

WESTERN KANSAS WEATHER MODIFICATION PROGRAM

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WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

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For the period August 9 – August 15, 2014

General Interest: As of August 16th, we have had only 15 seeding days which is extremely low as compared to historical values since program inception in 1975. The two primary reasons for this are target area size and a low frequency of severe weather. The average number of seeding days since 1975 is 54 days. However, the target area size has fluctuated throughout the years with the average target area size being thirteen counties. The maximum number of participating counties was twenty-five in 1998, while this year holds the record for least number of counties at three. Obviously, more seeding days would occur during years when the target area was larger than today due to a greater chance of storms impacting a larger target area. Indeed, had the target area been two or three counties larger this year, we would have had another five or six seeding days. Secondly, the drought was still in full force up until the beginning of June this year which significantly reduced the number of seeding days in April and May. Storm episodes were rather plentiful in June and July, but were still lacking in the number of severe weather events which reduced the number of flight days down further. At least in June and July, many areas received an optimum outcome with very little hail in a time otherwise noted for being the most hail-prone of any annual period, while significant rains fell along with somewhat cooler than normal temperatures. As it stands for August, storm episodes and severe weather events have been much less frequent than July, as expected historically, which has suppressed flight days further.

Weather: Hot and mostly sunny conditions occurred Saturday through the afternoon hours. However, by Saturday evening storms crossed into Kansas from Colorado as well as new storm development occurring over western Kansas. Several of the Saturday storms were severe with high wind being the widespread threat while scattered small to moderate hail was the secondary threat. Tranquil but very warm and mostly sunny conditions prevailed through Thursday afternoon. A complex of showers and weak thunderstorms pushed through mainly northwestern Kansas Thursday evening and overnight. Warm and partly sunny conditions prevailed Friday across western Kansas while a few storms were noted over eastern Colorado and central Kansas.

Operations: There was one operational day this week.

August 9th, Program Operations Day #15

Two aircraft were launched at 6:06 p.m. to investigate a developing line of storms stretching from Wichita County southwest into Stanton moving east. Seeding for hail suppression began at 6:33 near Leoti. By 7:05, storms ran from Logan County southwest through Wichita, Hamilton and Stanton. Seeding was ongoing over southwestern Wichita and southeastern Logan through 7:20. Seeding was terminated at 7:30 over southeastern Logan County. The plane working Logan headed southwest to aid in seeding efforts over northwestern Kearny. Seeding continued over central Kearny County through 8:20. Seeding was terminated at 8:43 over central Kearny County as the storm fell below the hail threshold. Planes turned for base at 8:53.

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