



Rio Rains



The CoCoRaHS Newsletter of the Rio Grande Valley

Issue 2

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NWS Brownsville

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January brought brief relief from drought

By Juan Alanis

The first half January brought temporary relief to the drought across the Rio Grande Valley in the form of rain and cooler temperatures.

A southwesterly flow well above the earth's surface across Texas combined with colder air diving southward closer to the surface. This combination produced prolonged cloud cover and a few rain events. An upper level disturbance passed from Coahuila, Mexico, into south central Texas on January 8th and 9th, and dropped welcome rain across the parts of the Valley. Two pronounced rain bands, one across Starr, Jim Hogg, and Brooks County and another across Cameron and Willacy County produced upwards of 2 to 3 inches of rain, including 2.91" at Los Fresnos and 2.46 at Rancho Viejo.

For some of these locations, this was the average monthly rainfall – in just a couple days. The clouds and rain also kept temperatures down. Average temperatures for the first half

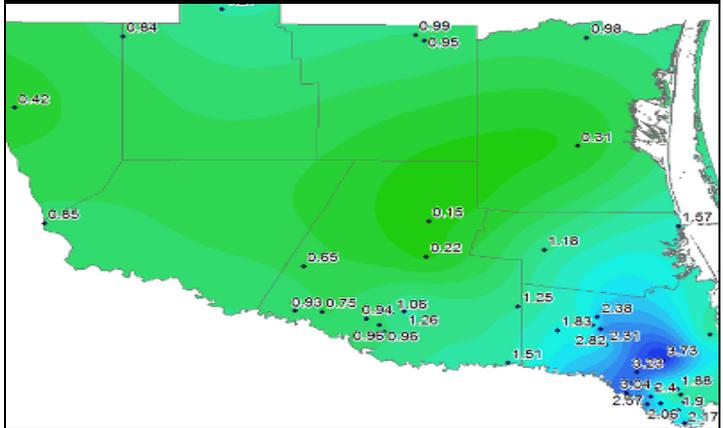
of January were about 3 to 4 degrees F below average across the Rio Grande Valley. The rainfall and cool temperatures also kept evaporation rates low.

Unfortunately, all good things come to an end. The weather pattern shifted from subtropical and tropical moisture overriding cooler surface air to a west-to-east pattern of drier air

from the southern Rockies and Mexican mountain ranges for most of the last two weeks of January shutting off the rain machine completely.

Monthly rainfall was more than an inch above average across the Lower Valley, a tad above average in the upper valley and below average across the mid-valley and western Zapata County.

Observed precipitation from January 1-10, 2013. While rainfall was very generous in Cameron and parts of Willacy Counties, northern Hidalgo County missed the action

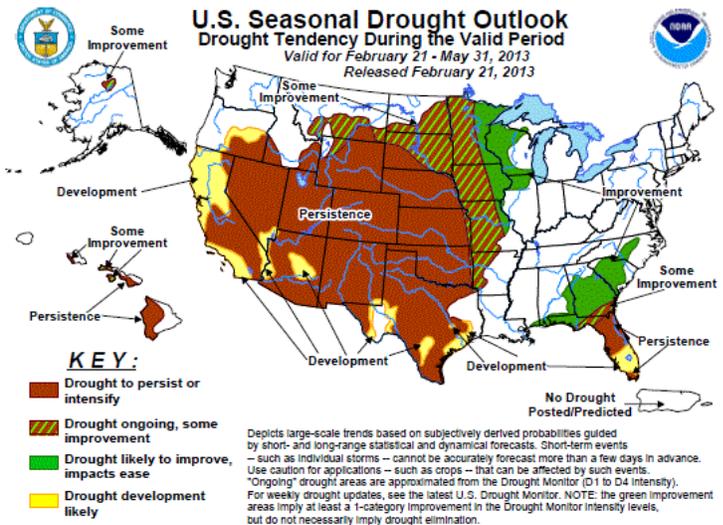


Drought expected into spring and summer

By Juan Alanis

Despite some welcome rains the first half of January, the outlook for rainfall is looking bleak.

The Climate Prediction Center is predicting precipitation across the Rio Grande Valley for the spring (March-April-May) will be below normal, with temperatures for the same time frame above normal. Although waters in the equatorial eastern Pacific Ocean have been running below average during the winter, forecasters at the



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Drought expected to continue

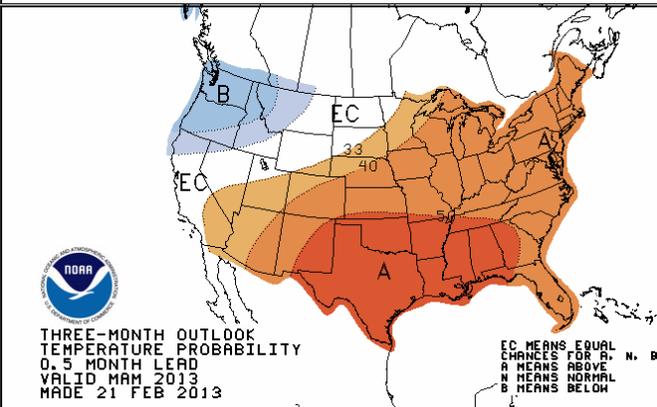
(from page 1)CPC are still leaning toward ENSO neutral conditions in the Pacific for the springtime. What rainfall does affect the area will provide only brief and spotty relief from the drought conditions.

This dry outlook of course does not bode well for reservoirs along the Rio Grande. Levels at both Falcon and Amistad currently sit at just above 30% of capacity. With a dry spring expected here and over all of the Rio Grande basin and watershed in New Mexico and southern Colorado, combined with increased evaporation as temperatures heat up, water levels will likely drop further, potentially leading to water shortages.

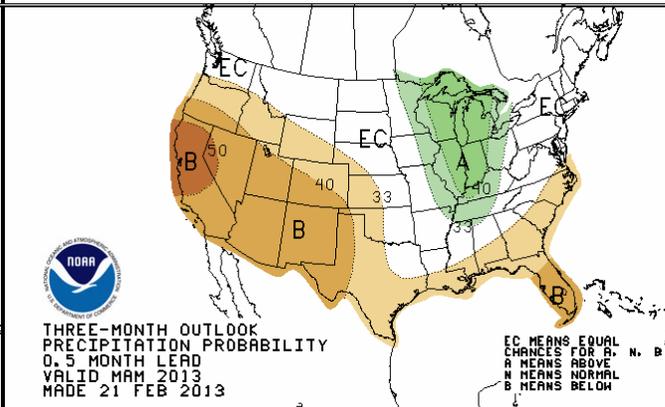
The summer is looking bleak as well. The latest outlooks from the CPC show temperatures very likely above normal and precipitation likely well below normal.

Beyond that point, the latest six month ENSO outlook shows a negative lean in the neutral phase, which would favor continued warm and dry conditions into August. Signs also point to a lean into a negative Arctic Oscillation/North Atlantic Oscillation (AO/NAO), which favor very dry conditions as well. The worst thing that could happen would be a negative AO/NAO and a lean toward El Niño during the height of the Atlantic hurricane season. This would suppress tropical development in the region. This happened in the summer of 2009, which was dominated by heat and drought. One can hope however that despite the bleak outlook, mother nature will deliver needed rain at end of summer. In 2009, after record heat and dryness, record rains came at end of August and into September. Current CPC outlook show rain returning to normal in August and September. Lets cross our fingers.

Temperature outlook from Climate Prediction Center for March-April-May 2013



Precipitation outlook for March-April-May showing below normal rainfall across much of Texas.



Observer Profile: Gene Novogrodsky

By: Geoffrey Bogorad

Eugene, aka Gene, Co-CoRaHS volunteer since 2007, is a professor of English at the University of Texas of Brownville, a local Farmer's Market vendor and a Rio Grande Valley amateur poet. Gene and his wife, Ruth, became aware of the CoCoRaHS volunteer rainfall network during a casual lunch with mutual friends. Since that infamous day Gene has never missed a daily rainfall observation including his "traces" and "zeros". "He is one of my most enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers", says Geoff Bogorad South Texas CoCoRaHS Coordinator.

Gene was recently presented with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Brownsville/Rio Grande Valley National Weather Service office. The following is an interview between Geoff and Gene.

CoCoRaHS: Have you ever done anything like CoCoRaHS?

Gene: No, but I love it. Everyone should do this to appreciate the weather.

CoCoRaHS: What have you learned?

Gene: The importance of the data and details of the data and how it relates to local, national and global climate trends.

CoCoRaHS: What do you like best about being a CoCoRaHS

volunteer observer?

Gene: The excitement of reporting rain and comparing "my" rainfall with other volunteers across the Valley. Also, reading the rainfall maps across the U.S. The weather has always fascinated me and now that I observe rainfall in my backyard I love it even more.

Thanks Gene for your dedication and many years of service to this



Lead Forecaster Geoffrey Bogorad presenting Gene Novogrodsky with a CoCoRaHS certificate of appreciation for his 6 years of service to the CoCoRaHS program.

great program. We look forward to working with you for many more years to come. Thanks once again!

CoCoRaHS Rio Grande Valley Observer Honor Roll

Although the CCoRaHS rainfall observer network started in 1999, the program did not expand into the Rio Grande Valley until late 2006. Since that time, the CoCoRaHS observer network has continued to expand throughout the valley. At this time, we would like to thank the following individuals who have been dedicated observers for many years. Many thanks for your years of dedication to CoCoRaHS. Your data is greatly appreciated.

CAMERON COUNTY

Geoffrey Bogorad	TX-CM-1	6 years
Jason Starub	TX-CM-6	6 years
Sabal Palm Audobon Center	TX-CM-8	6 years
Treasure Hills Golf Club	TX-CM-12	6 years
Gene Novogrodsky	TX-CM-13	6 years
Juan Luis Bonnin	TX-CM-16	5 years
Jimmy Paz	TX-CM-17	5 years
Joyce Hamilton	TX-CM-18	5 years
Stan Sterba	TX-CM-19	5 years
Michael Sedlachek	TX-CM-21	5 years
Paula Parson	TX-CM-23	5 years

Junior Munoz	TX-CM-31	4 years
Neil Haman	TX-CM-32	4 years
Eileen Mattei	TX-CM-36	4 years
Kenneth Erickson	TX-CM-42	3 years

HIDALGO COUNTY

Susan Thompson	TX-HDL-5	5 years
Sharon & Rick Slagle	TX-HDL-6	5 years
Donald Engle	TX-HDL-9	5 years
Martin Cordina	TX-HDL-16	3 years

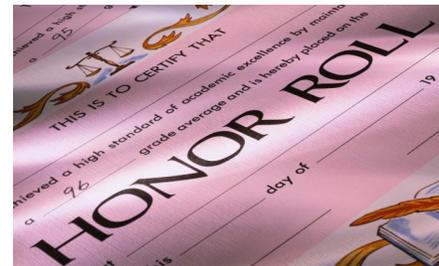
WILLACY COUNTY

Charles Brabham	TX-WC-1	5 years
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The following observers have submitted a report every day of the year:

Neil Haman TX-CM-32 & 35
2008,2009.2010.2011, 2012

Once again, a big THANK YOU to all observers for your many years of dedication.

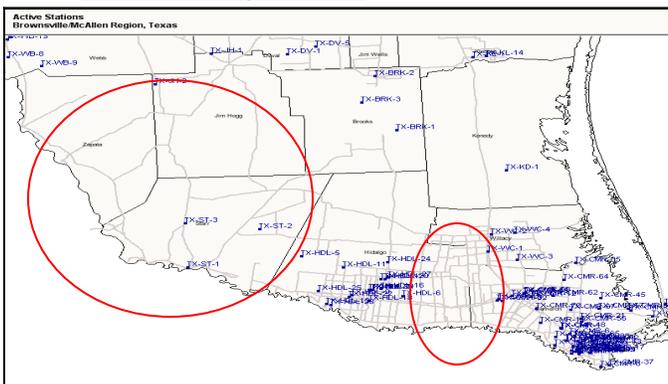


March Madness 2013: The CoCoRaHS Recruitment Drive

Its almost that time of year again....time for March Madness! To many of you, that means college basketball day and night for several weeks. For us however....it means the annual CoCoRaHS recruitment drive. Every March, CoCoRaHS challenges each observer to find new rainfall observers. The state with the most new recruits wins the "tournament."

The National Weather Service office here in Brownsville needs more observers throughout the Rio Grande Valley region, especially in Zapata, Starr, and Hidalgo counties. Observers are needed in areas such as Weslaco, Mercedes, Edcouch-Elsa among many others. All that is needed to join is a high enthusiasm for the weather, an official rain gauge (available for purchase through the CoCoRaHS web site) and be willing to report your data each morning. It only take a couple minutes a

day. To join, go to www.cocorahs.org and sign up. For any concerns you may have, contact Geoffrey Bogorad at 956-504-1432 or Juan Alanis at 956-251-3996 or email cocorahsstx@gmail.com.



Observers especially needed in circled areas: western RGV and the mid- valley.

CoCoRaHS Webinars discuss numerous weather topics

Would you like to learn about the weather from the experts? If so, sign up for one of the CoCoRaHS "Webinars." This monthly series consists of monthly web seminars (webinars) featuring engaging experts from the world of meteorology, climatology and related fields. Each webinar is approximately 60 minutes long and allows the audience members to ask questions to the experts.

The monthly webinars are free and open for everyone to participate. All that is required is registration through the CoCoRaHS home page at www.cocorahs.org

UPCOMING COCORAHS WEBINARS

Thursday 7 March @12pm CT

"I before E, except in drought" Presenter: Mark Svoboda, National Drought Mitigation Center-Lincoln, NE

Thursday 11 April 2013 @12pm CT

"Forecasting the Ferocious: The How, What, Where and Why of Tornadoes" Presenter: Greg Carbin, NOAA Storm Prediction Center-Norman, OK

Thursday 9 May 2013 @12pm CT

"At the Cutting Edge: Harry Wexler and the Emergence of Atmospheric Science" Presenter: Jim Fleming, Colby College-Waterville, ME

For those who can not join in live, all webinars are archived on the CoCoRaHS web site and can be viewed at anytime that is convenient for you.



CoCoRaHS on the Road at AMS Annual Convention

Top CoCoRaHS administrators from the Colorado headquarters recently went to Austin to promote CoCoRaHS and involve local kids in hands on activities. As part of the American Meteorological Society's 12th annual WeatherFest, held January 6th, CoCoRaHS National Coordinator Henry Reges, along with assistant Zach Schwalbe

went to Austin to promote CoCoRaHS to the local community. CoCoRaHS leaders, together with local coordinators joined together to show children and adults alike how rainfall is measured and why its so important to get accurate data. Local TV personalities stopped by to visit and join in the activities. And ironically, the first generous rainfall



in months for Austin came during the CoCoRaHS visit to the AMS convention.....the local area received 2 to 4 inches. Strangely, hasn't rained that much since.



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Phone: 956-504-1432
www.srh.noaa.gov/bro

National Weather Service Mission Statement

The National Weather Service (NWS) provides weather, hydrologic and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters and ocean areas, for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. NWS data and products form a national information database and infrastructure which can be used by other governmental agencies, the private sector, the public and the global community.

Brief National Weather Service History

The National Weather Service had its beginnings in the early history of the United States. Weather has always been important to the citizenry of this country, and this was especially true during the 17th and 18th centuries.

The beginning of the National Weather Service we know today started on February 9th, 1870 when President Ulysses Grant signed a joint resolution of Congress authorizing the Secretary of War to establish a national weather service.