



Nevada CoCoRaHS Newsletter

Because every drop counts even in the driest state!

Summer 2014

Welcome To Monsoon Season

Well summer is already here, which means the monsoon season for Nevada. Unlike other states in the Southwestern United States such as Arizona and New Mexico, the monsoon season in Nevada is more loosely defined. Since the Silver State is located further north and west, we are often removed from the main monsoon flow that prevails in the southwest United States between late June and September. Unlike Arizona and New Mexico, which often see a southeasterly flow aloft dominate for vast stretches of the summer, the flow aloft that controls the weather over Nevada varies through the summer in direction. Thus, sometimes this flow is southeasterly to southerly and pulls monsoon moisture in; however, systems passing by across the Pacific Northwest can easily turn the flow aloft to the southwest or west and push moisture associated with the monsoon just as quickly out as it arrives. As a result, the monsoon



Lightning near Moapa on August 30, 2013. Credit: Guy DeMeo.

season in Nevada tends to come in periods in which monsoon moisture comes and goes over several periods during the season. These periods tend to be more frequent or longer lasting in southern parts of the state compared to areas further north. Nevertheless, the North American Monsoon Season, as it is more formally called, accounts for roughly a quarter of the normal annual precipitation in southern Nevada. In northern Nevada, the monsoon season can be tougher to define as snow can easily fall in the higher elevations in early September and even in late September is not unheard of in the valleys. Thus, the monsoon may only last for one or two periods here during the summer and in extreme cases may never develop at all if the overall atmospheric flow keeps monsoon moisture away from this part of the state.

Small scale showers and thunderstorms are common during the monsoon season in Nevada. They can produce highly variable precipitation amounts in just a short distance. This is a great reason why CoCoRaHS observers are so valuable. Having five rain gauges in one town as opposed to one rain gauge can show just how much or how little rain a storm was able to produce. In addition, observers can provide us details on a storm such as when precipitation began and ended, when the heaviest precipitation took place, whether hail was observed and also even what impacts took place from any showers and thunderstorms.

Take Note!

* Denotes Required Field

6/29/2014 * **Observation Date** ?

11:59 PM * **Observation Time** ?

0.00 in. * **Rain and Melted Snow to the nearest hundredth inch that has fallen in the gauge during the past 24 hours, or T for trace, or NA for unknown.** ?

Observation Notes: (This will be available to the public) ?

One of the great features available in CoCoRaHS to observers is the “Observation Notes” section available each day when you input your observation. This provides an excellent opportunity to give details on what a storm did in your area. Besides giving details on the type of precipitation that fell, how frequent lightning was with a storm or if precipitation fell off and on during a several hour period, the remark section is also a great place to describe any damage from a thunderstorm or non-thunderstorm wind event, including estimates or measurements of how high the wind was. In addition, if you observe any flooding, you can also provide details on what flooded, how much water and debris there was and if there was any damage. This information can then be used by the National Weather Service offices in Reno, Elko and Las Vegas to use as verification for warnings as well as determining the impacts from any storms. Significant flooding and any property damages from thunderstorms gets archived by the National Weather Service in a product known as *Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena* which is published nationally by the National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, North Carolina.

Gauge Maintenance

After a prolonged dry period, one of the most important things to remember is to check your rain gauge! Bugs, dirt and other goodies can sometimes deposit themselves in the funnel of your gauge clogging it or inside the tube causing your readings to be off. In addition, the heat and dryness can easily cause older gauges to crack or discolor. Another maintenance issue can occur after water freezes and melts and then re-freezes inside a gauge. This can lead to a gauge cracking. If you live in a colder climate, check your gauge for leaks by placing the gauge on a surface and pouring water into it on a dry day.

As long as you poured your water carefully, any water should have made it into the gauge. If you did pour carefully and notice water you likely have a leak. While you can try to purchase a sealant to fix your gauge, in many cases it may need to be replaced with an entirely new part or gauge. Parts and new gauges are available for purchase on-line through websites linked in the CoCoRaHS store.



Keeping Your Account Up To Date

While we would love for all observers to stay with this program, we realize that things change. Many people move or have other changes in their lives that make commitment to being an observer difficult. If you find yourself in one of these positions, we ask that you update your account. If you move to a new address, you will have to obtain a new observer number. This is to keep all your records compatible with the location you took them at. If you no longer wish to observe, then please deactivate your account. Any accounts that do not take observations after a year will eventually be made inactive by the state or regional coordinators if you do not update them yourself. However, all of your information will always remain on file with us. This is to provide us with a record of observers. In addition, the CoCoRaHS database will always maintain all your records even if your station closes.

Weather Wonder: What Is Drizzle?



Drizzle on a window.

Drizzle is fairly uniform precipitation composed exclusively of fine drops very close together. Officially, drizzle consists of droplets of water less than 0.5 millimeters or 0.02 inch in diameter. Drizzle appears to float while following air currents, but falls to the ground unlike mist. Drizzle is most common in Nevada during the cold season months and almost exclusive to the period between November and April in far southern Nevada.

CoCoRaHS Nevada Resources

<http://www.cocorahs.org/state.aspx?state=nv>

State Coordinators and Southern Nevada Regional Coordinators

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