

WESTERN KANSAS WEATHER MODIFICATION PROGRAM

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WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

No. 2014-13

For the period July 5 – July 11, 2014

General Interest: Widespread significant rainfall has put an appreciable dent in the drought situation as of late according to the Drought Monitor Map. Going back to the June 3rd map, it looked as if the area was destined to slip into the strongest possible level of drought classification if another two weeks of dry weather continued. Instead, that trend was reversed and an easing of drought occurred across nearly the entire area. The strongest level of drought, exceptional drought, no longer exists within the southwestern Kansas counties bordering Oklahoma. Also, extreme drought, one level below exceptional drought, has been cleared out of Meade, Clark, Gray, Haskell, Finney and most of Greeley counties. Severe drought still exists over Hamilton, Kearny, Wichita, Wallace and Logan even though heavy rainfall accumulation occurred there during June. Across Kansas, all counties are still indicating some level of dryness but there may be a few counties across northeast Kansas that may fall into the normal category within the next two weeks. It was nearly this time last year when cooler temperatures and widespread rains came and decreased the drought strength significantly. Drought easing throughout almost all of western Kansas except Morton County is still forecast for the remainder of the month with the possibility of drought removal within the eastern portion of west-central Kansas by July 31st. Further, the prospects of long-term drought easing is still forecast out through the end of September. The really long-term precipitation forecasts indicated western Kansas stands a 40% chance of above normal precipitation during the August through October timeframe. Hopefully, reality will follow these predictions to some degree and we can finally dig out of this drought this year.

Source: United States Drought Monitor

Weather: The week started out with mostly sunny skies and warm temperatures across the region. By Monday, severe storms broke out across west-central and southwest Kansas during the late afternoon/early evening hours. Hot and mostly sunny conditions prevailed Monday and Tuesday. By Wednesday, a mass of showers and some thunderstorms pushed through western Kansas. The remainder of the week was hot with mostly sunny to sunny skies.

Operations: There was one operational day this week. Seeding for hail suppression and rain optimization occurred that day.

July 7th. Program Operations Day #12

Two aircraft were launched at 5:40 p.m. to investigate small storms over Scott and eastern Wichita counties. Rain optimization seeding began at 6:04 on a few small storms over Scott County and continued until seeding transitioned to hail suppression over Scott at 6:48. Meanwhile, hail suppression seeding began over northern Kearny at 6:39. By 6:50, radar indicated a nearly solid line of strong to severe storms stretching from northern Kearny northeast into Scott while less intense storms were located over Lane and Hamilton. Hail suppression seeding continued over Scott through 7:00 as the line advanced east and southeast. By 7:11, the storms over Scott had pushed into northern Finney prompting the termination of seeding. Seeding over northern and central Kearny continued until the storms fell below the hail threshold at 7:38. Both planes then patrolled the Kearny storms, should a further hail threat occur. With no further threat of hail predicted, both planes turned for base at 9:15.

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Western Kansas Weather Modification Program