

Madison County Experiences Its Fifth Earthquake in Five Years

David T. Dockery III, RPG, and Paul Parrish, RPG

A Magnitude 2.8 earthquake was recently recorded in Madison County, Mississippi, at 2:33 a.m. on August 9, 2019. This is the fifth earthquake recorded in the county in the last five years:

- May 2, 2015, 7:39 p.m., Magnitude 3.2 (see article in *MDEQ Environmental News*, June 2015).
- May 2, 2015, aftershock, Magnitude 3.0.
- June 29, 2015, 8:23 a.m., Magnitude 3.2 (*MDEQ Environmental News*, July 2015).
- August 17, 2015, 1:00 p.m., Magnitude 2.6 (*MDEQ Environmental News*, September 2015).
- August 9, 2019, 2:33 a.m., Magnitude 2.8.

The earthquake epicenter was in a residential area off Yandell Road on the northwest side of the Ross Barnett Reservoir (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Location of August 9, 2019, earthquake epicenter on the northwest side of the Ross Barnett Reservoir (top) and in a community south of Yandel Road (bottom).

And, the ground shaking in the felt area (Figure 2) was a magnitude of II to III on the Mercalli Intensity Scale.

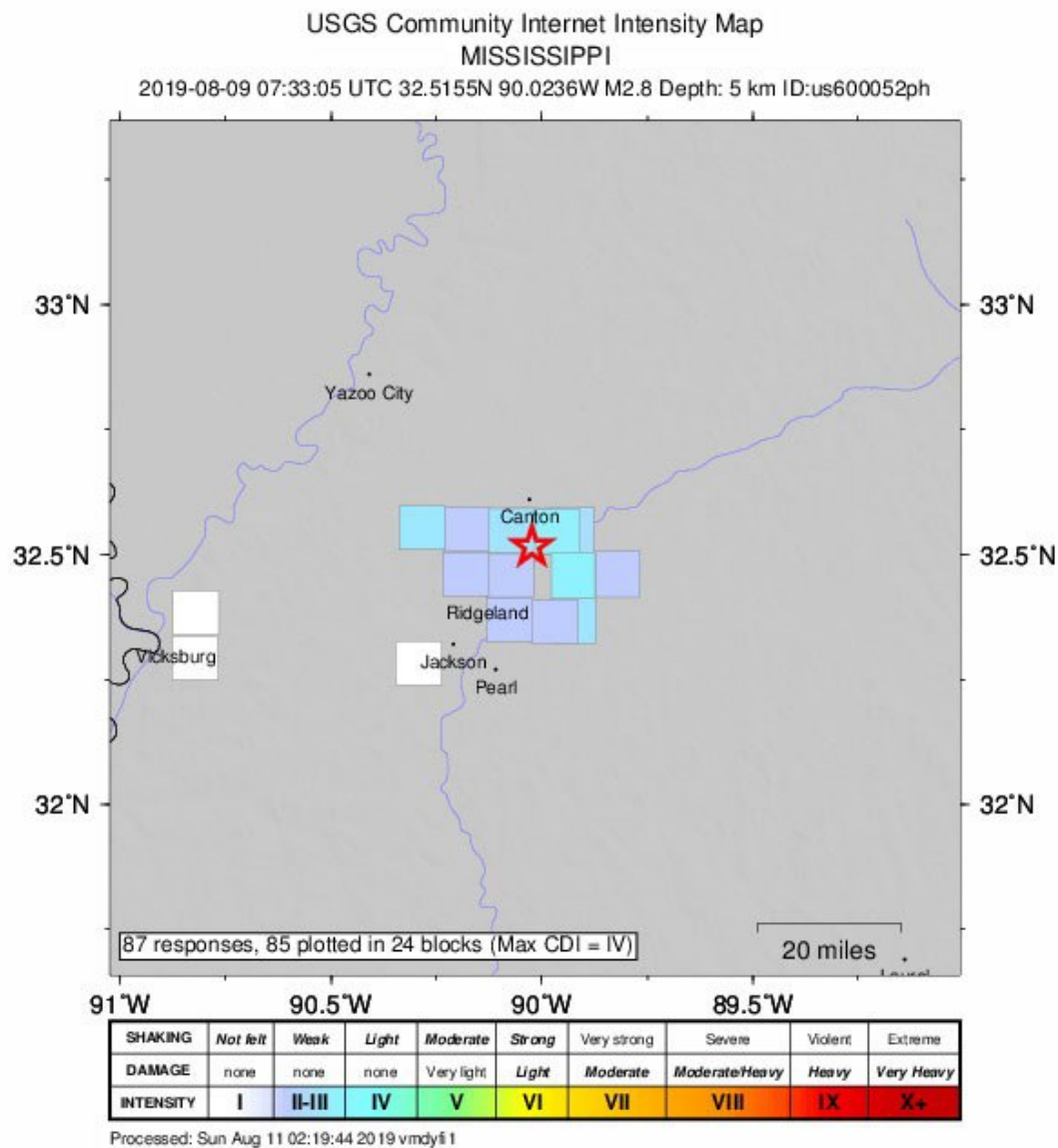


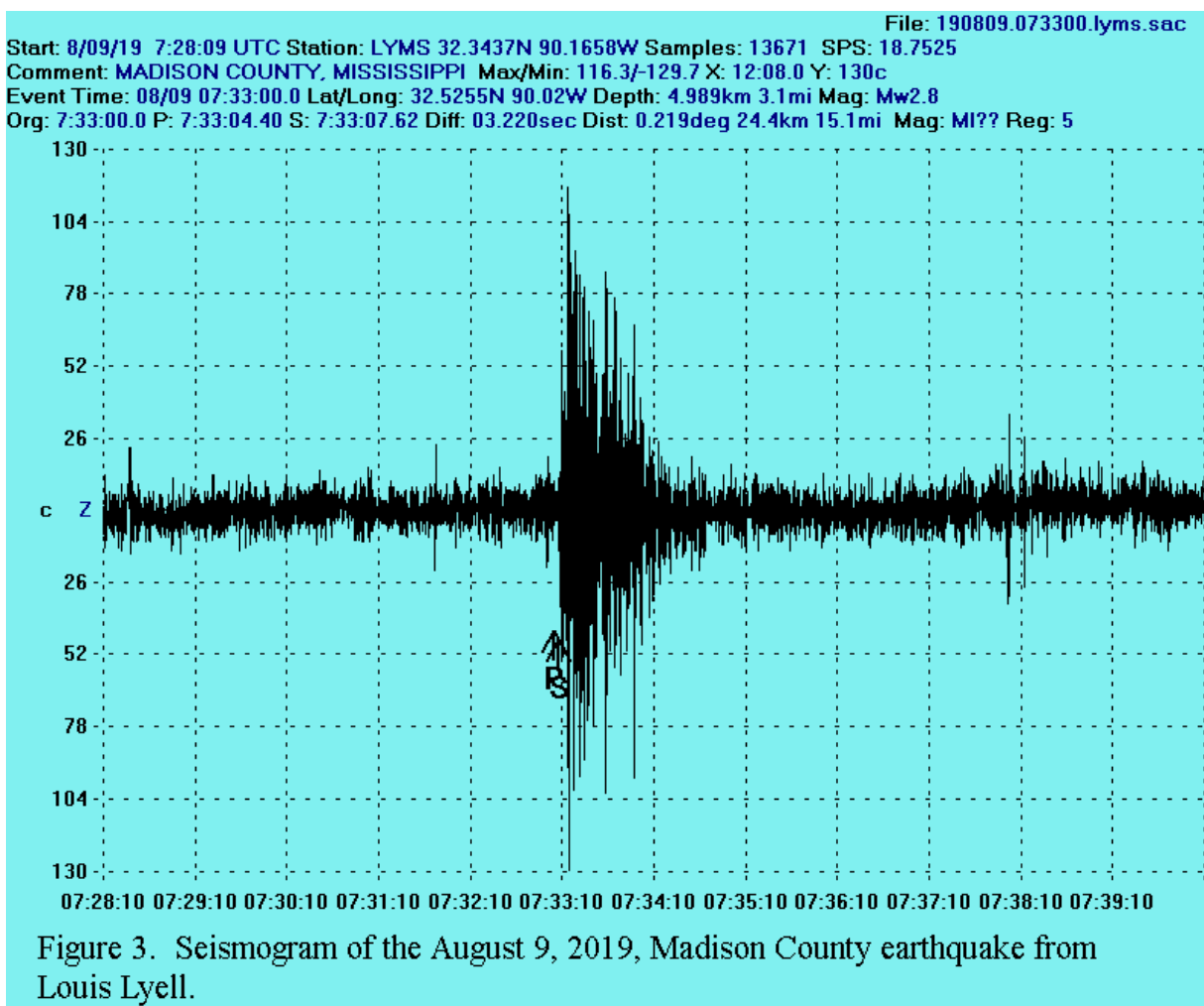
Figure 2. Felt area of the August 9, 2019, Madison County earthquake.

To get a more personal viewpoint, Paul Parrish and I interviewed several people in the area who felt the earthquake:

- Bettye Stewart (334 Hoy Road, Madison): “I was awake and heard a noise and then felt the foot of my bed move. I looked to see if anyone was there. Then, remembering my experience from the 2015 earthquakes, I looked at the time on my phone, which was 2:33 am.”
- Catie McCluskey (112 Cherry Rose Trail, Canton): “I felt something about 2:30 am. Felt the house shake. It woke me up. Dogs were barking.”

- Anonymous (214 Deerfield Club Drive, Canton): “The whole house shook... kind of like a soft rumble. It took my breath away.”
- Anonymous (NE side of the Reservoir): “Sounded like a large oak fell beside my house. Felt the house shift two to three times from side to side. Woke up the whole family and everyone I've spoken to in the neighborhood.”

We also secured a very informative seismogram from Louis Lyell who has a seismograph located on Old Canton Road in Jackson (Figure 3).



It is important to remember that although geologists cannot predict earthquakes, they do happen periodically in Mississippi. The Office of Geology has recorded all of the earthquakes that originated in or had an epicenter in Mississippi. That factsheet and map can be found [here](#). In addition, to be prepared for the next one, the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency has [information and tips](#) on what to do during an earthquake.