



The Mesonet's Been Everywhere

—by Stephanie Bowen

“I’VE BEEN EVERYWHERE, MAN. I’ve been everywhere, man. Crossed the desert’s bare, man. I’ve breathed the mountain air, man. Of travel I’ve had my share, man. I’ve been everywhere.”

Johnny Cash sang these words long ago, but they certainly apply to the Mesonet today. Through various outreach efforts, the Mesonet travels all over the state sharing weather knowledge with emergency managers, firefighters, students, teachers, agriculturalists, and beyond. In 2012, Mesonet staff gave presentations, led training sessions, and worked tradeshow booths at events across the state, totaling over 130 appearances and reaching over 7,500 people. The Mesonet’s outreach efforts have reached from Goodwell to Bartlesville, down to Atoka and across to Lawton, and all over central Oklahoma.

With intensifying drought, the Mesonet received more and more requests from various organizations around the state to speak about the Mesonet and drought conditions. Often,

Gary McManus, Associate State Climatologist, travels around Oklahoma discussing drought and the Mesonet. Photo courtesy of Brent Fuchs, Journal Record.

Gary McManus, Associate State Climatologist, has been the one traveling around the state, giving these presentations.

“Gary’s information and presentation at the OPREC 14th Annual Crop Production Clinic was great,” said Rick Kochenower, Oklahoma State University Agronomist. “I have received many compliments on the presentation, and producers have told me they may possibly change some crop selections on irrigated ground due to Gary’s presentation.”

The Mesonet also partners with teachers via the Mesonet’s K-12 outreach program to increase the use of weather and climate in classroom science curriculum. Andrea Melvin, Mesonet Outreach Programs Coordinator, leads workshops, field trips and summer camps for Oklahoma youth to learn more about science and the weather.

“The past several years my students and I have benefited from the Oklahoma Mesonet outreach programs in numerous opportunities,” said Jim Jenkins, Bethel Middle School seventh and eighth grade science teacher. “We have experienced fantastic educational field trips involving many hands-on experiences for my students. As an educator, I

have gained a wealth of educational knowledge and many practical laboratory procedures with current data to evaluate. Bethel students have been fortunate to converse with Andrea Melvin concerning their science fair projects. She has been instrumental in helping our students have a sound educational background in the world of science.”

Dusty Hugaboom, Enid High School Secondary Science teacher added, “I believe many of our students who may not have thought of furthering their education consider going to college after having been through this experience. The Mesonet outreach programs are a tremendous asset to public schools.” ■



MESONET IN PICTURES

ScienceFest 2012

- In April 2012, Mesonet's Andrea Melvin coordinated activity stations at ScienceFest Oklahoma, an event for 4th and 5th graders designed to foster scientific literacy. The event attracted 5,700 students from over 40 schools. Andrea has served on the Steering Committee for ScienceFest Oklahoma since 2005. At right, Mesonet staff Alexandria McCombs trains a student on rain gauge calibrations at the Mesonet booth.



Women in Agriculture and Small Business Conference

- In August 2012, Albert Sutherland, Mesonet's Agricultural Coordinator, spoke about the weather outlook and new Mesonet tools at the statewide Women in Agriculture and Small Business Conference.



MESONET IN PICTURES

Meteogram for Hooker

- Meteograms are graphs that show past Mesonet data for a specific site. You can change the duration, from six hours to one week, of the meteogram in the top right corner. When scrolling over the meteogram, a box appears like the one below showing the date, time, and Mesonet weather data recorded. Here, the Hooker Mesonet site recorded an air temperature of 68.5 degrees on March 31 at 6 pm. You can see a cold front came through after that, and temperatures remained below 40 degrees for most of the next day. To view a site's meteogram, visit www.mesonet.org, and click "Weather" from the top menu. Then click the meteogram image on the right side of the page.

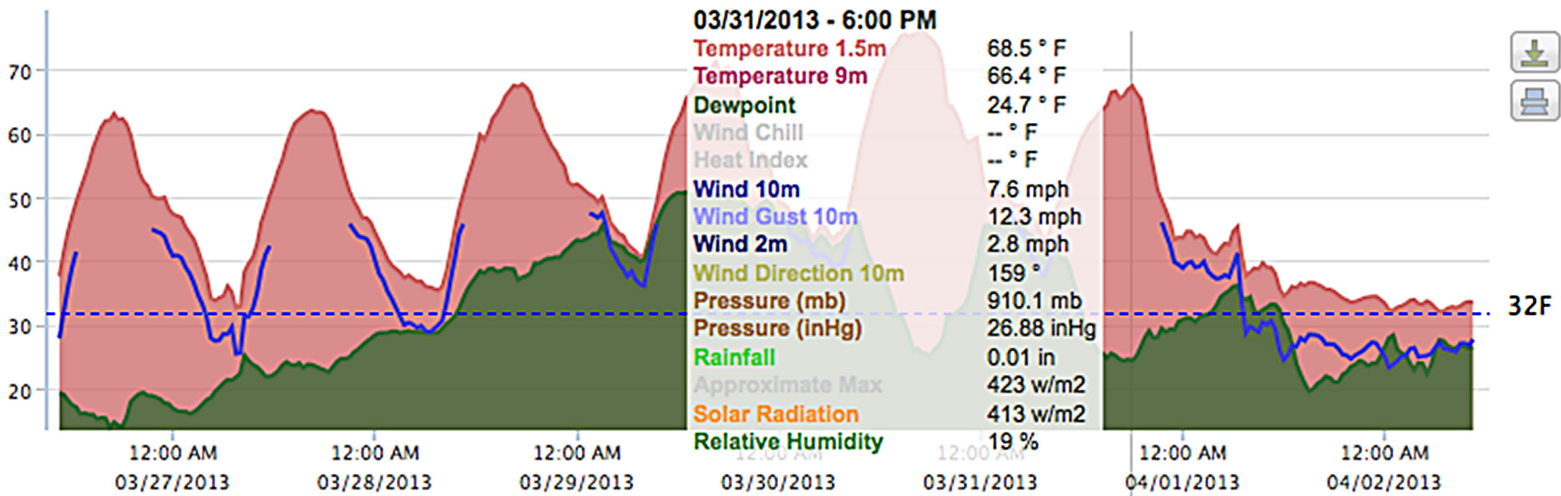
Meteogram for Hooker

Show Legend Duration: 1 Week

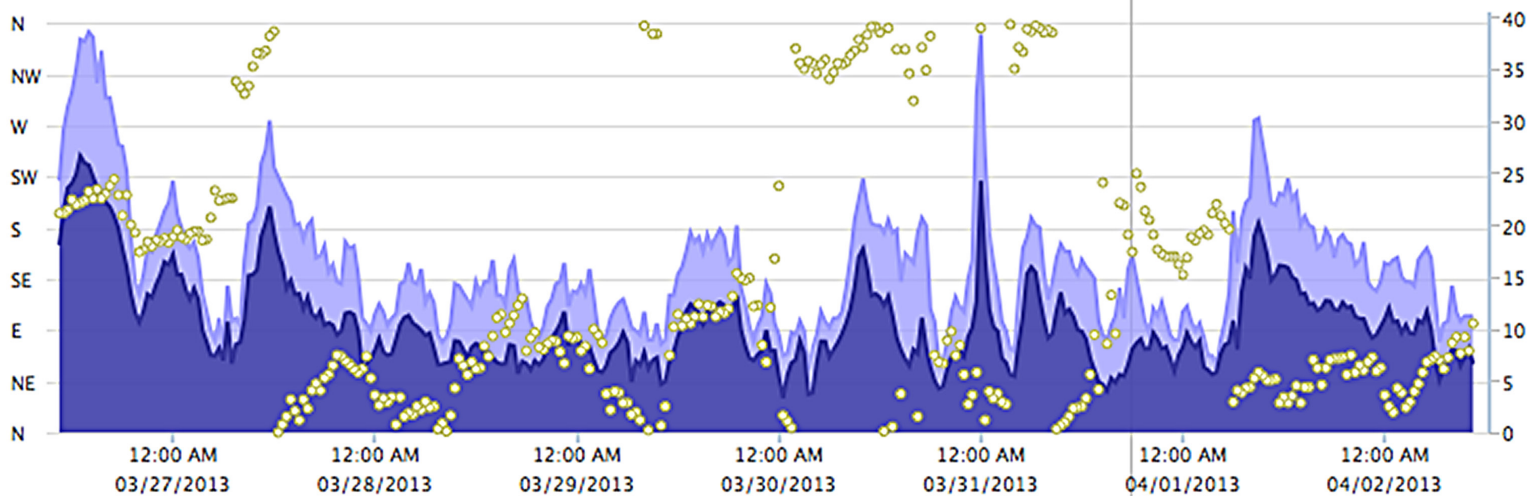
[Change Mesonet Site](#)

[Downloadable 24-Hour Graph](#)

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Temperature 1.5m
 Temperature 9m
 Dewpoint
 Wind Chill
 Heat Index



Wind Gust 10m
 Wind 10m
 Wind 2m
 Wind Direction 10m

City Personnel Pitch in at Mesonet Site

—by Stephanie Bowen

OKLAHOMA MESONET'S FIELD TECHNICIANS can encounter obstacles while ensuring that instruments are working correctly in order for you to receive quality weather data. The Mesonet site at Hooker has been a challenging case for our technicians.

“The first time I went to the Hooker site, I was overwhelmed by the amount of tumbleweeds along the fence,” said Kirk Wilson, Mesonet Field Technician. “There have been several attempts to try to curb them, but nothing has ever worked.”

A buildup of tumbleweeds can affect the data being measured at the site. When Wilson visited the Hooker site in March, he contacted the city superintendent's office and visited with him to explain the problem. Superintendent Forest Osborn offered to give the Mesonet a hand.

“When we first talked, he said it might be that afternoon when they could get someone out to help,” Wilson said.

“They were trying to determine which side of the site to burn the tumbleweeds. They chose to burn on the north side since winds were from the south.”

Within ten minutes, four men and a backhoe showed up to help. They helped Wilson clear all the tumbleweeds out of the site, and they also removed all the tumbleweeds from the north and south side.

“They didn't have to do any of it,” Wilson said. “This was above and beyond what was expected. I was really impressed with the pride the city staff held for their Mesonet site. It showed in how eager they were, and how willing they were, to help when they were aware of an ongoing issue and something they could help with.”

Wilson is also trying to coordinate with the Hooker FFA director to see if students would be interested in helping maintain the site between technician visits. ■

Clockwise from top left: The Mesonet site at Hooker is surrounded by tumbleweeds on March 20, 2013. City personnel help clear and burn the tumbleweeds, an ongoing issue at the site. Travis Stovall (left), Thomas Hart, and Chuck Rowlings helped Mesonet Field Technician Kirk Wilson. The Hooker Mesonet site is free of tumbleweeds, thanks to city personnel.





Arrival of Spring Fails to Rescue Dry March

By Gary McManus, Associate State Climatologist

MARCH WRAP-UP

The wet conditions of February failed to translate into March, but the cooler than normal weather continued virtually uninterrupted. According to data from the Oklahoma Mesonet, the month's statewide average temperature was 47.7 degrees, 2.5 degrees below normal and the 45th coolest March since records began in 1895. The two months together accomplished a relatively rare feat of late, becoming first consecutive months to finish below normal in Oklahoma since January and February 2011. This March stands in stark contrast to last year's record-breaking version, which ended at 59.6 degrees, 9.4 degrees above normal. Thanks to a late-month taste of spring storminess, the statewide average rainfall total climbed to 1.5 inches for the month, which fell about 1.6 inches below normal and ranked as the 33rd driest on record. The first three months of the year came out fairly close to normal for both precipitation and temperature. The statewide average January-March temperature finished at 42.8 degrees, a tenth of a degree above normal, while the precipitation total of 6.44 inches was a tenth of an inch above normal as well.

That late burst of springtime weather also came with a fair amount of severe weather. Reports of hail from the size of marbles to tennis balls came in from across the state on the 29th and 30th. Hail covered the ground and actually drifted in some parts of the state. At least one tornado was confirmed to have touched down late on the 30th in Sequoyah County near Sallisaw, damaging a home and downing power poles. More localized severe weather struck southern Oklahoma on the ninth and northern Oklahoma saw up to 3 inches of snow on the 24th.

The cooler than normal weather kept drought from spreading or intensifying, although drought impacts continued to be felt statewide. Data from the USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service indicate 49 percent of the state's topsoils were rated as either "adequate" or "surplus" for moisture, meaning 51 percent were rated as "short" or "very short." Subsoils have not fared quite so well given the long-term nature of this drought. The subsoils were rated at 88 percent "short" or "very short" and only 12 percent were rated as "adequate." State pasture and range conditions were rated 70 percent "very poor" or "poor," with only 25 percent rated as "fair" and 5 percent rated as "good." Approximately 10 percent of the state was covered by Exceptional drought according to the latest U.S. Drought Monitor report, down from 35 percent three months ago. The entire state has remained in at least Moderate drought since July 2012. The Drought Monitor's intensity scale slides from Moderate-Severe-Extreme-Exceptional, with exceptional being the worst category.

April is normally the fifth wettest month of the year with a statewide average of 3.36 inches. The last two Aprils have finished wetter than normal, only to be followed by drought intensification during May and June. The last two Aprils were also active severe weather months with 50 tornadoes during April 2011 and 53 in 2012, breaking the record for number of April tornadoes in consecutive years.

47.7°F

average statewide temperature for March

1.5"

PRECIPITATION

statewide average for March

33rd DRIEST

March since records began in 1895

10 PERCENT

of the state covered by Exceptional drought according to the U.S. Drought Monitor on March 26

CALENDAR

APRIL

- ▶ 2nd: OK-First re-certification class, Woodward
- ▶ 4th: OK-First re-certification class, Pauls Valley
- ▶ 8th: OK-First re-certification class, OKC
- ▶ 9th: Pecan Management Class Presentation, Perkins
- ▶ 10th: Field Trip for Enid High School
- ▶ 11th: Grape Management Class Presentation, Perkins
- ▶ 11th: Innovator of the Year Award, Journal Record, OKC
- ▶ 15th: Deadline for Regents Meteorology Camp
- ▶ 16th: School Visit, Putnam City Middle School. Camp Goddard
- ▶ 18th: ScienceFest, OKC Zoo
- ▶ 19th: OSU Soils & Water Class presentation, Stillwater
- ▶ 22nd: Deadline for Mesonet Weather Camp
- ▶ 30th-May 1st: OK FFA State Convention, OKC

Thank you for 20 years of partnership!

- ▶ Ketchum Ranch - Installed April 1, 1993
- ▶ Ringling - Installed April 2, 1993
- ▶ Waurika - Installed April 2, 1993
- ▶ Eufala - Installed April 21, 1993
- ▶ Stigler - Installed April 21, 1993
- ▶ Sallisaw - Installed April 22, 1993
- ▶ Wister - Installed April 22, 1993
- ▶ Lane - Installed April 28, 1993
- ▶ Talihina - Installed April 30, 1993
- ▶ Wilburton - Installed April 30 1993

CONTACTS

Accessing recent (within the past 7 days)
Mesonet data

Contact: [Mesonet Operator](#)

Instrumentation, telecommunications, or
other technical specifications

Contact: [Chris Fiebrich](#)

Mesonet agricultural data and products

Contact: [Al Sutherland](#)

Mesonet meteorological data

Contact: [OCS Data Requests](#)

Earthstorm - K-12 educational outreach

Contact: [Andrea Melvin](#)

OK-First - Public safety outreach

Contact: [James Hocker](#)

OK-FIRE - Fire management outreach

Contact: [J.D. Carlson](#)

Not sure?

Contact: 405-325-2541 or [Chris Fiebrich](#).

FORECAST FOR APRIL

[Click here to view the original maps from the Climate Prediction Center.](#)

DISCUSSION: Increased chance for above normal temperatures across Oklahoma. Increased chance for above normal precipitation across southeastern Oklahoma.

