MARYLAND/DC COCORAHS

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Welcome to Cocorahs

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First I want to welcome our new observers to Cocorahs as well as a big thank you to all of our long time volunteers that have made this program such a success. We live in an area of the country that experiences a wide range of weather and while at times we go through stretches of very tranquil (some say dull) weather, we do have our fair share of significant weather events from time to time. While modern technology has made such great strides in helping observe and forecast the weather, there is no replacement as yet for the human observer. That is one of the reasons why your precipitation reports are so important. Your precipitation reports are used by the National Weather Service, River Forecast Centers, other government agencies, businesses, teachers and others that use the data for various purposes. So keep those wonderful reports coming and tell your family and friends about us!

Winter in review

For snow lovers, this was not a winter that will go down in the record books by any means as most areas of the state had below normal snow readings for the third winter in a row. Our friends in Western Maryland reaped the benefit of several lake effect snows (moisture that comes directly off of the Great Lakes and is "squeezed out" by the lifting process of the clouds over the Appalachians). From Oct 1 2008 through Apr 1 2009 MD-GR-4 at McHenry in Garrett County was the official snow winner with 102.4 inches of snow for the season, while MD-GR-2 near Friendsville, MD was not far behind with 91.3 inches. East of Garrett county, the highest seasonal snow amounts didn't come anywhere close to these amounts, with the highest of 16.1 inches near Prince Frederick in Calvert County (MD-CV-7) followed by Frostburg (MD-AL-6) at 16.0 inches and Cockeysville 3.7N (MD-BL-11) with 15.9 inches.

Reporting daily zero's. Are they important?

Knowing that you received no precipitation is important for a number of reasons, so we would like you to report daily, even if you have no precipitation. When there is extended dry weather, it is just as important to get a no rain report for drought monitoring. If there are enough surrounding stations that report zero, we can sometimes infer that you were dry, but that is not always the case. The login process defaults to zero which makes the process of entering the dry days very easy. It takes less than a minute. One other way to go back in and fill in you days of no precipitation is to use the "Monthly Zeros" report. You simply click on the box for each day that you reported no precipitation and once done your records are complete.

March Weather Summary

March turned out to be slightly cooler than normal for most of the state and with a few exceptions, rather dry. A late season snowstorm on March 1 and 2nd hit parts of central and southern Maryland including central portions of the eastern shore with the heaviest snow of the season. Even with this snow, the season as a whole was below normal for most of the state. Snowfall amounts ranged from 9 to 13 inches through parts of Calvert, St Mary's, Caroline, and Talbot counties with lesser amounts elsewhere. MD-GR-2 reported only 0.9" of snow for the month which was the least amount reported since they began record keeping in 1993. Total precipitation amounts were generally below normal, but southern Maryland was the wettest location. MD-SM-3 (Leonardtown) lead the way with 4.41 inches for the month followed close behind by MD-SM-1 (Ridge) at 4.37 inches and MD-SM-2 (Park Hall). Harford County was the driest location with 1.49 inches reported at MD-HR-12 in Jarrettsville. Thunderstorms late in the month on March 29th produced some hail across portions of central and northern Maryland. Intense hail reports included MD-MG-24, ¼ inch hail and MD-CC-9, ½ inch hail.

Intense Rain and Hail Reports

As we get further into the Spring season the threat of strong thunderstorms with heavy rain and hail increase. One of the neat features of Cocorahs is the intense precipitation and hail reports which you can fill out and submit anytime you observe heavy rain with possible flooding in your area as well as hail. In the wintertime, you can use this feature to report heavy snow accumulations during the storm. These reports go directly to the National Weather Service where they are evaluated to determine the need for severe thunderstorm or flash flood warnings. In addition, your data is often sited in storm summary reports as well.

Questions/Suggestions?

If you have any items you would like to suggest for the newsletter or weather pictures that you took in your area that may be of interest please be sure to contact us. Also if there are any questions you have about taking and reporting observations that aren't clear to you, we would be happy to answer those for you in our upcoming newsletters. Please submit your comments to:

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