

Weather network expands into 10 states

Colorado State University's Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network is beginning its 10th year with the addition of 10 new states.

The program involves thousands of volunteers who document the size, intensity, duration and patterns of precipitation by taking simple measurements at their homes.

Each volunteer is asked to read a rain gauge each day at the same time and upload the measurement to a Web site. The university said data gathered by the volunteers provides daily and long-term decision-making information on drought and water supply for agricultural, recreation, utility providers, resource managers, teachers, scientists and homeowners.

The network now has more than 7,500 active volunteer observers in 27 states. The 10 states to be added this year are California, Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah and Washington.

Agencies assisting the network include the National Weather Service, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and other state and federal natural resources organizations.

The program's organizers, who hope to amass 20,000 volunteers nationwide by the end of next year, detailed the project this week in New Orleans during the annual meeting of the American Meteorological Society.

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