

**NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-903**  
**MAY 7, 2009**

*Operations and Services*  
*Hydrologic Services Program, NWSPD 10-9*

**GEOGRAPHIC AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

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**SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:** This directive supersedes NWS Instruction 10-903, “Geographic Areas of Responsibility,” dated March 23, 2007. The following revisions were made to this instruction:

- 1) Adds a procedure to Section 2 for providing shapefiles to the geographic information system (GIS) focal point in the Office of Science and Technology for the update of boundaries of river forecast center (RFC) areas of responsibility.
- 2) Adds a procedure to Section 3 for providing shapefiles to the GIS focal point in the Office of Science and Technology for the update of hydrologic service area (HSA) boundary maps.
- 3) Modifies the descriptions of the North Central RFC and Ohio RFC areas to make it clear that the Ottawa River basin is in the Ohio RFC area of responsibility.
- 4) Changes the Portland, ME HSA description to: “southern and western Maine and all but the southwest corner of New Hampshire.”
- 5) Revises the WFO Greenville/Spartanburg South Carolina HSA description to: “upstate South Carolina, a small portion of northeast Georgia, and a most of western North Carolina.”
- 6) Changes the name of WFO Roanoke to Roanoke/Blacksburg and revises the description of its HSA to: “south central and southwest Virginia (except the far western tip of the panhandle), southeastern West Virginia, and portions of northwest and north central North Carolina.”
- 7) Revises the WFO San Juan HSA description to “the island of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John).”
- 8) Renames WFO Knoxville/Tri Cities to Morristown, and revises the description of its HSA to “eastern Tennessee, five counties in extreme southwestern Virginia, and two counties in extreme southwestern North Carolina.”
- 9) Revises the WFO New Orleans/Baton Rouge HSA description to “southeast Louisiana and counties along the extreme southwestern end of Mississippi and coastal Mississippi.”
- 10) Revises the WFO Anchorage HSA description to “southern third of Alaska excluding the panhandle region; specifically, all drainages into the Pacific Ocean west of Cape Suckling and south of the Yukon Delta, including the Kuskokwim River drainage below McGrath.”

- 11) Revises the WFO Fairbanks HSA description to “northern two-thirds of Alaska; specifically, the upper Kuskokwim River above McGrath, the Yukon River and all of its tributaries, all drainages into the Pacific Ocean north of the Yukon Delta, and all drainages into the Arctic Ocean.”
- 12) Revises the HSA map in Figure 2 to reflect the changes in Alaska HSA responsibility and three other minor boundary adjustments at the county area scale.

(Signed)

April 23, 2009

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Date

**Geographic Areas of Responsibility**

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1. Introduction. This directive describes the area of responsibility for each river forecast center (RFC) and the hydrologic service area (HSA) for each weather forecast office (WFO) in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Weather Service (NWS).

2. River Forecast Centers. RFC areas of responsibility are designated according to major river basins and/or climatological regions. The official title of each RFC conveys its geographic area of responsibility and will be used when referring to RFCs in NWS documents and publications.

When a boundary needs to be adjusted between two or more RFCs, the offices first conduct the required coordination and notification process with regional headquarters and the OPR for this directive. Before a boundary change takes effect, RFCs work with the GIS (geographic information system) focal point in the Systems Engineering Center of the Office of Science and Technology (OST) to modify the appropriate RFC boundary shapefile. RFC boundary shapefiles can be found in the AWIPS Map Database Catalog at <http://weather.gov/geodata>. Areas of responsibility for each RFC are described below, listed in alphabetical order by RFC name. These areas are shown in Figure 1.

Alaska-Pacific RFC (APRFC) is located in Anchorage, Alaska; and has responsibility for all rivers in the State of Alaska and for providing hydrologic support for the Pacific Region.

Arkansas - Red Basin RFC (ABRFC) is located in Tulsa, Oklahoma; and has responsibility for the Arkansas River basin from its headwaters in Colorado and New Mexico downstream to and including Pine Bluff, Arkansas; and the Red River basin from its headwaters in New Mexico downstream to and including Fulton, Arkansas.

California - Nevada RFC (CNRFC) is located in Sacramento, California; and has responsibility for all river basins in California (except for the Colorado River drainage in the south), the Klamath River in southern Oregon, the Quinn River in southeast Oregon, and all river basins in Nevada (except for tributaries to the Snake River in the north, tributaries to the Colorado River in the southeast, and tributaries to the Great Salt Lake and Sevier Lake in the far east portion).

Colorado Basin RFC (CBRFC) is located in Salt Lake City, Utah; and has responsibility for the Colorado River basin from the headwaters in Colorado and Wyoming downstream to the international boundary with Mexico, the river basins west of the Continental Divide in New Mexico and Arizona, the Great Salt Lake basin, and the Sevier Lake basin.



**Figure 1.** River forecast center areas of responsibility.

Lower Mississippi RFC (LMRFC) is located in Slidell, Louisiana, and has responsibility for all drainage and tributaries of the Mississippi River basin below Chester, Illinois; including the Big Muddy River below Murphysboro, Illinois; the Ohio River and all tributaries at and below Smithland Lock and Dam Tailwater, Illinois; the Cumberland River drainage below Barkley Dam in Kentucky; all tributaries of the Tennessee River Basin above Kentucky Dam in Kentucky excluding the Tennessee River mainstem; and all drainage below Kentucky Dam; the Arkansas River basin and tributaries below Pine Bluff, Arkansas; the Red River basin and tributaries below Fulton, Arkansas; and all Gulf of Mexico drainages between and including the Pascagoula River basin in Mississippi west to the Calcasieu River basin in Louisiana.

Middle Atlantic RFC (MARFC) is located in State College, Pennsylvania; and has responsibility for the Atlantic slope drainages from below the mouth of the Hudson River to and including the James River basin in Virginia.

Missouri Basin RFC (MBRFC) is located in Pleasant Hill, Missouri; and has responsibility for the U.S. portion of the Missouri River basin from its headwaters in Colorado, Wyoming, and Montana down to the confluence with the Mississippi River and the U.S. portion of the St. Mary River basin in Montana.

North Central RFC (NCRFC) is located in Chanhassen, Minnesota; and has responsibility for the Mississippi River basin from its headwaters downstream to and including Chester, Illinois

(except for the Missouri basin which is serviced by the Missouri Basin RFC); the Big Muddy River downstream to and including Murphysboro, Illinois; the Red River of the North basin to the Canadian border; the Souris River basin in North Dakota; the Roseau River basin in Minnesota; the Rainy River basin in Minnesota; the Calumet River basin in Illinois/Indiana; and the Great Lakes tributaries in Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana (except for the Maumee River basin and Ottawa River basin which are serviced by the Ohio RFC).

Northeast RFC (NERFC) is located in Taunton, Massachusetts; and has responsibility for the Lake Erie and Lake Ontario drainages in the State of New York; the Hudson River basin above the Passaic River of New Jersey; the Lake Champlain drainages in New York and Vermont; the streams of Long Island, New York; and all other U.S. river basins to the northeast of these basins in the New England states.

Northwest RFC (NWRFC) is located in Portland, Oregon; and has responsibility for the U.S. portion of the Columbia/Snake River basins; all of the coastal river basins of Oregon and Washington; and the Great Basin rivers of Oregon with the exception of the Quinn River (which is serviced by the CNRFC).

Ohio RFC (OHRFC) is located in Wilmington, Ohio; and has responsibility for the Ohio River basin from its headwaters downstream to and including inflow into Smithland Lock and Dam near Smithland, Kentucky; the Cumberland River and its tributaries above Barkley Dam; and all Lake Erie drainage areas in Ohio, Indiana, and Pennsylvania, as well as Maumee and Ottawa River drainage areas in Michigan.

Southeast RFC (SERFC) is located in Peachtree City, Georgia; and has responsibility for rivers draining into the Atlantic Ocean from and including the Albemarle Sound (Nottoway River of Virginia/North Carolina) southward to the tip of Florida, the rivers draining into the Gulf of Mexico from the southern tip of Florida north and west to and including the Mobile River (Tombigbee/Alabama River basins) of Alabama, and Puerto Rico.

West Gulf RFC (WGRFC) is located in Fort Worth, Texas; and has responsibility for rivers draining into the western Gulf of Mexico along the Texas coast, from and including the Rio Grande basin of Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, and Mexico north to the Sabine River basin of Texas and western Louisiana.

3. Weather Forecast Offices. Each WFO provides site-specific hydrologic products and other hydrologic services for its HSA. HSAs are coincident with county warning and forecast areas (CWFA) as much as possible, but may deviate from the CWFA to accommodate natural hydrologic boundaries and partner/user requirements where necessary. Site-specific hydrologic forecast and warning products are provided for the HSA while areal hydrologic products such as flood watches are provided for the CWFA. CWFAs are described in [NWS Manual 10-507, Public Geographic Areas of Responsibility](#).



**Figure 2.** WFO hydrologic service areas.

Detailed HSA definitions, maps, and descriptions of WFO hydrology program support responsibilities are contained in supplements to this directive issued by the NWS regions. When an HSA boundary needs to be adjusted between two or more WFOs, the offices first conduct the required coordination and notification process with regional headquarters and the OPR for this directive. When an HSA boundary change is to take effect, WFOs work with the GIS focal point in the Systems Engineering Center of the OST to modify the shapefile used to generate the national HSA map. The national HSA map can be found in the AWIPS Map Database Catalog at <http://weather.gov/geodata>. A national HSA map is shown in Figure 2.

The HSA for each WFO is described in general terms below, listed in alphabetical order by WFO name, with official site identifier in parenthesis.

Aberdeen, SD (ABR) - central, north central, and northeast South Dakota.

Albany, NY (ALY) - portions of eastern New York, northwest Connecticut, western Massachusetts, and southern Vermont.

Albuquerque, NM (ABQ) - northern three quarters of New Mexico.

Amarillo, TX (AMA) - central and northern portions of the Texas panhandle along with the Oklahoma panhandle.

Anchorage, AK (AFC) - southern third of Alaska excluding the panhandle region; specifically, all drainages into the Pacific Ocean west of Cape Suckling and south of the Yukon Delta, including the Kuskokwim River drainage below McGrath.

Atlanta, GA (FFC) - most of central and northern Georgia.

Austin/San Antonio, TX (EWX) - a portion of southern and central Texas.

Baltimore, MD/Washington, DC (LWX) - most of Maryland (except for Garrett County and the eastern shore), northern Virginia, and the West Virginia panhandle.

Billings, MT (BYZ) - southeast quarter of Montana and Sheridan County, Wyoming.

Binghamton, NY (BGM) - portions of south central New York and northeast Pennsylvania.

Birmingham, AL (BMX) - central Alabama.

Bismarck, ND (BIS) - western two-thirds of North Dakota.

Boise, ID (BOI) - southwest Idaho and southeast Oregon.

Boston, MA (BOX) - most of Massachusetts (except for the far west portion), southwest New Hampshire, northeast Connecticut, and all of Rhode Island.

Brownsville, TX (BRO) - southern tip of Texas.

Buffalo, NY (BUF) - western New York and the Lake Ontario portion of northern New York.

Burlington, VT (BTV) - northern and central Vermont and northeast New York.

Caribou, ME (CAR) - northern Maine.

Central Illinois, IL (ILX) - central and east central Illinois.

Central Pennsylvania, PA (CTP) - south central, central, and north central Pennsylvania.

Charleston, SC (CHS) - southeast South Carolina and a portion of eastern Georgia.

Charleston, WV (RLX) - central, western, and southern West Virginia; southeast Ohio; and a small portion of eastern Kentucky.

Cheyenne, WY (CYS) - southeast Wyoming and western Nebraska.

Chicago, IL (LOT) - northeast Illinois and northwest Indiana.

Cincinnati, OH (ILN) - central, western, and southern Ohio, northern Kentucky, and southeast Indiana.

Cleveland, OH (CLE) - northern Ohio and the tip of northwest Pennsylvania.

Columbia, SC (CAE) - central South Carolina and a portion of eastern Georgia.

Corpus Christi, TX (CRP) - a portion of southern Texas above the southern tip of the state handled by Brownsville, TX.

Dallas/Fort Worth, TX (FWD) - east central and north central Texas.

Denver/Boulder, CO (BOU) - most of the northeast quarter of Colorado.

Des Moines, IA (DMX) - south central, central, and north central Iowa.

Detroit, MI (DTX) - southeast third of lower Michigan.

Dodge City, KS (DDC) - west central and southwest Kansas.

Duluth, MN (DLH) - northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin.

Eastern North Dakota, ND (FGF) - eastern third of North Dakota and northwest Minnesota.

El Paso, TX (EPZ) - western tip of Texas and southwest New Mexico.

Elko, NV (LKN) - northeast and north central Nevada.

Eureka, CA (EKA) - coastal area of northwest California.

Fairbanks, AK (AFG) - northern two-thirds of Alaska; specifically, the upper Kuskokwim River above McGrath, the Yukon River and all of its tributaries, all drainages into the Pacific Ocean north of the Yukon Delta, and all drainages into the Arctic Ocean.

Flagstaff, AZ (FGZ) - north central and northeast Arizona.

Glasgow, MT (GGW) - northeast quarter of Montana.

Goodland, KS (GLD) - northwest Kansas and small portions of southwest Nebraska and eastern Colorado.

Grand Junction, CO (GJT) - western portion of Colorado and four counties in eastern Utah.

Grand Rapids, MI (GRR) - southwest third of lower Michigan.

Great Falls, MT (TFX) - a large portion of central and southwest Montana.

Green Bay, WI (GRB) - north central and northeast Wisconsin.

Greenville/Spartanburg, SC (GSP) - upstate South Carolina, a small portion of northeast Georgia, and a most of western North Carolina.



Guam (GUM) - the Island of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and the Republic of Palau.

Hastings, NE (GID) - south central Nebraska and north central Kansas.

Honolulu, HI (HFO) - all of the Hawaiian Islands.

Houston/Galveston, TX (HGX) - a portion of southeast Texas.

Huntsville, AL (HUN) - northern Alabama and Lincoln, Moore, and Franklin counties in Tennessee.

Indianapolis, IN (IND) - most of central and southern Indiana.

Jackson, KY (JKL) - most of eastern Kentucky.

Jackson, MS (JAN) - central Mississippi, northeast Louisiana, and the southeast corner of Arkansas.

Jacksonville, FL (JAX) - northeast Florida and the southeast corner of Georgia.

Juneau, AK (AJK) - panhandle area of Alaska; specifically, all drainages into the Pacific Ocean south and east of Cape Suckling.

Kansas City/Pleasant Hill, MO (EAX) - north central, northwest, and west central Missouri and a small portion of eastern Kansas.

Key West, FL (EYW) - Florida Keys.

La Crosse, WI (ARX) - southwest Wisconsin, southeast Minnesota, and northeast Iowa.

Lake Charles, LA (LCH) - southwest Louisiana and a small portion of southeast Texas.

Las Vegas, NV (VEF) - southern Nevada, northwest Arizona south of the Colorado River, and a portion of eastern California.

Little Rock, AR (LZK) - most of the State of Arkansas except for small western, southern, and eastern portions.

Los Angeles, CA (LOX) - Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara, and San Luis Obispo Counties in California.

Louisville, KY (LMK) - central Kentucky and portions of southern Indiana.

Lubbock, TX (LUB) - a portion of northern Texas below the panhandle.

Marquette, MI (MQT) - most of the upper peninsula of Michigan and a small part of northeast Wisconsin.

Medford, OR (MFR) - southwest Oregon and a small portion of northern California near the Oregon/California boundary.

Melbourne, FL (MLB) - east central portion of the Florida peninsula.

Memphis, TN (MEG) - western quarter of Tennessee, the northern third of Mississippi, a portion of eastern Arkansas, and a small part of southeast Missouri.

Miami, FL (MFL) - southern end of the Florida peninsula.

Midland/Odessa, TX (MAF) - a large portion of western Texas and the southeast corner of New Mexico.

Milwaukee, WI (MKX) - south central and southeast Wisconsin.

Minneapolis, MN (MPX) - most of the southern half of Minnesota except for the southeast and southwest corners, and a portion of western Wisconsin.

Missoula, MT (MSO) - western Montana and northeast Idaho.

Mobile, AL (MOB) - southwest Alabama, the far west end of the Florida panhandle, and a portion of southeast Mississippi.

Morehead City, NC (MHX) - central portion of coastal North Carolina.

Morristown, TN (MRX) - eastern Tennessee, five counties in extreme southwestern Virginia, and two counties in extreme southwestern North Carolina.

Nashville, TN (OHX) - most of central Tennessee .

New Orleans/Baton Rouge, LA (LIX) – southeast Louisiana and counties along the extreme southwestern end of Mississippi and coastal Mississippi.

New York City, NY (OKX) - southeast end of New York including Long Island, northeast New Jersey, and the southern half of Connecticut.

North Central Lower Michigan, MI (APX) - northern third of lower Michigan and the eastern end of the upper Michigan peninsula.

Northern Indiana, IN (IWX) - most of northern Indiana and portions of northwest Ohio and southern Michigan.

North Platte, NE (LBF) - most of central Nebraska.

Oklahoma City, OK (OUN) - central and western Oklahoma (except for the panhandle) and western north Texas.

Omaha, NE (OAX) - eastern Nebraska and southwest Iowa.

Paducah, KY (PAH) - western Kentucky, southeast Missouri, southern Illinois, and southwest Indiana.

Pago Pago, AS (PPG) (Weather Service Office) - American Samoa - i.e., the islands of Tutuila, Manua, and Swains.

Pendleton, OR (PDT) - northeast Oregon and a portion of south central and southeast Washington.

Philadelphia, PA (PHI) - southeast Pennsylvania, all of New Jersey except for the northeast corner, all of Delaware, and five eastern shore counties in the Maryland portion of the Delmarva peninsula.

Phoenix, AZ (PSR) - south central and southwest Arizona along with most of the desert area of southeastern California.

Pittsburgh, PA (PBZ) - most of western Pennsylvania, part of eastern Ohio, northern West Virginia, and Garrett County, Maryland.

Pocatello/Idaho Falls, ID (PIH) - most of southeast Idaho.

Portland, ME (GYX) - southern and western Maine and all but the southwest corner of New Hampshire.

Portland, OR (PQR) - northwest Oregon and southwest Washington.

Pueblo, CO (PUB) - south central and southeast Colorado.

Quad Cities, IA (DVN) - most of eastern Iowa (except for the northeast corner), the adjacent portion of western Illinois, and the far northeast portion of Missouri.

Raleigh/Durham, NC (RAH) - central North Carolina.

Rapid City, SD (UNR) - western South Dakota and northeast Wyoming.

Reno, NV (REV) - northwest Nevada and the eastern most portion of the Sierra counties of eastern California.

Riverton, WY (RIW) - western Wyoming, except the far southwest corner, and most of central Wyoming.

Roanoke/Blacksburg, VA (RNK) - south central and southwest Virginia (except the far western tip of the panhandle), southeastern West Virginia, and portions of northwest and north central North Carolina.

Sacramento, CA (STO) - north central California centered on the Sacramento Valley.

Salt Lake City, UT (SLC) - Utah (except four eastern counties), Uinta County in Wyoming, a small portion of southeast Idaho, and northwest Arizona north of the Colorado River.

San Angelo, TX (SJT) - a portion of central Texas.

San Diego, CA (SGX) - San Diego and Orange Counties, western Riverside County, and southwestern San Bernardino County in Southern California.

San Francisco Bay Area, CA (MTR) - central coastal area of California, including the San Francisco Bay area.

San Joaquin Valley, CA (HNX) - a portion of central California centered on the San Joaquin Valley.

San Juan, PR (SJU) - the island of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands (St. Thomas, St. Croix and St. John).

Seattle/Tacoma, WA (SEW) - northwest Washington.

Shreveport, LA (SHV) - northwest Louisiana, northeast Texas, the southeast corner of Oklahoma, and southwest Arkansas.

Sioux Falls, SD (FSD) - southeast South Dakota, the southwest corner of Minnesota, and the northwest corner of Iowa.

Spokane, WA (OTX) - north central and northeast Washington, a portion of southeast Washington, and northwest Idaho.

Springfield, MO (SGF) - southwest and south central Missouri and southeast Kansas.

St. Louis, MO (LSX) - east central and most of northeast Missouri and portions of west central and southwest Illinois.

Tallahassee, FL (TAE) - central and eastern portion of the Florida panhandle, the southeast corner of Alabama, and southwest Georgia.

Tampa Bay Area, FL (TBW) - the west central portion of the Florida peninsula.

Topeka, KS (TOP) - northeast Kansas.

Tucson, AZ (TWC) - southeast Arizona.

Tulsa, OK (TSA) - most of eastern Oklahoma and northwest Arkansas.

Wakefield, VA (AKQ) - southeast Virginia, four eastern shore counties of Maryland, and northern coastal North Carolina.

Wichita, KS (ICT) - southeast Kansas and a portion of central Kansas.

Wilmington, NC (ILM) - southern coastal North Carolina and northeast South Carolina.