

Aqua satellite sees Rachel before losing hurricane status

September 29 2014



NASA's Aqua satellite saw Rachel when it was briefly a hurricane off Baja California on Sept. 28 at 5:15 pm. EDT. Credit: NASA Goddard MODIS Rapid Response Team

Tropical Storm Rachel strengthened into a hurricane over the weekend of Sept. 27 and 28, only to weaken back into a tropical storm by Sept.

29. NASA's Aqua satellite passed over Rachel before it weakened and took a visible picture of the storm off Baja California's coast.

Rachel became the Eastern Pacific Ocean's twelfth hurricane on Saturday, Sept. 27 at 5 p.m. EDT when [maximum sustained winds](#) reached 75 mph (120 kph). When NASA's Aqua satellite saw Rachel, the maximum sustained winds were at the same strength. At that time, Rachel's center was 485 miles (780 km) west of the southern tip of Baja California. The Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer or MODIS instrument grabbed a visible image of Rachel as Aqua passed overhead showing bands of thunderstorms circling a cloud-filled eye. The image also showed that the band of thunderstorms in the storm's southeastern quadrant was less full than the bands circling the rest of the storm.

By Sept. 29, strong upper-level south-southwesterly winds helped weaken Rachel and the tropical storm's cloud pattern appeared considerably less organized now than when NASA's Aqua satellite passed overhead.

At 11 a.m. EDT (1500 UTC) Rachel's maximum sustained winds were near 60 mph (95 kph) and steady weakening is expected over the next two days as the storm moves into cooler waters and battles [vertical wind shear](#). The center of Tropical Storm Rachel was located near latitude 22.8 north and longitude 117.5 west. That's about 485 miles (780 km) west of the southern tip of Baja California, Mexico. Rachel was moving toward the north near 2 mph (4 kph) the National Hurricane Center (NHC) expects it to become almost stationary before drifting southwestward by Tuesday, Sept. 40.

Rachel is forecast to become a remnant low on Tuesday, Sept. 29.

Provided by NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center

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