

# The High Plains Drifter

## September—National Preparedness Month

When catastrophic weather events occur, those that are prepared are a step ahead of the crowd. During September join FEMA, NOAA and the NWS to take the opportunity to review your preparedness level and make a pledge to be prepared before the storm.

Be determined to be a force of nature and join NOAA in our vision for a Weather-Ready Nation. **The vision where society is prepared for and responds to weather-dependent events.**

In 2012, the weather has provided a range of event and hazards. The winter provided little snow and a reflection to the start of one of the driest years on record. Today the U.S. Drought Monitor showed an exceptional (D4) drought encompassing most of western and north central Nebraska. The drought remains at the forefront in the news. Additional newsworthy weather events for the year include the first ever tornado recorded in Nebraska in the month of February, record

heat and the number of fires ignited by lightning are still to be determined.

March 18th our readiness was tested, a Sunday when one supercell thunderstorm developed and produced a total of six tornadoes while moving north from central Lincoln County through eastern Cherry County. In Lincoln County, four tornadoes produced extensive damage and four injuries, with the greatest damage caused by one confirmed tornado rated an EF-3 on the Enhanced Fujita Scale.

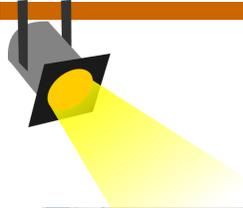


March 18, 2012 tornado damage image courtesy of NWS

When minutes count be able to say “I was prepared”! To be prepared you

must be informed, make a plan, build a kit and get involved in preparedness. Resources online to learn more include the web sites [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) and most recently the new ‘Be Ready Nebraska’ at [www.bereadynebraska.com](http://www.bereadynebraska.com)

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## Employee Spotlight—Cory Martin, Meteorologist Intern



In the spotlight is Cory Martin. In January 2012 Cory arrived at the North Platte WFO to fill a Meteorologist Intern vacancy. He is no stranger to the National Weather Service as his early career path as a student meteorologist provided him opportunities to work at the WFO in his hometown of Aberdeen, South Dakota, and at the Weather Forecast Center in Norman, Oklahoma.

Cory is a 2011 University of Oklahoma graduate —Boomer Sooner all the way! He wears the schools colors well in an office heavily sided with graduates from the University of Nebraska—Lincoln. When Cory was asked when did he know he wanted to be a meteorologist, he said “Always wanted to be one. Some people are just born to be a meteorologist”.

Cory’s favorite aspect of working in weather is the pressure that comes with working high-impact weather events and the challenge of forecasting the day-to-day variability of weather. No two days are exactly the same.

His ability to work under pressure has already been tested such as when he worked a tornado outbreak at the Norman WFO in April 2011. He recalled a day when numerous tornadoes tracked across central and southern Oklahoma, with the headline being an EF-4 tornado that hit Tushka, Oklahoma. In Cory’s words “It felt like I gained several years’ worth of experience in one day”.

Cory notes that starting his professional career at the North Platte WFO has been an invaluable experience up to this point. As a met intern, it is his responsibility to prepare and release the weather balloon, quality control area climate data, and complete a long list of training exercises that will prepare him for the next step in his career as a general forecaster. In his spare time at work he likes to practice creating gridded forecasts and aviation forecasts, work on GIS projects, and interact with people in our county warning area on Twitter and Facebook.

When the opportunity exists send a shoutout, or better, give him a tweet of weather news on Twitter, or post your information on our Facebook wall.



## Storm Reports and Use—Teresa Keck, Warning Coordination Meteorologist

If you have received a call asking for your snow depth, how deep is that water, or one of my favorite, how big was that hail; you can know your not alone. The National Weather Service gathers storm reports almost daily. Terri Guillemets is quoted for saying “Weather is a great metaphor for life—sometimes it’s good, sometimes it’s bad, and there’s nothing much you can do about it but carry an umbrella” (www.quotegarden.com). Yet, when the weather is bad, we are going to be there to gather data to verify, communicate and document the bad weather that comes our way. Storm reports gathered are used in three primary areas that include the warning process, verification, and the Storm Data Program.

**The Warning Process**— Every day hazardous weather is happening if not locally, somewhere else. At the office, the warning process during significant weather episodes require gathering storm reports. If we are not answering calls, we are making them to determine a storm impacts. The information gathered is used to raise awareness and inform the warning team, public and partners.

Our focus changes each day to the weather hazard at hand. The reports gained are used to verify storm warning, while also creating a history of weather elements that create impacts and are newsworthy.

We gather reports through a variety of avenues such as 911 Centers, the public, storm spotters and most recently the social media sites Twitter and Facebook. Warning operations do come first, where social media web sites may be viewed during or after an event. If you have a report that may be life-threatening be sure to call your local law enforcement or our office directly. The information gathered helps to inform the warning team what are the hazards so they can adjust their approach to what can be a rapidly changing storm environment. The storm reports are logged, entered as a local storm report that goes out to the world to include the Performance Management Branch for verification of weather warnings.

**Performance Management**— Verification of warnings are essential for all. Warnings can be issued for fire weather, hydrology, and severe weather (both winter and summer), where the data is compiled, verified and statistics generated. A storm report is used to determine whether a warning was verified or not, and a slew of other statistics such as event Probability of Detection, False Alarm Ratios, and Critical Success Index. For example Figure 1 shows the Mean Lead Time of severe weather warnings in Central Region. The data available creates a statistical haven for those who just like numbers, or better yet, graphs and tables for the visual users.



OPL Steve Carmel Gathering Storm Reports  
(NWS Photo)

[Continued on the next page...](#)

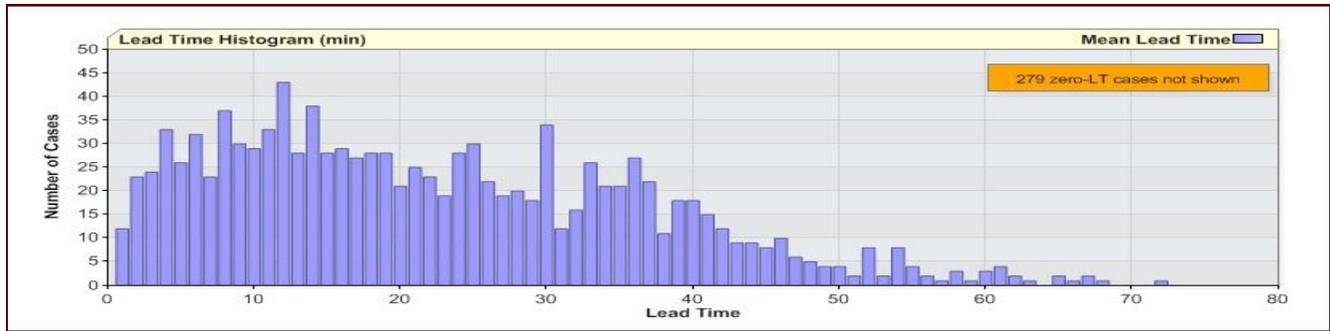


Figure 1: Central Region Office Severe Warnings Mean Lead Time in Minutes

For those that like to read storm reports are gather for the Storm Data Publication that is available online.

**StormDat Program**—The final stop for storm reports before becoming a permanent part of the official publication– Storm Data.

The StormDat Program is a map-based interface that has made entering 48 different weather event types such as hail, tornadoes, wildfires and blizzards easy. The program allows entry of reports right down to using a person’s street address. Each month all storm reports are reviewed, entered into the database and then certified. Once certified the storm report becomes part of the official Storm Data publication produced by the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC).

If you want to review severe storm data for your area that occurred from 1950 to present, consider visiting the NCDC web site [www.ncdc.noaa.gov](http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov). The online web page provides access to a plethora of weather data, climate statistics and provides a spotlight on the most recent reports released.



## U.S. Drought Monitor

September 18, 2012  
Valid 7 a.m. EST

### Nebraska

**Extreme (D3) to Exceptional (D4) Drought lingers in western and north central Nebraska**

	Drought Conditions (Percent Area)					
	None	D0-D4	D1-D4	D2-D4	D3-D4	D4
Current	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	97.94	70.94
Last Week (09/11/2012 map)	0.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	97.94	70.94
3 Months Ago (06/19/2012 map)	15.63	84.37	65.55	4.94	0.00	0.00
Start of Calendar Year (12/27/2011 map)	71.66	28.32	13.81	0.65	0.00	0.00
Start of Water Year (09/22/2011 map)	75.70	24.30	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
One Year Ago (09/13/2011 map)	59.90	40.10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00



**Intensity:**

- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Drought - Moderate
- D2 Drought - Severe
- D3 Drought - Extreme
- D4 Drought - Exceptional

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.

<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>



Released Thursday, September 20, 2012  
David Simeral, Western Regional Climate Center

## Protecting Your Home From the Dangers of Wildfire

by Shawn Jacobs Fire Weather Focal Point

Elevated fire conditions have become common late this summer due to a lack of significant precipitation and the persistence of well above normal temperatures across much of western and north central Nebraska. These conditions are favorable for extreme fire growth with low afternoon relative humidity keeping area fuels prime for burning.

The majority of fuels across western and north central Nebraska are composed of 1-hr fuels, such as grasses and small brush. These fuels respond quickly to changes in atmospheric moisture, especially when cured. A seemingly lush prairie can become volatile in a matter of hours under favorable atmospheric conditions, and when fire is introduced, a dangerous situation may unfold. Often persons are caught off guard in grassland wildfire situations and express concerns such as “it came on fast” or “underestimated the speed at which the fire was moving.” Now is the time to prepare; the simple tips below will help minimize and potentially prevent a wildfire from damaging or destroying your home.

### What can you do to protect your home?

- Remove all leaf litter from rooftops, gutters, decks, eaves and porches. This debris burns easily and when removed, will reduce the potential of firebrands (embers) igniting your home.
- If it can burn, keep it at least 3 to 5 feet from the foundation of your home; maintain a strong firebreak.
- If the fuel is brown, knock it down! All dead vegetation surrounding your home should be removed immediately. Dead fuels can pose a danger to your home as far as 100 feet away.
- A well maintained yard will further reduce/slow the advance of a wildfire. Dry-brown grasses and shrubs burn more readily than hydrated-green fuels.
- Maintain trees and bushes on your property; remember fire not only can spread among ground fuels, but also through the tops of the trees. Pruning the lower branches helps eliminate the “ladder effect,” where fuels have a continuous path to the tree tops.
- Consult with your local green-house on which plants are slow growing and easily maintained. Also seek advice from a local expert on which native plants may slow fire advance. Stay away from vegetation that has high oil content, such as pines and cedar. These fuels burn hotter and promote fire spread.
- Avoid parking or idling in dry grass and never set a hot chainsaw or other gas powered equipment down on cured fuels. Numerous fires are started every year when fuels come into contact with hot mufflers.
- Contact your insurance agent to ensure you have adequate home owners insurance to cover loss by wildfire. Structures such as sheds or garages not attached to your home may not be covered.
- Always obey burning bans and know the expected weather before igniting a planned burn.



Single Engine Air Tankers (SEATS) responding to the Stapleton Fire . Courtesy of Shawn Jacobs 10/04/11

## POLARIMETRIC DATA COMING TO A RADAR NEAR YOU

BY SHAWN JACOBS—METEOROLOGIST & 88D FOCAL POINT

### What is Dual-Pol Radar?

Weather surveillance radars send out short bursts of radio waves called pulses. These pulses bounce off particles in the atmosphere and are reflected back to the radar dish. Computers then use algorithms to determine the type of particles (called hydrometeors) sampled and the direction and speed of those hydrometeors. Current National Weather Service (NWS) Doppler radar transmits and receives pulses of radio waves only in a horizontal orientation, allowing the radar to determine only the horizontal dimensions of a target. On the other hand, dual-polarimetric radar transmits and receives pulses in both the horizontal and vertical orientation with both the conventional and Dual-Polarization radar examples shown in Figure 2. Therefore, the upgrade to the dual-pol radar will allow current NWS radars to interrogate both the horizontal and vertical dimensions of a target. The additional information provided by the vertical pulses will greatly improve short-term forecasts and warnings for hazardous weather such as flash flooding and winter weather.

### Why the need for Polarimetric Data?

The upgrade will greatly enhance weather surveillance radars by not only providing the ability to collect data on the horizontal but also the vertical properties of weather. Where the upgrade has already occurred, significant improvements in the estimation of precipitation rates, the ability to discriminate between precipitation types (snow, rain, graupel, hail), and the ability to better identify non-meteorological returns (chaff, smoke from wildfire, wind farms, insects and birds) has been observed. These same results can be expected across western and north-central Nebraska with the implementation of the dual-polarimetric radar upgrade.

### When will the Dual-Pol upgrade occur?

The weather surveillance radar located in Thedford, Nebraska, is slated in February 2013. The entire fleet of National Weather Service radars will receive the software and hardware upgrade, with several regional radars already completed.

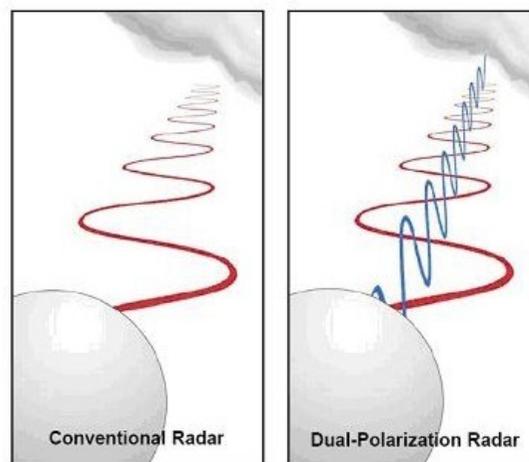


Figure 2: Radar propagation for conventional and Dual-Pol

## What are the Benefits of Polarimetric Data?

- A more accurate estimate of precipitation amounts.
- Stronger estimate of the size distribution of the hydrometeors as well as improved ability to classify precipitation types.
- A greater improved ability to identify areas of extremely heavy rainfall that are closely linked to flash flooding.
- Improved detection and mitigation of non-meteorological related radar echoes such as chaff, smoke from wildfires, ground clutter, wind farms, birds and insects.
- Easier identification of the melting layer, which is helpful in distinguishing snow levels and location of the rain to snow changeover.
- Improved detection of tornadic-lofted debris.

The WSR-88D Dual Polarization Program installation status can be viewed in Figure 3.

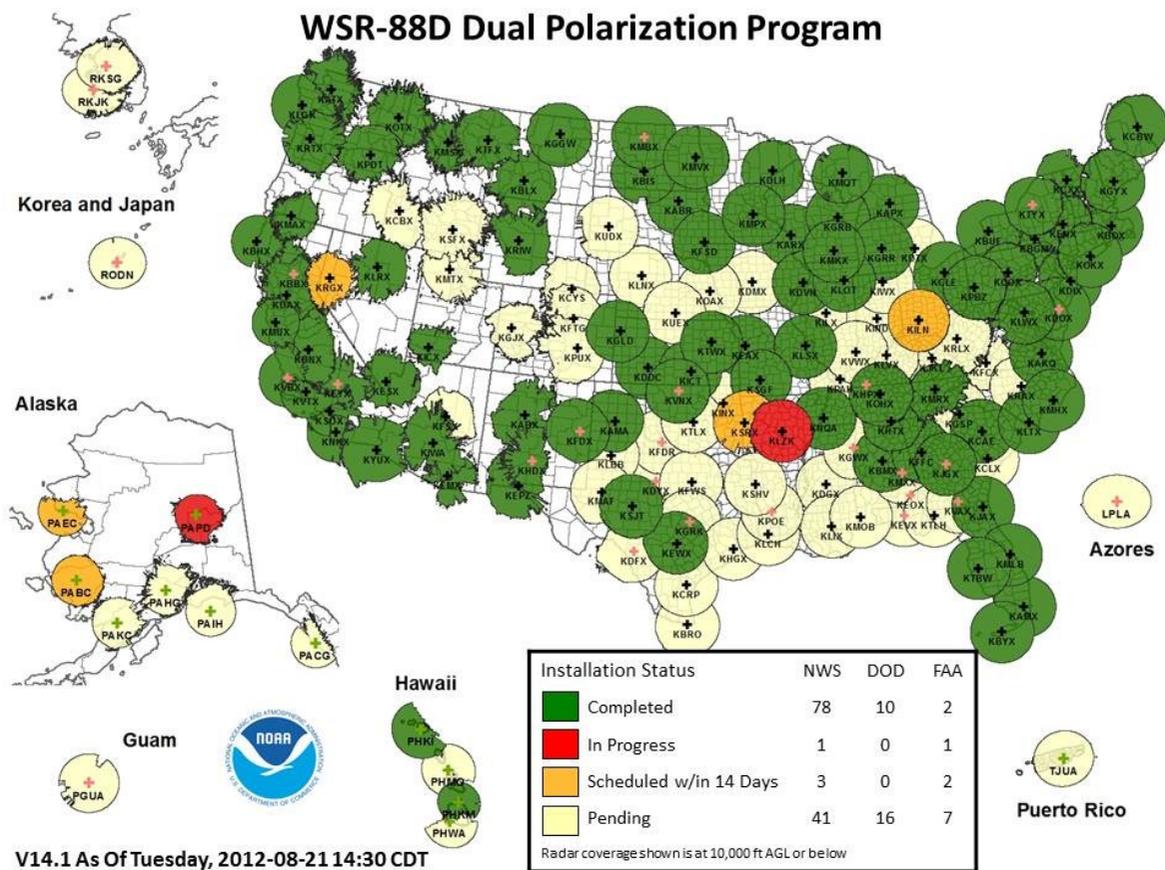
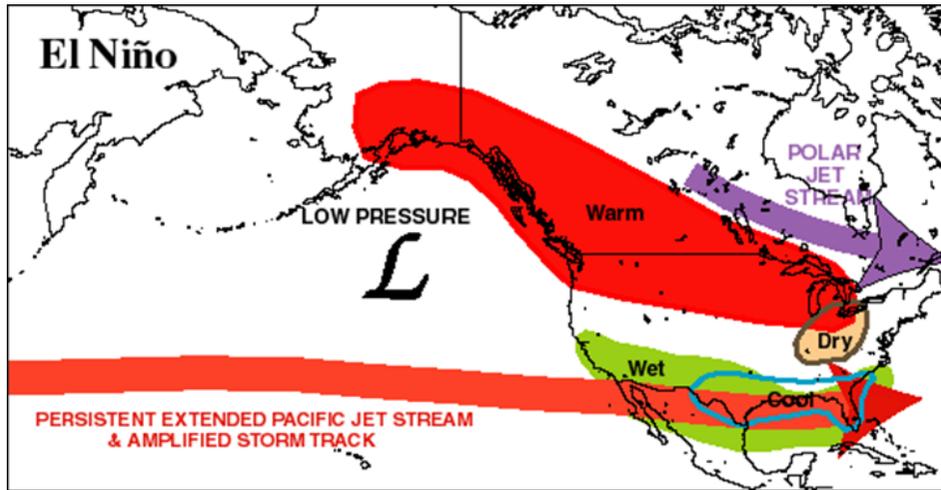


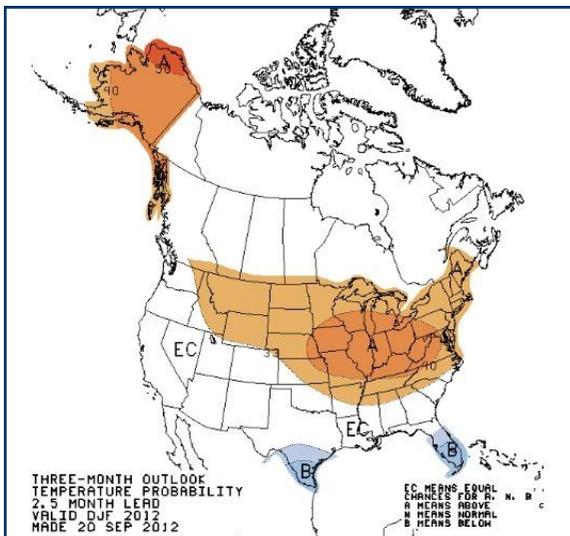
Figure 3: WSR-88D Dual Polarization Program Map

## El Niño Developing for Winter 2012-2013 - by Matt Masek, Meteorologist

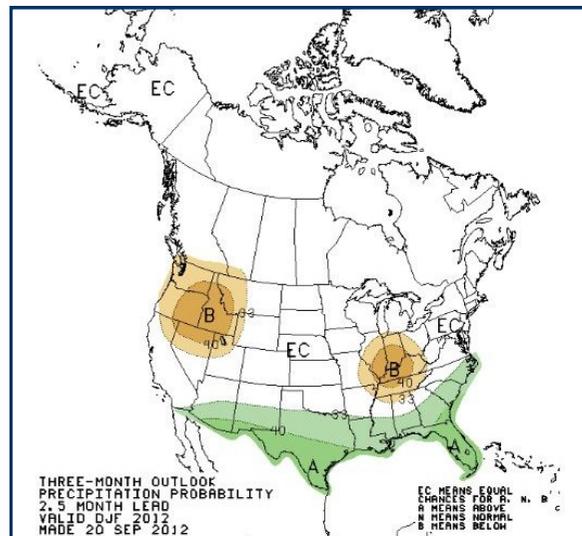


### Typical Effects of an El Niño

A weak to moderate El Niño is expected to develop for this winter. Typically an El Niño favors a more active storm track across the southern United States, resulting in cool and wet conditions across the southern plains. The polar jet stream is most often flowing across Canada. This results in warm conditions across the northern United States and southwestern Canada. Across the state of Nebraska the effects of El Niño are not consistent. A recent study found a slightly higher correlation for warmer and wetter conditions; however there have been years with an El Niño in place that resulted in dry winters and sometimes the winters have been cold. The latest outlook by the Climate Prediction Center for this winter is for a higher probability of warmer temperatures across the Western and North Central Nebraska. There is no strong signal for precipitation, with equal chances for above normal, below normal, or near normal precipitation forecasted.



December, January, and February Temperature Outlook



December, January, and February Precipitation Outlook

## Flood Stage – What Does It Mean? - Jessica Brooks, Hydro Program Leader

The National Weather Service (NWS) continuously monitors a network of river stages around the country as precipitation can increase runoff into lakes, rivers and streams that can lead to flooding. When excessive rainfall occurs an established flood stage allows the NWS to issue products to alert communities downstream of the potential impacts. Yet, what does flood stage mean?

By definition—flood stage is the water level of a stream as read by a gage for a particular location, measured from the level at which a flowing body of water threatens lives, property, or commerce. The issuance of flood advisories or warnings are linked to the flood stage.



The NWS relies on a network of almost 10,000 stream gages. This information provides present river conditions and is the initial information used to develop a river forecast. Once a gage location is selected as a forecast point the location is researched to determine how various flows create impacts to include three flood categories, or levels of flooding at each forecast point. These levels include Minor, Moderate and Major flood stages. At each level the flooding impacts increase to include:

- **Minor Flooding** as minimal or no property damage, but possibly some public threat.
- **Moderate Flooding** as some inundation of structures and roads near the stream or river, where some evacuations of people and/or transfer of property to higher elevations is required.
- **Major Flooding** as extensive inundation of structures and roads, where significant evacuations of people and/or transfer of property to higher elevations is required as well.

As you might imagine there is a degree of subjectivity involved in determining flood stages and impact levels, however they prove valuable when describing the severity of flooding at any given location during flooding. These levels are determined using information gathered through surveys by the NWS, and at times through joint efforts of local officials and property owners near a forecast point. When any flooding occurs additional surveys can be performed to allow stages to be modified when necessary. One recent example was after the 2011 major flooding event along the North Platte River, where surveys found the severity of the flooding was less than expected at the moderate and major flood stage levels, where each level was raised to reflect observed impacts to lives and property.

One additional term used by the NWS is **Record Flooding**, which is when flooding occurs that equals or exceeds the highest stage or discharge at a given site during the period of record keeping. In western and north central Nebraska, we monitor 10 river forecast points to include river gages on the North and South Platte Rivers, the main stem of the Platte River, Elkhorn River, Niobrara River, Stinking Water Creek, and the Frenchman Creek .

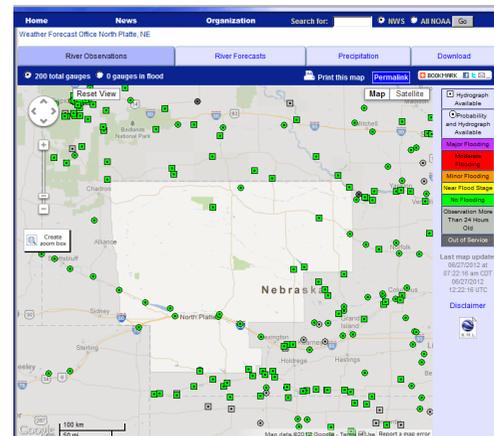
# Hydrologic Program is Building Partnerships

by Jessica Brooks, Hydro Program Leader

The NWS mission is to protect life and property, and enhance the local economy. To succeed in this mission when it comes to hydrology our office is building partnerships through the hydrologic program. Our office closely monitors the established river stages and flows on rivers, as well as some lake levels and dam releases. Although flooding is not a frequent occurrence along most rivers in the area, all rivers are continuously being monitored for flood potential. Several rivers across western and north central Nebraska are regulated by dams, with flood potential coming both from natural conditions, as well as from the influence of partners tasked in the established flow to meet water demands.

One of the more highly regulated rivers in the area is the North Platte River, which includes an intricate system of dams and canals from North Platte upstream through Wyoming. The regulation of the North Platte River shows that even in a year of extreme drought flood impacts can occur. Agencies that work closely together to determine the amount of water needed to satisfy the water demands include the Central Nebraska Public Power and Irrigation District, the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, the Platte River Recovery Implementation Program, and the Nebraska Natural Resources Districts. They work together to produce the flows needed for irrigation, power, recreation, and wildlife to prosper. Aside from deciding the amount of water to be released, they work with the NWS to create accurate river forecasts.

Water releases from Kingsley Dam into the North Platte River have been identified as a recurring challenge when determining how to reach desired flows in the Platte River downstream of North Platte. This becomes a challenge as these high flows need to move through what has been come to be known as the North Platte choke point. Over the years, stream channel migration, along with sediment and vegetation growth in the river bed has not allowed the high flows through the North Platte area without the river rising over the established flood stage. Studies completed by our partners have shown the potential for improved flows, where the NWS in North Platte is building partnerships that extend to the city of North Platte. All will be working toward solutions that may one day allow for higher river flows downstream of North Platte.



AHPS gages in Nebraska

In addition, the Army Corp of Engineers is leading a plan to create new flood inundation maps of the city of North Platte from the advanced satellite mapping techniques that were used during the record flooding of 2011. These new maps will be more accurate for indicating which areas will see the threat for flooding when the river reaches high stages. When completed, new interactive maps will be included on our Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service (AHPS) webpage and can be found online at <http://water.weather.gov/ahps2/index.php?wfo=lbf>

## Summer 2012 – Very Hot and Very Dry by Matt Masek Meteorologist

The summer of 2012 will go down in the record books as one the hottest and the driest on record due to a persistent ridge of high pressure over the plains. Average high temperatures for the meteorological summer (June through August) were over 93 degrees for the first time in over 120 years of recorded history at North Platte and Valentine. Both North Platte and Valentine recorded the most days when the high temperature reached at or above 80 degrees and 90 degrees and almost reach the most for 100 degrees during the 3 month period.

In addition to the very high temperatures were the very dry conditions leading to the development of extreme to exceptional drought conditions. Typically the summer months result in almost half of the yearly total precipitation, normally in a year the total is about 20 inches. This summer rainfall totaled less than 3 inches at North Platte and Valentine, less than 15 percent of our yearly total. Rainfall recorded at the Broken Bow Airport saw even less precipitation during the summer, only totaling 0.52 inches. This was 8.66 inches below their normal total for the 3 months. Below are some climate statistics for the 3 months of June, July and August for North Platte and Valentine and how they ranked compared to recorded history.

North Platte 3 Month (June, July, August) Summary									Valentine 3 Month (June, July, August) Summary								
	Ave High	Ave Low	Ave Temp	Precip	Days Lows < 50	Days Highs 80+	Days Highs 90+	Days Highs 100+		Ave High	Ave Low	Ave Temp	Precip	Days Lows < 50	Days Highs 80+	Days Highs 90+	Days Highs 100+
<b>Average</b>	85.1	59.1	72.1	8.28	8.5	69.5	30.8	3.5	<b>Average</b>	84.7	58.0	71.3	8.25	11.5	66.1	30.7	5.1
<b>Max</b>	93.5	64.2	78.2	18.22	28	88	65	29	<b>Max</b>	93.6	63.9	77.7	16.88	28	87	61	28
<b>Year</b>	2012	1934	1936	1951	2004	2012	2012	1936	<b>Year</b>	2012	1936	1936	1983	2004 1992	2012	2012	1936
<b>Min</b>	78.1	54.6	66.9	2.65	0	42	4	0	<b>Min</b>	76.6	52.3	65.4	2.76	1	38	2	0
<b>Year</b>	1915	1992	1992	2012	1921 1932 1933	1915	1915	41 times (last 2010 & 2009)	<b>Year</b>	1915	1992	1915	2012	1933	1915	1915	14 times (last 2009)
<b>2008</b>	84.8	57.4	71.1	7.77	12	69	23	2	<b>2008</b>	85.3	57.0	71.1	9.20	15	72	26	1
<b>2009</b>	81.4	56.1	68.7	10.41	17	61	12	0	<b>2009</b>	80.8	54.9	67.9	12.53	19	58	15	0
<b>2010</b>	85.5	60.4	72.9	11.32	4	78	29	0	<b>2010</b>	87.3	59.7	73.5	8.17	4	75	37	6
<b>2011</b>	86.4	61.1	73.8	9.61	5	74	36	2	<b>2011</b>	86.6	60.0	73.3	9.76	8	71	35	5
<b>2012</b>	93.5	58.7	76.1	2.65	13	88	65	23	<b>2012</b>	93.6	60.4	77.0	2.76	11	87	61	26

Top 10 Finishes for the 2012 Summer (Jun, Jul, Aug) for North Platte							Top 10 Finishes for the 2012 Summer (Jun, Jul, Aug) for Valentine						
Average High	Average Temp	Least Precipitation	Most Days Highs 80+	Most Days Highs 90+	Most Days Highs 100+		Average High	Average Low	Average Temp	Least Precipitation	Most Days Highs 80+	Most Days Highs 90+	Most Days Highs 100+
93.5 (2012)	78.2 (1936)	2.65 (2012)	88 (2012)	65 (2012)	29 (1936)		93.6 (2012)	63.9 (1936)	77.7 (1936)	2.76 (2012)	87 (2012)	61 (2012)	28 (1936)
92.3 (1936)	78.1 (1934)	3.81 (1886)	83 (2006)	64 (1936)	23 (2012)		91.5 (1936)	61.6 (1933)	77.0 (2012)	2.92 (1917)	84 (1959)	56 (1988)	26 (2012)
92.1 (1934)	76.2 (1881)	3.83 (1936)	83 (1988)	58 (1934)	22 (1934)		90.7 (1988)	61.5 (1931)	75.2 (1934)	3.55 (1976)	84 (1956)	54 (1936)	16 (2002)
90.7 (2002)	76.1 (2012)	3.86 (1924)	83 (1934)	57 (1937)	14 (1980)		90.0 (2002)	61.4 (1937)	75.0 (2002)	3.55 (1895)	82 (1988)	49 (2002)	16 (1988)
89.7 (1980)	75.8 (2002)	3.94 (2002)	82 (1956)	55 (2002)	13 (1954)		89.4 (1934)	61.1 (1934)	74.9 (1988)	3.60 (1936)	81 (2002)	48 (1983)	16 (1934)
89.4 (2000)	75.7 (1937)	4.10 (1925)	81 (2002)	52 (2000)	13 (1937)		89.0 (2006)	60.8 (1938)	74.9 (1933)	3.61 (2002)	81 (1971)	48 (1937)	14 (2006)
89.1 (1952)	75.6 (1931)	4.11 (1876)	81 (1938)	52 (1980)	12 (1952)		88.8 (1980)	60.6 (1921)	74.8 (1931)	3.66 (1894)	78 (1984)	47 (1933)	13 (1933)
89.0 (1954)	75.6 (1933)	4.20 (1931)	81 (1922)	49 (1933)	11 (2002)		88.5 (1959)	60.4 (1932)	74.6 (2006)	3.68 (1996)	78 (1963)	46 (1931)	13 (1931)
88.9 (1931)	75.5 (1938)	4.21 (1940)	81 (1881)	48 (1935)	11 (2000)		88.2 (1933)	60.4 (1953)	74.4 (1937)	4.03 (1974)	78 (1934)	45 (1980)	12 (1995)
88.8 (1988)	75.3 (1901)	4.40 (1875)	80 (1959)	47 (1939) 47 (1931)	10 (1931)		88.2 (1931)	60.4 (2012)	74.0 (1963)	4.33 (1918)	78 (1894)	45 (1934)	11 (2001) 11 (1974) 11 (1937)

Coming soon!

Winter Weather Awareness Day on November 8th

## **Social Media in Emergency Management— Cory Martin , Meteorologist Intern**

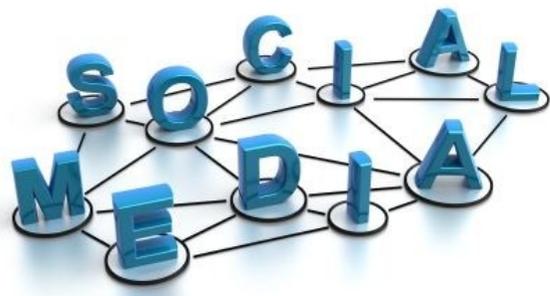
Social media platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter, can be a great source of local news information and intelligence about things happening in the community. Due to its ease of use and incredibly large user base, very often Twitter has breaking news and important information about incidents before traditional media begins covering it. Even if you never engage yourself in posting on a social media site, you're missing a lot of potentially valuable information if you're not at least monitoring.

The fundamental benefit of using a social media for emergency managers is that it lets you engage with the people in your community in an interactive manner. You can use it to educate them about important topics and relay information during a significant event in your area. Social media also puts a name and face on a city/county/state government agency, which means people in your area of responsibility get to know you and see that you are there working for them instead of being identified as just another government office.

The “social” part of social media is also important even though you may only have a handful of followers, which may be more common in our area due to our limited population, the information you provide will likely be shared and retweeted with others, allowing you to reach an even larger audience. It is important to stay engaged with your followers to develop a connection between yourself and them. Twitter or Facebook do not have to be your official platform for relaying information during a significant event, but it is easy to frequently remind people of where they can get that information when they need it.

Technology in this day and age has allowed for the vast majority of people with easy access to the web to become constantly thirsty for more and more information. The typical social media user will actively look for information before, during and after a significant event, especially if it is in their personal area of interest. If they can't get it from an official source, they will seek it out from somewhere else. This could be an unofficial source or someone just spreading a rumor, thus running into the problem of inaccurate information being spread for anyone to see. If you don't provide the information, someone else will.

The National Weather Service office in North Platte invites you to become engaged in using social media as a tool of communication in your agency. In only a short time of using it in our daily operations, we have already come to realize it's value in providing a new outlet of information that is current with modern trends, as well as developing a more personal connection with our customers. If you have any questions in regards to social media, please contact me at (308) 532-0921.



## 2012 John Campanius Holm Awards

The John Campanius Holm award was created to honor Cooperative Observers for outstanding accomplishments in the field of meteorological observations. It is named for a Lutheran minister, the first person known to have taken systematic weather observations in the American Colonies. Reverend Holm made weather observations, without the aid of instruments, in 1644 and 1645 near the present site of Wilmington, Delaware. His son later had these observations published.

In 2012 only fourteen worthy recipients were chosen to receive the Hohn Campanius Holm Award. Meteorologist-in-Charge Ryan Knutsvig and Observing Program Leader Steve Carmel attended the awards ceremonies, where Mr. Knutsvig officially presented two awards this year to selected local cooperative observers.

The first Holm Award was presented on August 25th to Deanna Brummet, from Stapleton, at the Logan County Fair on the floor of the rodeo arena. At the conclusion of the awards ceremony, Deanna was presented a proclamation signed by Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman and Nebraska Secretary of State John Gale– declaring August 25, 2012 as Deanna Brummet Day. She was also presented a congratulatory letter from Nebraska State Senator Deb Fisher– heralding the accomplishments by Deanna in her role as a stellar cooperative weather observer.



Photo courtesy of Marcia Hora,  
Editor of the Stapleton Enterprise

The second Holm Award was presented to Scott Poese from O'Neill and General Manager of KBRX Radio Station on September 12th at the Blarney Stone Restaurant in O'Neill. At the award presentation Scott was also presented with his 25 Year Length-of-Service Award and an award pin.



Photo courtesy of Steve Carmel,  
Observing Program Leader

At the conclusion of the awards ceremony, Mr. Poese was also presented a proclamation signed by Nebraska Governor Dave Heineman and Nebraska Secretary of State John Gale– declaring September 12, 2012 as Scott Poese Day.

Congratulations to Deanna and Scott! Thank you for your observations and services to your local community and the National Weather Service's Cooperative Observer Program.



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