

## **WATER YEAR ENDS FRIDAY—CHECK YOUR DATA**

FORT COLLINS, CO — Wednesday, September 28, 2005

Wow, widespread storms last night and some really heavy rains out over western Colorado (at least in a relative sense—any rain in Eagle County approaching 2" is a big deal for that country).

### **2005 Water Year Wraps Up**

For those of you who have been involved in CoCoRaHS for more than a year know, this is a special time of year. In this part of the country (western states and Rocky Mountain region) we track the climate, the rainfall and the streamflow on a "Water Year" basis. The water year is the same as the federal fiscal year and runs from October 1 through Sept 30. It is not an arbitrary definition. Rather, it relates directly to our water storage - water usage patterns here where winter is the time of year for gathering and accumulating moisture while summer is the season where the water is put to use -- both in managed and natural systems. Sep 30 marks the approximate end of the growing season and the summer irrigation season.

### **Time to Check Data**

So, this is a very practical time of year to check over your data and make sure all of your entries for the past year are accurate and complete. We will be doing many data analyses in the next few weeks compiling water year totals and comparing to long-term averages and fluctuations and hope to begin sharing results with you in mid October.

The quickest way to check your data is to go and click on "View Data" at the top of your CoCoRaHS screen and then select "Station Precipitation Summary Report" from the menu and click on that.

Then type in your complete station number and select 10/1/2004 as your start date and today's date as the end date (or 9/30/2005 after the end of Sept). Click "Get Summary" and it will quickly compute and list out all of your daily reports for the past water year and compile a total at the bottom. Go through the data and see if everything matches up. If not, or if you find you accidentally missed some days, then this would be a good time to go fill those in.

For editing daily reports, the easiest thing to do is go to "My Date" and then click "Daily Precipitation" from the "List/Edit My Reports" menu on the left hand side. It will bring up all the reports you've entered and then you can click the "eyeglass" to view or the "pencil" to edit each report -- those symbols are on the far right end of each line of data in your report table. To add in data, you will need to do normal daily data entry making sure you get each date correct, or you can use the "Monthly Zeroes" data entry form to quickly fill in days where no precip fell.

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One thing to be aware of. Remember we launched the new web site and new data entry forms this past winter. During the process of moving data from the old data base to the new, quite a few data points did not transfer due to various data inconsistencies like mistyped station names or numbers, invalid date or time formats, and data that were not in the right format for the new database. The result is that you may find that some data that you know you entered may not be in the new report tables. We have had several thousand inconsistent data points to deal with and hoped to have either corrected or deleted them by now. Unfortunately it was a bit overwhelming and we are not done yet.

If you find data for your station that does appear in the data reports form the old site (which is still accessible at)

<http://ccc.atmos.colostate.edu/~hail>

but which do not appear in the new data reports, then you can assume there was an inconsistency in format or content that resulted in the data being set aside. You can re-enter those data in the new system, if you have the time and inclination, or you can wait for us to continue to slowly plow through thousands of values.

For those of you with complete data for WY2005 it would really help us if you could provide a quick report containing

Station name  
Station number

Total precip. for each month, Oct - Sept  
Number of days with measurable (0.01" or greater) precip each month  
Total water year precip (Sum of all 12 months)  
Total number of days with measurable precip for the year

A format like this would be best.

month	total precip (in.)	# of days
Oct	1.45	7
Nov	2.11	8
Dec		
Jan		
.		
Total		

Snow totals can also be added if you wish but are optional—likewise number of days with hail would be very interesting.

We know that many of you had complete data for a portion of the year, or only a few gaps in your data. You can compile partial totals if you wish, but let us know which months are complete and which are not.

**-- -- -- NOTICE -- -- --**

We will eventually have a "Water Year Report" option that will do these computations for you using the data base. We hoped to have it done this week, but we were thinking wishfully. Either way, the report is only as good as the data behind it, so please take this opportunity to make sure your data for the past year are entered and archived correctly.

Thanks so much!! We truly have a great team of weather and water watchers assembled here in CoCoRaHS and it is a great pleasure for me to work with you on this project.

**Encouragement for Marty**

Just wanted you to know that Marty, the CoCoRaHS webmaster and active volunteer since the project began in 1998 in Fort Collins has been diagnosed with cancer and is going in for surgery on Monday. Your thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated. I do not know all the details but she is in good spirits and will get back to CoCoRaHS as soon as she can. So if you don't get your questions answered or your e-mail address changed right away, that may be the reason.

**GO MD, VA, and DC**

Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia will be joining the CoCoRaHS network next week. They already have more than 100 volunteers signed up and

ready to go as soon as we get all their information processed. Maybe hold back for now, but as soon as you can see things are set up and working properly on the website, you can begin letting your eastern friends and family know about CoCoRaHS.

That's all for now. Best wishes!!

*Nolan*

P.S.: Last call for recruiting contest. Applications must be received from new candidate observers by midnight Friday to qualify for the contest. Also, new volunteers must then be signed up and collecting data by the end of October.