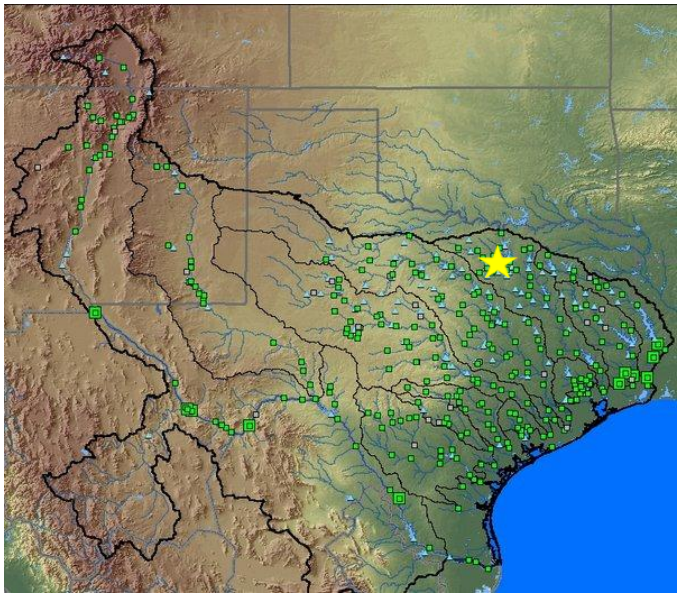
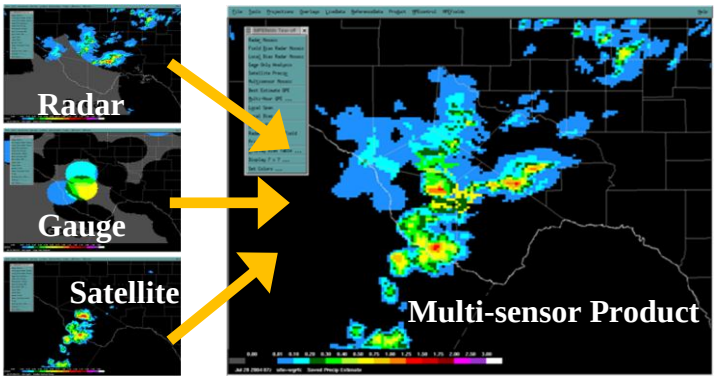
WGRFC

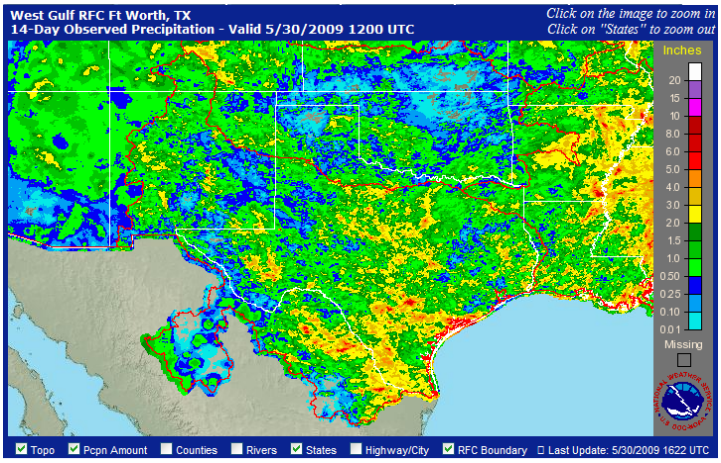
West Gulf River Forecast Center

The West Gulf River Forecast Center (WGRFC), in cooperation with numerous federal, state, and local government entities, uses the latest science and technology to provide timely and accurate river forecasts in an effort to protect life and property. The WGRFC's area of responsibility stretches from the Rio Grande in southern Colorado and New Mexico east to the Sabine River along the Texas-Louisiana border. The WGRFC area of responsibility covers more than 315,000 square miles (815,000 square kilometers) of land in the United States and over 87,000 square miles (225,000 square kilometers) in Mexico.



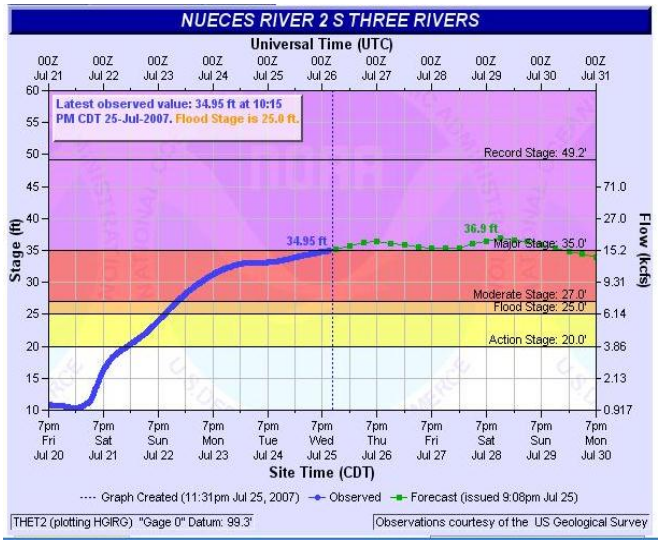
West Gulf RFC Area of Responsibility

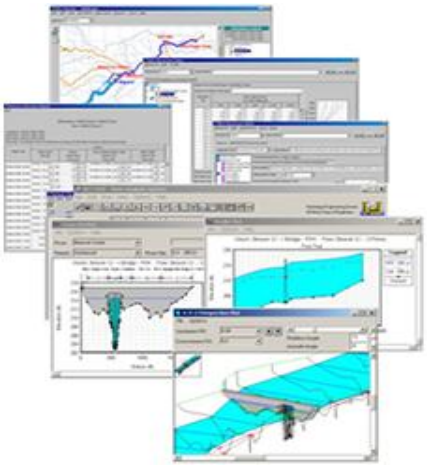




Hydrometeorological Analysis and Support (HAS) Forecasters monitor rainfall estimates from multiple sources, including radar and satellite. Rainfall estimates from these sources are adjusted based on comparisons to rain gage reports. The final "Best Estimate" of precipitation is input into the river forecasts models. HAS Forecasters also analyze meteorological model data to generate a quantitative precipitation forecast (QPF). QPF is a specific forecast detailing the amount, timing, and location of expected precipitation. Basing their decisions, actions, and forecasts on up-to-date science and technology (along with experience), the HAS Forecasters perform a vital function in the river forecast process.

After obtaining the latest and most accurate rainfall datasets, WGRFC Hydrologists begin the process of generating river forecasts for the area. Using river gage data and streamflow measurements and estimates, the hydrologists will look at the combinations of rainfall, runoff, and routed river flows to issue river forecasts. The river forecasts are used as guidance to create public river flood warnings and statements and also help authorities prepare for the impacts associated with the expected river conditions. Forecasts are accessible via the National Weather Service Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service (AHPS) at: http://water.weather.gov.





WGRFC is migrating to a new operational forecast system which has the capability of infusing cutting-edge hydrologic models and new technologies into the forecast process. This new system, the Community Hydrologic Prediction System (CHPS), builds on better coordination among all water agencies and improves the accuracy and utility of the entire community's water-based forecasts. CHPS will also allow for the rapid transfer of collaborative research into NWS operations. Along with innovation in software, the WGRFC has added a new position to facilitate coordination and outreach with water resource partners and customers.

From time to time, the impacts from river flooding can be extreme. But with accurate and timely forecasts, precautions can be taken to help minimize the damage associated with river flooding. At the WGRFC, our mission is to provide those forecasts. Officials can then determine the best course of action to protect all interests involved during river flood events.

For more information, you can contact the West Gulf RFC by sending correspondence to:

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Or you can check us out on the internet at: http://www.srh.noaa.gov/wgrfc
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