rudi and his wife Becky began making phone calls to move 38 calves from hutches to higher ground. They also took care of personal belongings, removing them from the basement to the

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