

SPECIAL NOTICE

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waltergeiger@yahoo.com

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Western KS Groundwater Management District Office: 620-872-5563.

WESTERN KANSAS WEATHER MODIFICATION PROGRAM

P.O. BOX 254 Lakin, KS 67860

Lakin Office: 620-355-6913

waltergeiger@yahoo.com

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WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

No. 2014-2

For the period April 19 – April 25, 2013

General Interest: The multi-year drought continues to strangle the region stretching from portions of western Nebraska on south through western Kansas and into Texas. Significant rains during late July into early August of last year had lessened the intensity substantially with the bulk of western Kansas experiencing only severe drought by early October according to the Drought Monitor. Although severe drought is still very strong, the area had climbed out of exceptional drought which is the strongest category of drought on the drought map. However, lengthy periods of dry weather resumed and by the start of 2014, the drought began to further intensify with areas of extreme drought, one category stronger than severe, showing up over northwest Kansas while the rest of the western Kansas remained in severe drought. Fast forward to today and we find the drought not only intensifying further but has now expanded again to cover all but a tiny sliver of extreme northeast Kansas. Currently, the entire western half of western Kansas resides in extreme drought and gets stronger by the week. This pattern has been fairly consistent over the last three years as most locations fall short of the monthly precipitation averages for March, April, May and June. This year looks to be a repeat of the pattern thus far.

Source: Drought Monitor

Weather: Warm temperatures along with a few thunderstorms began the week on Saturday as a cool front lay across extreme western Kansas northeast into Nebraska. Scattered showers and a few weak thunderstorms broke out again Sunday across western Kansas due to daytime heating and the cool front lingering around. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms formed on Tuesday across portions of western Kansas. While most storms remained very weak, a few over Wichita and Scott Counties attained moderate intensity with a brief period of small hail. Precipitation then faded around sunset. A dryline followed by a cold front moved into the area Wednesday. Scattered strong to severe storms broke by late afternoon primarily over portions of west-central and northwest Kansas. A few isolated severe storms also occurred over deep southwest Kansas in the evening. Additional showers with a few rumbles of thunder occurred overnight as the cold front swept through the remainder of the area. Warm and tranquil conditions rounded out the remainder of the week.

Operations: There were two operation days this week. Seeding for rain optimization occurred one day while hail suppression occurred the other day. Also, one observation flight occurred on April 20th.

April 19th, Program Operational Day #1

Two aircraft were launched at 5:20 p.m. to investigate an area of weak to moderate storm growth over eastern Hamilton. Radar indicated most of this cluster was popcorn type storms traveling northeast. Seeding for rain optimization began at 6:16 over eastern Wichita County on the eastern side of the storm mass which would soon impact northwestern Scott County. Seeding continued over northern Scott County through 6:45 on the eastern flank of the storm mass before the line exited the target area at 7:14. Seeding was terminated there with the planes then moving to check a separate area of clustered small storms over southeastern Wichita County. Seeding resumed at 7:35 over extreme western Scott County with this storm moving slowly east-northeast. Updrafts associated with a gust front had pulled well out ahead of the storm cluster by 7:48. Seeding stopped at 7:48 over western Scott. Planes patrolled the area before returning to base at 8:09.

April 22nd, Program Operations Day #2

One plane was launched at 7:01 p.m. to investigate a thunderstorm tracking east-northeast through northern Wichita County. Radar indicated there was a possibility for the eastern portion of the storm to track over northwestern Scott County. Seeding for hail suppression began over northeastern Wichita County at 7:01 and continued over northwestern Scott County by 7:25. Seeding stopped at 7:30 over northwestern Scott as radar indicated this storm was no longer hail-bearing. The plane patrolled the remaining storm mass for brief time before turning for base at 8:03.

Walter Geiger, Meteorologist
Western Kansas Weather Modification Program