

**Messages of the Day**  
**February 2015**

Tuesday, February 3, 2015

**CoCoRaHS WxTalk Webinar for February 2015:  
"Agricultural Meteorology: Layer Upon Layer"**

Agricultural Meteorology will be the focus of our next "[WxTalk Webinar](#)" on Thursday, February 26th "Agricultural Meteorology: Layer Upon Layer" will be presented by Brad Rippey and Mark Brusberg of the USDA's Office of the Chief Economist, Washington, DC

*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 the following day.

**REGISTRATION INFO**

**Title: Webinar #39 - CoCoRaHS WxTalk: Agricultural Meteorology: Layer Upon Layer**

Date: Thursday, February 26, 2015

Time: PLEASE NOTE THE TIME CHANGE FOR THIS WEBINAR — 2:00 PM Eastern, 1PM Central, 12Noon Mountain, 11:00 AM Pacific

*"The field of agricultural meteorology may be best described as what it is not. Practitioners of this narrow subset of the meteorology spectrum are not professional forecasters, nor are they restricted to computer modeling or programming. Indeed, some agricultural meteorologists are skilled forecasters and programmers, but those roles are secondary to their expert analysis of the impact of weather on U.S. and global crop yield and production.*

*Increasingly, however, agricultural meteorologists are adept at layering meteorological and agricultural information in a geographic information system (GIS), and providing up-to-the-minute analysis of agricultural weather impacts as they relate to world agricultural supply and demand. Analysis that was once done by hand, bent over a light table, in hours or days, is now produced in minutes, layer by layer, in a GIS.*

*At USDA, a small group of five agricultural meteorologists provides weather intelligence for an economic team, which produces the monthly World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates. In addition to a support role, the meteorology group releases its own set of products, including the Weekly Weather and Crop Bulletin. And, with its expertise in impact analysis and geographic information systems, the USDA agricultural meteorology group has been instrumental in other roles, such as the development and production of the U.S. Drought Monitor.."*

Reserve your seat now by registering here: [AGRICULTURE](#)

**COCORAHS WXTALK IS GOING ON VACATION!!**

Starting in March, after 39 continuous episodes, CoCoRaHS WxTalk will be taking a long overdue vacation. We will be back later on this summer with a line-up of exciting Webinars. Check back around June to see what we have in store for the rest of 2015.

Thursday, February 5, 2015

## **Have you visited the CoCoRaHS Blog? It's one of our coolest features with great graphics!**

The CoCoRaHS blog administered by Illinois state coordinator Steve Hilberg, covers a wide range of topics on weather and climate. Steve, the former director of the Midwest Regional Climate Center, brings his expertise and passion for the earth's atmosphere to the blog by highlighting interesting current events.

Some of the topics addressed this winter have been "*Winter's Resurgence and the Maine Event*", "*The Northeast Blizzard*", "*Try Your Hand at 'Forecasting' Winter Precipitation*", "*Sorting Out Winter Precipitation*", "*The Hawaiian Blizzard*", and "*Frost on the Roses*" just to name a few. These are well written pieces with fantastic graphics. If you haven't had a chance to view them, please take the time to. Steve usually posts a new topic mid-week

The blog is also interactive, meaning you can leave comments or messages for Steve and all our CoCoRaHS blog readers by clicking on comments below each post. This is located after the time stamp for each posting.

Please check out the blog and don't be shy if you want to talk weather and climate! To visit the blog please click here: ["CoCoRaHS Blog"](#).

We hope you'll visit the blog this week!

Tuesday, February 10, 2015

## **The PRISM-CoCoRaHS Climate Portal!**

The PRISM-CoCoRaHS Climate Portal. What is that you might ask? The PRISM portal is a CoCoRaHS data analysis tool developed in collaboration with the PRISM Climate Group at Oregon State University. This is an exclusive feature available only to CoCoRaHS participants. It helps connect our daily precipitation measurements (weather) to seasonal patterns, long term averages and year to year precipitation variations (climate). This portal provides access to estimates of "normal" precipitation for any location in the contiguous United States. PRISM also provides estimates of total precipitation for each month and year since 1895. View the ["PRISM Portal Reference page"](#)

You can access the portal by going to the CoCoRaHS home page and clicking on "My Account" at the top of the page. From there you have two choices. One is to select the PRISM Portal section and click on on the "blue" words PRISM PORTAL to get access to the Continental United States or under the My Station heading click on the "blue" words PRISM DATA to get access to your specific station's PRISM estimates.

Once there you'll be able to find the estimated precipitation for any location in the continental United States or create a historical time series for monthly and annual precipitation.

We recommend watching the PRISM Portal Guide YouTube instructional video on how to use the portal by clicking here: ["PRISM PORTAL VIDEO"](#)

Please enjoy and use this great feature to explore the climate of the U.S.

Friday, February 13, 2015

## **"Field Photo Weekend" February 14-16th . . . Celebrate President's Day Weekend by taking a photo or two!**

What does your landscape look like in mid-winter? Have you participated in the CoCoRaHS Field Photos Weekends before? If not, here's your chance to join hundreds of other CoCoRaHS users to see what our landscapes looks like. If you have participated before, this is a great chance to go back to your favorite spots and see what has changed. During February 14-16th, you can help by participating in our eighth "Field Photo Weekend".

All you have to do is take your camera or smartphone, find a landscape in your community (streams, lakes, rivers, reservoirs, a forest, a crop field, a pasture, etc.) and take a single photo or a panorama in four different directions (N, E, S, W) from where you are standing. After that you can either email your photos with your location to: [fieldphotos@southernclimate.org](mailto:fieldphotos@southernclimate.org), or upload them directly to the Earth Observation and Modeling Facility's photo archive website: "<http://www.eomf.ou.edu/photos>". For detailed instructions, click here: "[FIELD PHOTO WEEKENDS](#)"

If you have a smartphone, you can use the "Field Photo" app, which is now freely available in the "[Apple Store](#)" and "[Google Play Store](#)". You can use your smartphone to take a photo in the field, enter metadata to describe the landscape, and then upload the photo and metadata into the EOMF photo archive website directly from your iPhone when you have access to WI-FI. When you enter metadata, you may add "#CoCoRaHSFeb15" keyword.

If you want to see what others have submitted before, go to "<http://www.eomf.ou.edu/photos/cocorahssep14/>" and click on any of the dots (these photos were from Labor Day weekend last September). We are working on going back to the earlier events and tagging all those photos so you will be able to easily find all the ones from our past weekends. If you upload photos directly to the EOMF website, you can help us by adding a tag #CoCoRaHSAFeb15 in the Field Notes section.

Field Photo Weekend is a partnership between CoCoRaHS, the Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program (SCIPP) and the Earth Observation and Modeling Facility (EOMF) to help ground truth through photos, what is going on with our landscapes throughout the country. It's not just drought we are looking for either, it could be flooding, or whatever state the landscape is now in. There is the possibility that we may hold additional "Field Photo Weekends" during the year to show how conditions to your landscape may have changed over time. This should be fun!

In a few weeks this weekend's photos will be posted and you'll be able to see your photos and those taken by other volunteers. Reference the "[FIELD PHOTO WEEKENDS](#)" page to see how to view the photos.

Remember you don't have to email your photos this weekend, just take them, but we do encourage you to email them soon afterward. That address again is: [fieldphotos@southernclimate.org](mailto:fieldphotos@southernclimate.org). When uploading your photos please include the words #CoCoRaHSFeb15 in the notes field.

Just think if all 19,500+ CoCoRaHS volunteers take photos! Wow!

Thanks in advance for participating and have a great President's Day weekend!

Tuesday, February 17, 2015

**Our President's Day "Field Photo Weekend" has come and gone. Thanks for participating. Please remember to upload your photos or email your photos in!**

Thanks to all of you who took the time to take photos this past weekend. Your efforts helped our seventh collaborative "Field Photo Weekend" take a look how drought or lack of drought has affected the landscape of our local communities.

Field Photo Weekend is a partnership between CoCoRaHS, the Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program (SCIPP) and the Earth Observation and Modeling Facility (EOMF) to help ground truth through photos, what is going on with our landscapes throughout the country. It's not just drought we are looking for either, it could be flooding, or whatever state the landscape is now in. There is the possibility that we may hold additional "Field Photos Weekends" during the year to show how conditions to your landscape may have changed over time.

In a few weeks this weekend's photos will be posted and you'll be able to see your photos and those taken by other volunteers. Reference "Viewing Photos" on the ["FIELD PHOTO WEEKENDS"](#) page to see how to view the photos.

Please don't forget send us your photos of this past "Field Photo Weekend". You can either email your photos with your location and the words (#CoCoRaHSFeb15) to: [fieldphotos@southernclimate.org](mailto:fieldphotos@southernclimate.org), or upload them directly to the Earth Observation and Modeling Facility's photo archive website: ["http://www.eomf.ou.edu/photos"](http://www.eomf.ou.edu/photos). When uploading your photos please include the words #CoCoRaHSFeb15 in the notes field. For detailed instructions, click here: ["FIELD PHOTO WEEKENDS"](#)

Thursday, February 19, 2015

**Weather Preparedness 2015**

As part of [NOAA's Weather Ready Nation](#), NOAA encourages you to "Be a Force of Nature" when it comes to extreme weather by learning about potential hazards. Help advance the Weather-Ready Nation by being prepared for the worst. NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) and its partners encourage individuals, families, businesses and communities to know their risk, take action, and be an example when it comes to dangerous weather.

Look for seasonal campaigns for spring, summer and fall in your state — all designed to keep the public safe. Preparedness event topics include:

- Severe Weather Awareness Week
- Flood Safety Awareness Week

- Tsunami Preparedness Week
- Safe Boating Week
- Rip Current Awareness Week
- Lightning Safety Awareness Week
- Tornado Drill
- Monsoon Awareness Week
- Hurricane Preparedness Week
- Heat Awareness Day
- Avalanche Safety
- Winter Weather Awareness Week

To find out more visit: [Weather Preparedness Events Calendar](#).

Sunday, February 22, 2015

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### **The "*Total SWE Monday*" Habit**

The [National Operational Hydrologic Remote Sensing Center](#) 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 short animation on: [SWE](#).