CLIMATIC DATA-_
Statewide
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Section I NE-NRCS-JANUARY 1995
USE OF CLIMATIC DATA STATION INDEX

Virtually every NRCS agricultural operation, and many engineering activities, are dependent on weather or climate. Climatic parameters are the driving force in the physical process of soil erosion and plant growth, and are also key factors in water quality and quantity concerns. A network of some 7000 cooperative stations collect climatic data. A Station Index of these 7000 sites has been developed and incorporated in Section I of the Nebraska Field Office Technical Guide. This Station Index of sites enabled field office personnel to determine which sites in the area would be useful in conservation planning and application of conservation measures (reference Figure 1 for locations within Nebraska).

The National Weather Service Cooperative Station Network

The Station Index lists stations in the National Weather Service (NWS) Cooperative Network. A cooperative station is a station at which observations or other services are performed by private citizens, institutions (such as utilities and television stations), etc. Services rendered usually consist of reading instruments or taking visual observations and transmitting reports.

The Cooperative Program Manager (CPM) is responsible for the installation of all furnished instruments, observer instruction in techniques of weather observation, data recording, and caring for instruments and equipment. The equipment used to take observations may be owned by the NWS, an individual company, or by another government agency. The observed data are recorded on a Record of River and Climatological Observation form WS Form B-91, and are sent monthly to the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) in Asheville, North Carolina. NCDC digitizes, quality controls, and archives the data.

Types of Stations

The station types are defined by the parameters measured. Although the majority of cooperative stations record precipitation and maximum and minimum temperatures, several other weather parameters may also be observed. For example, one station may record precipitation, temperature, and evaporation. One or more of the following may be reported: precipitation, air temperature, evaporation, wind movement, soil temperature, or agricultural data.