



# NOAA's NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE Western Region Notes

September 22, 2005

## REGIONAL DIRECTOR'S OFFICE



**LIFT Selections:** Congratulations to the following people selected to participate in the next Leadership and Innovation For Tomorrow (LIFT) class.

- |     |                  |                    |
|-----|------------------|--------------------|
| 1.  | Don Britton      | WFO Great Falls    |
| 2.  | Alan Haynes      | CNRFC              |
| 3.  | Jim Scarlett     | WFO Billings       |
| 4.  | Michelle Mead    | WFO Missoula       |
| 5.  | Tyree Wilde      | WFO Portland       |
| 6.  | Dan Matusiewicz  | NWRFC              |
| 7.  | Dessa Emch       | WFO Oxnard         |
| 8.  | Larry Van Bussum | Boise              |
| 9.  | Stan Czyzyk      | WFO Las Vegas      |
| 10. | Clair Ketchum    | WFO Flagstaff      |
| 11. | Ryan Walbrun     | WFO Monterey       |
| 12. | Austin Jamison   | WFO Phoenix        |
| 13. | Chris Brenchley  | WFO Salt Lake City |
| 14. | Brian Alley      | WFO Portland       |
| 15. | Tom Evans        | WFO Tucson         |

## METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES DIVISION

**Statement of the Week:** High surf generated from a large storm several thousand miles away in the South Pacific affected Southern California last week. The high surf continued into the weekend, when the beaches receive especially heavy use. While usually enthusiastically received by surfers, the high surf does pose hazards if precautions are not taken. Those hazards include significantly larger than normal waves, which have potential to sweep fishermen off jetties and exposed rocks and sweep beach goers into the rough surf. The surf also contributes to beach erosion and can result in minor coastal flooding. Additionally, dangerous rip currents are generated as a result of large breaking waves. Good job, San Diego, for getting the word out!

WHUS46 KSGX 171100  
CFWSGX

COASTAL HAZARD MESSAGE  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE SAN DIEGO CA  
400 AM PDT SAT SEP 17 2005

CAZ042-043-171700-

/X.CON.KSGX.CF.Y.0001.000000T0000Z-050918T0600Z/

/X.CON.KSGX.SU.Y.0001.000000T0000Z-050918T0600Z/

ORANGE COUNTY COASTAL AREAS-SAN DIEGO COUNTY COASTAL AREAS-  
400 AM PDT SAT SEP 17 2005

...HIGH SURF ADVISORY REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL 11 PM PDT THIS EVENING...

...COASTAL FLOOD ADVISORY REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL 11 PM PDT THIS EVENING...

A LONG PERIOD SOUTH SWELL WILL SLOWLY DECREASE THROUGH SUNDAY. THE COASTS OF ORANGE AND SAN DIEGO COUNTIES WILL EXPERIENCE SURF OF 5 TO 8 FEET WITH LOCAL SETS TO 10 FEET TODAY. THE SURF WILL DECREASE SUNDAY. DANGEROUS RIP CURRENTS WILL MAKE THE WATERS TREACHEROUS FOR INEXPERIENCED SWIMMERS.

THE HIGH SURF COMBINED WITH THIS EVENINGS HIGH TIDE NEAR 7 FEET MAY CAUSE LOCAL TIDAL OVERFLOW AT LOW LYING AREAS. BEACH EROSION IS ALSO POSSIBLE MAINLY DURING HIGH TIDES. THE HIGH TIDES WILL DECREASE SUNDAY.

FORECASTED HIGH TIDE AT SAN DIEGO BROADWAY PIER...

THIS EVENING.....6.8 FEET AT 928 PM.

A COASTAL FLOOD ADVISORY INDICATES THAT HIGH SURF AND HIGH TIDES WILL COMBINE TO GENERATE LOCAL FLOODING OF LOW AREAS ALONG THE SHORE.

A HIGH SURF ADVISORY MEANS THAT HIGH SURF WILL AFFECT BEACHES IN THE ADVISORY AREA...PRODUCING DANGEROUS RIP CURRENTS AND LOCALIZED BEACH EROSION.

WHITLOW



*(L to R) MIC Kevin Baker and WCM Jeff Savadel participate in the highway cleanup.*

**WFO Elko Adopts A Highway:** WFO Elko participated in the Nevada DOT Adopt-A-Highway program, cleaning a two-mile section of the Lamoille Highway near Elko at the base of the picturesque Ruby Mountains. The goal of this servant leadership project was to provide a community service and increase NOAA and NWS exposure to the community.

NOAA and the NWS office in Elko were listed on the two highway cleanup signs as being responsible for cleanup of the designated section of Highway 225. The office turnout for the first environmental restoration day on September 10 was very good with 10 staff and family members in attendance. Participants included Greg and Nila Lonien, Randy and Patty Settje, Delyne Kirkham, Larry Whitworth, Jeff Savadel, Kevin Baker, Troy Marshall and

Rick Arkell. Another cleanup day will be scheduled later this fall.



**Deaf Nation Expo Held in Seattle:** On September 17, WFO Seattle participated in the 2005 Deaf Nation Expo, held at the Seattle Center. Approximately 2,500 deaf and hard of hearing people attended. This was the largest attendance ever for this event and included attendees from as far away as eastern Washington, Idaho, Utah, and Oregon.

Seattle Warning Coordination Meteorologist Ted Buehner staffed a booth with the Hearing, Speech, and Deafness Center. The booth highlighted use of NOAA Weather Radio with special attachments for the hard of hearing, such as bed and pillow shakers and strobe lights, to aid in alerting users to all-hazards warning information. Many visitors to the event had little or no knowledge that this service was available and affordable. This event was one of a number of activities during the September NOAA All Hazards Weather Radio Awareness Month in Washington state.

**Pocatello Forecaster Praised for Fire Support:** Ken Simosko, a forecaster at WFO Pocatello, received the following thank you note from the Incident Commander of the recent Big Dry Canyon Complex fire. Ken was praised for his forecast skills and his outstanding customer service. Great job, Ken!

*Dean Ken,*

*The Great Basin Fire Use Management Team 1 would like to thank you for your proactive interaction with our Fire Behavior Analyst on the Big Dry Canyon Complex. We really appreciate the extra efforts on your part. We hope to have another opportunity to work with you again in the future. Please except my gratitude for you assistance on the Big Dry Canyon Complex on the Caribou-Targhee National Forest during September 2005.*

*Gary P. Cones  
Incident Commander*

**NOAA Weather Radio and Web Outreach in the Billings CWA:** Lead Forecaster Tom Humphrey and General Forecaster Scott Carpenter, of WFO Billings, spent several days in early September visiting 40 hotels across southeastern Montana to raise awareness about NOAA's All Hazards Weather Radio. The two distributed brochures to be placed in hotel lobbies for travelers. The brochures, created by Billings WCM James Scarlett, contained information about NOAA All Hazards Weather Radio and transmitter frequencies for the state of Montana. National Weather Service web-based products and services were also promoted as a resource for travelers. Many hotel managers were eager to help out. Concentrating mostly along the I-90 and I-94 corridors, Tom logged 14 hours and 1,000 miles on the road as part of this outreach effort. Scott devoted an additional 4 hours visiting 22 hotels in the Billings area.

**Tsunami Warning Communications Test Conducted:** On September 14 at 10:45 AM PDT, Western Region (WR) Coastal Offices in Washington, Oregon, and California participated in a special communications test of the Tsunami Warning System. Beginning as early as Fall 2004, WR coastal WFOs began coordinating the test plan with Emergency Managers, the Coast Guard, law enforcement agencies, and others. As the test date drew closer, they announced the test to the general public by

issuing public service announcements, posting information on their web pages, and in some cases enlisting the help of local media to spread the word.



*Crews from local television stations in the Monterey-Salinas area cover the September 14th Tsunami Warning Communications Test, as it was carried out at WFO Monterey.*

The West Coast/Alaska Tsunami Warning Center (WC/ATWC), located in Palmer, Alaska, kicked the test off by transmitting a special “test” product via the same channels as would be used in the event of a tsunami. This was considered a “limited” test of the tsunami warning system, and there was no simulation of an earthquake or tsunami involved. Instead, it was designed primarily to test the communications paths from the WC/ATWC to WFOs and other normal warning points. Upon receiving the “test” message, local WFOs broadcast a special scripted announcement over NOAA Weather Radio and the Emergency Alert System (EAS) discussing the purpose of the test (using “Routine Test” or “Administrative Message” EAS codes). Overall, the test was successful and identified some areas for improvement. As a result, all involved will be working together toward strengthening the tsunami warning system.

## HYDROLOGY AND CLIMATE SERVICES DIVISION

**Updated Flash Flood Monitoring and Prediction Training:** The FFMP training, which was provided in Spring 2004, has been updated to a prerecorded format. The training can be found on the internal HCSD web page, under HCSD Training. It can also be accessed directly at: <http://ww2.wrh.noaa.gov/hcsd/Hydro/training/HCSD/FFMP/index.html>

The training module takes about 45 minutes to complete and provides a detailed overview of FFMP and the associated components such as the Forced Flash Flood Guidance GUI and the Data Monitoring System. This training is designed to be a good refresher on the new functionality associated with FFMP and an excellent overview for those who did not get to participate in the training last time.



*(L to R) Tom Clemmons and Tom Zickus analyze previous water levels in the recently drained reservoir.*

**FGZ and PSR Staff Investigate “Most Unsafe Dam in Arizona”:** On September 13, Tom Clemmons (WFO Flagstaff), Clair Ketchum (WFO Flagstaff), and Tom Zickus (WFO Phoenix) conducted a site visit to assess problems at City Dam, above Williams, AZ. The dam, which impounds one of the two major water storage facilities for the City, has been recently declared the most unsafe dam in Arizona.

On September 16, Clair returned to the dam site to observe the installation of the ALERT monitoring gage by the Arizona Department of Water Resources and to be briefed about the status of the structure. Although the reservoir has been drained significantly to alleviate pressure, a wet winter will cause renewed concerns about the safety of the structure. WFO Flagstaff will be working with the Arizona



Department of Water Resources and the City of Williams on finalizing an Emergency Action Plan.

## SCIENTIFIC SERVICES DIVISION

**Bi-annual SOO/DOH PD&T and Intern Progress Reports:** The bi-annual Western Region PD&T and Intern Progress Reports are due from each WFO and RFC by September 30, 2005.

**AWOC Core and Severe Weather Training Progress:** As of September 15, 417 WR forecasters and staff completed approximately 98% of the required modules.

**Winter Weather Program at HPC:** The NCEP HPC Winter Weather Desk (WWD) will begin operations for the 2005-2006 winter season. *An email with more information was distributed to all offices last week.* Some of the new WWD changes are:

- Staggered deadlines for internal accumulation graphics
- Larger model diagnostic images
- Public version of Low tracks graphic
- Snow ratio algorithms
- New SREF derived Winter Weather Impact Graphics
- Experimental intermountain region hi-res (4km) 6h snow grids and graphics through 72h using Mountain Mapper via HPC QPF and snow ratio .

The WWD schedule will be:

- *The WWD is staffed 8 hours twice daily starting 0130Z/1330Z from Sept 15 through May 15*
- *0445/1645Z – Winter Weather model diagnostic web graphics available  
(SREF by 0320/1520Z, NAM by 0330/1530Z, GFS by 0445/1645Z)*
- *0500/1700Z - Day 1 S/IP, ZR accumulation web graphic available (internal page)  
HPC will announce internal graphic availability via 12 Planet*
- *0545/1745Z - Day 2 S/IP, ZR accumulation web graphic available (internal page)*
- *0615/1815Z - Day 3 S/IP, ZR accumulation web graphic available (internal page)*
- *0815/2015Z - Collaboration window closed (opens formally at 0615/1815Z)*
- *0900/2100Z - External products issued*

The WWD points of contact are:

Robert Kelly (HPC Forecast Operations Branch Chief) – [robert.kelly@noaa.gov](mailto:robert.kelly@noaa.gov),

Dan Petersen (HPC WWD Focal Point) – [dan.petersen@noaa.gov](mailto:dan.petersen@noaa.gov),

Peter Manousos (HPC SOO and WWD coordinator) – [peter.manousos@noaa.gov](mailto:peter.manousos@noaa.gov)

**Bi-weekly WR SOO/DOH Operational Calls have resumed:** The Bi-weekly SOO/DOH operational calls have resumed. The calls are held every 2 weeks with the option to hold the second call during periods of active weather. The goal of the conference calls is to promote better situational awareness of upcoming weather changes and promote scientific sharing among the offices. These calls are not intended to replace daily forecaster collaborations or small group blast-up calls. Any questions should be directed to Andy Edman (SSD).

## Upcoming Science Workshops:

**Hydrologic Research to Operations Meeting:** WR is organizing a hydrology research to operations meeting October 4-6. The purpose of the meeting is to build relationships between the research and NWS operations communities to apply current and future research to solve problems in hydrology operations at the RFCs and WFOs. The website for the meeting is: [www.wrh.noaa.gov/hydroscience](http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/hydroscience). Please contact Kevin Werner (WR/SSD) with any questions.

**Ninth Annual Great Divide Weather Workshop:** The Great Divide Workshop will be held at the Hampton Inn in Great Falls on October 25-27, 2005. The focus of the workshop will be on the forecast challenges faced in the Intermountain West and the Western High Plains. The scheduled key note speaker for the banquet will be David C. Whiteman from the University of Utah. Dave will present a pictorial look at unique weather phenomena.

For more information, access the local news section at either the Missoula or Great Falls home pages ([weather.gov/missoula](http://weather.gov/missoula) or [weather.gov/greatfalls](http://weather.gov/greatfalls)).

Workshop contacts are Gene Petrescu, Michelle Mead, and Mike W. Johnson  
voice: 406-329-4715 fax: 406-329-4842  
e-mail: [wr.great.divide.workshop@noaa.gov](mailto:wr.great.divide.workshop@noaa.gov)

**Twelfth Annual Workshop on Weather Prediction in the Intermountain West:** The Twelfth Annual Workshop on Weather Prediction in the Intermountain West will be held on November 3, 2005 at the Desert Research Institute (DRI) in Reno, Nevada. The objectives of these annual workshops are to discuss major issues related to operational meteorology over the western United States and to foster interaction between applied meteorologists, research scientists, and others who rely on operational weather forecasts or data. The workshop is held in alternate years at DRI and the University of Utah, and this year is being hosted by the DRI / NOAA Cooperative Institute for Atmospheric Sciences and Terrestrial Applications (CIASTA).

This year's workshop agenda has two primary focus areas: Transportation Weather and Air Quality Forecasting and Impacts, with emphasis on the operational prediction methods, monitoring networks, and management challenges specific to the Intermountain West. Abstracts can be submitted for either poster or oral presentations.

Abstract submittal is not required for participation. The deadline for registration is October 1. For a more complete workshop description and registration instructions, please visit the workshop web page at: <http://conferences.dri.edu/WxPrediction/>

## Training Update

**NWSTC AWIPS Postgres Training Materials:** Postgres will replace Informix in AWIPS OB6 this autumn. In preparation for this change, the National Weather Service Training Center has been developing Postgres database training materials over the past several months. These materials are;

1. Postgres Documentation/Reference Manuals.

2. A Postgres training CD that acts as a Postgres emulator. This will allow local offices to work with Postgres commands.
3. An Introduction to Postgres on-line course. This will be available from the NWSTC in September 2005.
4. An Integrating Postgres into AWIPS on-line course is expected in October 2005.
5. A Postgres server with an AWIPS database at the NWSTC. Accessing this server will allow offices to run and test their Postgres scripts with AWIPS data. This server has been purchased by the NWSTC and is being ramped up. No date for field access is available at this time, but the goal is for sometime in late September or early October 2005.

National deployment of AWIPS OB6 is currently scheduled to begin on October 17, 2005. Hence, all WR offices should factor in Postgres training and changeover time for their appropriate AWIPS managers over the next few months.

**AWOC Update:** According to Ed Mahoney (WDTB), the upcoming AWOC winter weather training modules will be ready by the April/May 2006 time period. The current plan will be to require AWOC winter training next summer/fall in preparation for the following winter. More information will be coming as we receive updates.

#### **Recently Released COMET Modules:**

- Wave Life Cycle I: Generation
- Creating a Local Climate Product Using Composite Analysis
- Introduction to Ensemble Prediction
- Mesoscale Banded Precipitation
- The Impact of Weather on Air Traffic Management
- **Coming soon** – Dispersion Operation Training Module

To access, go to: <http://www.meted.ucar.edu/>

**Teletraining Sessions for October:** The Virtual Institute for Satellite Integration Training (VISIT) calendar for October is now available. Offices can register for the teletraining sessions by sending email to: [visit@comet.ucar.edu](mailto: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 October are:

- Cyclogenesis: Analysis utilizing Geostationary Satellite Imagery (Basic, Oct 12)
- Downscaling Technique by Climate Team (Basic, Oct 5,19)
- CPC Long Range Forecasting by Climate Team (Basic, Oct 6,26)
- CPC Extended Range Forecasting by Climate Team (Basic, Oct 7,18)

- CPC Monitoring Products by Climate Team (Basic, Oct 11,19)
- Use of GOES/RSO imagery with other Remote Sensor Data for Diagnosing Severe Weather across CONUS (RSO 3) (Intermediate, Oct 4, 5)

Climate Team sessions are intended for climate focal points and are a prerequisite for additional classroom training.

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 UHF Radio Link Installed:** The Audio for the NWR transmitter at Naselle Ridge (Astoria) is now being routed on the new phone circuit from WFO Portland, then via UHF link from the USCG facility at the Astoria airport to the Naselle Ridge transmitter site. The Astoria transmitter will now be receiving its audio source via phone line, which will result in a more reliable source of conveyance for NOAA Weather Radio Alert Tone activation. Thanks to Bill Flieder and the ET staff at WFO Portland.



**New RRS Installed at WFO Salt Lake:** The new Radiosonde Replacement System has been installed at WFO Salt Lake City. This is the third OATs RRS site to be installed. The last official flight of the old ART upper air system was September 19, 12z UTC. The first RRS GPS flight was September 20, 00z UTC. The HydroMetrological Technicians and the General Forecasters at WFO Salt Lake City were praised by the RRS Installation Team for having so many certified observers ready for training. The training will be completed by September 23. Kudos to Sean Wink, Lee Jenson, Grant Garner, Tom Page, Randy Miller, Steve Summy, Greg Wallace, and the electronics staff for all their efforts

and work in reaching this Regional Milestone.

**New Generator at NWR Signal Hill:** Lee Jenson and Tom Page traveled to WFO Glasgow to complete battery and cable work on the WSR-88D; as well as upgrade the generator at the NWR Signal Hill transmitter site