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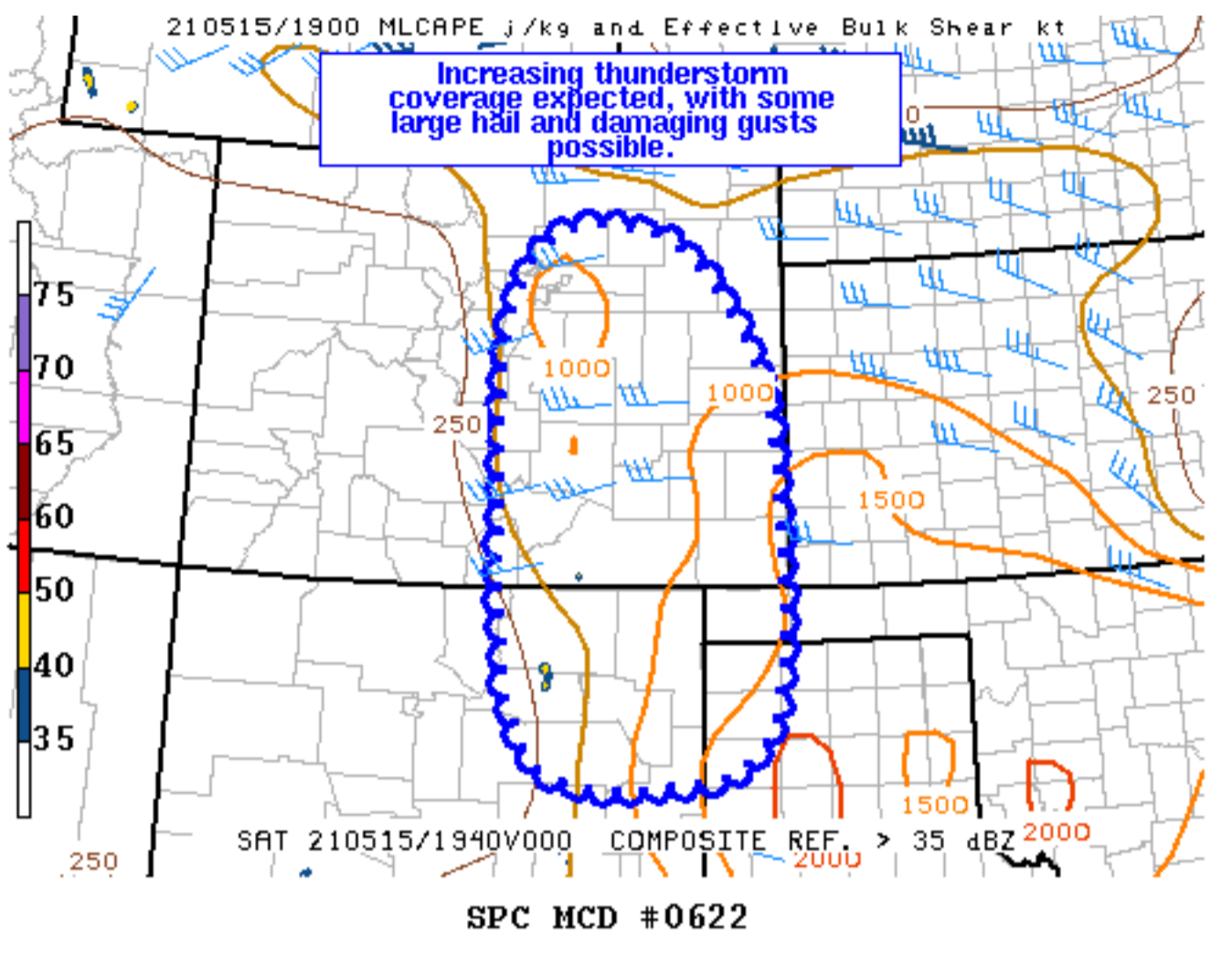
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Mesoscale Discussion 622

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Mesoscale Discussion 0622
NWS Storm Prediction Center Norman OK
0257 PM CDT Sat May 15 2021

Areas affected...East-Central/Southeast CO...Northeast NM...Far Northwest TX Panhandle...Far Western OK

Concerning...Severe potential...Severe Thunderstorm Watch likely

Valid 151957Z - 152200Z

Probability of Watch Issuance...80 percent

SUMMARY...Increasing thunderstorm coverage is anticipated, with an attendant increase in the threat for large hail and damaging wind gusts, and a Severe Thunderstorm Watch will likely be needed this afternoon.

DISCUSSION...Cumulus has gradually deepen across the Front Range over the past few hours, with several instances of lightning observed over the last half hour. Expectation is for this deepening trend to persist, with eventual convective initiation across much of the region. The downstream air mass currently remains relatively cool, with temperatures ranging from the upper 60s to low 70s throughout much of the region. However, continued diurnal heating and mixing will likely push temperatures into the mid to upper 70s while simultaneously eroding the convective inhibition. This should result in a modestly buoyant air mass with by steep low and mid-level lapse rates. Additionally, low-level southeasterly flow veering to westerly in the mid-levels will result in moderate vertical shear.

Storms currently building over the high terrain are forecast to move eastward into the then destabilized airmass, resulting in the potential for a few supercells. Hail will be possible early in the storm's lifecycle, with the threat transitioning to damaging wind gusts over time and with eastward extent. Slightly better low-level moisture is in place just east of the region in southwest KS and the eastern TX/OK Panhandle. Some guidance indicates this moisture may advect into southeast CO prior to the thunderstorms, potentially resulting in some tornado potential. Given the anticipated storm coverage, a watch will likely be needed this afternoon to cover the impending severe threat.

..Mosier/Guyer.. 05/15/2021

...Please see www.spc.noaa.gov for graphic product...

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