



NOAA's NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE Western Region Notes

January 12, 2006

REGIONAL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE



Brad Colman – New MIC at WFO Seattle: I am pleased to announce the selection of Dr. Bradley Colman as the new MIC at WFO Seattle.

Brad is well known in the Seattle area and across the Western Region. Prior to being selected as MIC, Brad was the SOO at WFO Seattle for 12 years.

Brad is also an affiliate associate professor with the Department of Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Washington. He is involved in local scientific studies and actively works with students. He is also active in Seattle community affairs.

Please join me in congratulating Brad Colman on his new assignment.



David Brandon – New HCSD Division Chief at WRH: I am also pleased to announce the selection of David Brandon as the new Hydrology and Climate Services Division Chief, effective January 22, 2006.

Dave has served as the Hydrologist-in-Charge of the Colorado Basin RFC since 1989. Prior experience includes working as WR Deputy Regional Hydrologist, Computer Systems-Hydrologist at NWSH, and Service Hydrologist at WSFO Topeka, KS. Dave's experience in hydrology, his strong interest and knowledge of climatology, and his recognition of the growing need for more and better observations are great assets to Western Region.

Congratulations, Dave, on your new assignment.

Communication Corner

By Brian Klimowski, WFO Flagstaff MIC

Our ability to effectively communicate with our customers and partners largely determines the value of our services. Additionally, communication *within* the agency serves as the oil to keep our operations running smoothly; the better we are at communicating with each other, the more efficient the NWS machine will run. In our organization, we have many different communication tools at our disposal (email, instant messaging, phone, teleconference, etc). Our jobs demand communication on a wide variety of time scales, between a diverse set of audiences (forecaster-to-forecaster, headquarters-to-

office, supervisor-to-staff, office-to-customer, etc) and at various levels of urgency. We need to use the right communication tool for the right situation, and understand how to use it effectively. In the 'Communication Corner' we'll be addressing the challenges of communication in the NWS workplace, and providing common-sense guidance on improving our communication skills.

Let's take a quick look at a poll on what various experts believe are the fundamentals needed to be an effective communicator within an office environment. Here's a sampling of their replies:

1) Know how to listen (not just hear). Without a good receiver, the sender can't get their message through. The result: a breakdown in communication. This type of breakdown is rarely recognized until it is too late.

2) Know how to effectively use the communication tools at your disposal (email, instant messaging, phone, etc). For some messages it is best to use email; for other messages face-to-face communications are essential. The phone is an underutilized, but very effective tool. What determines the best communication tool for the job?

3) Know how to use your voice. *How* you say something is just as important as *what* you say.

4) Know what your non-verbal communication is saying (expressions, gestures, posture, tone of voice, speed of delivery).

5) Know your audience. Will the audience perceive the meaning of the message the way you intended?

As you read these, evaluate yourself as a communicator. Would you consider yourself effective in your communication? Stay tuned, over the next couple months, as we explore effective communication techniques (and more) here in Staff Notes.

METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

Statement of the Week: Western Region's Statement of the Week for this edition of Staff Notes is actually two separate products, but both relate to the dangers of High Surf. The first product is from WFO Monterey, a High Surf Warning (HSW). This is the first High Surf Warning to be issued in Western Region. In previous seasons, only High Surf Advisories were issued by Washington, Oregon, and California WFOs. However, every year, people die because they get too close to large and dangerous waves while on the beach or rocks. The High Surf Warning communicates an especially heightened level of risk to the public when waves are unusually large, and extremely dangerous. This HSW was actually a segmented product to provide greater detail for specific sections of the coast, but for brevity a portion has been omitted here. Great job Monterey! Our second product is a section of the Area Forecast Discussion (AFD) discussing expected high surf conditions in Southern California. Because the AFD gets a wide audience, including the media, adding a special section dedicated to the high surf helped spread the word. Great job also to Oxnard!

High Surf Warning from WFO Monterey:

WHUS46 KMTR 201218
CFWMTR

COASTAL HAZARD MESSAGE

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE SAN FRANCISCO CA
418 AM PST TUE DEC 20 2005

CAZ006-505-509-202100-
/O.UPG.KMTR.SU.Y.0004.051220T1600Z-051222T2000Z/
/O.NEW.KMTR.SU.W.0001.051220T1600Z-051222T2000Z/
SAN FRANCISCO-
COASTAL NORTH BAY...INCLUDING POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE-
SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA COAST-
418 AM PST TUE DEC 20 2005

...HIGH SURF WARNING IN EFFECT FROM 8 AM THIS MORNING TO 12 PM
PST THURSDAY...

THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN SAN FRANCISCO HAS UPGRADED THE HIGH SURF
ADVISORY TO A HIGH SURF WARNING FOR THE SONOMA COAST SOUTHWARD TO THE
SAN FRANCISCO PENINSULA COAST. THIS HIGH SURF WARNING IS IN EFFECT FROM 8
AM THIS MORNING UNTIL NOON THURSDAY.

A POWERFUL PACIFIC STORM OFF ABOUT 600 MILES WEST OF THE OREGON COAST HAS
BEEN GENERATING LARGE WESTERLY SWELLS...WHICH WILL BEGIN TO IMPACT THE
CALIFORNIA COAST THIS MORNING. SWELLS WILL REACH 15 FT BY THIS
AFTERNOON...THEN PEAK AT 18 TO 22 FT TONIGHT AND WEDNESDAY MORNING.
SWELL PERIODS ARE EXPECTED TO RANGE BETWEEN 14 TO 16 SECONDS.

THESE ENERGETIC WAVES WILL PRODUCE LARGE AND DANGEROUS BREAKERS
ALONG THE COAST. PERSONS OBSERVING LARGE WAVES ARE ADVISED TO STAY
WELL AWAY FROM THE WATER AS BREAKERS CAN UNEXPECTEDLY WASH OVER
BEACHES...ROCKS...AND COASTAL STRUCTURES WITHOUT WARNING. RIP CURRENTS
AND LOCALIZED BEACH EROSION ARE ALSO POSSIBLE.

SWELLS ARE EXPECTED TO GRADUALLY SUBSIDE WEDNESDAY NIGHT AND
THURSDAY MORNING.

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WEAGLE

Area Forecast Discussion from WFO Oxnard (215am PST Friday December 16, 2005):

.MARINE...

A POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS WESTERLY SWELL IS BEING ADVERTISED BY THE ENP
AND GWW MODELS FOR NEXT WED INTO THU. THE MODELS INDICATE A WESTERLY 20
FT SWELL WITH AN 18 SECOND PERIOD. AFTER COORDINATING WITH THE MONTEREY
AND SAN DIEGO OFFICE...FEEL LIKE IT IS TOO EARLY TO BITE ONTO THIS AT THIS
POINT. HOWEVER IT WAS AGREED THAT SWELLS SHOULD AT LEAST REACH 14 FT SEAS
IN THE OUTER WATERS AND UP TO 10 FT IN THE INNER WATERS. A RATHER LONG
PERIOD OF 18 SECONDS WITH THIS SWELL COULD LEAD TO SURF WELL ABOVE HIGH
SURF ADVISORY LEVELS AND LIKELY SOME LOCAL COASTAL FLOODING ON WESTERN

FACING BEACHES. WILL HAVE A BETTER IDEA ON THIS NEXT BIG SWELL OVER THE NEXT 48 HOURS. THIS IS POTENTIALLY A VERY DANGEROUS SITUATION FOR MARINERS ON WED INTO THU AND SHOULD BE MONITORED CLOSELY.

&&

KAPLAN



Dana Point, California Recognized as TsunamiReady and StormReady: On Dec 14, 2005, Dana Point, California was proclaimed the first StormReady/TsunamiReady Community in Southern California. In the picture from left to right are: Jim Purpura (MIC San Diego), Mike Rose (Emergency and Support Services Manager for City of Dana Point), and Wayne Rayfield, (Mayor, City of Dana Point). Congratulations!



San Diego ITO Recognized by FEMA for Help During Hurricane Katrina: San Diego's MIC, Jim Purpura, received a letter of appreciation from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The letter was sent to express gratitude for the Michael Khuat's efforts to help relief efforts following Hurricane Katrina on the Gulf Coast. Michael, San Diego's ITO, worked as a Vietnamese translator and councilor for hurricane victims who did not speak English.

Dear Mr. Purpura:

I am writing to express our gratitude to you and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration for allowing Michael Khuat to work with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security/FEMA during the Presidential Declared Hurricane Katrina Disaster. It was truly a pleasure to work with him and get to know him.

The FEMA Office of Equal Rights is charged, among other things, with responsibility for ensuring that FEMA benefits are equally offered to all disaster victims. Michael was deployed to an area in Alabama with a large Asian population. We at FEMA wanted to make sure their needs were met as well as those of other disaster victims. Michael was able to provide that information. As the only Equal Rights Officer assigned to that remote area, he willingly and enthusiastically performed the duties assigned to him and others that he identified as necessary. He worked well with other FEMA employees, community leaders and the community at large.

Michael represented FEMA and NOAA well. You should feel proud he was willing to spend this time with FEMA, and know that his time away from NOAA was not in vain. We commend you and your Agency for your generosity in sacrificially providing resources to assist during this national disaster.

*Sincerely,
Jo Browne
Lead Equal Rights Officer*

Northeast Montana Disaster and Emergency Services Workshop: WFO Glasgow recently hosted a two-day workshop for disaster and emergency services (DES) coordinators in northeast Montana. The workshop was planned and coordinated by Glasgow WCM Tanja Fransen. Attendees included

Montana DES coordinators, county commissioners, newspaper editors, a floodplain manager, and employees from the City of Glasgow, along with Jeff Lorens from WRH MSD and WFO Bismarck's WCM John Paul Martin. This local workshop was an ideal way to convey a large amount of information in a short time, and it focused on new technologies and weather and hydrologic information available from NWS web sites. Feedback from the attendees was extremely positive!



Marine Outreach at San Diego Boat Show: San Diego staffed a booth at the greater San Diego Boat Show, January 5-8. The event offered an excellent opportunity to reach out to marine customers, not only in the local area, but outside as well, due to the large number of people in attendance. During this event, several hundred people stopped by the booth to learn about NWS marine products and services. In the photo, HMT Noel Isla (left) and Forecaster Don Whitlow (right) are shown at the information booth.

HYDROLOGY AND CLIMATE SERVICES DIVISION

CBRFC Participates in Colorado River Water Users Conference: On December 14-16, Dave Brandon (HIC), and Jeff Smith (Senior Hydrologist) hosted a booth at the 60th Annual Conference of the Colorado River Water Users Association in Las Vegas. The conference had about 1500 attendees and the NOAA/NWS/CBRFC booth was well attended. The item most asked about was Climate Change, Global Warming, and the affects that they may have on the Colorado River System. The 'hottest' brochure passed out was titled "Understanding and Responding to Climate Change" put out by the National Academies. This publication was so recent it had a few references to Hurricane Katrina.

SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

HMT Update: The OAR Hydromet Test-bed (HMT) is currently in the fifth Intensive Operating Period (IOP) and about to start the sixth IOP. So far, the HMT has captured several impressive meteorological and hydrological events on the American River near Sacramento. HMT is an OAR program to help improve operations through the use of better science and technology and runs through March 23, 2006. The Sacramento RFC HAS, Sacramento WFO, and Reno WFO are the primary WR offices participating in the HMT.

USGS MMS / PMRS Hydrologic Software Training: The Precipitation – Runoff Modeling System (PRMS) and the Modular Modeling System (MMS) were developed by USGS scientists in the early 1990s to provide hydrologists with an open source platform adaptable to many problems in hydrology. PRMS is a modular deterministic, distributed-parameter modeling system that can be used to evaluate the impacts of various combinations of precipitation, climate, and land use on stream flow, sediment yields, and general basin hydrology. Kevin Werner (SSD) is working with the USGS to establish a week of training to facilitate a PRMS evaluation at approximately 6 WR offices.

Gridded MOS Update: 5km Gridded MOS is now flowing to Medford. Dennis Gettman (WFO Medford) is conducting an initial evaluation. The results so far have been positive. MDL will be modifying the dataset with several enhancements and we will be expanding the evaluation to a few more offices.

WR Suite of IFPS Verification: Kirby Cook, Aaron Sutula and Carl Gorski are working with the DMST to prepare a suite of gridded verification software that will be provided to each WR office. The

software release will be in conjunction with the roll-out of the WR Verification Theme, where the verification emphasis will be refocused on significant public impacts. More information will be coming over the next few weeks.

Reminder: GOES Rapid Scan and Winter Storm Reconnaissance Program: Two programs exist that allow WR offices to request that the GOES-West satellite be placed in Rapid Scan mode and extra soundings to improve model performance over the Pacific Ocean. The Monterey Forecast Office is again serving as the Western Region Focal Point for both programs. Lead Forecasters are encouraged to call the office and request the additional data.

GOES-West Rapid Scan: The GOES satellite can be placed in a rapid scan mode where images of the western US are produced every 7.5 minutes. To request Rapid Scan, call the Monterey Forecast Office and provide a starting time, ending time, and operational reason (i.e. winter storm or severe weather event). The Monterey office will pass the request to NESDIS operations.

Winter Storms Reconnaissance (WSR) Program: The program deploys 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). Requests must be sent to the SDM at NCEP before 9:30 am EST (6:30 am PST). The Winter Storms Program for 2005 will conclude on or before March 15.

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

Upcoming Science Workshops

Annual AMS Meeting - Jan 29 - Feb 2: 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 - March 3-4: 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: www.atmos.washington.edu/~cliff/PNW2006.html for latest information and on-line registration. For more information contact:

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Climate Prediction Applications Science Workshop – March 21-24: The National Weather Service Climate Services Division, in conjunction with the University of Arizona Climate Assessment for the Southwest and Arizona Cooperative Extension is hosting the Fourth Climate Prediction Applications Science Workshop (CPASW) at the Westward Look Resort in Tucson, Arizona, on March 21-24, 2006. The deadline for on-line registration is February 1, 2006.
<http://cals.arizona.edu/climate/CPASW2006/index.htm>

New WR Science Publications

WR TA-Lite 05-15

An Evaluation of the 01-02 February 2003 South Central Montana and Northern Wyoming Snow Storm, by Don Moore, WFO Billings, MT
<http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/wrh/talite0515.pdf>

Training Update

NWSTC Update: If you sign up for a NWSTC course and are selected, it is important that you attend as planned. Training resources are extremely limited and people selected for training should plan well in advance on attending the course.

If there are extra-ordinary reasons (i.e. unexpected major illness in family) that develop that will affect your attendance, you must notify your MIC/HIC and WRHQ (Mark Mollner) as soon as possible. This will allow time to fill the slot, but again, this should only be a rare case.

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 January: The Virtual Institute for Satellite Integration Training (VISIT) calendar for January 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 January are:

- NEW - GOES Sounder Data and Products (Basic, Jan 31)
- GOES High Density Winds (Basic, Jan 9,19,23)
- Cyclogenesis: Analysis utilizing Geostationary Satellite Imagery (Basic, Jan 10)
- Utilizing GOES Imagery within AWIPS to Forecast Winter Storms Part 1 (Intermediate, Jan 17)
- Utilizing GOES Imagery within AWIPS to Forecast Winter Storms (Intermediate, Jan 18)

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

New ASOS Employee: Gerry Deiotte, the new ASOS Regional Maintenance Specialist (RMS), has reported to WRH. Gerry comes from Chanhassen, MN, where he was an RMS. Gerry has a wife and two kids.

Snow Cat Training: Western region snow cat training has been completed for the second consecutive year. The training was held in Auburn, CA and an ET from each office has attended. The class covers survival training, snow cat operation, and procedures. The goal is to have every snow cat operator trained in Western Region.

Safety Incidents: Western Region has reported only two safety incidents for the first quarter of FY2006. Last year at the same time Western Region had recorded seven safety incidents. This represents a decrease of 71% in recorded safety incidents.

ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT DIVISION



Admin Division Hosts Retirement Seminar: Western Region Administrative Management Division invited Deborah Galloway, the Benefits and Retirement Specialist for the Workforce Management Office in Seattle, Washington, to conduct retirement information meetings for Salt Lake employees. The seminar involved two meetings, one for CSRS employees and one for FERS employees. Deborah also held one-on-one meetings with individual employees to discuss their retirement benefits and help them plan for the future. Western Region Headquarters is grateful to Deborah for taking time to come and talk to us about the retirement program available to all employees and giving us the

benefit of her expertise about planning for retirement. Should anyone in Western Region need advice or guidance about their retirement, they may contact Deborah at (206) 526-6894.