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Can cloud seeding control the weather?

Jesse Juchtzer, right, and Frank McDonough, left, tend to one of Desert Research Institute's cloud-seeding machines up on Alpine Meadows Ski Area in California on Feb. 27, 2018. PHOTOS BY JASON BEAN/RENO GAZETTE JOURNAL FILE

Extreme events, such as TX flooding, often stir up long-running conspiracies

Hayleigh Evans Arizona Republic | USA TODAY NETWORK

PHOENIX – In early July, a storm dumped as much as 20 inches of rain in parts of central Texas, the equivalent of months' worth of rain. It swelled the Guadalupe River with such devastating force that at least 130 people died in the flooding, including dozens of children.

Amid the grief and confusion, blame emerged in an unexpected place. A small cloud-seeding flight conducted by a startup named Rainmaker two days prior became the target of unfounded accusations. Elected officials and online influencers questioned whether the operation triggered or worsened the deluge.

The flight, more than 100 miles away and lasting about 20 minutes, released 70 grams of silver iodide into a set of clouds and prompted a drizzle that produced less than half a centimeter of rain on farmlands struggling with drought. Scientists said the distance made it scientifically impossible for the small seeding event to have played a role in the

A vial of silver iodide is seen at the DRI cloud-seeding generator at Alpine Meadows Ski Resort on Feb. 25, 2021.

"It's important to understand that cloud seeding is dependent on the existence of clouds. Weather modification cannot create clouds. It cannot create storms."

Eric Betterton Professor emeritus in atmospheric sciences at the University of Arizona

'Profoundly concerned'

Some experts worry as FL moves to end vaccine requirements

Ana Goñi-Lessan
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

Hours after Florida Surgeon General Joseph Ladapo announced the Department of Health and the Legislature would work hand-in-hand to repeal vaccine mandates in the state, national organizations, state university medical centers and former Florida officials came out against the move.

Rivkees

Berman

Ladapo has been Florida's surgeon general since 2021 and is also a professor of medicine at the University of Florida. But the university's academic health center, UF Health, stood firm in a statement that vaccines are "safe" and "essential."

"Public health and safety is a shared responsibility," the institution said in a statement. "The overwhelming consensus of the medical and public health communities show that vaccines are among the most studied and scrutinized medical interventions in history."

"They are proven to be safe, effective, and essential in preventing the spread of many serious infectious diseases," it added. "Following evidence-based practices regarding vaccines and other care decisions are best made in consultation with your health care professional."

Conservative reaction was largely positive, with many framing Ladapo's stance as a refusal, as one person put it, to "bow to (Big) Pharma or the bureaucrats."

For example, Dr. Simone Gold – founder and President of America's Frontline Doctors, the far-right group formed to oppose COVID restrictions – posted, "This is real leadership – defying Pharma's coercion and restoring true medical freedom."

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'Not sure' what National Guard can do

Residents of high-crime city in Louisiana oppose Trump's troop plan

Tim Reid, Jayla Whitfield-Anderson and Brad Heath
REUTERS

SHREVEPORT, LA – Wayne E. Smith, the police chief in Shreveport, Louisiana, sits in his office beside a map dotted with pins – each marking one of the 26 murders that have shaken this Louisiana city so far this year.

He is weighing a proposal floated by President Donald Trump to send National Guard troops into Louisiana to fight crime – an idea backed by the state's Republican governor but one Smith fears could do more harm than good.

Smith, already facing a shortage of 150 officers, told Reuters in an interview on Sept. 4 that deploying troops could

further drain his force as many of his officers also serve part-time in the National Guard. Smith pauses and looks at the board and its red, blue and green pins, each color representing the sex or youth of the victim. "I feel that hurt and that pain. I feel that I as police chief, this police department have not done enough to

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If the Louisiana National Guard is deployed in Shreveport or elsewhere in the state, Shreveport Police Chief Wayne E. Smith says his ranks will be thinned even more than they already are, as many guard members are also police officers. KATHLEEN FLYNN/REUTERS

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