

Rainmaker Drones, Palantir's Thiel Funding, and the Deadly Texas Flood: What We Know

State-authorized drone seeding overlapped with historic Texas floods—documents show Rainmaker had active clearance just days before disaster struck.



JON FLEETWOOD

JUL 07, 2025



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A startup backed by billionaire Peter Thiel's elite fellowship program was actively seeding clouds over Texas just days before historic floods killed over 60 people in early July 2025.

A new Texas bill, SB 1154, seeks to [ban government-run geoengineering and weather modification](#), but it exempts all contracts signed before its September 1, 2025 effective date.

Rainmaker's Mission: Weather on Demand

[Rainmaker Technology Corporation](#), founded by Augustus Doricko, claims to enhance rainfall using autonomous drones loaded with cloud-seeding chemicals.

The company disperses silver iodide and calcium chloride into storm systems to artificially boost precipitation.

The technology is state-authorized and already in operation across the Western U.S.

In early 2024, Doricko was [awarded a Thiel Fellowship](#), a prestigious \$100,000 grant program founded by Peter Thiel that backs high-risk, high-reward ventures from college dropouts and other scientists.

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Confirmed Government Contracts in Texas

According to a NOAA weather modification filing dated February 26, 2025 ([document ID: 2025TXTP-1](#)), Rainmaker was under contract to perform cloud seeding flights in the Trans Pecos region of Texas from March 15 through October 31, 2025.

NOAA FORM 17-4 (4-81)		U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION		Form Approved OMB Control No. 0648-0025 Expires 05/31/2027													
INITIAL REPORT ON WEATHER MODIFICATION ACTIVITIES This report is required by Public Law 92-205; 85 Stat. 735; 15 U.S.C. 330b. Knowing and willful violation of any rule adopted under the authority of Section 2 of Public Law 92-205 shall subject the person violating such rule to a fine of not more than \$10,000, upon conviction thereof.				Complete in accordance with instructions on reverse and forward one copy to: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research 1315 East-West Highway, WWMC-3, Rm 11216 Silver Spring, MD 20910													
1. PROJECT OR ACTIVITY DESIGNATION, IF ANY Trans Pecos WMA				2. DATES OF PROJECT a. DATE FIRST ACTUAL WEATHER MODIFICATION ACTIVITY IS TO BE UNDERTAKEN 3/15/2025 b. EXPECTED TERMINATION DATE OF WEATHER MODIFICATION ACTIVITIES 10/31/2025													
3. PURPOSE OF PROJECT OR ACTIVITY RAIN ENHANCEMENT, HAIL SUPPRESSION																	
4. (a) SPONSOR NAME Ward County Irrigation District AFFILIATION TFWMA STREET ADDRESS 420 Mackey Ave CITY Barstow STATE TX ZIP CODE 79719				4. (b) OPERATOR NAME RAINMAKER AFFILIATION RAINMAKER TECHNOLOGY STREET ADDRESS 251 Little Falls Drive CITY Wilmington STATE DE ZIP CODE 19808													
5. TARGET AND CONTROL AREAS (See Instructions) <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">TARGET AREA</th> <th colspan="2">CONTROL AREA</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>LOCATION</td> <td>Trans Pecos TX</td> <td>LOCATION</td> <td>Trans Pecos TX</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SIZE OF AREA</td> <td>7969 SQ. MI</td> <td>SIZE OF AREA</td> <td>7969 SQ. MI</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>						TARGET AREA		CONTROL AREA		LOCATION	Trans Pecos TX	LOCATION	Trans Pecos TX	SIZE OF AREA	7969 SQ. MI	SIZE OF AREA	7969 SQ. MI
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LOCATION	Trans Pecos TX	LOCATION	Trans Pecos TX														
SIZE OF AREA	7969 SQ. MI	SIZE OF AREA	7969 SQ. MI														
6. DESCRIPTION OF WEATHER MODIFICATION APPARATUS, MODIFICATION AGENTS AND THEIR DISPERSAL RATES, THE TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED, ETC. (See Instructions) Please see the attached.																	
7. LOG BOOKS Enter name, affiliation, address, and telephone number of responsible individual from whom log books or other records may be obtained.																	
NAME RAINMAKER SAFETY TEAM AFFILIATION RAINMAKER TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION STREET ADDRESS 251 Little Falls Drive CITY Wilmington STATE DE ZIP CODE 19808																	
8. SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> YES</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO</td> <td>Has an Environmental Impact Statement, Federal or State, been filed? If yes, please furnish a copy as applicable.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> NO</td> <td>Have provisions been made to acquire the latest forecasts, advisories, warnings, etc., of the National Weather Service, Forest Service, or others when issued prior to and during operations? If yes, please specify on a separate sheet.</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> NO</td> <td>Have any safety procedures (operational constraints, provisions for suspension of operations, monitoring methods, etc.) and any environmental guidelines (related to the possible effects of the operations) been included in the operational plans? If yes, please furnish copies or a description of the specific procedures and guidelines.</td> </tr> </table>						<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	Has an Environmental Impact Statement, Federal or State, been filed? If yes, please furnish a copy as applicable.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	Have provisions been made to acquire the latest forecasts, advisories, warnings, etc., of the National Weather Service, Forest Service, or others when issued prior to and during operations? If yes, please specify on a separate sheet.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	Have any safety procedures (operational constraints, provisions for suspension of operations, monitoring methods, etc.) and any environmental guidelines (related to the possible effects of the operations) been included in the operational plans? If yes, please furnish copies or a description of the specific procedures and guidelines.			
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9. OPTIONAL REMARKS (See instructions. Use Separate Sheet).																	
CERTIFICATION: I certify that all statements in this report on this weather modification project are complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and are made in good faith.				NAME OF REPORTING PERSON RAINMAKER SAFETY TEAM													
AFFILIATION RAINMAKER TECHNOLOGY CORPORATION STREET ADDRESS 251 Little Falls Drive CITY Wilmington STATE DE ZIP CODE 19808				SIGNATURE <i>Br Delo</i> OFFICIAL TITLE RAINMAKER SAFETY TEAM													
				DATE 2/26/2025 PHONE NUMBER 603-988-1170													

The sponsor was the Ward County Irrigation District.

The operation covered a target area of 7,969 square miles and used single-engine aircraft outfitted with flare racks to disperse 40g silver iodide and 1kg calcium chloride flares.

The form also confirms use of National Weather Service radar for guidance, live radar-monitoring software (GR2Analyst, Radarscope), and emergency beacons on board.

Operations were to be suspended during flood or tornado warnings, but no documentation yet shows whether that actually occurred.

July 2025: Floods Strike in Rainmaker's Active Zone

The deadliest flooding occurred across South-Central Texas—including Bandera County, where the Camp Mystic tragedy unfolded, killing multiple people in fast-moving water.

Official maps from the Texas Department of Licensing & Regulation (TDLR) show that Rainmaker's authorized seeding operations extend into counties immediately adjacent to Bandera, such as Kerr, Real, Edwards, and Uvalde.

5. Area of TPWMA operations is highlighted in yellow on the map below.



6. The TPWMA utilizes single engine aircraft equipped with flare racks to enhance rainfall in 4 1/2 counties in the Trans Pecos region of Texas (Pecos, Reeves, Ward, Loving and portions of Culberson Counties). Flares include 40g glaciogenic (5.5 AgI) and 1kg hygroscopic flares (CaCl₂). Ops are conducted by a state licensed meteorologist (licensed by TDLR) using radar provided by the NWS. Aircraft are tracked via telemetry on the TITAN radar display. Dosaging can range from 1 flare per cloud upwards to 10 flares per cloud, depending on the size and characteristics of cloud. Any operations will be suspended under flood or tornado warning, or upon request by the TDLR and/or management of the TPWMA and associated counties.

8. The Trans Pecos Texas Weather Modification Association (TPWMA) continues to strengthen its relationship with the National Weather Service (NWS). The project meteorologist will monitor weather watches issued by the Storm Prediction Center and all warning advisories and short-term forecasts issued by the NWS via weather radio, television, and internet websites. The meteorologist is also at times in contact with the NWS via telephone, social media or text message.

The TPWMA has also been using radar software called GR2Analyst and Radarscope. This product provides live radar, watches, warnings, and real time weather reports on the radar screen. GR2Analyst has also been used for aircraft safety especially with the viewing of vertical updrafts which can at times skew ahead or behind a storm. This has been utilized as a tool during seeding operations.

Furthermore, all aircraft are equipped with a 406 Mhz emergency beacon. This will alert a Rescue Coordination Center in the event of a distress message being sent out from our aircraft. It will allow Search and Rescue (SAR) forces to locate the aircraft in a timely manner.

These programs, authorized by the state, were active during the first week of July.

An unverified internal log circulating online claims Rainmaker seeded clouds on July 2, just two days before the flood.

Public records confirm the company had full clearance to operate at that time, but specific flight logs remain unreleased.

\$25 Million in New Funding as Drone Network Expands

In July 2025, [Axios Pro reported](#) that Rainmaker had secured a \$25 million Series A investment round led by Lowercarbon Capital.

Other investors include Starship Ventures, Long Journey Ventures, and prominent Silicon Valley technologists Garry Tan and Naval Ravikant.

CEO Augustus Doricko told Axios that the funds would scale Rainmaker's drone operations, automate forecasting software, and grow a team of atmospheric scientists.

Rainmaker also confirmed that it has government contracts with the Utah and Colorado Departments of Natural Resources and the Santa Barbara Public Works Department.

Each drone flight reportedly costs \$50.04 per hour, including dispersal material and battery recharging.

Compared to conventional manned aircraft seeding, the system is billed as cheaper and more precise.

Can Drones Modify the Weather? | Augustus Doricko, Rainmaker



Augustus Doricko - CEO of Rainmaker: Manipulating the Weather | SRS #207



No Transparency, No Oversight

While cloud seeding is legally required to be reported to NOAA, there is no federal oversight on whether the operations are safe, ethical, or accurately measured post-flight.

Safety procedures exist on paper, but no audits confirm compliance.

Despite operating in multiple states during extreme weather, Rainmaker faces no public accountability or environmental liability.

The FAA does not regulate chemical dispersal from drones in the same way it monitors airspace for other uses.

Thiel, Surveillance, & Climate Engineering

The connection between Rainmaker and Peter Thiel is not incidental.

Thiel is also co-founder of Palantir Technologies, a CIA-backed AI surveillance company currently contracted by the U.S. government to run predictive biosecurity simulations and infrastructure forecasting.

By backing Rainmaker, the Thiel Fellowship has formally entered the geoengineering space, positioning itself at the frontier of weather manipulation.

Critics worry this convergence of private capital, unregulated tech, and state-authorized atmospheric experimentation could lead to disaster without warning.

Did Cloud Seeding Contribute to the Texas Flood?

No government agency has admitted that cloud seeding played a role in the early July flood.

But Rainmaker had the authority, the tools, and potentially the timing.

With no public access to flight logs or chemical dispersal data, the truth may remain hidden unless whistleblowers or lawsuits bring it to light.

This much is clear: Rainmaker, a Thiel-backed startup, is actively modifying weather with drones.

It has contracts across the country.

It was authorized to operate in the Texas flood zone during the time of the disaster.

And no one—not even Congress—has stepped in to investigate.

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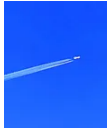
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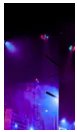
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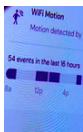
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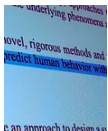
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This wouldn't happen to be the same Thiel that attends the Bilderberg conferences, would it?



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