

NOAA's NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE Western Region Notes

April 5, 2007

REGIONAL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Women's History Month *(contributed by Carolina Walbrun):*

In this day and age when history is unfolding before our eyes we don't need to look very far back for historical events that have reshaped our world or the very organization we all work for. Women's History Month is a perfect chance to highlight a historical turning point in our agency's history. Seeing women in our workforce has become rather commonplace, but as time goes on these women are moving farther up the ladder and their numbers are growing. Can you imagine that only 10 years ago the National Weather Service Western Region had never had a female lead forecaster? That all changed in February of 1998 when Claudia Cox was promoted to a lead forecaster in the Monterey, California Weather Forecast Office. Claudia is now the Regional Outreach and Planning Scientist at Western Region Headquarters in Salt Lake City. She is currently involved in NOAA's Regional Collaboration and acts as a liaison between the field offices and Weather Service Headquarters for international visits/visitors and provides direct support to the Regional Director. Here is what Claudia recalls about her journey:



"I was born in San Francisco, but spent most of my early years in Novato, CA. I wasn't interested in weather that much as a kid. Growing up in the Bay Area I don't have any great snowstorm or tornado stories. I was a junior in high school when I decided to go into meteorology. To this day I am not sure exactly what made me want to become a meteorologist, but once I decided I never wavered. I attended Santa Rosa Junior College for a few years before transferring to the University of Colorado. I only stayed in Boulder for a year then

transferred again to the University of California at Davis where I graduated with a degree in Atmospheric Science. One day while I was attending UC Davis, I went to the local career fair and met a few people staffing the NWS booth. I was very interested in the NWS and ended up volunteering, getting school credits and working over the summer at the Weather Service Office in Sacramento.

Once I graduated from college, I was offered an intern position in Pendleton, Oregon. This was back when interns spent roughly half of their internship in a Weather Service Office (WSO) and half in a Weather Service Forecast Office (WSFO). After a year and a half, I transferred to the WSFO in Redwood City. At this time, the NWS was going through MAR and the WSOs were spinning up the new journey forecasters and I was selected for a position in Sacramento.

However, I was only in Sacramento for 6 months before transferring to the Monterey office where I became a marine/aviation forecaster. I was in Monterey for about 3 years when a lead forecaster job opened up and I was selected. About a month later, Norm Hoffmann (the MIC at the time) and I were driving home from a meeting and just amicably chatting away when he said to me, "I was told that you are the first female lead forecaster in Western Region." I was so shocked that I don't think I said another word the rest of the way back to the office! Several months later the WSOs spun up, the new senior forecasters were hired and a lot of outstanding women filled those positions. So, I didn't have the distinction of being the only female lead forecaster for long, but will be forever grateful for the opportunities I've had."

Exactly one year later, in 1999, Vickie Nadolski was named Regional Director. Today the Western Region has approximately 10 women lead forecasters, 3 MICs, 1 HIC, 3 WCMs, 27 journey forecasters, 2 senior hydrologists, 1 hydrologist, 2 senior service hydrologists, 3 service hydrologists, 7 program managers, 2 OPLs, 8 HMTs, 2 ITs, 4 ETs, 7 interns, and 31 ASAs around the Region.

NWS Women list-server:

A new list-server "*NWS Women*" is available to National Weather Service employees. While the topics will usually focus on women, the list-server is open to anyone. It will cover work-life issues that are relevant to both men and women, but also provide a forum for women who are looking to network with one another. It will also be used to lend support and information amongst women in our challenging career field. The list-server was the idea of several female forecasters and has my support. To sign up for the list-server, you can go to: <http://infolist.nws.noaa.gov/read/login/>, and then select the "All Forums" tab. A list of all the available forums will be displayed, and then "NWS_Women" should be selected. If you do not have an account already on the NWS listserv site, one can be set up from the above link.

Leadership Opportunity:

I am pleased to announce plans for Western Region's third Leadership and Innovation for Tomorrow (LIFT) class. We are accepting applications from now through May 1, 2007. The class is open to all Western Region employees, except MICs/HICs and Western Region Headquarters Division Chiefs. An official announcement is posted on our WW2 Intranet page. Information about the class is available from your MIC, HIC, or Division Chief.

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

STATEMENT OF THE WEEK: This week's Statement of the Week goes to Matt Mehle of Monterey who issued a timely Marine Weather Statement highlighting very dangerous wind and sea conditions developing along the entire coastal waters area of Monterey. The statement was concise and highlighted the gales and hazardous seas as well as dangerous bar conditions. The forecast verified in all respects with winds gusting to 45 kts at the buoys and seas reported at 15 to 22 ft making for dangerous swell conditions. Excellent Job!

FZUS76 KMTR 272154
MWSMTR

MARINE WEATHER STATEMENT
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE SAN FRANCISCO CA
254 PM PDT TUE MAR 27 2007

PZZ530-535-550-555-570-575-280600-
/X.CON.KMTR.MA.S.0001.000000T0000Z-070328T1400Z/
SAN FRANCISCO/SAN PABLO/SUISUN BAYS AND THE WEST DELTA-
MONTEREY BAY-
COASTAL WATERS FROM PT. ARENA TO PIGEON PT. CA OUT 20 NM-
COASTAL WATERS FROM PIGEON PT. TO PT. PIEDRAS BLANCAS CA OUT
20 NM-WATERS FROM PT. ARENA TO PIGEON PT. CA FROM 20 TO 60 NM-
WATERS FROM PIGEON PT. TO PT. PIEDRAS BLANCAS CA FROM 20 TO 60 NM-
254 PM PDT TUE MAR 27 2007

...STRONG NORTHWEST WINDS OVER THE COASTAL WATERS THROUGH
WEDNESDAY...

THE PRESSURE GRADIENT BETWEEN STRONG HIGH PRESSURE BUILDING OVER THE
EASTERN PACIFIC AND THE LOW PRESSURE SYSTEM MOVING INTO THE GREAT
BASIN HAS GENERATED STRONG NORTHWEST WINDS. SPEEDS OVER THE CENTRAL
CALIFORNIA COASTAL WATERS WILL RANGE BETWEEN 25 TO 35 KNOTS
SUSTAINED...WITH LOCALLY HIGHER GUSTS UP TO 40 TO 45 KNOTS...INTO EARLY
WEDNESDAY MORNING. GALE FORCE WINDS ARE NOT ANTICIPATED IN SAN
FRANCISCO AND MONTEREY BAYS...BUT WINDS WILL BE STRONG NONE THE LESS.

IN ADDITION TO GALE FORCE WINDS...BUOYS INDICATE THAT SEAS HAVE BUILT TO
HAZARDOUS LEVELS. AREAS IN BOTH THE NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN WATERS
HAVE COMBINED SEAS REACHING 15 TO 18 FEET WITH A DOMINANT PERIOD OF 11
SECONDS. SEAS SHOULD SUBSIDE BELOW HIGH SURF CONDITIONS BY LATE
MORNING HOURS ON WEDNESDAY.

MARINERS ARE URGED TO EXERCISE EXTREME CAUTION THIS EVENING DUE TO
THE ROUGH CONDITIONS AND STRONG WINDS. THOSE TRAVERSING THE SAN
FRANCISCO BAR SHOULD ALSO BE ALERT FOR SWELLS UP TO 13 FEET DURING
MAXIMUM EBB CURRENT TIMES AND PLAN ACCORDINGLY.

MONITOR NOAA WEATHER RADIO FOR THE LATEST MARINE WEATHER
INFORMATION INCLUDING FORECASTS AND CURRENT OBSERVATIONS. CHECK OUR
WEB-SITE AT WEATHER.GOV/SANFRANCISCO BEFORE VENTURING OUT. CURRENT
BUOY OBSERVATIONS CAN ALSO BE ACCESSED FROM OUR AUTOMATED
FORECAST LINE AT 831-656-1725.

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Outreach opportunities are everywhere: Andrew Rorke, lead forecaster and Aviation Liaison Officer at WFO Los Angeles/Oxnard, was recently returning from a course at the NWS Training Center when he bumped into a Frontier first officer while waiting for a flight at Denver International Airport (DIA). Andrew introduced himself and first asked her about how pilots use National Weather Service TAFs, which brought an invitation to the pilot's lounge at DIA where there were 10 captains and first officers. Since Andrew had his laptop with him, he was able to give those in the lounge an impromptu presentation on NWS aviation services! He received quite a few questions on wind regimes and wave turbulence, as well as the marine layer behavior, for California coastal terminals. Although most of the weather information the pilots get comes from dispatch, they were impressed to hear of the wide ranging aviation services provided by the NWS - especially hearing how at any one time there are NWS forecasters all across the country preparing or monitoring TAFs. It's these sorts of outreach endeavors - those with even just a handful of customers - that can have a rippling effect of communicating the services of the agency to its customers.



High School Students Tour WFO Monterey: A group of students from the Menlo Park High School in Atherton, CA visited and toured WFO MTR on March 14th. Observation Program Leader Bob Benjamin (photo, at right) performs the weekly NOAA Weather Radio test with the students looking on.

Las Vegas Presents Award to Ford Motor Company Facility: Las Vegas MIC Kim Runk (2nd from left) and Observation Program Leader (OPL) Don Maker (3rd from left) present a 50 year Cooperative Observer Award to representatives from Ford Motor Company's Arizona Proving Ground on March 14th.



(L to R): Scott Carpenter (WFO Billings), Dawn Fishler (WFO Boise), Mike Cantin (WFO



Northern Rockies Outreach Workshop: WFO Missoula hosted a sub-regional workshop focusing on outreach, March 20-21. WCMs from NOAA/NWS offices in the northern Rockies area attended (in addition to WFO Missoula: WFOs Great Falls, Billings, Glasgow, Boise, Pocatello, Pendleton, and Spokane). Additionally, several forecasters involved in outreach activities at these offices attended, and a representative from NWS Western Region (WR) Headquarters (MSD) attended. Specific topics included WR's "Outreach Vision," local WFO Outreach

initiatives and plans, StormReady, educational (science) resources for school visits and other outreach events, spotter issues, Weather and Society*Integrated Studies (WAS*IS), current status of several technical projects underway or planned in WR, and a presentation by Dr. Steve Running (University of Montana) on climate observations in Montana.

WFO Monterey Supports “Women in Science”: Brooke Bingaman, Forecaster at WFO Monterey, and a group of San Francisco Bay Area middle school girls recently took part in a “Women in Science” activity, sponsored by San Jose State University (SJSU). The 29th annual “Expanding Your Horizons (EYH) Conference” took place at SJSU on Saturday, March 17, 2007. Approximately 800 young women and 200 accompanying adults attended the conference. The annual conference encourages young women's interest in science and math. The goals of the EYH conference are:



- To emphasize the importance of taking mathematics and science courses in secondary school
- To increase young women's interest in mathematics and science
- To foster awareness of career opportunities for women in mathematics and science related fields
- To provide young women with the opportunity to meet and form personal contacts with women working in traditionally male-dominated occupations

To alleviate the isolation of young women who are interested in math, science, engineering, and other careers that are not traditional for women.



Weather Seminars at U.S. Power Squadron

Conference: Oxnard Forecaster Joe Sirard traveled to Santa Maria, CA on Saturday, March 17th to present two marine weather seminars at the U.S. Power Squadron's (USPS) District 13 Spring Conference. The first seminar focused on marine weather products and services provided by the National Weather Service, with an emphasis on southern California Specific topics included area geography and climatology; routine/non-routine NWS marine products; buoy information; tools used in marine forecasting (e.g. models, satellite, radar, etc.); NOAA Weather Radio; marine data available on the internet; and a summary of NDFD.

The second seminar provided a more detailed discussion of data and products available on the internet, using a high speed wireless connection for demonstration (including graphical and

text products, satellite, and radar). Some basic satellite and radar interpretation was also provided.

NWS outreach materials were provided, including a new locally published pamphlet on WFO Oxnard's Marine Weather Program. Approximately 55 people attended each seminar. Several of the attendees teach USPS's "Weather" course. USPS is a private, nonprofit, non-governmental, and non-military organization of men, women and families with a common interest in recreational boating. USPS is comprised of some 70,000 members in approximately 450 local Squadrons in virtually every state. USPS is the world's largest private boating organization.

HYDROLOGY AND CLIMATE SERVICES DIVISION

DAPM/OPL Conference: The DAPM/OPL Conference led by Susan held last week was a complete success. Many topics were covered and 50 plus action items were created. Susan is working to complete and track the actions that arose from the meeting.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

Upcoming Science Workshops

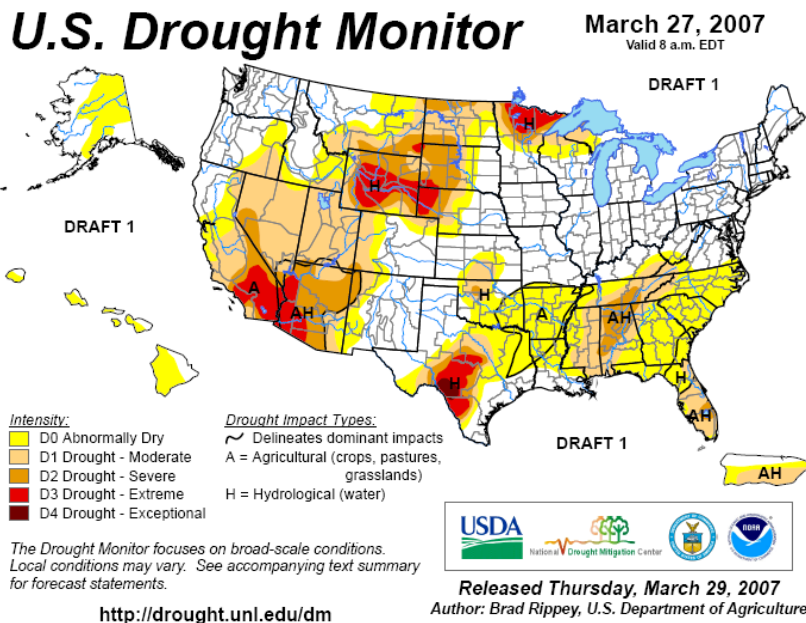
WR SOO/DOH Workshop: *April 17-19* The next WR SOO/DOH Workshop will be held April 17-19 in Salt Lake City.

AMS Conference: *June 24-29* The AMS on Weather Analysis and Forecasting/18th Conference on Numerical Weather Prediction, will be held 24-29 June 2007 at The Yarrow Resort Hotel & Conference Center (Hotel) in Park City, Utah. The WAF conference is focused on the "Analysis and Prediction of High-Impact Weather".

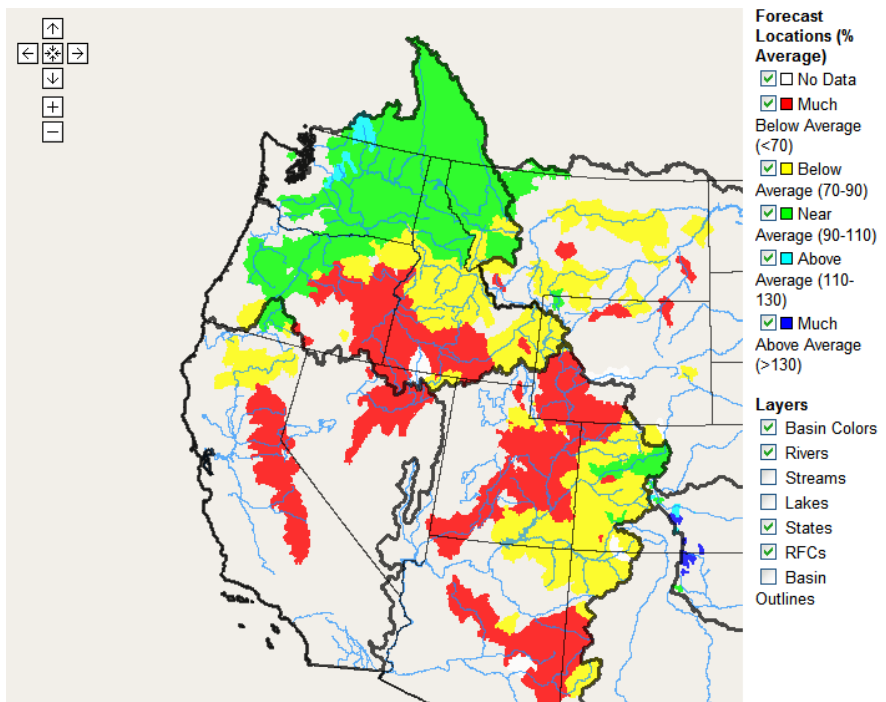
General

Hydromet Testbed (HMT) Update: HMT is finishing up this winter field program. Approximately 7 IOPs were conducted this winter. Unfortunately, this has been a dry winter in the west and the HMT field activity was down substantially from last year. OAR has deployed an experimental next generation AWIPS workstation at Sacramento, Reno and Monterey to evaluate experimental model data sets. This workstations will remain at the offices for the next few months. For more information, please refer to <http://www.esrl.noaa.gov/psd/programs/2007/hmt/>

Drought and impact to WR Water Supply and Fire Threat: The drought continues to intensify across most of Western Region. The latest updates for the drought monitor and water supply are:



The new water supply page has been under development and reported in prior SSD staff notes. The RFCs updating the water supply forecast during the first week of each month with the spring flood & water supply press release expected in April. Please take a look at the new WR water supply page and other RFC forecasts
<http://www.cbrfc.noaa.gov/westernwater/map.php?map=wsup>



Instant Messaging -- Mike Doney (WR/SSD) is working on updating the final Akonix configuration. Mike is also preparing an IM training module. Expect to be ready to release IM (and meet DOC new polices) later this spring

Bias Correction Training Module -- The Bias corrected grids have shown real promise during this winters evaluation. The training module provides some background on how the bias correction works. **David Myrick (WR/SSD)** has published a new training module entitled "Bias Corrected Grids: Long-term forecast examples explained". This training module is based on two examples provided by **Tim Barker (S)-Boise** and explains some common misconceptions about the bias corrected grids. The module has been posted on the digital services page: http://ww2.wrh.noaa.gov/ssd/digital_services/training/BC_module2

SPC NOAA Hazardous Weather Testbed Spring Experiment The 2007 Spring Experiment will occur over a seven-week period during the peak severe convective season. As in recent Spring Experiments (formerly known as the SPC/NSSL Spring Program), the primary focus will be an examination of convection-allowing ($dx = 2-4$ km) configurations of the WRF model in a simulated severe-weather-forecasting environment. A new component to the experiment will be the use of a 10-member ensemble of 4-km WRF model simulations provided by the Center for the Analysis and Prediction of Storms (CAPS). CAPS, the Environmental Modeling Center (EMC), and the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) will provide additional deterministic WRF simulations with grid spacing of 2-3 km. These simulations, covering approximately the eastern three-fourths of the U. S., will be evaluated based on their ability to 1) simulate the evolution of the pre-convective environment,

particularly boundary layer evolution, temperature and moisture stratification, and vertical wind profiles; 2) predict the location and timing of thunderstorm initiation and evolution; and 3) offer useful information on thunderstorm morphology with an emphasis on higher order classifications of discrete supercells and quasi-linear convective systems (QLCS). The main purpose is to determine the value added by the use of storm-scale ensemble output compared to traditional and experimental deterministic model output. The Program is scheduled to run Monday-Friday from April 23 through June 8, and will be located in the HWT facility adjacent to the SPC and WFO Norman operational forecast areas

SYSTEMS OPERATION DIVISION



Spring is upon us and as our grass greens and grows many of us will start up one of the most dangerous tools we have in our household...the lawnmower. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission reports that each year lawn mowers injure over 110,000 people seriously enough to require treatment in hospital emergency rooms. Lawn mower injuries include deep cuts, loss of fingers and toes, broken and dislocated bones, burns, and eye and other injuries. Some injuries are very serious. Both users of mowers and those who are nearby can be hurt by thrown rocks or sticks. To prevent lawn mower injuries follow these recommendations:

- Try to use a mower with a control that stops the mower from moving forward if the handle is let go.
- Make sure that sturdy shoes (not sandals or sneakers) are worn while mowing.
- Prevent injuries from flying objects, such as stones or toys, by picking up objects from the lawn before mowing begins. Use a collection bag for grass clippings or a plate that covers the opening where cut grass is released. Have anyone who uses a mower wear hearing and eye protection.
- Start and refuel mowers outdoors, not in a garage or shed. Mowers should be refueled with the motor turned off and cool.
- Do not pull the mower backward or mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary, and carefully look for children behind you when you mow in reverse.
- Always turn off the mower and wait for the blades to stop completely before removing the grass catcher, unclogging the discharge chute, or crossing gravel paths, roads, or other areas.
- Use earplugs to preserve your hearing.



Facilities Engineering Technician Jim Chaisson was caught in the act, or should we say in the Spirit, hanging the Celebrating 200 Years of NOAA History banner at WFO Billings, MT.