

Original Records

The State Climatologist has an extensive archive of original records. All of the original manuscript forms for the NWS stations from the beginning of record (some back to the 1890's) to the present are available. In addition, there are some United States Army records available, which are previous to the 1890's.

Agencies which have records for which they have no further use, such as fire weather, are encouraged to contact the SC before disposing of them. Also, any person or agency that collects data is encouraged to send the data or to inform the SC so that others may know these data are available.

Other Sources of Information

The State Climatologist has access to numerous other systems, such as the NWS's Climate Analysis Center and the National Climatic Data Center for answering requests. Also, the Western Regional Climate Center (WRCC) at Reno, Nevada assists the State Climatologist and provides direct assistance to those requiring use of lightning data. WRCC also has the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service RAWS weather data as well as NWS radiosonde and airways data sets.

A library of out-of-print publications is maintained by the SCS who also has access to libraries maintained by other State Climatologists and federal and state agencies. Thus, requests which cannot be satisfied internally can often be referred to a person or agency knowledgeable in the area or subject in question. Each state surrounding Idaho also has a State Climatologist Program. These people are also a resource that can be contacted for additional information.

Charges for these services are minimal. Many reports can be generated in 15 minutes or less and are not charged. Requests requiring computer time are cost reimbursable. Since many reports now are for data on microcomputer diskettes, a minimal charge of \$5.00 is made for material, computer time and mailing. For those agencies which regularly support the operation of the State Climatologist Program through grants or contracts, no charges are assessed.

Cooperating Agencies

National Climate Data Center, NOAA
National Weather Service, Western Region, NOAA
Bureau of Reclamation, USDI
Soil Conservation Service, USDA
Bureau of Land Management, USDI
Forest Service, USDA

For further information on the State Climatologist program or to request assistance with a problem requiring climatic or streamflow data, contact:

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Idaho Water Resources
Research Institute



S t a t e

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Purpose

Climatic information is essential to every citizen of Idaho. Whether these citizens are farmers or recreationists, researchers or corporate executives, engineers or planners, climate plays a key role in planning and every day work.

The State Climatologist Program strives to "...acquire, archive, process and disseminate, in the most cost-effective way possible, all climate and weather information, which is or could be of value to policy and decision makers in the state", and to provide climatic services which are important to the needs of the people of Idaho. Providing these services is the State Climatologist whose functions are to:

- ◆ *act as liaison between Idaho weather information users and the National Climatic Data Center of the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration;*
- ◆ *maintain a data bank of climatological and hydrological information;*
- ◆ *supply data in a useful form to users;*
- ◆ *refer requests for complex analyses to the appropriate person, agency or consulting firm;*
- ◆ *maintain contact with users of climatic information in order to ascertain their needs for data and analyses;*
- ◆ *maintain contact with researchers to convey user's needs to them and keep them apprised of other researcher's work;*
- ◆ *maintain a bibliography of publications pertinent to Idaho and Pacific Northwest climate.*

History

The National Weather Service (NWS) State Climatologist Program was terminated in 1973. After this program was dropped, a gap existed in the delivery of data and information from the data collection and publishing agency to the end user. Until this time, requests for data and climatic analyses were handled by the (NWS) State Climatologist (SC) in each state. The SC provided a service to persons in the state that was not available elsewhere. Requests would range from questions about maximum snow accumulation to minimum temperature to drought duration and the like.

In May, 1978, an agreement was concluded among the National Climatic Data Center, the National Weather Service and the University of Idaho to provide some of these terminated services. Since 1978, the State Climatologist Program, in cooperation with the Idaho Water Resources Research Institute and the Idaho Agricultural Experiment Station, has developed and implemented a broad base of services.

Climate Information Services

A few of the requests for data and information services that have been answered in the last few years are:

Snow depth and frozen ground for pipeline design

Rainfall intensities for microwave design

Streamflows for small hydro design

General climate studies for wildlife habitat

Rainfall and snowmelt data for erosion and runoff

Snow and ice on highways for insurance claims

Drought assessment

Snowloads for structural design

Evaporation from sewage lagoons and pesticide wash water holding ponds

Develop a mean annual precipitation map

Minimum temperature probabilities for fruit plantings and concrete curing

Climate Data Services

The data and information necessary to answer requests come from a variety of sources. These sources include computerized databases, published paper records or original manuscript records.

NHIMS

The primary data archive for climatic and water data in Idaho is the Northwest Hydrologic Information Management System (NHIMS). This database is easily accessible on the University of Idaho mainframe computer. It contains hourly and daily data for precipitation, air temperature, snow courses, snowfall, streamflow, reservoir contents, peak flows and pan evaporation. In addition to data listings, numerous routine analysis programs are incorporated into NHIMS. These analyses often will be all a user needs to satisfy their requirements. The SC also maintains other databases containing airways data, solar radiation and soil frost depths.

AGRI-MET

Agri-Met data are collected by a network of automatic weather stations operated by the Bureau of Reclamation in cooperation with the Bonneville Power Administration and other local, state and federal entities. These are 15-minute, one-hour and daily data collected at about 30 stations in the Pacific Northwest for the purpose of energy conservation with an emphasis on irrigation management. All data are available through the NHIMS system. This is one of the few easily available sources of wind data for the region.

SNOTEL

The State Climatologist also has access to the Soil Conservation Service's Centralized Forecast System database, which contains extensive files useful in water supply forecasting. These include comprehensive daily temperature and precipitation data from many NWS stations in the western United States, as well as United States Geological Survey (USGS) streamflow and reservoir data. The majority of the data available from this system is the Snow Survey data. These data consist of snow water equivalent and precipitation from both SNOTEL sites and manual snow courses.