

https://www.paducahsun.com/news/kentucky-mesonet-adds-weather-station-to-ballard-county/article_481b9060-dd36-5cb3-bfbc-495cf9e25367.html

TOP STORY

Kentucky Mesonet adds weather station to Ballard County

By DAVID B. SNOW dsnow@paducahsun.com
May 13, 2022



Those on hand for the official ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Ballard County Kentucky Mesonet station were (from left) Steve Eddy of NWS-Paducah, Andrew Quilligan of the Kentucky Mesonet, Kate Webb of Western Kentucky, John Gordon of the National Weather Service, State Rep. Steven Rudy, interim director Megan Schargorodski of the Kentucky Mesonet, David Brown of Western Kentucky University, land donor Terre Cooper, Eddie Melton of Kentucky Farm Bureau, former state climatologist Stu Foster and Ballard Judge-Executive Todd Cooper.

DAVID B. SNOW | The Sun

KEVIL — A new weather station has been placed in northern Ballard County that will bolster forecasting and improve on storm warning times, allowing people in rural western Kentucky more time to shelter themselves.

It will also make soil recording to improve soil research in western Kentucky.

The weather station is part of the Kentucky Mesonet and was officially dedicated Monday with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The land for the site along Bandana Road was donated by Benny and Terre Cooper.

According to Megan Schargorodski, the interim director of the Kentucky Mesonet and the Kentucky Climate Center, the station will gather information about air temperature and relative humidity at multiple levels, wind speed and direction at multiple levels, solar radiation, soil moisture and soil temperature.



Report ad

“We have two separate soil moisture pits (at the site),” Schargorodski said. “This is really interesting because it brings not only just one sample of what the soil looks like but it also brings another one in a different type of soil in close proximity.

“It’s going to help further soil research; it’s going to help further the ability for the National Weather Service to get the word out whenever there is a storm coming in. Overall, we are establishing the climate record for Ballard County; it has never been established.”

Data from the Ballard County weather station site is sent from the station to the National Weather Service bureau in Paducah. Information from the station can also be seen at kymesonet.org.

David Brown, the dean of the Ogden College of Science and Engineering at Western Kentucky University, said he was proud of the Kentucky Mesonet.

“It is one of the foundations of our weather and climate knowledge base,” he said. “It is a statewide network that provides high quality and research-grade data on weather and climate factors ... all of these provide value-added services to Kentuckians.

“We anticipate installing many new stations in the upcoming biennium and beyond. Our eventual goal is that we will have at least a station in every county of the commonwealth.”

Officials said that a site near Wickliffe near the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio rivers would be a good addition to the network.

The Ballard County station is the second-most western site in the network. Other stations in the Jackson Purchase region are located in Calloway, Fulton, Graves and Marshall counties.

Others on hand for the ceremony included Ballard Judge-Executive Todd Cooper, State Rep. Steven Rudy and several representatives of Western Kentucky University, the National Weather Service and the Kentucky Mesonet.

The Kentucky Mesonet is recognized as the official source of climatological observations for the commonwealth of Kentucky, as designated by a resolution that was signed by Gov. Ernie Fletcher on April 5, 2006. The first Mesonet weather station was put up in 2007.

It is a division of the Kentucky Climate Center, which was created in 1978 and became a charter member of the Applied Research and Technology Program of Distinction at Western Kentucky University in 1998.

“Mesonet” is a portmanteau word taken from “mesoscale network,” which is a network of automated weather and environmental monitoring stations designed to observe mesoscale – or “middle-scale” – weather phenomena.

Follow David B. Snow on Twitter, @SunWithSnow, or on Facebook at facebook.com/sunwithsnow.

Follow David B. Snow on Twitter, @SunWithSnow, or on Facebook at facebook.com/sunwithsnow.

David Snow

