Messages of the Day
February 2012

Friday, February 3, 2012

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR)

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information directly from the nearest National Weather Service office. NWR broadcasts official Weather Service warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Working with the Federal Communication Commission's (FCC) Emergency Alert System , NWR is an "All Hazards" radio network, making it your single source for comprehensive weather and emergency information. In conjunction with Federal, State, and Local Emergency Managers and other public officials, NWR also broadcasts warning and post-event information for all types of hazards ñ including natural (such as earthquakes or avalanches), environmental (such as chemical releases or oil spills), and public safety (such as AMBER alerts or 911 Telephone outages).

Known as the "Voice of NOAA's National Weather Service," NWR is provided as a public service by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), part of the Department of Commerce. NWR includes more than 985 transmitters , covering all 50 states, adjacent coastal waters, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the U.S. Pacific Territories. NWR requires a special radio receiver or scanner capable of picking up the signal.

Click on the following link to find out more about where to listen to NOAA Weather Radio in your area:
NOAA RADIO

Monday, February 6, 2012

Upcoming "CoCoRaHS WeatherTalk Webinar Series" Presentations

CoCoRaHS recently kicked off a new and exciting monthly Webinar series called CoCoRaHS WxTalk (wx is shorthand for weather). CoCoRaHS WxTalk consists of a series of monthly one-hour interactive Webinars featuring engaging experts in the fields of atmospheric science, climatology and other pertinent disciplines. These easy to follow presentations are live and approximately sixty minutes long. The audience is given a chance to submit questions for our experts to answer.

Here's a link to our Webinar page: WxTalk Webinars

CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinars are free. February will feature two Webinars in our series: "*Remote Sensing: How Weather Satellites Sense the Earth*" on February 9th and "*Who Uses Weather and Climate Data and How Do They Do It?*" on February 16th. ***Space is limited to the first 100 registrants***, so register today! We will notify the first 100 who register of their acceptance to the Webinar. Those who aren't able to attend will be able to watch these episodes on line at a later date.

REGISTRATION INFO

Title: "Webinar #2 - CoCoRaHS WxTalk: Remote Sensing: How Weather Satellites Sense the Earth"
Date: Thursday, February 9, 2012
Time: 1:00 PM Eastern, 12:00 Noon Central, 11:00 AM Mountain, 10:00 AM Pacific

This Webinar will feature the Naval Research Laboratory's Research Meteorologist Arunas Kuciauskas.

"The US public is typically informed of daily weather from either TV newscasts or internet outlets, where glossy colored movie loops of clouds over land and water compliment the forecasters' analyses and predictions. But beyond that, there's so much more weather information that satellites provide – there are also plenty of different weather satellite sensors, and the technology in this field is accelerating. This presentation will introduce and hopefully entice folks with little or no science background to understand the exciting world of weather satellite sensing. Part of this talk will also address CoCoRaHS members - by relating the daily rainfall (and snowfall) reports to the atmosphere that sits above them."

Reserve your seat now for the February 9th Remote Sensing Webinar by registering here: **Remote Sensing Webinar Registration**

Title: Webinar #3 - CoCoRaHS WxTalk: Who Uses Weather and Climate Data and How Do They Do It?
Date: Thursday, February 16, 2012
Time: 1PM Eastern, 12PM Central, 11AM Mountain and 10AM Pacific Time

This Webinar will feature former Midwest Regional Climate Center director (retired) and CoCoRaHS Illinois state coordinator Steve Hilberg.

"The constant changes in the ocean of air we live in affect everyone. Weather and climate information is used for a decision as mundane as "What do I wear today?" to multi-million dollar business decisions. Data collected from a variety of networks, including CoCoRaHS, are important to a wide variety of users, including government agencies, businesses, and the general public. This Webinar will highlight some the typical and not so typical uses of weather and climate data and will demonstrate the contributions of CoCoRaHS observations."

Reserve your seat now for the February 16th Webinar by registering here: **Climate Data Webinar Registration**

Our next CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar "Understanding and Identifying Clouds" will take place on March 8th. Stay tuned for an upcoming announcement on how to register.

Monday, February 6, 2012

The "*Total SWE Monday*" Habit

The National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center (http://www.nohrsc.nws.gov/) utilizes CoCoRaHS reports of precipitation, snowfall, snow depth and the water equivalent of the snow on the ground every day. CoCoRaHS data provide critical "Ground Truth" information that can improve the skill

of their products and models. This will improve the accuracy of flood forecasts in the weeks and months ahead.

Their guidance to us has been:

"The analysts at NOHRSC prefer a Total Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) observation taken once a week on Monday. The simple reason is that digging cores every day ruins your sample snowfield area.

Taking once-a-week observations will help preserve the day-to-day consistency of the readings. A flood of Monday morning SWE reports gives us a better picture of the overall snowpack instead of a few scattered results trickling in throughout the week. Daily total SWE would be great, but let's make "Total SWE Monday" a habit."

Monday, February 13, 2012

Time of Observation

Your "Time of Observation" is the time that you check and empty your gauge each day. When you first signed up for CoCoRaHS, you entered your preference for when you would check your gauge each day. That time automatically appears on your data entry report each day.

If your "default" observation time is 7 AM but you actually checked your gauge at 7:50 AM, then type in the actual time.

If it is raining or snowing when you take your observation, it is especially important to note the time. Stations measuring later in the morning may report more than those who measured early. Only observations taken before 10 AM each day will appear on the CoCoRaHS maps. Any data report is valuable, and you may submit your report at any time, but if you want your data to appear on the CoCoRaHS maps, then please check your gauge before 10 AM.

Thursday, February 16, 2012

CoCoRaHS WeatherTalk Webinar for March 2012: "Understanding and Identifying Clouds"

CoCoRaHS offers a monthly one-hour Webinar series called CoCoRaHS WxTalk (wx is shorthand for weather). CoCoRaHS WxTalk interactive Webinar's feature engaging experts in the fields of atmospheric science, climatology and other pertinent disciplines. These easy to follow Webinars are presented live with an opportunity for the audience to submit questions for our experts to answer. CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinars are free.

Here's a link to our Webinar page: WxTalk Webinars

March features a very interesting Webinar on clouds: "***Understanding and Identifying Clouds***" given by Tom Schlatter of NOAA on March 8th (Tom has been writing the "*Weather Queries*" column in Weatherwise magazine for 31 years). ***Space is limited to the first 500 registrants***, so register today! We

will notify the first 500 who register of their acceptance to the Webinar. Those who aren't able to attend will be able to watch this episode on-line at a later date.

REGISTRATION INFO

Title: "Webinar #3 - CoCoRaHS WxTalk: Understanding and Identifying Clouds"
Date: Thursday, March 8, 2012
Time: 1:00 PM Eastern, 12:00 Noon Central, 11:00 AM Mountain, 10:00 AM Pacific
The Webinar will cover the following subtopics:

- 1) How clouds form and dissipate
- 2) How to identify the ten basic types of clouds (illustrated with numerous photos)
- 3) How thunderstorm clouds can grow so tall
- 4) Quick quiz on basic cloud types (self-graded; answers explained)
- 5) Question and answer session.

Reserve your seat now for the March 8th "Clouds" Webinar by registering here: **Clouds**

Our next CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar "Flash Floods" will take place on April 12th. Stay tuned for an upcoming announcement on how to register.

Saturday, February 18, 2012

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The National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center (http://www.nohrsc.nws.gov/) utilizes CoCoRaHS reports of precipitation, snowfall, snow depth and the water equivalent of the snow on the ground every day. CoCoRaHS data provide critical "Ground Truth" information that can improve the skill of their products and models. This will improve the accuracy of flood forecasts in the weeks and months ahead.

Their guidance to us has been:

"The analysts at NOHRSC prefer a Total Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) observation taken once a week on Monday. The simple reason is that digging cores every day ruins your sample snowfield area (unless you have a big yard or open fields nearby).

A flood of Monday morning SWE reports gives us a better picture of the overall snowpack instead of a few scattered results trickling in throughout the week. Daily total SWE would be great, but let's make "Total SWE Monday" a habit.

(Note: If you have the room, more frequent observations are appreciated, especially when conditions are changing. For areas that only infrequently get snow, there is no need to wait for Monday -- report SWE whenever you have the chance). For instructions on how to take core samples and report the snowpack SWE, please view our on-line training materials on snow: Training Slide Shows or watch the YouTube Webinar on Snow Measurements: Snow Measuring YouTube

Monday, February 20, 2012

The National Phenology Network

As you know, CoCoRaHS focuses on measuring precipitation and learning about rainfall patterns. Many CoCoRaHS volunteers are also farmers, gardeners, and naturalists who pay close attention to more than just rain and snow.

Here is a project that may interest some of us. Some of us may already be. Please read on.

What do a robin building a nest, a butterfly emerging from a cocoon, and a cherry tree in bloom all have in common? All are examples of phenology, or seasonal life cycle events in plants and animals. Throughout history, people have used phenology to make decisions about when to plant crops and when and where to hunt for particular animals. More recently, phenological observations such as the timing of bird migrations, insect molts, and flowering have proven to be very valuable in documenting species' and ecosystems' responses to changing climate conditions.

Using Nature's Notebook, a program of the USA National Phenology Network, you can track the phenology of plants and animals in your yard. By doing so, you will join thousands of other individuals who are providing valuable observations that scientists, educators, policy makers, and resource managers are using to understand how plants and animals are responding to climate change and other environmental changes. Your observations make a difference!

Want to help? Here's how it works:

Go to: www.usanpn.org

Learn about the plants and animals you can observe. Find out which species in your area are on the list - learn more about them and the phenophases to look for.

Learn how to observe. Learn how to select a site, select your plants and animals, and record your observations.

Sign up to be an observer. Become an official participant and set your username and password. All you need is an email address and Internet access.

Start reporting! Now you are ready to register your site and the plants and animals you will observe, and start reporting! As you collect data during the season, log in to your account at "Nature's Notebook" and enter your observations.

Saturday, February 25, 2012

The "*Total SWE Monday*" Habit

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Monday, February 27, 2012

Download a "CoCoRaHS Brochure"!

This week, download a CoCoRaHS brochure and give one to a friend or family member who might be interested in weather. Anyone can download it from his or her home as a pdf file (5.1 MB). The brochure is an easy and concise way to share CoCoRaHS with others.

To download the brochure click here: CoCoRaHS Brochure

Your help in recruiting new volunteers helps bolster our network while filling in the precipitation reporting gaps across the country. It's a fun way to get your friends involved in "citizen science" as well. Thanks for passing the word along!

Your friends at CoCoRaHS