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NON-COMPETITIVE DIVISION

CoCoRaHS: A Valuable Tool for Emergency Managers

The Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS) is a national, non-profit, community-based network of volunteer weather observers. We strive to collect and display accurate, high-quality, high-density precipitation data that is utilized by professionals in various industries, such as: scientists, emergency managers, engineers, water resource managers, utility companies, insurance adjusters, fisheries, agriculture, media, educators, etc. With close to 25,000 active stations, it is a high-resolution precipitation archive for the analysis of snowfall, drought and rainfall hazards.

Our citizen science data benefits emergency managers in a multifaceted way and many emergency managers routinely use this resource. CoCoRaHS data supplements and verifies official National Weather Service observations. It is also used for assessing extreme conditions and is critical for determining what counties qualify for disaster declarations. CoCoRaHS has a reliable snowfall database that is utilized by meteorologists, hydrologists, climatologists and emergency managers. FEMA uses CoCoRaHS reports to identify and confirm snowstorms worthy of federal disaster declarations. Localized CoCoRaHS rainfall data has many hydrological applications, one of which is to gain a better understanding of the rain events that cause flash flooding. It is also used for river forecasting, drought assessment and contingency planning. CoCoRaHS data is incorporated into many weather and climate products and seasonal outlooks. As the network continues to

improve in spatial coverage and technology, it presents many more opportunities for emergency managers to benefit from this valuable resource.

Presentation Theme: I will present case studies and data applications for how emergency managers can utilize the CoCoRaHS rain, hail and snowfall database.

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