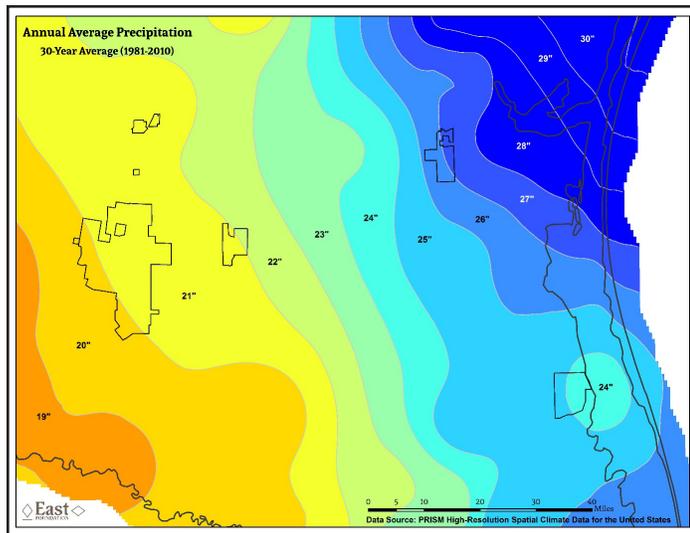


WEATHER MONITORING

As stewards of the land we make decisions and implement management actions on a daily basis that affect its long term productivity – varying livestock stocking rates, brush control, invasive species management, prescribed fire. With each of these, we have a say in when and how they are applied; however, when it comes to rain we are left to adjust to changing conditions on the ground. The East Foundation ranches are in a part of Texas that receive on average 20 to 27 inches of rain per year. **As recent floods and extreme droughts in the last five years indicate, we rarely have an average year and rainfall events are often spotty and highly variable in intensity.**



Recognizing the important role rainfall plays in the Wild Horse Desert, the East Foundation has implemented a weather monitoring network in partnership with the Crop Weather Program at the Corpus Christi Texas A&M AgriLife Research Center. **The cornerstone of this network is a series of eight high precision weather stations distributed across the ranches.** Four are located on the San Antonio Viejo with one each on the El Sauz, Santa Rosa, Buena Vista, and Ranchito. These stations provide ranch specific weather condition but over time they will

provide insight into regional weather trends due to their distribution across the region.

Enhancing the network is a **series of 19 self-tipping rain gauges evenly distributed across the Coloraditas study area.** The Coloraditas is an operational-scale project encompassing more than 18,000 acres of native rangelands aimed at getting a better picture of the relationships among cattle grazing (two different densities under continuous verses rotational situations), forage availability and plant responses, and wildlife populations in the south Texas Sand Sheet. The Coloraditas rain gauge network will allow us assess the variable nature of rainfall across the landscape and its impact on forage availability and wildlife habitat. **The East Foundation is developing tools to compile this weather data and present it in a useful manner to better manage our ranch lands.**



The recent rains over the last year have revived a parched landscape. As the vegetation around our historic structures on the San Antonio Viejo can attest, **periodic drought defines the south Texas landscape and the people who love to work here.** The information we collect now on weather and how our ranches respond to periods of recurring drought will help us and other ranchers prepare and respond to the next one.

Partners: Crop Weather Program at the Corpus Christi Texas A&M AgriLife Research Center, and Texas A&M Institute of Renewable Natural Resources