

# The Catch

## **DUSTY SNOW AGAIN— COCORAHS ALERT—FOR ROCKY MOUNTAIN AREA VOLUNTEERS**

FORT COLLINS, CO — Friday, March 2, 2007

### **Snow watchers—special bulletin!!**

A major storm has been swirling across the country and has brought widespread wild weather to many parts of the country this week. Thanks to all of you who have tested out our new "Intense Precipitation" report to send updates on both heavy rain and snow. Also, thanks to all of you who sent in hail reports yesterday. A lot of you folks in Indiana were up mighty early in the AM March 1 to measure hail and send in reports.

THANKS!

Dr. Thomas Painter with the National Snow and Ice Data Center in Boulder, CO contacted me today and asked if I could notify all CoCoRaHS volunteers in the Rocky Mountains—particularly SW and central Colorado—regarding a recent dust storm affecting snow here in the Rockies. As we mentioned earlier, the presence of dust can significantly alter melting patterns, and this can be significant for water supplies and other purposes. If you live in or near the affected areas, please read the following message and see if you might be able to gather some snow samples to help study this event.

Tom also mentions (see his letter below) that he now has some results from the big mountain dust storm last year and we will be sharing that soon.

I don't normally send attachments with my messages, but for those of you who can help gather samples, Tom has sent specific instructions in the attached Word document. If you have questions, please contact him directly.

Also, if you are interested in the annual cycles of plants, animals, etc, please go to the end where this message continues.

Here is the letter to CoCoRaHS volunteers received this AM.

Hi all -

*We've had another major dust deposition event in the Colorado Mountains on 27 February in the late afternoon into the evening - not quite as big as last year's Valentine's Day event but more concentrated in the San Juan Mountains and the Elk Range. As per last year, we're hoping to quantify the amount of dust that was deposited in snow across the state and you all are the key to doing so!*

*Attached is the protocol for sampling the dust - please let me know if you have any questions. I will be circulating an email soon with the figure that shows last year's distribution of dust deposition that came from your measurements of last year.*

*Thank you in advance for this year's effort!*

Tom

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## **Phenology!! CoCoRaHS is helping**

I spoke this AM to Dr. Mark Schwartz from the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. So far, 100 CoCoRaHS participants have signed up to help in the new nationwide study of seasonal cycles of selected plants (and later, perhaps, animals, etc.) This is WONDERFUL!! He did mention, however, that no one from Kansas, and not many from Maryland, Oklahoma or Illinois have expressed interest, so please spread the word there. Plant watching is not for everyone, and maybe it's not as exciting as watching a big squall line roll in, but it is important. This is yet another great opportunity for "Citizen Scientists" to make a big difference.

I was not clear with my last message, but individuals do NOT need to belong to CoCoRaHS to help with the new USA National Phenology Network. Anyone in all 50 states who really loves watching plants through their annual cycles could qualify to help with this study. So if you know individuals or organizations that might be interested, please direct them to:

1) \*If you have access to the Internet,\* use the web page <http://www.npn.uwm.edu> to register. Be sure to include your name, full email address, mailing address, and CoCoRaHS station number (not required). Put your station number in the “comments” box. Your phone number, other information, or questions can also be listed in the “comments” box.

2) \*If you do NOT have access to the Internet\*, call (414) 229-2436 and provide the same information listed in “1” above.

Thanks again. The power and impact of volunteers is indeed amazing.

Nolan