

Top 5 Weather Events of 2021:

The staff of the National Weather Service in Jackson has once again ranked what we deemed were the top 5 weather events of this past year, 2021. Here are the events, ranked from 1 to 5, with 1 being the most significant:

1. February 26 – March 1, 2021: Major Flooding across eastern Kentucky:



Old Highway 80 between London and Manchester
Courtesy of Chris Meadows

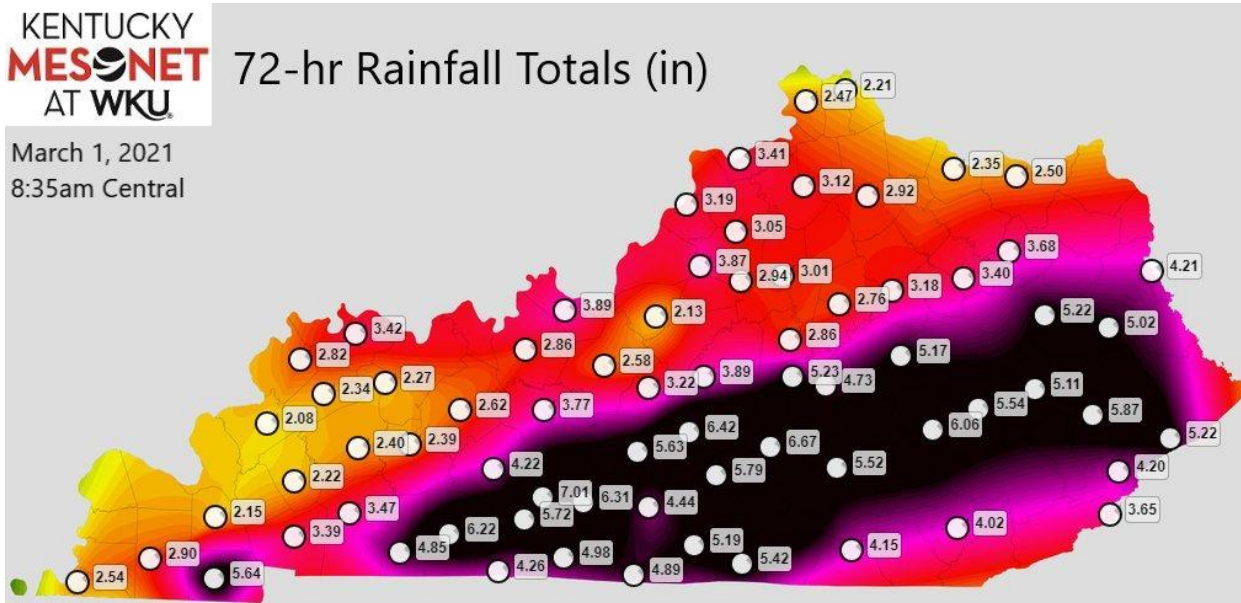
Several rounds of heavy rain moved across eastern Kentucky from late Friday, February 26th through early Monday, March 1st. The combination of all the heavy rainfall led to significant flooding across a good portion of central and east Kentucky. For some areas, this was the most significant flooding in the last 50 to 60 years, or more.

The first round of heavy rain came through late on Friday. This rainfall targeted areas along the Hal Rogers Parkway, including Laurel, Clay, Perry, and Knott Counties. Flash flooding led to some closed roads for a short time in these areas.

The second round of rainfall came through late Saturday night as a warm front lifted northward across east Kentucky. The heavy rain stalled out over portions of Powell and Menifee Counties, leading to flash flooding in the early morning hours of Sunday.

Finally, the third round of heavy rain came from late Sunday afternoon through Sunday night. Given that much of the area had already received significant amounts of rain earlier, this last round caused widespread flash flooding across much of east Kentucky. This ultimately led to larger creek and river flooding. River levels on the Kentucky River were some of the highest readings ever recorded, namely at Booneville and Ravenna. Clay City, Heidelberg, Jackson,

Paintsville, and Salyersville also saw significant river flooding of which hadn't been seen in 40 to 50 years.



In addition, the periods of heavy rain and flooding led to numerous water rescues and mud/rock slides. Many areas were cut off or blocked due to the flooding. Power outages were also noted and reached as high as 12,000 during the peak of the flash flooding Sunday night.

For more information on this event: https://www.weather.gov/jkl/022821_Flood

2. February 15th – 16th, 2021 Significant Ice Storm:

An area of low pressure tracked across east Kentucky from Monday, February 15th into Tuesday, February 16th. Widespread precipitation spread across east Kentucky during the afternoon hours on the 15th, with locally heavy precipitation during the evening hours. With temperatures below freezing across most of east Kentucky,

and warmer air just off the ground, freezing rain was the predominant precipitation type, resulting in significant ice accumulations.

Power outages during the peak of this event reached 150,000 across east Kentucky with numerous trees snapping off from the weight of the ice. Many roads became impassable due to downed trees and electrical lines.



Magoffin County
Courtesy of Gary



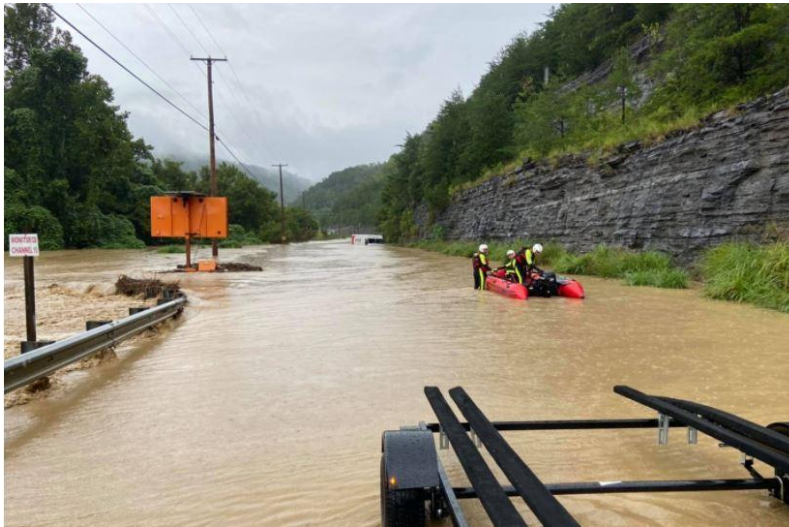
Whitley County
Courtesy of Robbie

information:
For more
https://www.weather.gov/jkl/021521_Ice

3. August 30, 2021 Flash Flooding in Pike County:

Hurricane Ida made landfall in Louisiana at 11:55 a.m. CDT on August 29th. From there it continued to slowly move inland and northward. By late morning on August 30th, it had reached southwest Mississippi. A large amount of moisture was pulled from the Gulf northward with this system and made its way to Kentucky. This was exacerbated by a frontal boundary that was stalled north of the Ohio River, keeping Kentucky in the warm and moist sector of the storm system.

Showers and thunderstorms developed across portions of the Coalfields by mid-morning. The most persistent and intense storms occurred over Pike County between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. and had very little forward motion. Rainfall rates under the heaviest activity approached 3 inches per hour at the peak of the event. This led to flash flooding which blocked multiple roadways, and water entering one of the fire stations at Blackberry. High water rescues were performed along Stone Coal Road as the flood waters rose. Fortunately, no fatalities were reported.



**Water rescue in progress along Stone Coal Rd.
Courtesy of Dillon Gaudett**

For more information:

https://www.weather.gov/jkl/2021-08-30-Pike_County-Flash_Flooding

4. August 19, 2021, Flash Flooding at Bethany in Wolfe County:

A weak shortwave moving into a very moist atmosphere during the overnight hours was sufficient to trigger showers and thunderstorms throughout the following day across eastern Kentucky. Portions of the region had already been hit by heavy rains in the days leading up to this event, saturating soils and priming those areas which later experienced flooding. Ultimately the heaviest rainfall occurred over southern Wolfe County between 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. and was followed by significant flash flooding. Additional showers passed through the area around midday, likely exacerbating the situation. In particular, Holly Creek in Bethany and Hunting Fork along U.S. Highway 15 experienced some of the worst flooding. A number of houses were inundated. Flooding was also observed in other portions of the county such as along Stillwater Creek between Malaga and the Mountain Parkway.



**Flooding at Bethany School
Courtesy of Johnny Ray Feltner**



**Inundated Road along Hunting Fork
Courtesy of Michael Parsons**

For more information:

https://www.weather.gov/jkl/2021-08-19-Wolfe_County-Flash_Flood

5. February 7th, 2021, Snow Storm:



Top of Pine Mountain
Courtesy of Tammie

A weather disturbance aloft interacted with a cold front over southeast Kentucky to bring widespread snow to the area during the early morning hours of February 7th. A band of very heavy snowfall developed from Whitley and Bell counties through Harlan and Letcher counties. Within this band of snowfall, amounts ranged from 4 to 9 inches. The snow was very wet and heavy in nature, which led to several

downed branches and trees. This in turn, knocked out power for several thousand customers during the morning hours. Travel was also very difficult as snowfall rates exceeded 2 inches per hour at times, making it nearly impossible to keep the roads cleared off. Travel across the higher ridgetops above 2,000 feet was especially treacherous as temperatures in these areas were much colder, resulting in higher accumulations.

SNOWFALL REPORTS FOR 02/07/2021		
Location	Amount	Reported By
1 N Rock House	9.8 in.	Public
Pansy	8.5 in.	Public
1 NNE Gatun	8.3 in.	Public
1 NE Loyall	6.5 in.	Public
Frakes	6.5 in.	Public
Mayking	6.5 in.	Public
1 WSW Wallins Creek	6.0 in.	Public
Strunk	4.5 in.	Public
Carcassonne	4.0 in.	Public
Pineville	3.5 in.	Law Enforcement
1 SSW Ermine	3.5 in.	CO-OP Observer
2 ESE Slemph	3.0 in.	Public
1 ESE Skyline	2.7 in.	CO-OP Observer
Beverly	2.5 in.	Public
Whitley City	2.5 in.	Trained Spotter
1 SW Deering	1.1 in.	CoCoRaHS
Thornton	1.0 in.	Trained Spotter
Clover Bottom 1WSW	1.0 in.	CO-OP Observer
SNOWFALL REPORTS FOR 02/07/2021 (Continued)		

Location	Amount	Reported By
Cressy	0.7 in.	CO-OP Observer
Stanton 2W	0.6 in.	CO-OP Observer
Campton 9.3 SE	0.6 in.	CoCoRaHS
Viper 0.5 N	0.5 in.	CoCoRaHS
Jackson 5.5WNW	0.5 in.	CoCoRaHS
Salyersville	0.5 in.	CO-OP Observer

For more information: https://www.weather.gov/jkl/020721_Snow

Honorable Mentions (In no particular order):

1. February 17th – 18th, 2021 - Snowfall
2. February 28th, 2021 - Wayne County Tornado
3. June 11th, 2021 – Flash Flooding in Lee County
4. July 30th, 2021 – Flash Flooding in Frenchburg