

WESTERN KANSAS WEATHER MODIFICATION PROGRAM

P.O. BOX 254 Lakin, KS 67860

Lakin Office: 620-355-6913

waltergeiger@yahoo.com

Internet: www.gmd1.org/index-3.html

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

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For the period September 6 – September 15, 2014

Note: The end of the season has arrived and unless the program seeds any storms on the 14th or 15th of this month, this will be the last newsletter of the year.

General Interest: Summertime, June-August, precipitation across the three target area counties varied considerably. Information provided by the NWS Dodge City show the county with the most rainfall during the period was Lane County. Although the highest totals for Lane favored the northern half of the county, the maximum was located over and near Dighton at roughly 20.00 inches. The Lane average was roughly 16.00 inches. The minimum for Lane was found about 13-miles southeast of Dighton were only around 7.00 inches had fallen. In Scott, the best rains favored the eastern half of the county where the 16.00 to as high as 16.50 inches occurred. A significantly less amount was recorded over most of the western half of Scott with the least amount located near Modoc at only 12.00 to 12.50 inches were reported. A huge disparity was found of Kearny County. Summertime rainfall clearly favored the northern half of Kearny where the average was around 16.00 to 17.00 inches while the southern portion of the county averaged only 8.00 to 9.00 inches. The driest area within all target area counties was found along Highway 50 about midway between Kendall and Lakin where the summertime precipitation total equated to an abysmal 6.50 inches.

Precipitation prognostications look fairly good for a period of above average moisture between now and early spring of 2015. West-central and southwest Kansas stands a 33% to 40% chance of above average precipitation through March while northwestern Kansas stands an equal chance of being below, near normal, or above normal for precipitation according the Climate Prediction Center. Should these predictions hold true, western Kansas will be well on the way to breaking drought by winter. Lane County is the closest to breaking the drought now and may transition back to normal as early as October while the rest of the area west of Lane may have to wait till mid winter. Either way, the predictions for moisture going into the fall and winter are some of the most optimistic I've seen in many years! However, a good deal of this optimism may hinge on the prospects of an El Nino developing this year. The past June, there was talk about El Nino development by as early as August/September but conditions waned enough that it hasn't developed yet. As it stands now, the chance of developing an El Nino by fall and winter is still 60% to 65%.

Weather: Cooler and pleasant conditions prevailed during the weekend under mostly sunny skies. By Monday, a surface trough lay across extreme western Kansas. A few short-lived showers and storms were found primarily over northwest and west-central Kansas by late afternoon/evening. A significant cold front passed through Kansas Tuesday evening. Storms broke out along and slightly ahead of the front during the evening hours across portions of western Kansas while widespread storms were found along the front over central and eastern Kansas. Unseasonably cool temperatures along with rainy, misty and foggy conditions occurred Wednesday, Thursday and Friday under mostly cloudy skies.

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

September 9th, Program Operations Day #22

Two aircraft were launched at 7:07 p.m. to investigate a stable to perhaps slightly intensifying storm traveling east through southern Wichita County. Seeding for hail suppression began over south-central Wichita at 7:29. Seeding crossed into southwestern Scott at 7:40. Seeding was terminated at 7:45 over southwestern Scott as the storm fell below small hail potential. Seeding resumed again from 8:19 to 8:22 over southwestern Lane. The storm was ready to exit the target area at 8:42 at which time the planes turned for base. Aside from the isolated threat these storms posed through the evening, the biggest threat was from strong winds with the example being a 92 mph gust reported 10-miles southeast of Scott City at 8:07.

Walter Geiger, Meteorologist
Western Kansas Weather Modification Program