



For the past 5 years, [SCIPP](#), [CoCoRaHS](#), and the [Earth Observation and Modeling Facility](#) have conducted a “Field Photos Weekend” project to create a national picture of our landscape. The project started out as a way to compare visual impacts of drought to the kinds of things we measure, like rainfall and stream flow. But the photos of places that are not in drought can be equally valuable, providing a frame of reference for future years and seasons.

For each Field Photos Weekend, we asked CoCoRaHS observers and other citizen scientists to take pictures of the land around them - water bodies, fields, forests, or any other facet of our environment - at roughly the same time. These events began with Labor Day Weekend in 2012 and have continued over Presidents Day and Memorial Day ever since.

What we do with your photos

Photos are stored in the [EOMF Field Photos Archive](#) along with all the other photos received from researchers, field projects, and citizen scientists. All of these photos are valuable in trying to figure out how the landscape responds to both sudden and gradual changes in climate, water, ecology and even geology.

For the Field Photo Weekends project, photos are tagged in the notes section with **#CoCoRaHSMmmmy** (mmm=month and yy=year, for example may14). You can search the archive by keyword such as **#CoCoRaHSSep18** to see all the photos that were submitted last Presidents Day weekend.

Taking Photos

So what makes a good picture for a project like this? Photos should tell the story of the field or landscape, anything that you feel is representative of the world around you. Just as you do not find the deepest snowdrift for your snowfall measurements, you should not find the vegetation that is in the worst condition for your pictures. We want to see what it may look like walking through a field, where some things may be in better condition than others.

Photos can be of any of the following:

- A water body, showing how much water it is currently holding and where the natural bank might be. For example, a farm pond showing the ring of bare soil around it that is usually submerged

- A tree, showing the health of its leaves. It may be a tree in your front yard, one in a nearby park, or something over in the woods, whatever you think tells the story about how it is faring this year.
- A field, such as a pasture, meadow, or crops. The photo should show whether vegetation is brown or green, if soil is becoming exposed, if seeds are burnt up, or if vines are withering.
- A typical scene showing the depth of snow, maybe a meadow, nearby hill, or looking up at the mountains. Be sure to add comments telling us whether the snow is more than or less than usual for this time of year.
- A panorama, or series of pictures from a single spot looking in each direction (north, east, south, and west - and down!). The panorama is a good way to get a “big picture” of the land around you, especially if you think you might participate in another Field Photos Weekend in the future. Be sure to pick somewhere that is nearby but fairly open. A bunch of houses will not tell us about how wet or dry it is.

What you need to participate

All you need is a camera. Any old camera will do, but if you have a camera with GPS capability or a smartphone, that would be even better.

If you are using a SmartPhone or GPS camera, make sure “location services” is turned on. This will automatically encode the picture’s latitude, longitude and direction you are looking. To turn on location services, go to your phone’s settings and you should see “Location Services” in the menu. When you select this, you will get a list of applications that use location services, each with an on/off switch. Make sure camera and compass are both turned on. If you feel better not having your phone know where you are, you can turn these off again after taking the pictures. The embedded latitude and longitude will help us from having to estimate from a map.

Submitting your photos

There are three ways to contribute to the project:

1. Upload your photos directly to the [EOMF Photo Archive](#).
2. Email them to us at fieldphotos@southernclimate.org.

If you upload the photos yourself, please add **#CCoCoRaHSep18** to any photos in the Field Notes section so we can identify those related to this project. If you email them to us, we do need a little information from you so that we can place them properly on a map:

1. Description of where the photo was taken, as detailed as possible. For example, northwest corner of Highway 9 and Jenkins in Norman, Oklahoma, looking west.
2. The date the photo was taken
3. If you are a CoCoRaHS observer, your CoCoRaHS station number (we want to give due credit!)

If you prefer to upload and manage your photos directly, visit the EOMF website [and register for an account](#). This will let you set privacy settings, edit your photos to provide additional detail, or upload other photos from other locations or times of the year. The more photos that are in the EOMF archive, the better will be our ability to ground-truth all of the weather and environmental data that we collect.

Note that your name or e-mail address will not appear with the photos or on any website. SCIPP will provide a list of those who contributed to CoCoRaHS and will not maintain any records themselves. So your e-mail is safe.

Questions

If you have questions along the way, please e-mail SCIPP at fieldphotos@southernclimate.org SCIPP will help clarify any questions about taking, uploading or viewing photos.

We want this to be a fun experience for everyone and give everyone a chance to see what it looks like near where we all take our observations each day. We hope that you will be as excited about participating as we are in hosting this.