

NORWEST
CORPORATION



PIONEER
NATURAL RESOURCES



Background

Annual total precipitation in Las Animas County ranges from 14 to 16 inches: however, over the last decade, this area of Colorado has experienced extreme to exceptional drought conditions based on reports provided by the US Drought Monitor group (<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu>).

Landowners in the Raton Basin have had the unique opportunity to utilize Pioneer Natural Resources (Pioneer) coalbed methane (CBM) surface discharges to meet some of their water needs over the past several years. This mutual partnership has provided a new water source helping to maintain the agricultural industry in Las Animas County, and has offset a part of the reduction in rain and snowfall due to the drought conditions over the last ten years. Tracking precipitation totals throughout the county is useful in assessing the value of any new or existing water sources that are currently being used for agricultural purposes.



Volunteer Program Overview

In May 2012, Pioneer joined the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail and Snow Network (CoCoRaHS), a non-profit community-based network of volunteers working together to measure and map precipitation throughout Colorado and the United States. Pioneer's partnership and support allow data to be collected from ten new CoCoRaHS rain gauges, seven of which are installed at public schools throughout Las Animas County and will be monitored by student volunteers.

Automated Program Overview

Norwest Corporation installed three automated rain gauges in Las Animas County, Colorado in July 2012 to support Pioneer's CBM operations in the Raton Basin. These automated rain gauges are part of the overall effort Pioneer has initiated to improve the knowledge of water availability in Las Animas County, home to an agricultural community that depends on water for its livelihood. In addition, data collected by one additional station, the Hoehne CoAgMet (Colorado Agricultural Meteorological Network) weather station is included in the Pioneer precipitation monitoring program.

For More Information

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For additional information on the program, please visit:
<http://www.apishapawatershed.org>

