

# The Catch



NOLAN DOESKEN'S BI-MONTHLY COCORAHHS E-MAIL MESSAGE

## CoCoRaHS -- Happy New Water-Year!

**Fort Collins, Colorado -- September 30, 2014**

Wishing everyone a happy "Water Year"!

In the tradition of CoCoRaHS, today is the last day of 2014 and tomorrow (Oct 1) marks the beginning of the new 2015 water year. For much of the country, the growing season has now ended or will end soon, evapotranspiration has slowed, and fall and winter precipitation can now recharge soil, rivers and lakes in preparation for the 2015 growing season. It's a more logical time to start the climate clock ticking instead of dividing winter in half. So "Happy New Year", one and all. Surprise a friend or neighbor and see what they think.

As the year ends, this is also a great time to go back and check your data entries for the past 12 months. Fill in any days that you might have accidentally missed. If you are one of the many volunteers who report when it rains but not when it doesn't, this is also a chance to use the ["Monthly Zeroes" report](#) to check over your reports and fill in your zeroes.

In about 3 weeks, we will then run our "Water Year Summary report" to calculate all the monthly totals for every station and a variety of other graphs and reports. If you're not familiar with our "Water Year Summary Reports" [check them out here](#).

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### Western Rains

Since I last wrote, many of us in the Western States have enjoyed (for the most part) some rains. For most of the West, the wildfire season is winding down. Northern California got it's first major rain event of the fall (Sept. 24-26) with as much 3.75" of rain falling in a few spots as far inland as Shasta and Red Bluff. Phoenix experienced some traffic-disrupting flooding downpours. Even Pinedale, WY got soaked the last 3 days with as much as 3" of rain. Today, it's the Blackhills of South Dakota taking a hit with many CoCoRaHS volunteers reporting more than 3" in their gauges this morning. And then there's west Texas and southern New Mexico who were drenched from the remnants of Pacific Hurricane Odile. From Sept 18-24, areas around Carlsbad, NM picked up anywhere from 6 - 8" of rain helping to wipe out some of the long-term drought deficits there. How about Florida? 560 CoCoRaHS volunteers have sent in reports from FL this month with 10-18" totals commonplace this year, despite the quiet hurricane season. There are exceptions, of course. The western panhandle, for example, has missed most of the storm. How did your part of the country fare in Sept?

### Rain Gauge Calendar



The long awaited 2015 CoCoRaHS Rain Gauge calendars are now on sale! I wish I could send all of you a beautiful CoCoRaHS calendar as a gesture of our appreciation for helping CoCoRaHS. We have so many super volunteers in so many places that just

shipping and postage alone would cost over \$100,000 (yikes). Maybe someday we'll have a budget like that, but for now please consider purchasing one or more calendars. Maybe even give them out as gifts! Our artistic, bookstore quality calendar features over fifty photos by fellow precipitation observers displaying their gauges in a variety of settings. It truly is a work of art that you won't find anywhere else. [Click here to view the calendar for a closer look.](#)

The last time we offered our calendar in 2011 an observer wrote: "Thank you so much for the CoCoRaHS calendar. It arrived well packed. It is superb! Better than I expected. The company you all chose to print this up did a fabulous job. I know that once my family sees it, they will all want a copy!" Believe it or not, the 2015 version is our best yet!

The calendars sell at a reasonable price with a portion of each purchase going toward the CoCoRaHS Network. Just click on the banner at the top of the CoCoRaHS Home Page or [click here to place your order](#) today. We hope you'll enjoy the calendar throughout the year ahead.

### Have you Moved?

Each month, dozens of us in various parts of the country find ourselves relocating --

sometimes to totally different parts of the country. If you move 2 blocks or 2000 miles, either way, drop us a line and let us know. We'll be happy to assign you a new station name and number. If you keep reporting, but don't let us know you moved, our computer isn't very smart and will continue to plot your data reports where you used to live. That can really cause some data confusion.

Also, if you've changed e-mail, let us know. Even if you changed it in your user profile, that doesn't link to our general CoCoRaHS mailing list that I use to contact everyone.

To report any changes or to ask any questions, just contact [info@cocorahs.org](mailto:info@cocorahs.org)  
Thanks!!

### Webinar - Atmospheric Rivers



Our next CoCoRaHS webinar will explore the amazing phenomenon known as Atmospheric Rivers. These have always existed but only recent advances in observation, modelling and satellite imagery has made these easy to spot. Join us on Thursday, October 23rd at 1:00 PM Eastern, 12:00 Central, 11:00 AM Mountain, 10:00 AM Pacific to hear from one of the

foremost Atmospheric River experts, Dr. Marty Ralph. [Click here to register.](#)

### CoCoRaHS Fall Picnics

This year, two sponsors in Colorado who appreciate the work (and the data) from CoCoRaHS volunteers, sponsored community picnics to thank and recognize the volunteer efforts. We had absolutely gorgeous weather and had a total of close to 60 participants. Wouldn't it be great if we could do this in other parts of the country too? Whenever I have business travel from now on, I'm going to try to see what we can organize. We might be coming to Texas in November, and for sure we'll be in Phoenix in early January for the Annual Meeting of the American Meteorological Society. On Sunday, January 4th, there will be a large public meteorological open house called "[WeatherFest](#)". We plan to be there and hopefully we can get together afterwards with our great AZ CoCoRaHS team!

### New Message of the Day Series - Who Uses CoCoRaHS Observations?



We've had many, many requests to find out if and how our CoCoRaHS rainfall reports are used. The fact is that many major professional organizations - and

some private companies - routinely access and use our rainfall data. Snow and hail data are also very important and popular.

We've assembled a series of "Messages of the Day" that we will post throughout the fall ([and will be archived here](#)) to highlight the many and varied ways that CoCoRaHS data are used.

**Learn More about the Weather!**



No matter what level you're starting at, [here is a source for online learning that is just amazing](#) -- compliments of the University Corporation for Atmospheric Research. Furthermore, several of the educators in this team are CoCoRaHS volunteers. Hurray!

### **On the Farm - From 3 to 1**

So much for the tomatoes. We got a wonderfully warm, sunny September, just as we hoped for -- but only after a very hard early freeze brought the growing season to an abrupt halt for all the frost-sensitive plants. With our Mothers' Day snow and our early freeze we only had a 4-month growing season -- one of our shortest in decades.

And then there are the racoons. They've been few and far between the last few years so I forgot what a problem they can be. They've had a population boom this year and sure enough -- just as our grapes were becoming deliciously ripe, they went on a nocturnal rampage (while our dogs were quietly sleeping inside -- bummer). In one night they harvested a bushel or two of the yummiest grapes we've ever grown. The politely left one bunch -- a sour one at that.

Racoons also found a way between two loose boards that we hadn't noticed, and got into the chicken coop two weeks ago. We had the younger chickens in a separate area -- away from older hens. Somehow the raccoons managed to remove three bricks, lift off the fenced lid and then took care of two of the three youngsters. Had we still had our wretched geese, they would never have tolerated such behavior, but that's the price we're paying for calm silence and sleepy dogs.

I patched the siding of the chicken coup so we're OK again -- for awhile. Oh yes, and then there's the bear. We often hear stories of bears coming down from the mountains and following the river and irrigation ditches (like the one that flows behind our barn) into town. I've never seen one, but our neighbor reported a bear crossing our pasture back in early Sept when the weather first turned cold. If I see him, I'll let you know. But I will say that our favorite fall apple tree that was hanging full of apples before we left for Michigan is now totally bare. I only got a couple dozen apples before they all disappeared. Suspicious . . . .

Thanks, everyone, for being a part of our rain gauge endeavor as we all work together to measure and map our always-interesting precipitation. Have a very "Happy New Water-Year".

Sincerely,

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