

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 May 11 – May 17, 2013

General Interest: The latest Drought Monitor map shows the drought remains firmly entrenched across the western half of Kansas while drought impacts continue to ease across eastern Kansas. There has even been some expansion over the past week of exceptional drought into Wallace County. Exceptional drought is the most intense drought classification on the Drought Monitor map. This time last month, exceptional drought covered Greeley, Wichita, Scott, Finney, Kearny, Hamilton, Stanton and Grant in west-central and southwest Kansas. However, exceptional drought now covers all of southwest Kansas west of a line extending from Kalvesta to Plains. Further east over central and eastern Kansas the drought has significantly decreased in intensity due to persistent rains over the past 3 months. Widespread storms and squall-line storms over the past several days will continue to aid in easing drought severity there yet again. Across the border in southeastern Colorado, the drought situation is nearly a carbon copy of southwestern Kansas with exceptional drought covering the entire area.

Looking ahead, the latest Drought Outlook released May 16th, indicates the drought will persist or even intensify across all of western Kansas and most of Colorado through August 31st. This prediction fits in line with what I mentioned last week where our area stands a 40% to 50% chance of below normal precipitation and a 40% to 50% chance of above normal temperatures during June. At this point, it seems likely we will remain in drought for the rest of this year.

Source:

Drought Monitor: droughtmonitor.unl.edu

Weather: The week started with seasonal temperatures and mostly sunny. By Monday, temperatures climbed into the middle 90's and continued through Wednesday under mostly sunny skies. Daytime highs topped out around the middle 80's on Thursday. A few storms developed over eastern Colorado Thursday afternoon and died out near the Kansas border. Scattered storms also occurred over northwestern Kansas southeast into west-central Kansas around sunset. Tranquil but muggy conditions prevailed Friday.

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

May 16th, Program Operations Day #3

One plane was launched at 7:45 to investigate a line of storms traveling southeast through Logan and Gove counties. Radar indicated the lead edge of the line would be near northern Lane by 8:50. Seeding for rain optimization began at 8:21 over southeastern Gove. At 9:03, radar indicated the potential for nickel size hail in the storm over extreme southern Gove County. Seeding transitioned to hail suppression at that time. A small section of the hail core moved into extreme northeastern Lane at 9:09. Seeding was terminated at 9:19 over extreme northwestern Lane as the storm was moving into Ness County. The plane turned for base at 9:27.

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Walter Geiger, Meteorologist
Western Kansas Weather Modification Program