

NOAA's NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE Western Region Notes

December 1, 2005

REGIONAL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE



Making Safety a Priority: Last week, I received a safety briefing from Harold Knocke who has taken over as the WR Safety & Environmental Compliance officer. Unfortunately, our safety record isn't as good as I would like. I take this very seriously, and I am making safety a high priority.

Slips, trips, and falls are the leading cause of accidents throughout the NWS. With winter upon us, the potential for these type accidents are even greater. Therefore, I'd like everyone to be aware of these winter safety tips....

Winter Safety Tip #1: In winter the leading causes of injuries is due to slips or falls on icy or snow covered surfaces. Here are some tips to remember when walking on icy or snow covered surfaces.

Winter Walking Safety—Prevent Falls

- Concentrate on what you are doing while you are doing it.
- Be aware of your surroundings - Always watch for hazards and dangers such as ice on steps, sidewalks, and pathways, snow and water puddles.
- Walk flat-footed.
- Don't rush. Move at a speed that feels comfortable and shorten the length of your step. Give yourself lots of time to get where you are going.
- Keep your weight over your feet; avoid reaching or twisting when walking. Keep one hand free for your balance.
- Be especially careful getting on and off buses and getting in and out of cars.
- Wear boots with traction and a low wide heel - not smooth leather soles or high heels.
- If you have them, wear ice grippers on footwear to help prevent falls on ice and snow. Make sure you can attach and remove them from your boots before purchasing.
- Outdoor stairs and entrances need to be sanded or salted during the winter and free of ice and snow.

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

Statement of the Week: Monterey issued this Special Marine Warning on November 28 for a line of strong thunderstorms over the coastal waters near San Francisco Bay. The warning message is clear and concise, but sufficiently detailed in terms of the specific hazards expected, as well as where and when. The danger to mariners is very well conveyed. Nice job, Monterey!

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BULLETIN - EAS ACTIVATION REQUESTED
SPECIAL MARINE WARNING
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE SAN FRANCISCO CA
602 PM PST MON NOV 28 2005

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN SAN FRANCISCO HAS ISSUED A

* SPECIAL MARINE WARNING FOR...
FROM PT. ARENA TO PIGEON PT. CA FROM 20 TO 60 NM OVER PACIFIC WATERS
COASTAL WATERS FROM PT. ARENA TO PIGEON PT. CA OUT 20 NM OVER PACIFIC WATERS
SAN FRANCISCO/SAN PABLO/SUISUN BAYS AND THE WEST DELTA OVER PACIFIC WATERS
INCLUDING ALAMEDA AND SAN FRANCISCO BAY

* UNTIL 630 PM PST

* AT 558 PM PST...NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE DOPPLER RADAR INDICATED
A LINE OF THUNDERSTORMS...PRODUCING STRONG WINDS OVER 35 KNOTS
FROM 27 MILES WEST OF SAN FRANCISCO BAY TO 73 MILES WEST OF SAN
FRANCISCO BAY...MOVING EAST AT 20 MPH.

* THESE STRONG THUNDERSTORMS WILL BE NEAR 3 MILES SOUTHWEST OF
SAN FRANCISCO BAY BY 620 PM PST OVER ALAMEDA BY 625 PM PST

MARINERS CAN EXPECT GUSTY WINDS...HIGH WAVES...DANGEROUS LIGHTNING... AND HEAVY
RAINS. BOATERS SHOULD SEEK SAFE HARBOR IMMEDIATELY...UNTIL THIS STORM PASSES.

THUNDERSTORMS CAN PRODUCE SUDDEN WATERSPOUTS. WATERSPOUTS CAN EASILY
OVERTURN BOATS AND CREATE LOCALLY HAZARDOUS SEAS. SEEK SAFE HARBOR
IMMEDIATELY.

LAT...LON 3789 12278 3754 12380 3740 12292 3773 12189

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STROBIN



Orange County Declared Storm Ready: On November 16, Orange County, California, was proclaimed StormReady. Orange County, with a population of nearly 3 million people, is the first county in southern California to be designated StormReady. Congratulations all!

Photo (from left): Steve Bishop (Orange County Assistant Sheriff); Terre Duensing (Orange County Emergency Manager); and Jim Purpura (MIC, WFO San Diego)



Tucson Hosts Columbia Air Force Officers: Supported by WFO Tucson staff and U.S. Air Force personnel from Davis-Monthan AFB, a group of Columbia Air Force Officers recently visited the Tucson ASOS and Upper Air sites. Electronics Technician Norm Phelps provided an overview of the ASOS. The group then visited the Tucson Upper Air site, where they reviewed radiosonde preparation procedures and observed a balloon release by Jim Hansen (retired from NWS and currently a contract employee for Upper Air releases). The Columbia Air Force would like to expand observations in Columbia, and hope to obtain similar weather equipment.



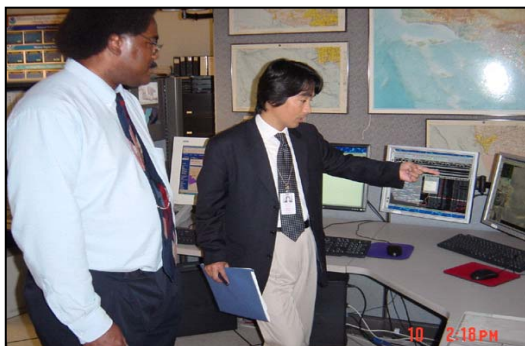
Pocatello SOO Nominated for Award by Idaho Library

Association: Dean Hazen, Science Operations Officer (SOO) at WFO Pocatello, has been nominated as "Trustee of the Year" by the Idaho Library Association. Jim Meyer, Pocatello's MIC, said: "Dean has been a trustee of the library for eleven years; for the past seven of those he has been Chairman. Under his leadership the library's progress has made quantum leaps including the building campaign, planning and building of the library, conducting meetings twice a month and improving open communication between the Library Consortium of Eastern Idaho along with working full time for NOAA as a meteorologist (SOO), and taking care of his disabled wife, Tammy." Kathy Fatkin, Medical Librarian said, "Dean is a voice of calm in a sea of confusion." Karen Tate-Pettinger (Library

Director) said, "In my many years as a library director in Idaho, I have worked with several excellent board chairmen, but Dean exemplifies exceptional leadership." Congratulations, Dean!

Pacific Marine Expo Held in Seattle: WFO Seattle collaborated with Alaska Region and the NWS' Ocean Prediction Center (OPC) to operate a booth at the 2005 Pacific Marine Expo, held in Seattle's Qwest Field Event Center on November 17-19. The booth was one of four operated by NOAA in an exhibitor's block that included National Ocean Service (NOS), NOAA Marine Fisheries (NMFS), and NMFS Enforcement. This Expo is the only trade show event dedicated exclusively to the Pacific Maritime Industry, with representatives and attendees from around the Pacific Rim. More than 10,000 people attended. The event provided a comprehensive collection of marine products and services, as well as a full conference program. Forecasters Jim Prange, Carl Cerniglia, Ted Buehner, and Port Meteorological Officer (PMO) Pat Brandow staffed the booth from WFO Seattle and addressed questions specific to the west coast.

Having all the NOAA booths together in the same area worked very well. Many attendees at the NWS booth asked other NOAA related questions and they were easily directed to the other represented NOAA booths, conveniently located next door. The other NOAA booths directed weather questions to the NWS booth as well. The NWS booth received a number of inquiries about weather buoys, marine fax products, NWR, satellite disseminated weather services, and a variety of marine weather questions. The booth offered a wide variety of information on marine products and services, including brochures and maps, NOAA Weather Radio, web sites, and marine weather fax schedules.



Japan Meteorological Agency Visits WFO San Diego:

Kazuhide Akaishi, Chief of Disaster Prevention Planning for the Japan Meteorological Agency (pictured at right), visited WFO San Diego on November 10. Mr. Akaishi was interested in learning about NWS forecast technology. In addition to getting a tour of the office from Ivory Small (SOO; pictured at left), he also discussed Fire Weather and Incident Meteorologist roles and responsibilities with Senior Forecaster Rob Balfour.



WFO Salt Lake City Co-hosts Avalanche Open House with Forest Service Utah Avalanche Center:

On November 18, snow safety officials from the Forest Service Utah Avalanche Center, the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT), Powderbird, and several ski resorts gathered at the WFO Salt Lake City Office for an open house. The open house, held annually, is an excellent forum to promote information exchange among the various Federal, State, and Private Sector entities that are involved in snow safety.

Powder cloud associated with a Mount Timpanogos avalanche near Sundance Ski Resort on January 12, 2005. Photo by Bill Nalli, Avalanche Forecast Supervisor, UDOT Region 3

Forest Service Utah Avalanche Center personnel provided an update on their “Know Before You Go” safety program and described upcoming changes to their website, accessible at: <http://www.avalanche.org>. Located within the WFO SLC office and working with NWS staff, the Utah Avalanche

Center provides critical avalanche information needed to make life-and-death decisions in critical avalanche terrain. Their goal is to “help keep people on top of the Greatest Snow on Earth instead of buried beneath it.” Larry Dunn, Meteorologist-In-Charge at WFO SLC, spoke about verification results for the 2004-05 Winter Season and recent additions to SLC web pages. UDOT and ski resort officials discussed avalanche control and provided recaps of the active 2004-05 avalanche season.



Larry Whitworth and Ian Morrison participate in the WFO Elko Winter Weather Safety event at the local Wal-Mart.

Winter Weather Awareness Week Held in Nevada:

Nevada’s three WCMs combined efforts for “Winter Weather Awareness Week,” held October 24-28. Rhett Milne (Reno) took the lead in obtaining a proclamation from Nevada’s Governor, Kenny C. Guinn, and worked with Jeff Savadel (Elko) and Andy Bailey (Las Vegas) to schedule several winter weather awareness and preparedness activities. Rhett did a series of interviews with local media in the Reno area.

In Elko, Jeff Savadel and Kevin Baker (MIC) did a 30 minute radio interview. In addition, the local Wal-Mart invited WFO Elko to set up a table for winter weather safety on November 19. Larry Whitworth (Lead Forecaster) and Ian Morrison (General Forecaster) volunteered for the outreach event and spread the word

on winter weather safety to hundreds of people during the day. Response was very good from the public and Wal-Mart, and there are tentative plans already in place for future safety and awareness outreach events.

WFO Elko Outreach Activities: Several members of the Elko forecast office participated in career fairs across northern and central Nevada during the week of November 14. Students discussed careers with the NWS representatives and were given handouts highlighting the various careers available with the National Weather Service and other opportunities within NOAA. Those who represented the NWS at the fairs included Roham Abtahi (HMT) and Delyne Kirkham (ASA) at the Ely Career Fair; Steve Apfel (SOO) and Jeff Savadel (WCM) at the Elko fair; Ian Morrison (General Forecaster) and Jeff Savadel at the Battle Mountain fair; and Greg Lonien (HMT) and Larry Whitworth (Lead Forecaster) at the Winnemucca fair.



WFO Pocatello ASA Donna Mills works at the potato bar.

Autumn Fundraiser in Pocatello: On November 21, WFO Pocatello sponsored a potato bar to raise funds for the Idaho Food Bank. The event was held at the Pocatello Airport. Employees provided potatoes, chili, topping for the potatoes, sodas, and desserts for participants who wanted to make a donation to the Idaho Food Bank.

WFO Pocatello served approximately 60 people, including employees from Skywest, Hertz, Aviation Center, Pocatello Airport, Budget Rental, Idaho Unlimited, nearby Construction Workers, Emergency Managers, City Police, and Department of Transportation. Almost \$400 was raised.



L to R: Eric Boldt (WCM), Dr. Paul Moersdorf (NDBC Director), and Mark Jackson (MIC)

Staff Visits Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary: Buoy data is crucial for mariners in the coastal waters near the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary (CINMS) off the southern California coast. To help address concerns over funding for two buoys near Santa Barbara, National Data Buoy Center (NDBC) Director Dr. Paul Moersdorf was asked to address the members of the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) about the buoy status at their November 18 meeting. In addition, WFO Oxnard WCM Eric Boldt gave a presentation about the forecast and warning decision-making process for the local marine area.

On the day prior to the meeting, Dr. Paul Moersdorf and WFO Oxnard staff were invited to participate in a sight-seeing cruise off Santa Cruz and Anacapa Islands on the NOAA research vessel, R/V *Shearwater*. The group paid a visit to the “East Santa Barbara Channel” NOAA buoy, then paralleled the coast of Santa Cruz Island, and eventually arrived at Anacapa Island. There, they received a tour and stopped at the Visitors Center. During the tour, the group also had an opportunity to operate an underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) to view the kelp environment. Upon returning to Santa Barbara, the WFO Oxnard staff visited the NOAA Internet Kiosk, located at the Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History’s Ty Warner Sea Center.



Los Angeles County Department of Public Works receives the 75 year NWS Length of Service Institutional Award:

*Photo: (L to R) Fred Lai, Jayme Laber (WFO Oxnard SSH), Ben Willardson, Araik Zargaryan, Chris Stone, Dessa Emch (WFO Oxnard OPL), Paul Risher, Rodney Brown, Adam Walden, Eric Boldt (WFO Oxnard WCM)
Photo by: Ben Moyer (WFO Oxnard Lead Forecaster).*

HYDROLOGY AND CLIMATE SERVICES DIVISION

Climate Change Science Program Workshop: Vickie Nadolski and Andrea Bair attended NOAA's U.S. Climate Change Science Program Workshop the week of November 14-16, 2005. The purpose of this meeting was to address the increasing needs of decision makers for climate information, science, products and services. The meeting brought together numerous federal agencies and partners along with stakeholders who use climate information. Attendees were separated into teams to work on various aspects of Climate Change Science and address current resources and identify needed resources. More information about the workshop, along with a forthcoming document of the outcome of the teams from the meeting, is available at: <http://www.climatescience.gov/workshop2005/update27jun2005.htm>



Jenna McPhee explains how the upper air balloon and radiosonde work, which was on display during the presentations.

Expanding Your Horizons in Science and Mathematics: On November 5, Andrea Bair and Jenna McPhee were among several volunteers to present at the 5th Annual Expanding Your Horizons in Science and Mathematics (EYH) at Ogden Middle School, Ogden UT. EYH is a national program designed to foster girls' interest in math and science at the age when they tend to lose interest in those subjects. The 6th -9th grade girls are encouraged to consider more technical career options, such as engineering, physical science, computer science, and more. The conference offers workshops hosted by women working in the math and science related fields ranging from medicine to nuclear science and everything between. Andrea and Jenna's presentation gave an overview of the NWS's role in providing weather and water forecasts and warnings. The sessions were at maximum capacity, and the girls were very interested and eager to learn more about the weather.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

Ridge Radar: The Ridge Radar will be rolled out operationally on Jan 31, 2006. Until that time, Ridge radar is still experimental. Implementation instructions are expected to be released by early next week.

Winter Storm Reconnaissance Program: The Monterey Forecast Office is again serving as the Western Region Focal Point for this season's Winter Storms Reconnaissance (WSR) Program. The basic idea of the program is to deploy spatially and temporally targeted dropsondes well out over the

Pacific from aircraft flying out of Honolulu and Anchorage -- with the objective of improving the NCEP model forecasts in critical weather situations and when there is significant model disagreement or uncertainty. For the western U.S., the constraints of the program are such that the forecast event of interest would typically have to be identified 60-96 hours in advance (for a request to be made for targeted obs). The Winter Storms Program for 2005 will conclude on or before March 15.

The procedure to follow if we receive such a request from any WR office: Requests must be sent to the SDM at NCEP before 9:30 am EST (6:30 am PST).

For significant additional detailed information on the current WSR program, see:
<http://www.emc.ncep.noaa.gov/gmb/targobs/target/wsr2005.html>

UAP: The FY06 portion of the UAP awards were sent out to the recipients this week. We don't know the status on whether UAP will be offered again for next year

Science Publications: Two new TAs and 1 TA-Lite have been released.

TA 05-05

An Evaluation of Fog Forecasting Tools for a Fog Event and Non-Event at Salt Lake City International Airport, by Mark Struthwolf

Found at: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/wrh/05TAs/ta0505.pdf>

TA 05-06

Evaluation of Post-Burn Hydrologic Recovery of a Small Mountainous Watershed: Upper Campo Bonito Wash in Southern Arizona, by Mike Schaffner and William B. Reed

Found at: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/wrh/05TAs/ta0506.pdf>

TA-Lite 05-12

Communication Between NWSFO and FAA Mitigates Effects of Microbursts at Salt Lake City International Airport, by Mark Struthwolf

Found at: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/wrh/talite0512.pdf>

Upcoming Science Workshops:

Annual AMS Meeting: The Annual meeting of the American Meteorological Society (AMS) will be held January 29 to February 2, 2006 in Atlanta. Please refer to the web site www.ametsoc.org/meet/annual for details. WR attendance is restricted to those who have been pre-approved.

Pacific Northwest Weather Workshop: The Pacific Northwest Weather Workshop will be held Friday and Saturday, March 3 and 4, 2006, at the NOAA Western Regional Center campus at Sand Point in Seattle, Washington. This annual conference, sponsored by the National Weather Service, University of Washington, and Puget Sound Chapter of the American Meteorological Society, covers recent developments in weather forecasting and observational technologies, major weather events of the past year, and topics dealing with Western U.S. meteorology.

Pre-registration is required for all attendees. You are encouraged you to visit the web site at: <http://www.atmos.washington.edu/~cliff/PNW2006.html> for latest information and on-line registration. ABSTRACTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 1 January 2006.

For more information contact: Brad Colman, NWS Forecast Office (206.526.6095 x 224/222, brad.colman@noaa.gov or chris.hill@noaa.gov), or Clifford Mass, Dept of Atmospheric Sciences, Box 351640, University of Washington, Seattle WA 98195 (206.685.0190, cliff@atmos.washington.edu).

Training Update

Aviation Module: Reminder, the Aviation module is required to be completed by **December 31, 2005**.

COMET Module: The COMET "NWS Support During Hazardous Materials Emergencies" is required to be completed by **April 30, 2006**. Please refer to memo sent to each WR MIC and HIC for more information. The COMET module is available through the NOAA E-Learning system at <http://e-learning.doc.gov/noaa/>.

WDTB AWOC: The AWOC Winter Track is required to be completed by **November 30, 2006**. Please refer to the memo sent to each MIC and HIC for more details

Teletraining Sessions for December: The Virtual Institute for Satellite Integration Training (VISIT) calendar for December is now available. Offices can register for the teletraining sessions by sending email to: visit@comet.ucar.edu. The teletraining calendar is now at: <http://rammb.cira.colostate.edu/visit/ecal.asp>

The teletraining planning calendar with other sessions is at: <http://rammb.cira.colostate.edu/visit/planning.html>

The current sessions planned for December are:

- GOES High Density Winds
(Basic, Dec 2,12,20)
- Cyclogenesis: Analysis utilizing Geostationary Satellite Imagery
(Basic, Dec 13)
- Utilizing GOES Imagery within AWIPS to Forecast Winter Storms Part1
(Intermediate, Dec 1,7)
- Utilizing GOES Imagery within AWIPS to Forecast Winter Storms Part 2
(Intermediate, Dec 2,8)
- Lake-Effect Snow II
(Advanced, Dec 5)
- Forecasting Convective Downburst Potential Using GOES Sounder Derived Products
(Basic, Dec 6)

The revised GOES Sounder Data and Products session is an introductory-level module that updates the original lesson (Bachmeier et al., 2000) and provides an introduction to the data and products available from the GOES Sounder instrument along with examples of sounder Derived

Product Imagery (DPI) and their applications to weather analysis and forecasting. Special attention is given to the recent change to Single Field of View (SFOV) sounder DPI in AWIPS, and the importance of applying an appropriate image enhancement (color table) to the products. These GOES Sounder products are now available on AWIPS. A message will be sent as soon as the session is ready.

Several recorded VISIT session are available via LMS: <http://e-learning.doc.gov/coursecatalog/index.cfm>. Then, go to NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE COURSES and search on VISIT.

All previous sessions including those with recorded instructor audio and annotations are available at: <http://rammb.cira.colostate.edu/visit/ts.html>

SYSTEMS OPERATIONS DIVISION

Facilities: WR Facilities Engineering Technician Lee Jensen responded to an emergency UPS outage which left WFO Hanford without critical power protection. Lee was able to quickly diagnosis the problem and return the UPS back into service utilizing spare parts from WRH spares.