

# The Catch

## **COCORAHS—BEWARE, MUCH COLDER!**

FORT COLLINS, CO — Thursday, January 11, 2007

Howdy,

It is mid January now—time flies. And as we write this, cold, Arctic air is streaming southward out of Canada and in 24 hours we may be seeing temperatures here and in many other parts of the western Great Plains down around or below zero. Doesn't that sound like fun. For you folks to the east where winter has forgotten about, don't give up hope yet. This Arctic attack will likely trigger some interesting storms—and SNOW. So please polish up on winter precipitation measurement techniques!!

Our observers from SE Colorado, northeast New Mexico and western Kansas are STILL DIGGING OUT from the huge blizzard from late December. And some of our western Kansas volunteers are still without electricity after one of their worst ice storms in ages. Thanks for the photos some of you sent. Awesome! If you want some interesting leisure reading, click on "View Data" and then select "Comments" and go back and see what some of our volunteers have written during the past 2 weeks. It is quite amazing what some of you have been going through. A few of our observers in SE Colorado have waded through the snow to take core measurements to get the total "Snow Water Equivalent (SWE)" of the snow remaining on the ground. It's still over 3-4" in several areas—and that's in an area that averages less than 1.5" of moisture for the entire Dec–Feb midwinter period.

I saw that you folks down in southern New Mexico (Las Cruces, etc.) finally got your chance to measure some snow this week. Congratulations!! It disappeared quickly, and was gone before some of you could even measure it, but thanks much for getting out there with your rulers.

## **CoCoRaHS and FEMA Disaster Declarations**

I just wanted you to know that while CoCoRaHS data are technically not "Official NOAA data" our reputation and availability is such that your reports may be used to supplement the official National Weather Service observations and may be

used in assessing extreme conditions. In the last three weeks, emergency management officials have been scrutinizing data reports to see what counties qualify for disaster declarations. You never know when your data reports may be the most important ones in the land.

I know that many of you in SE Colorado and W. Kansas and parts of New Mexico and Nebraska have been without power for long periods. Others have not been able to report due to the difficulty of finding your gauges, and melting the ice and snow. We even got a few messages saying, "Sorry, I can't open the door to get out of the house." But when you accomplish your "best effort" readings, please know they are greatly appreciated. And if there is uncertainty how to report under extreme and uncertain conditions, you are always welcome to discuss this with us or your local coordinator before reporting.

### **Still White in Albuquerque**

Well, you sun hounds in New Mexico have gotten a taste of winter. Albuquerque is a colder place in winter than many folks realize, but still snow does not usually hang around for long. The city has been nicely covered in deep snow (over 12" for a few days) for over two weeks now. Meanwhile, you folks in the Midwest and East are wondering what snow looks like. At least a few of our PA observers reported a little bit yesterday.

### **Help Wanted in San Antonio!!**

CoCoRaHS will be on display at the San Antonio, TX at their Convention Center this week. Henry is flying down to attend the American Meteorological Society Annual Meeting and will be giving several presentations on our network. This Sunday, there is a large public event called "WEATHERFEST" where thousands of local Texans will have a chance to learn what Atmospheric Scientists all over the country are doing. We will have a CoCoRaHS display there and will be recruiting new volunteers from Texas.

If by any chance you will be attending this convention and will be in or near San Antonio on Sunday, Henry could use some help getting the display hauled over to the convention center from his hotel and getting everything set up. Also, if you love talking with the public, we could use help from noon to 4 pm because we might be swarmed (Henry plans to drop pretend hail stones on real hail pads to draw attention to the CoCoRaHS effort)—and then there is the issue of removing the display afterwards. :-)

If you can help Henry, please let him know: [hreges@atmos.colostate.edu](mailto:hreges@atmos.colostate.edu)  
He'll be flying on Sat, so contact him today or tomorrow. 970 491-1196

## **Come to the Colorado Farm Show**

CoCoRaHS is not having a booth at the Farm Show in Greeley, CO as we have in the past, but I will be speaking at the Exhibit Hall on Wednesday afternoon, Jan 24th from 2–4 PM. We would love to see some of our CoCoRaHS friends, and I hope we can recruit more good folks to join our team. If you are in the vicinity or if you have friends who are interested in weather and climate, please encourage them to attend. Last year, we were shocked when one of our CoCoRaHS volunteers from Virginia showed up and introduced himself. I love it!!

## **Watch Illinois grow**

The CoCoRaHS effort in Illinois seems to be taking root. Every day more data points are showing up on the maps. We understand that 36 people showed up at a training session in Springfield this week. Great job! Welcome to all of you fellow Illini. Since that's my home state, I will be watching very closely.

Gotta go! Keep up the great work!

*Nolan*