Kentucky in the News

The Kentucky Geographic Alliance -September, 2017

Precipitation from Hurricane Harvey in Kentucky

Precipitation Data Points on Kentucky State Map

Precipitation from Hurricane Irma in Kentucky

Precipitation Data Points on Kentucky State Map

These maps were created by the Kentucky Mesonet to show the distribution of rainfall. Hurricane Harvey was not as strong as Hurricane Irma, but it impacted west-central Kentucky with record rainfall. Russellville's Mesonet tower received 8.25" of rain during the event which is 16% of their normal precipitation for the year (Kentucky Climate Center). Hurricane Irma's precipitation in Kentucky was not as great, and Russellville only received .89" of rain. Hurricane Irma did have higher winds associated with the event.

Geographers study events like this in order to model unusual weather and how it affects our state. Emergency managers use these geographic skills to plan for different natural hazards in order to mitigate their effects. Hurricane Maria's impact on Puerto Rico demonstrates the need for logistical planning before and after events. Understanding how natural hazards impact an area and the utilization of resources is key to recovery.

Kentucky schools have an opportunity to use Geographic Information Systems to understand natural hazards. A simple story map has been created to show how students can understand the use of maps for hazard analysis. Currently the job outlook for GIS shows growth of 29% with a median pay of $62,750 a year. Geographers are trained in science, math and social studies in order to understand the larger impacts of natural hazards.