

The Catch

IT'S SNOWING, WE'RE GROWING, AND OUR WEBSITE IS GROANING

FORT COLLINS, CO — Wednesday, April 27, 2005

First, let me apologize for all the time wasted the past few days as many of us have struggled with error messages trying to enter data on the new website. We've had some sort of problem during peak data-entry times (8–9 AM) 3 out of the past 4 mornings. Julian, our web developer, is feverishly trying to identify and correct the problem. It appears to be in the process of map generation, but we're not totally sure. Please know we are trying to correct this problem as soon as possible, and we are very sorry for the inconvenience.

Weather update—Snow in Fort Collins and Wyoming

It has been snowing giant wet flakes here in western Fort Collins for the past 2 hours, and I see many places in Wyoming are also getting snow. Too bad that tomorrow is our family's day to drive across Wyoming on our way north to retrieve our daughter from college. I love watching and measuring snow, but I don't like driving in it.

The good news is we continue in a cool and frequently stormy weather pattern—ideal conditions at this time of year for slowing mountain snowmelt, adding moisture at lower elevations that can soak into the still -dry (in many areas) soil, and generally improving water supply, forest and range conditions. I'll take a cool, wet spring anytime—just as our ancestors told us via old weather folklore adages.

USA Today tracks CoCoRaHS

Some of you have been interviewed recently by a local correspondent for USA Today. As best we can tell, they will be publishing a fairly extensive story about our project within the next week or so—they must be short on news :-)

Hail Detectors Installed

The NASA Engineer from the Kennedy Space Center was here in Colorado yesterday and we deployed two of his recently designed and soon to be tested hail detectors. One went in east of Parker and the other near Bennett. Thanks to so many of you for offering your locations to be a part of this special study. The hail detectors, which I saw for the first time yesterday, are the same size as our hail pads but are built sturdily to handle most any size of hail. The device ends up working a lot like a large microphone picking up sound waves from the impact of stones on the metal surface and then processing the frequencies of the sound waves to interpret the number and size of each impact. Two sensors are currently in place near the launch pad at the Kennedy Space Center. Colorado was chosen for testing since we have a much larger risk of hail here than there.

Supplies and training

We've added many new volunteers in the past few weeks. Our student assistant processing new applications has not been able to keep up. But we will soon. Remember, if you have not yet obtained supplies, please contact your local coordinator (see menu on left side of our homepage for list of local contacts). Also, there has already been a lot of hail and more will be on the way. Keep at least two hail new hail pads ready.

I will be gone until Wednesday, and then very busy for several days after that. If you have questions that cannot be answered by your local coordinator, then please contact

info@cocorahs.org

Thanks again. We, the National Weather Service, and many, many others greatly appreciate your help with CoCoRaHS. Even if you are not currently actively measuring and reporting precipitation, we hope you are benefiting from this activity.

If you are sick of getting these e-mails, just let us know and we will quickly remove you from our e-mail correspondence list.

Nolan Doesken