

West Offers Dry Ground For Tests on Rainmaking

By BURTON THOMPSON
Associated Press Staff Writer

DENVER—(AP)—This is a critical period for weather modification activities—generally referred to as rainmaking.

The test is whether there will be worthwhile results from cloud seeding weather modification attempts on a vast scale. The west is the proving ground.

The target terrain covers from 10 million acres upward. Projects in 17 western states add up to 13 per cent of the nation's acreage. The overall figure may be 20 million acres by the end of the summer.

Big Year

This is the first big year for the fast-growing weather modification industry. The judges of how the weather modifiers succeed will be thousands of farmers, ranchers and others backing in-

ing efforts are generally successful, there won't be any miracles. Weather modifiers don't make rain — "we aren't magicians," Krick has emphasized. Only nature can put moisture in a cloud. The weather modifiers try to help her let loose of it.

To do the job, dry ice, silver iodine and other material are scattered from airplanes or sent up from ground generators.

The theory is that in nature, moisture is attracted to frozen drops of water, dust, bits of soil and rock. The thing to do is to furnish extra amounts of them.

Doubts Expressed

Commercial rainmakers are confident moisture may be increased from 50 to 500 per cent and that hail and heavy rains can be tamed. But some scientists and meteorologists feel that there is insufficient evidence that weather can be modified except on labora-

Weather modification has swirled up some touchy disagreements. In the Rogue River Valley of southern Oregon, pear growers hire a weather control firm for hail prevention and report that there have been no serious storms since 1948. However, other farmers in the same area fear cloud seeding may reduce rainfall. H. L. Claycomb, Ashland grain farmer, called seeding "cloud-napping" and contended:

Oh Well, Let's Wait

"Let the Lord take care of the weather and let the pear growers take out hail insurance."

"Maybe," Wilson conceded, "the whole idea is a mistake, and won't work consistently anywhere but in a deep freeze box. Maybe it is okay but takes a lot of working out. Well, the first automobiles were not so hot, either, but I drive a pretty good car today."

... projects with at least

... commercial rainmaker, Dr. P. Krick of Denver, estimates his own contracts alone insure 300 million acres. His water resources development corporation contracts cover all New Mexico. Krick confidently predicted the end of a drought in that state in July. But the state still was dry in July and a survey showed rainfall this year has averaged 55 per cent of normal.

"We are still confident that we will break the drought," Krick said. "And that they will get lots of rain in August and September." ... if the far flung rainmak-

... tory and local scales.

W. F. McDonald, assistant chief of the U. S. Weather Bureau, has said this of weather modification:

"We admit the possibility that rainfall may be locally influenced in some degree by artificial means. The bureau feels that it is still too early to try to define what can or can not be done."

Just an Experiment

Jim Wilson of Fort Collins, Colo., secretary of the National Weather Improvement Assn., takes this attitude:

"This whole thing is so new that it is still only an experiment."

But thousands of westerners want to try it. Farmers, ranchers and others have banded together in loosely-knit organizations. One man, several or a few could not afford to absorb the cost.

There are other considerations, too. Among them is freedom from individual liability in court actions.

City Dads Like Mayor, Table His Resignation

WOODBURN —(U.P.)— Wood-

1059 Willan

W

Fri

WOODBURN —(U.P.)— Wood-
burn city fathers think too much
of Mayor Elmer Mattson to let
him resign.

On advice of his physician,
Mattson submitted his resigna-
tion July 17.

But the council unanimously
rejected the resignation Tuesday
evening. Councilmen said they
would just wait two or three
months, in hopes Mattson could
resume his duties. Until that
determination, Council Presi-
dent Jess Fikan will continue to
serve as acting mayor.

tions.

Wilson estimated that at least
30 associations have been formed
to back cloud seeding. His organ-
ization—independent of all com-
mercial contractors—includes 18
groups.

Fees Are Varied

Sometimes a flat fee is agreed
upon for association membership.
Sometimes charges are worked out
at so much per acre to be covered
by rainmaking or perhaps a sec-
tion of land is the basic unit. The
charge varies with the type of
land—farm land more and range
land less.

• Associated Press - Aug 1951. West offers dry ground for tests on rain making.

<http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1310&dat=19510809&id=kDBQAAAIBAJ&sjid=vgsEAAAIBAJ&pg=6558,4474331>