



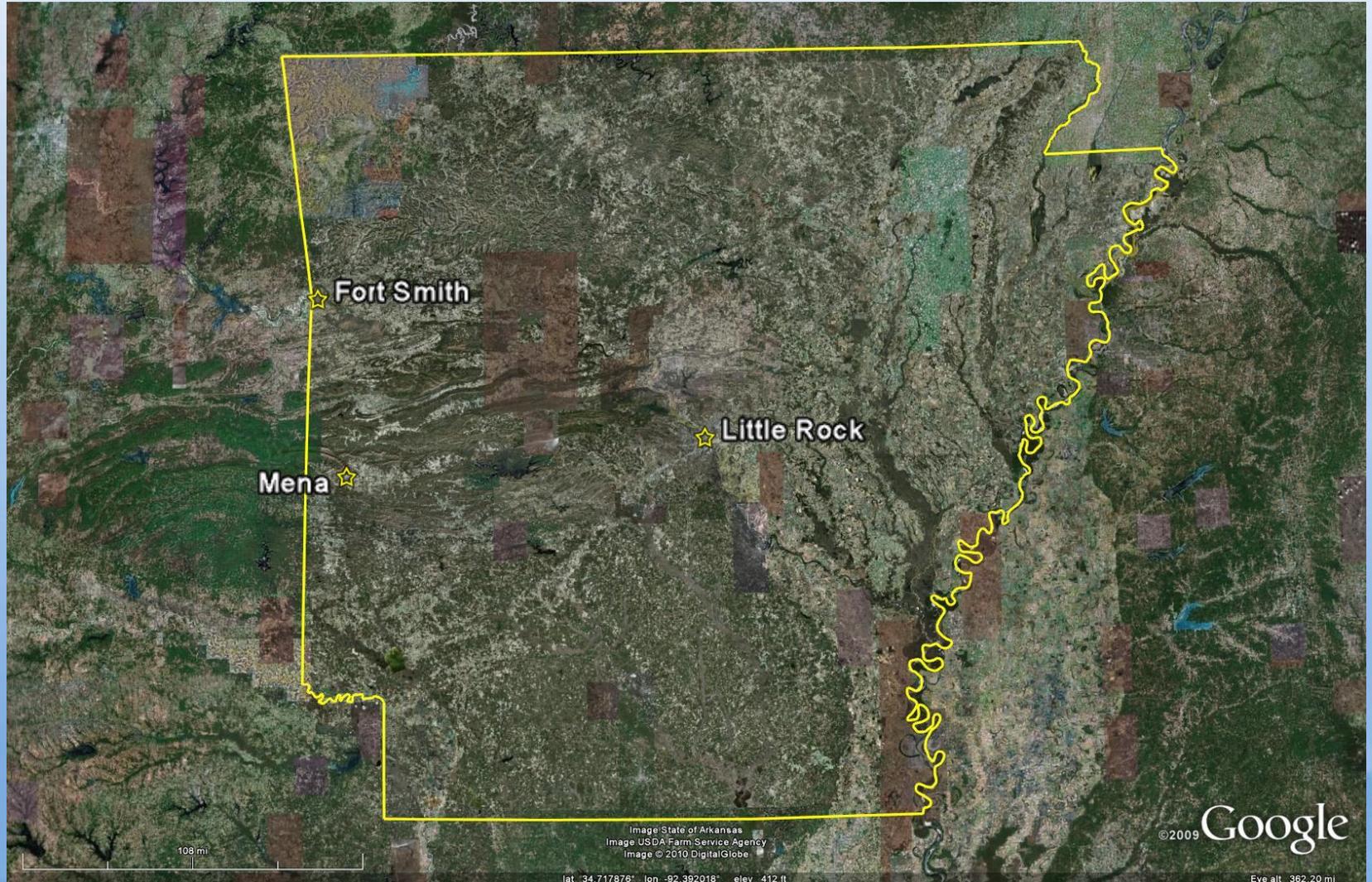
# The Mena, Arkansas Tornado of April 9, 2009



**John Robinson, WCM  
WFO Little Rock, Arkansas**

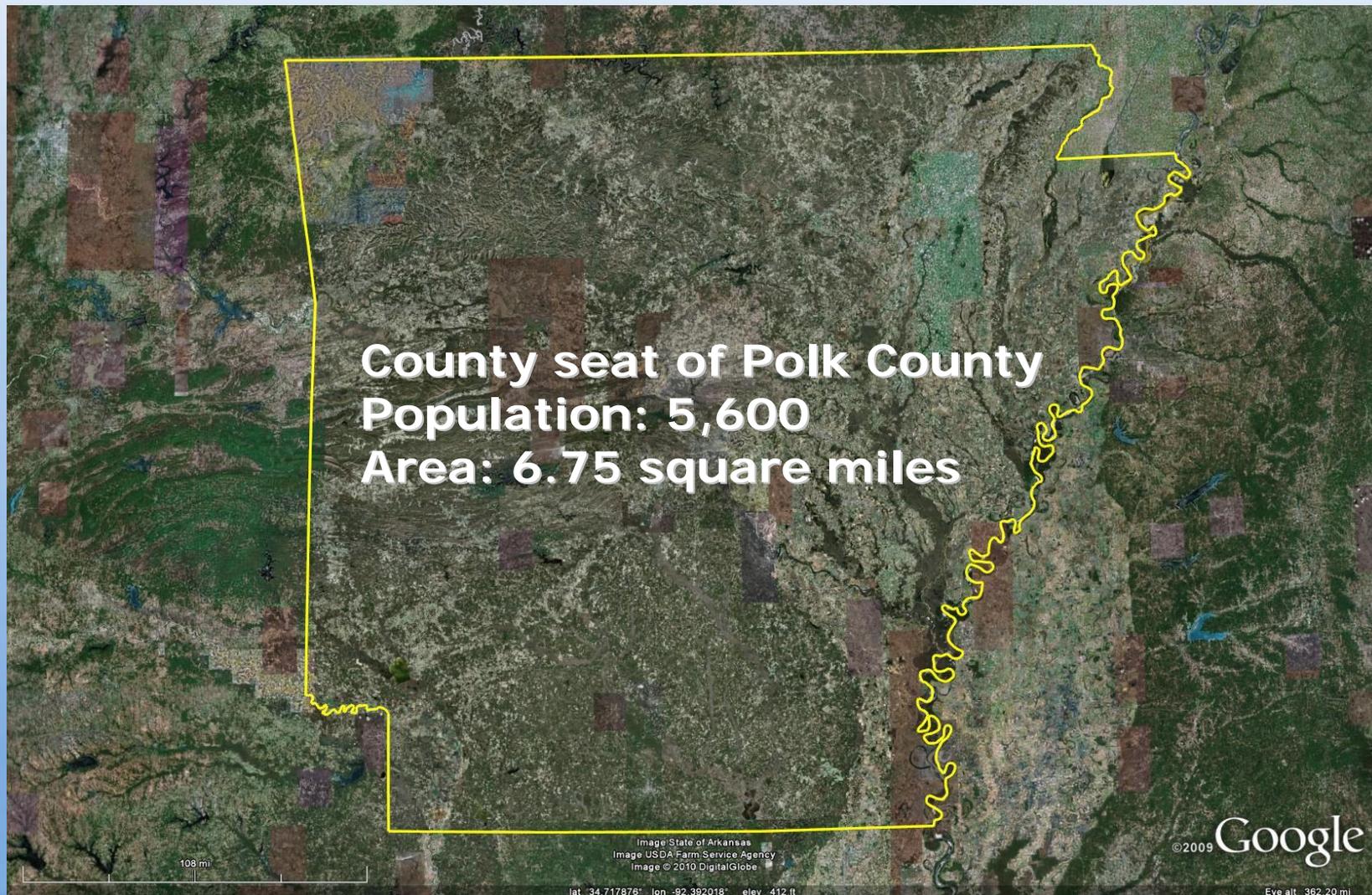


# Location of Mena



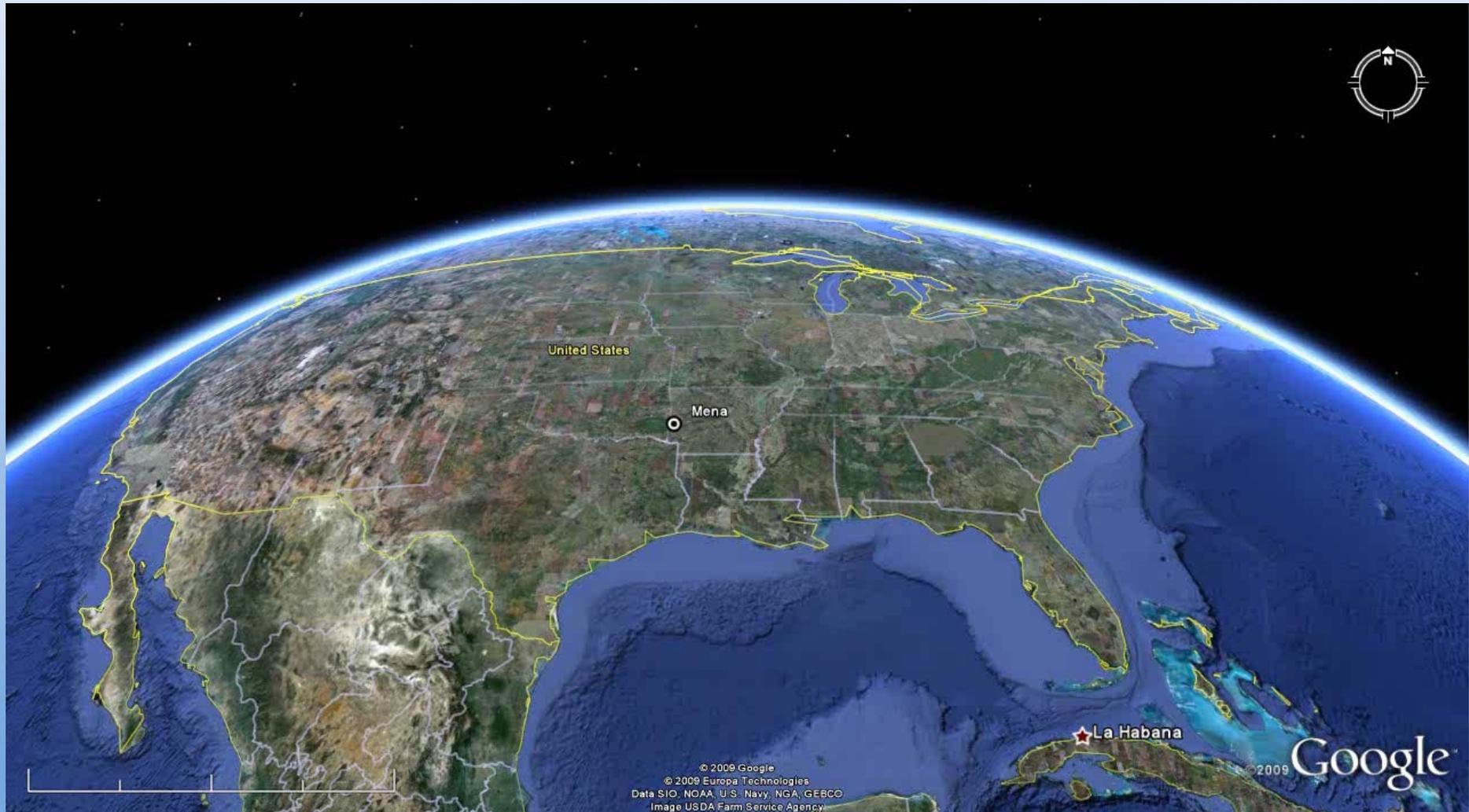


# Facts about Mena



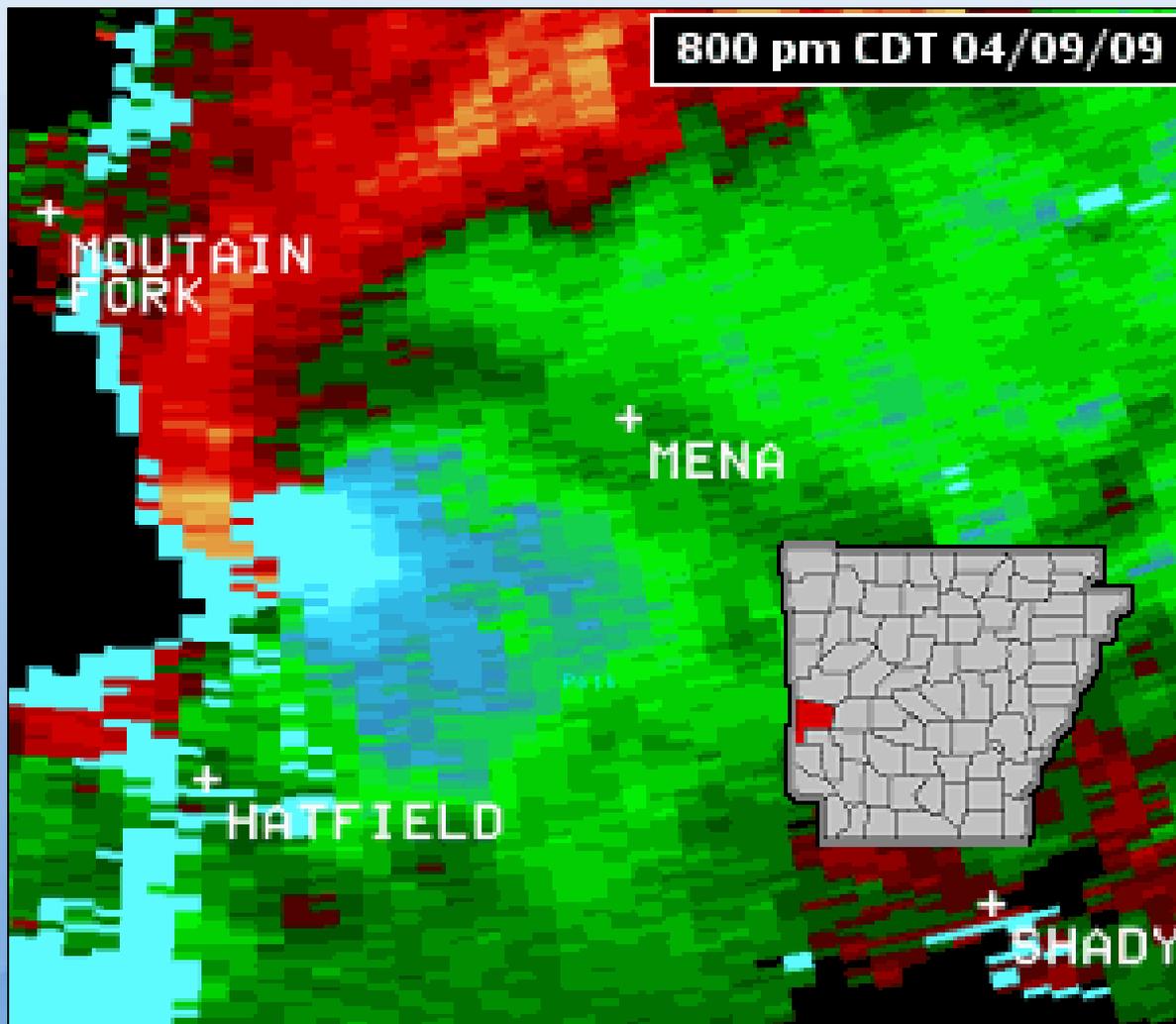


# Animation of Event





# WSR-88D SRM Loop





# Tornado Impact



- ▣ 3 fatalities, 30 injuries
- ▣ 165 houses destroyed
- ▣ 701 houses with major damage
- ▣ 11,200 trees hauled away



# Tornado Impact



- Mena Middle School damaged beyond repair
- Polk County Courthouse and jail, Mena City Hall, police and fire department all damaged
- Rich Mountain Community College and city industrial park damaged



# Communications



Emergency management / State Police radios



# NWS Chat



- [00:50:48] <[nws-john.robinson@nwschat.weather.gov/NWS](mailto:nws-john.robinson@nwschat.weather.gov/NWS)>  
Arkansas State Police are reporting a tornado touchdown along the Arkansas/Oklahoma line where AR Hwy 8 goes into Oklahoma. Reports are that a house just across the line has been hit and there are injuries. Polk County emergency management is on the way there.
- [00:55:46] <[nws-john.robinson@nwschat.weather.gov/NWS](mailto:nws-john.robinson@nwschat.weather.gov/NWS)>  
Arkansas State Police report that Oklahoma Highway 63 is blocked just west of the AR/OK state line. This is where AR Hwy 8 goes into Oklahoma.
- [01:00:51] <[nws-emilie.nipper@nwschat.weather.gov/Home](mailto:nws-emilie.nipper@nwschat.weather.gov/Home)> another warning is going out for polk county...the second circulation will enter the state just south of the current warning...and affect areas near potter and may move into the other warning. this may be near mena around 810 pm.
- [01:07:08] <[media-rob.dale@nwschat.weather.gov/Home](mailto:media-rob.dale@nwschat.weather.gov/Home)> ||



# NWS Chat



- [01:09:53] <[media-ryan.vaughan@nwschat.weather.gov/StormCenter](mailto:media-ryan.vaughan@nwschat.weather.gov/StormCenter)>  
Hmm.... I wonder if that will be the first tornado of the year for AR.
- [01:10:24] <[nws-john.robinson@nwschat.weather.gov/NWS](mailto:nws-john.robinson@nwschat.weather.gov/NWS)>  
Trooper reporting a tornado in Mena at this time. Power lines down in town.
- [01:11:32] <[nws-emilie.nipper@nwschat.weather.gov/Home](mailto:nws-emilie.nipper@nwschat.weather.gov/Home)>  
conformed tornado on ground in mena moving southwest to northeast from highway 8 area. also a report of a house damaged in the northwest corner
- [01:13:12] <[nws-john.robinson@nwschat.weather.gov/NWS](mailto:nws-john.robinson@nwschat.weather.gov/NWS)> State police is reporting extensive damage in downtown Mena.
- [01:15:12] <[nws-john.robinson@nwschat.weather.gov/NWS](mailto:nws-john.robinson@nwschat.weather.gov/NWS)> Large gas line broken in Mena - from state police.



# Warning Sirens



- 4 tornado sirens and 1 fire siren covering 6.75 square miles





# Damage Survey



Google Earth's Street View can be a valuable resource in helping us to identify what a building looked like before it was damaged.



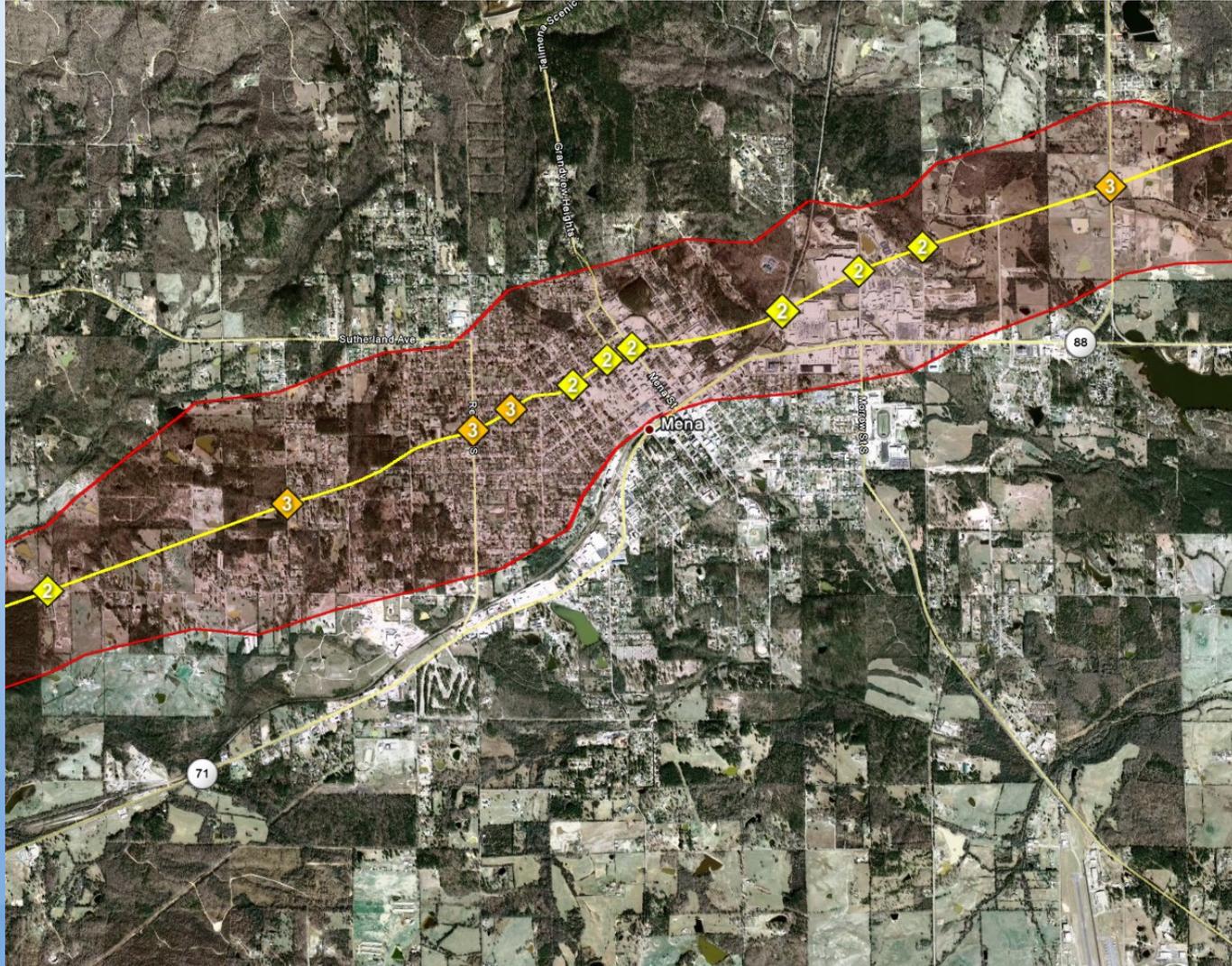


# Damage Survey





# Image for Storm Data





# Image for Storm Data





# Quirks



- **Storm spotter training was conducted in this building 48 hours before the tornado struck**



# Quirks



## Ink, Arkansas



**Tornado damage 10/6/2008.  
Old chicken house knocked off  
its foundation.**



**Tornado damage 4/9/2009.  
Old chicken house struck  
again and destroyed.**