SUMMARY OF THE FEBRUARY 1983 WEATHER ON THE MONTEREY PENINSULA, CALIFORNIA

General: February 1983 was wet and mild with below average fog and light to moderate winds on the days between storms. Rainfall at the end of February is at an all-time high (since 1966) for the season since 1 July 82.

Temperature: February’s temperatures were on the mild side, with a 54.2°F average, equivalent to 1.1°F above the 32-year normal. Daytime temperatures were actually below normal on the average – 61.4°F vs. 61.7°F while the many cloudy nights yielded an average minimum of 47.0°F, 2.5°F above normal. Only one temperature in the 70’s occurred, namely 70°F on 22 Feb for the month’s high. Low for the month, 41°F, was registered on 3 Feb. Only two Februarys in the last 32 years had a minimum higher than 41°F (42°F in 1978 and 1963). And, only five Februarys in the last 32 years registered an absolute high cooler than 70°F (coolest = 65°F in 1979). The 29°F range between the absolute high and low in Feb matches the lowest range on record for the month (1960, 1969 and 1978).

Precipitation: February continued the string of wet months with 5.56" (up to 6 p.m. 28 Feb) compared to a 32-year normal of 2.82". Every month this season has been wetter than normal starting with Sept. As of 6 p.m. 28 Feb, the seasonal total (Jul 1, 82 to date) stands at 26.17", compared to a normal of 13.40" and a total last year at this time equal to 16.73". The station’s annual rain record of 29.99" was marked in the period July 1, 1966 to June 30, 1967. Two other years turned in a 29+" record: 29.68" in the year ending 30 June 1952 and 29.56" in the year ending 30 June 1978. Using Cal Am Water Company records at Forest Lake before 1952, there is a 30.96" in the year ending 30 June 1941 and a 33.65" value in the year ending 30 June 1907. If normal rainfall occurs the remaining four months of this season, 5.30" would be added to the 26.17" as of 28 Feb, totaling 31.47" by 30 June 1983. (The continuation of heavy rainfall beyond 6 p.m. 28 Feb, into the first day of March, enhanced considerably the chance for an all-time record rainfall season.)

The 26.17" total is the highest ever at this point in the rainfall season, considering all years back to 1896. Even in the year with 29.99", the end-of-Feb total only measured 15.44". In 1969 there was 23.81" as of 28 Feb – the year ended with 28.36". The wet 1940/41 year at Forest Lake only measured 19.19" by 28 Feb and even in the 1906/07 year only 21.90" had fallen by 28 Feb. Evidently late winter and spring rainfall has added considerably to the total of many wet years.

The 5.56" in Feb did not break a record, although it is the highest since 5.88" in Feb 1973. However, it is much lower than the record of 7.31" in 1969.

The two major storms of the month occurred on 7 Feb and again on the last day of the month. The latter was a phenomenal disturbance affecting all of California with very high winds and occasional deluges of rain. Wind gusts were locally measured up to 70 mph near the mouth of the Carmel Valley, up to 70 mph at the Harbor in Monterey and 62 mph at the Naval Postgraduate School (4:30 p.m.) – all in late afternoon 28 Feb. There was extensive moderate damage to trees, property and utility lines in the area from the storm.

Two thunderstorms were registered, 7 and 27 Feb, with lightning during the evening 28 Feb. (Carmel Valley reported thunderstorms during the evening.) More typical of Feb is none or one thunderstorm day.

Fog: Fog is of little interest this time of year – Jan, Feb and March being months of least occurrence. In Feb 83 there were only three days with some fog vice the 6 expected.
Wind: Winds were light for the most part except on storm days. The airport hourlies, for an 18-hour day from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., averaged 5.8 mph in Feb (through 21 Feb). Gusts in the area reached at least 70 mph on 28 Feb as indicated in the precipitation section.