

Western Region Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2012

National Weather Service

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Regional Director's Message

To all Western Region Employees,

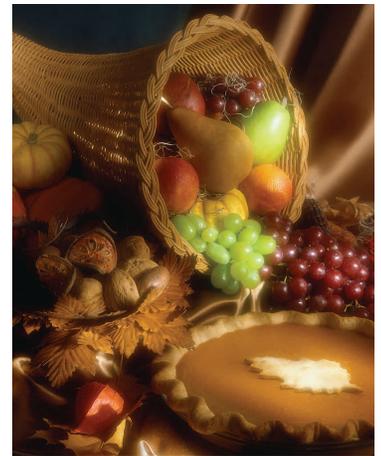
Let me first congratulate all who took part in community service week! What outstanding support across our region! Western Region Headquarters volunteered again this year at the Crossroads Urban Center. We painted inside, outside, packaged food, all for those in need. Do check out the photo .

Fall is in full swing with winter rapidly approaching. This time of year is also the end of the performance period and the beginning of a new one. Thank you all for the job you have done over the past year, and I encourage you to remain focused on our mission and the service delivery that our customers and partners have come to rely on.

For some, that is easier said than done as we find our agency going through unprecedented, difficult times. The fiscal environment remains challenging for the NWS , as we operate under a continuing resolution with minimal 6 month spending levels set by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). We will continue to pay for the basics and go beyond when we can, and when it is operationally necessary.

As the holiday season nears, this is also a season of thanks and giving. The Combined Federal Campaign is in full gear, and I encourage you all to consider CFC as a way to give back to the many organizations that depend on donations.

Once again, thanks for the great job you do every day.



Vickie

NOAA Helping NOAA

During the week of September 24th, the Weather Forecast Office (WFO) in Eureka, CA provided a highly specialized level of Decision Support Services (DSS) to NOAA's Pacific Marine Environmental Lab (PMEL) to assist in retrieval of a Slocumm (ocean) Glider off the coast of northwest California. PMEL was "flying" the glider from the northern part of the Washington coast down to California as part of the 2012 West Coast Ocean Acidification Cruise. More information on PMEL's ocean acidification projects can be found on [PMEL's web site](#).



The Slocumm Ocean Glider, Photo courtesy of Teledyne Webb Research

Ocean gliders dive very deep underwater and normally cannot get closer than 15 NM from shore for safe operations or retrieval. Retrieving vessels must have specific capabilities to help ensure a successful retrieval of these very expensive and specialized gliders. Because of WFO Eureka's location at the Port of Eureka, PMEL asked the WFO to assist in finding a local vessel with the correct size and specifications to help keep retrieval costs low. Because of the port location, WFO Eureka was able to provide weather and marine DSS information briefings directly to PMEL retrieval project staff. DSS information provided was used for vessel bar passage, transit to the retrieval site and operations on scene.

WFO Eureka WCM, Troy Nicolini reported that, "It was an interesting process for the office to provide weather support to PMEL and assist in contracting with a local boat for retrieval. Based on the PMEL's retrieval requirements, including glider weight and boat deck machinery capability, we initially suggested a 32-foot "fast boat" to save PMEL money. However, two days out from the scheduled retrieval, forecast conditions were looking worse so we then recommended a 50-foot crab fishing boat. PMEL then advised us that the glider would likely be 30 NM offshore instead of the original 15 NM due to an offshore current, requiring use of a 70-foot research vessel that could handle sea conditions that far offshore. This increased vessel contract costs to PMEL, but resulted in a fast, successful retrieval. PMEL expressed much appreciation for our ability to blend weather information with local fleet availability knowledge that provided a dynamic range of retrieval solutions." PMEL staff will return to Eureka again late in the year to retrieve two different research instruments and will contact WFO Eureka for weather and vessel contracting support.

Complete information about the "Slocumm Glider" used by PMEL for this mission can be found here: (<http://www.webbresearch.com/slocumglider.aspx>).

Great work WFO Eureka!

Sneak Peak at Western Region Aviation DSS in Action

Dense fog is a common occurrence along the west coast and many of our coastal WFO's are quite experienced in working these types of weather events. Inland, and particularly over the cold, dry northern tier of our region, dense fog is not a common phenomena. On October 6th, WFO Billings was faced with the forecast challenge of dense fog and did an outstanding job handling the weather situation and providing updates for their partners and the public, especially the [Billings Logan International Airport](#). The WR ODSD will highlight WFO Billings' aviation IDSS for this event in an upcoming Sharing Call. We've asked Billings to prepare a short case study on the fog event, and share their IDSS challenges and successes with the rest of region. We look forward to hearing from you, WFO Billings!

Another excellent aviation IDSS event unfolded recently at the Salt Lake Center Weather Service Unit (CWSU). A strong frontal passage brought a rather abrupt change to wind direction and wind speed. The [Salt Lake City International Airport](#) was actually in a ground stop for awhile. As you would expect, our aviation partners were quite eager to get planes moving again but needed to proceed with caution and safety. Our CWSU provided several updates to the FAA Traffic Management Unit, bringing SLC back into full operations with only a minimal period of ground stop in place. Coordination between the WFO and CWSU, and excellent IDSS to our aviation partners, is something WR ODSD feels much of region would be interested in hearing about. As such, we also plan to highlight the SLZ CWSU aviation IDSS in a future Sharing Call. We look forward to hearing from you, ZLC!

Great job, WFO Billings and the Salt Lake City CWSU and WFO, in handling these two interesting and time sensitive aviation IDSS events. We look forward to hearing more from you in the near future. In the meantime, WR ODSD encourages all offices to please keep us in the loop on these types of IDSS events. There is a lot of value in peer-to-peer sharing and we encourage you to submit ideas and topics to wr.hq.odsd@noaa.gov.

In our October Newsletter, WR ODSO announced that the November Weather Story of the Month would be nominated by our field offices. We received a lot of great weather stories and appreciate the enthusiasm and willingness to share your office creativity with the rest of the Region.

This month's winner was nominated by WFO Elko, Nevada and created by Met Intern Jeremy Michael. The weather story was issued on October 10, ahead of a wet weather system moving through the region. The impact from this system focused on valley rain/mountain snow and included the fact that many outdoor enthusiasts such as hunters, hikers, and campers would be outside and exposed to the elements. Jeremy highlighted the change from rain to snow in the higher elevations and mentioned a few popular outdoor recreation spots that were expected to be impacted. This is the type of weather story that our partners, customers and the general public can relate to. As a matter of fact, the Elko Facebook page saw 97 "Likes" for this weather story and had at least one "Share". Overall, Jeremy and the WFO Elko staff provided excellent advanced notification about the change in weather, empowering their customers and users to make more informed decisions based on the upcoming weather. Way to go, Jeremy! Keep up the great work WFO Elko.

Reminder: Please submit your top three local weather story favorites to wr.hq.odsd@noaa.gov by the 20th of each month. Please include the image, who made it, any social media feedback and how the weather story was created (e.g. template, etc).

Chance of Rain - Mountain Snow Possible Above 8000 feet



Showers and thunderstorms will break out across central Nevada today, then spread north tomorrow through Friday night.

Rain can be expected in the valleys, however before this system exits, up to a foot of snow could fall on the east slopes of the Schell Creek and Snake mountain ranges of White Pine county.

Impacts:

- Outdoor enthusiasts, such as hunters, hikers, and campers, should continue monitoring the weather and be prepared for lightning, rain and possibly snow.
- Gusty winds near thunderstorms
- Seek shelter if you hear thunder or see lightning.

Keep checking www.weather.gov/elko for updates

WFO Billings and WFO Glasgow - Montana SERC/TERC/LEPC Fall Conference

The NWS offices in Billings and Glasgow participated in the Montana SERC/TERC/LEPC Fall Conference in Sidney, MT recently. The offices supported a booth as well as gave presentations. The conference focused on Hazmat, Emergency Preparedness and Planning, running a successful LEPC, exercise planning and execution, and the mounting issues resulting from the Bakken oil boom in western North Dakota and eastern Montana. IMET Patrick Gilchrist set up his equipment and had discussions with hazmat and fire crews from around the state on how the IMET program assists on critical incidents. WCM Tom Frieders presented on how dual pol radar will help forecasters with improved products, warnings and services to aide decision support. WFO Billings has had their upgrade for 10 months, and the remaining WFO's have had them since July/August, and Tom was able to show various examples from around the state and some shared in the Dual Pol Storm of the Month webinars. WCM Tanja Fransen presented on IPAWS, CMAS/WEA, iNWS and NWSChat. Tanja also showed some of the recent MODIS imagery showing the large number of burn scars across Montana from this fire season. One thing they were able to do was have one on one discussions with many of the new partners we have, and make connections with users who need weather information for decision support (Local Red Cross, Pipelines and Railroads), and they signed up new iNWS users. They were able to see some of the software being utilized by the regional Hazmat teams in the state for plume modeling, and discuss one on one how Hysplit and Aloha are used in the NWS.



WFO Portland Staff Members Hike to Site of the Mann Gulch Fire



During the week of September 22-26, WFO Portland staff members Scott Weishaar and Kirsten Elson along with Kirsten's son, Aaron and father Richard Moloney, hiked into the Mann Gulch wilderness area of western Montana to pay tribute to the 13 firefighters who tragically lost their lives fighting a wildfire in the area on August 5, 1949. Lessons learned from the Mann Gulch fire had a great impact on fire-fighting training over the next several decades. It remains one of the most tragic wildfires to date.

From left to right: Kirsten Elson, Aaron Willman and IMET Scott Weishaar at the trailhead of Mann Gulch

WFO Reno - Fire Fest 2012 at Lake Tahoe



A South Lake Tahoe tradition, the Kiwanis Club of Lake Tahoe hosted the Lake Tahoe Basin Fire Fest 2012 on Saturday September 29 at the South Lake Tahoe Airport. Several key fire partners were at the event, including: Cal Fire, U.S. Forest Service, South Lake Tahoe Fire, and many others. It was a

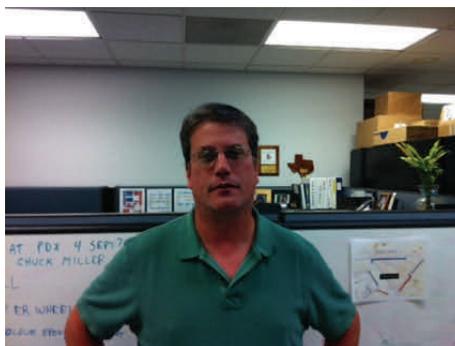


Jaws of life rescue demonstration

family event that featured demonstrations, home safety, disaster preparedness, energy conservation tips, and the importance of defensible space. South Lake Tahoe is an extremely proactive community when it comes to fire prevention and safety, and the firefighting community and the public maintain a good relationship. The devastating Angora fire affected the community in June 2007, destroying over 200 structures.

The community of South Lake Tahoe understands the need for defensible space, disaster preparedness, and situational awareness. Edan Lindaman, a journey forecaster, represented WFO Reno at the event and answered questions about fire weather forecasting, lake forecasts, and advertised WFO Reno's presence on Facebook and Twitter. She also conducted a live radio interview with KTahoe, and focused on the importance of weather for fires and the close working relationship with the fire partners.

WFO Portland Electronic Technicians - DOC Gold Medal Recipients



Doug Birck and Joe Hannon from WFO Portland are recipients of the DOC Gold Medal Award for their quick and selfless actions assisting victims of an automobile accident while on their way back to the office after a maintenance trip on September 28, 2011.

L to R: Doug Birck and Joe Hannon, Electronic Technicians from WFO Portland.

They came upon the accident just after it occurred near Grande Ronde, OR. A car traveling at a high rate of speed had hit a tree and split into two sections. The section containing the occupants ended up in the river adjacent to the road. Doug and Joe were the first to arrive on the scene and heard a female voice crying for help. Doug and Joe and an Oregon State Trooper slid down the embankment, waded into the river, and held one of the victims above water until she could be freed from her seat belt and extracted from the car. The Oregon State Trooper said Doug and Joe acted as Good Samaritans and helped save the life of the female passenger.

WFO Spokane - Presents the Jefferson Award

Recognizing over 40 years of service, Rosalia WA residents Bill and Alice Hofmann (right) were presented the 2012 Thomas Jefferson Award for outstanding service in the Cooperative Weather Observer Program. MIC John Livingston (left) presented the award to the Hofmann's on 10/12 at a small ceremony at the Brass Rail in Rosalia. The Jefferson Award is the highest honor for co-op observers recognizing longevity, quality and continuity. The Hofmanns represent the best of this all volunteer program, willingly serving their community and country.



NWS Assists During First Ever City of Pocatello Safety Fair



NWS Pocatello Lead Forecaster Dan Valle

WFO Pocatello Lead Forecaster Dan Valle and WCM Vernon Preston were invited to participate in the first ever City of Pocatello Safety and Preparedness Fair. After a devastating fire at the end of June which burned more than 60 houses, residents asked the city to help spread the word about preparedness. The fair was hosted at the city hall with a variety of safety and preparedness displays and vendors. Over 300 people took advantage of the event which

included live TV and the local access Cable TV channel conducting interviews for an upcoming show.



NWS Pocatello WCM Vernon Preston

WFO Elko Participates in Annual Elko KMART Health and Safety Fair

Another successful Health and Safety Fair was held at the local KMART store on Mountain City Highway in Elko during the second weekend in October. Several of the local agencies including the Nevada Highway Patrol, Elko Fire Department, Committee Against Domestic Violence (CADV), Sentry Flameless Candles and the Elko National Weather Service supported this annual event.

Delyne Kirkham (HMT/Ops & DSS Team Lead), Donald Dumont (SOO) and Michael Fitzsimmons (WCM) teamed up to man the National Weather Service booth during the sixteen hour event. The focus of our booth was to provide decision support services through accessing the internet via a laptop broadband

card. As a result, we were able to feature our Detailed Hazard, Facebook, Climate, Radar and Satellite information from our webpage for customer demonstration. This combined with providing seasonal brochures and disaster response wheels to many of the KMART customers proved to be a very educational weekend for all.



NWS Boise Recognizes Boise Airport as a Storm Ready Community

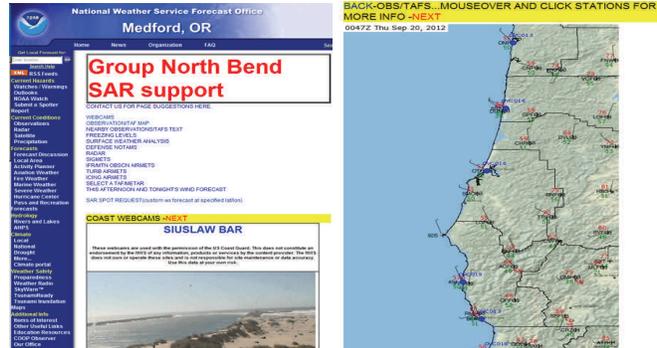


L to R : Jay Breidenbach (WCM), Bob Diaz (MIC), Rebecca Hupp (Airport Director), Dale Nalder (Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security), Sarah Demory (Airport Director of Operations and Security), Bill Wojcik (Sr.. Forecaster), Doug Hardman (Ada County Emergency Manager)

The National Weather Service officially recognized the Boise Airport as being Storm Ready this month. Sarah Demory, Director of Boise Airport Operations, worked closely with the Boise Forecast Office and the Southwestern Idaho Storm Ready Board to insure that the airport workers and the general public are weather ready while on airport property. At the recognition ceremony, Jay Breidenbach spoke about the Weather Ready Nation initiative and its relevance to a large airport, where the general public, ground crews and the aviation community often make weather dependent decisions.

WFO Medford - Coast Guard Operational Decision Support Services

The United States Coast Guard doesn't have dedicated aviation weather support, and Coast Guard pilots typically gather weather information from a myriad of sources. According to uscg.mil, there are 35 Coast Guard Air Stations across the United States. One of these is located in North Bend, Oregon, where the fickle summertime marine layer and strong winter storms produce hazardous flying conditions on a regular basis. Sven Nelaimischkies and Shad Keene recently visited North Bend's Coast Guard Air Station to help evaluate and improve the Coast Guard Briefing Page that Sven created about 5 years ago, and they remain in touch with pilots via email and phone. Sven and Shad use the feedback they receive to tailor the website to the pilots' needs. Coast Guard pilots can now access webcams, AIRMETs, freezing levels, a tailored flight category observation map, and other important weather information on one single page. So far, it has been well-received, getting over 200 visits a month from the group of Coast Guard pilots. LCDR Jason Gelfand says, "Our tactical environment can be unforgiving, and we are very concerned about fog in the summer and icing in the winter." He's appreciative of the National Weather Service reaching out to provide weather support to the Coast Guard. The National Weather Service Office in Medford continues to explore ways to bolster their partnership with the Coast Guard and the public.



NWS Monterey and CWSU ZOA Support Great Shakeout!



On October 18, 2012, the San Francisco Bay Area National Weather Service office in Monterey and the CWSU in Fremont participated in the Great Shakeout by supporting and participating in several local activities. Jerome Jacques of the CWSU represented both offices at a local Earthquake and Emergency Preparedness Safety fair on the grounds of Hartnell College in Salinas, California. The event allowed the NWS to reach out to the local community and encourage preparedness and knowledge of critical NWS products and services. The NWS also collaborated with the California

Geological Survey to distribute earthquake specific information at the safety fair. CERT and Ham Radio demonstrations were also a part of the event, which was the first of its kind at the Hartnell College. Meanwhile, on the same day, WCM Logan Johnson and Forecaster Larry Smith were taking part in the California Emergency Managers training course on Earthquakes. The training course covered principles of emergency management and delved into the massive coordinated response that the region would need to undertake in the aftermath of a large earthquake. The relationships built there will increase partner awareness of critically important DSS that the NWS can provide in the event of an actual earthquake. Hazmat incidents, mass sheltering, and public safety would all be of tremendous importance and accurate and timely weather information from the NWS will be crucial to the response and recovery phases after a catastrophic earthquake. The course wrapped up on October 18 with a full exercise and participation in the Great Shakeout drills at 10:18 AM. These events will help to shape the formation of collaborated earthquake response plans within the NWS and throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.

What is LIFT like?

The seventh Western Region LIFT workshop was held the last week of September in Portland Oregon. Sixteen students and six facilitators spent an intense week together learning about leadership. Since its beginning in 2004, over 100 people have been through the program. LIFT's overarching purpose is creating and motivating strong leaders at all levels in Western Region. Students get much from LIFT on a personal level, which enhances their ability to perform their work better. That's a great benefit, but LIFT doesn't exist merely to enhance the careers of those who participate. LIFT participants are expected to use what they learn in order to help the NWS succeed in its important mission. In order to provide a little more about the LIFT experience, I've asked a few of the LIFT 7 students to write briefly about their impressions of their time at LIFT.



Dwight Williams, Electronics Systems Analyst, WFO Spokane: To me, participating in the LIFT program brought to the forefront the meaning of leadership. Not only does LIFT reinforce what I already know, it taught me new things through engaging and sometimes very revealing discussions with the facilitators and other members. The easy-going environment made the discussions during the week feel so natural, like we'd been friends for a long time. I believe this mentored journey is the key difference between the short-term inspiration so often provided by other programs, and evolving into a leadership lifestyle. Lastly, I had a lot of fun. The socials and group functions like volunteering at the Oregon Food Bank were very entertaining and provided fuel for even more discussion the next day. I met very talented and engaged co-workers from across the region and most importantly, I made 15 new friends.

Nanette Hosenfeld, Meteorologist Intern, WFO Salt Lake City: LIFT is described as a "leadership development program," designed to "improve the positive influence of individuals at every level." While that is a great description of what LIFT is, nothing can really convey what the experience of LIFT is. When I applied for LIFT, I hoped for the opportunity to improve and develop leadership skills. What I didn't realize was how LIFT would really change my life. I know it sounds totally corny, but I really feel like my experience at LIFT will help shape my outlook and attitude for the rest of my life. I have always known that everybody thinks differently LIFT has been such an amazing experience. The facilitators did an incredible job planning a week that was motivating and educational. I learned so much from the comments and examples of my classmates, and am overwhelmed by the bond that we formed in just a few days. I look forward to enriching these relationships, and applying the lessons I learned well into the future.

Darren Van Cleave, General Forecaster, WFO Sacramento: In an organization composed largely of scientists and technicians, we often forget one of the underlying facets of successfully performing our mission: interpersonal relationships. Like many of you, I spend the vast majority of my time applying equations and theories to predict the future state of the atmosphere, while largely ignoring the human side of myself, coworkers, and most importantly our partners and customers. LIFT is an amazing opportunity to fill this gap. LIFT builds this foundation first, followed by practical and proven methods to develop sound leadership skills LIFT is advertised as an opportunity to train future leaders in the organization, but after experiencing it in person; I think it is so much more. It reminds us to put people first, and enables us to bring this passion for people back to the workplace.

Megan Thimmesch, General Forecaster, WFO Boise: In short, I would describe LIFT as a week of reflection and camaraderie. It's a safe environment to learn more about yourself and how you choose to impact the world around you. It's a rare opportunity to meet and befriend your NWS counterparts; a chance to associate a face and personality to those names we encounter almost exclusively in 'print'. In essence, LIFT was a week to remind me that the National Weather Service isn't just a federal organization - it's people like you and me.

Southwest Aviation Weather and Safety Workshop -- June 19-20

The National Weather Service Forecast Offices in Oxnard, San Diego and the Center Weather Service Unit in Palmdale, CA are planning on hosting the next Southwest Aviation Weather and Safety Workshop 5; "SAWS V" in Long Beach, CA on June 19-20, 2013. The two day event will be located at the Best Western Golden Sails in Long Beach. The purpose of this event is to promote aviation safety and productivity through improved weather awareness and forecasting services, including joint outreach with partners and participation in discussions on service improvement. The workshop traditionally has an Aviator and Controller Weather Workshop on the first day, and an Aviation Weather Forecasting Workshop on the next.

WFO Tucson - NWS Additional Radiosonde Releases in Support of Hurricane Sandy Receive Local Media



ABC affiliate KGUN9 TV featured a story on the extra launches taking place across the nation in support of efforts to more accurately forecast Hurricane Sandy and its potential impacts along the east coast.

KGUN9 meteorologist Aaron Brackett and WFO TWC MIT Ricardo Humphreys launch the balloon from the roof of WFO TWC. Photo courtesy of KGUN9

WFO Tucson - Participates in Pima Community College Activities



WFO TWC attended Earth Sciences Day at Pima Community College, staffing a booth and conversing with students and others about NWS careers, products and services. The following week, members from one of the college's weather courses toured the WFO.

WFO TWC student volunteer Jeremy Mazon and SH Erin Boyle staff a booth at Earth Sciences Day. Photo: TWC WCM Ken Drozd

WFO San Diego - WCM Receives 2012 Media Award

This year's annual Floodplain Managers Association (FMA) conference was held in Sacramento September 4 to 7, 2012. This year's award was presented at the lunch banquet with about 500 attendees



from California, Nevada and Hawaii. The award and recognition was for Impact Decision Support Services and specifically graphical email weather briefings and sharing of information. The award read "Alex has worked hard to ensure that the partners' messages meet the needs of NWS users and partners in the weather forecast and information process primarily through one on one contact and discussing the customers' needs for weather data and then polishing the messages to meet those specific needs. One of the issues is to not overwhelm people with weather data, but get to the details on the expected impact of the weather events. Alex has worked very hard to get more at risk communities and organizations in the area ready in the rare event of a tsunami through the Tsunami Ready program. This was the first award given to a National Weather Service employee from this regional FMA.

WFO San Diego - Booth at San Clemente Hazard Expo



Nearly 600 from the public attended the San Clemente hazard expo on October 20th, 2012. The National Weather Service booth is pictured. Photo by Alex Tardy.

An all hazards workshop was held in the community of San Clemente on October 20th, with about a dozen booths related to emergency preparedness. NWS San Diego featured a booth with emphasis on flood preparedness as part of the first annual California Flood Preparedness Week. The new brochures that were produced through multi-agency collaboration were distributed. During lunch the booths were closed for a 30 minute presentation on flood hazards given WCM Alex Tardy, and this was followed by Rick Wilson of the California Geological Survey who provided 30 minutes on information pertaining to local earthquake hazards and preparedness. Overall the event had around 600 in attendance ranging from small children to adult professionals.

WFO Seattle - Participates in Ceremony for the “Take Winter by Storm” Preparedness



L to R: NW Cable News Morning Show Host Greg Copeland discusses the campaign with NWS Seattle WCM Ted Buehner, Wheedle on the Needle author Stephan Cosgrove and the Wheedle.

NWS Seattle WCM Ted Buehner was the master of ceremony for the Take Winter by Storm preparedness campaign in the central Puget Sound area this year. The campaign kicked off on October 8th at a media event at the Space Needle in Seattle that involved the debut of the campaign's new mascot - The Wheedle on the Needle. The story behind the Wheedle involves him moving from Mt Rainier to the Space Needle 50 years ago when the 1962 World's Fair started and feeling ashamed that he brought many storms with him to the area. Now the Wheedle is better prepared to handle storms and wanted to share his preparedness with everyone through the Take Winter by Storm campaign. The Wheedle was also the Seattle Supersonics mascot during their early years in the

NBA. Author of the Wheedle children books Stephen Cosgrove gifted the mascot to the campaign to help promote the preparedness message, especially among children. The centerpiece of the preparedness campaign was the 50th anniversary of the Columbus Day Storm, the strongest non-tropical wind storm ever to hit the lower 48 in American history. On the day of the 50th anniversary, October 12th, the campaign conducted a media tour of morning TV news programs with Stephen Cosgrove, Ted and the Wheedle on the Needle. The team visited all four Seattle TV news stations plus NW Cable News as well as several radio stations that morning, recalling the storm's 50th anniversary and promoting the Take Winter by Storm campaign including all the easy-to-use preparedness check lists at takewinterbystorm.org.

WFO Seattle - FEMA Region X RISC

Roger Lamoni of WR ODSD gave a pair of presentations at the FEMA Region X RISC meeting at the NOAA Western Region Center in Seattle on October 24th. His first presentation addressed Weather Ready Nation and High-Impact Decision Support Services, asking the more than 80 attendees from Alaska, Oregon, Idaho and Washington to expand their dialogue with the NWS in the effort to enhance services to them and their key decision makers. Roger gave the latest winter weather outlook in his second presentation for both Alaska and the Pacific Northwest.

Feedback from the presentations included the desire to learn the anticipated impacts from weather events in any messaging and briefings from the NWS. Roger also participate in several of the RISC sub-committee meetings on October 23rd.



Roger Lamoni of WR ODSD starts his Weather Ready and IDSS presentation at the latest FEMA Region X RISC meeting

WFO Missoula - National Public Lands Day

On September 29th, eight representatives and family from WFO Missoula, MT participated in an event commemorating National Public Lands Day. We spent three hours building, sanding and staining picnic tables to be used at the new Fort Missoula Regional Park, plans for which were also officially unveiled that afternoon at the event. The picnic tables were built of lumber milled from logs recovered at the base of two area dams which had recently been removed. We followed the same picnic table schematics as those built between 1933 and 1942 by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a public work relief program developed as a part of the New Deal for unemployed, unmarried men between the ages of 17 and 23. The Montana Conservation Corps, a modern local non-profit program which trains, mentors and utilizes young adults much in the same way as the original CCC, was our host and provided each volunteer team with a guide to help us through the project. Also in attendance that day were dozens of original CCC members who were invited to celebrate the beginnings of a *new* Fort Missoula Regional Park, a project which a number of them worked to build back in the 1930s! It was a very fun event, rich with history and the results of which will be utilized heavily in our community for many years to come.



From L to R: **Luke Robinson, Marty Whitmore, Dan Zumpfe, Shannon Dickerson, Jeff Kitsmiller, Lisa Whitmore, Laura Zumpfe and Corby Dickerson**

WFO Boise Participates in Adopt a Highway Program

The Boise NWS office adopted a two mile stretch of highway as part of the Idaho Adopt a highway program several years ago. Boise Forecaster, Coleen Decker, worked with the Transportation Department to pick out the section of Highway 21 which travels through a very scenic area in the Boise mountains. For the 4th year in a row, the forecast office served the community by picking up trash along the road and helped keep Idaho beautiful. This year on October 6th, 2012, NWS employees and their families enjoyed perfect weather while walking along the highway and were able to collect 4 large bags of trash. After cleaning up, everyone met for a great dinner at Trudy's restaurant in Idaho City, which is located on Highway 21 and is a favorite stop for many people traveling through the area.



From left to right: Mariah Parker, Sarah Decker, Coleen Decker, Carl Breidenbach, Bob Diaz, Stephen Parker, Grant Breidenbach, Belinda Breidenbach, Jay Breidenbach, Lucas Decker)

WFO Las Vegas Participated in NWS Week of Community Service



Back Row: John Adair, Lead; Stan Czyzyk, SOO; Barry Pierce, Lead **Front Row:** Mike Kennedy, General; Mike Staudenmaier, MIC; Reid Wolcott, General; Andy Gorelow, General; Ryan Metzger, Intern

WFO Las Vegas staff took part in the NWS National Week of Community Service campaign by volunteering at the Three Square food bank in Las Vegas and holding a food/fund drive at the office. 354 lbs of food and \$500 in gift cards to a local grocery store were collected. WFO staff spent the morning of October 3rd packing boxes in the volunteer room for the "Senior Share" Program, which provides food-insecure seniors with healthy supplemental groceries across the Las Vegas Valley.

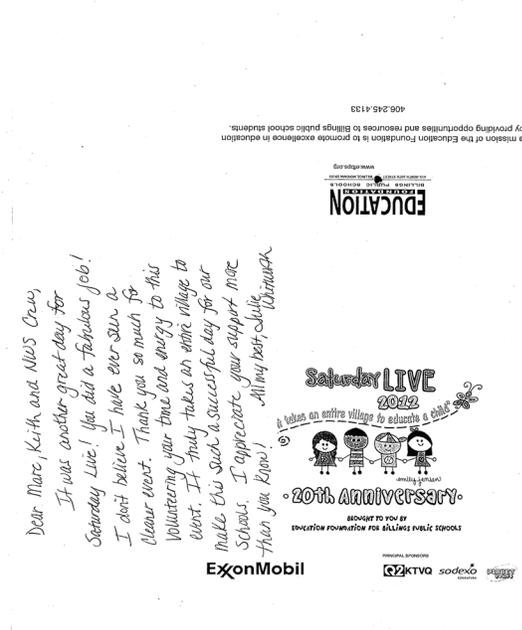
WFO Tucson Participated in NWS Week of Community Service

WFO Tucson staff members participated in the NWS National Week of Community Service by once again volunteering at the Community Food Bank of Tucson on October 3rd. The Food Bank was in a bind as they had recently conducted inventory that resulted in a tremendous amount of donated non-perishable food being "backed up" in their holding area. The food needed to be sorted quickly not only so it could be best utilized, but also to make room in the warehouse staging area so that normal operations could more easily continue. As the WFO Tucson crew tackled this task, the Food Bank coordinator commented to WFO Tucson NWOC S organizer WCM Ken Drozd, "Some of our workers were getting nervous about all this food backing up but I told them that I had a great group coming in today that would take care of the job quickly."



WCM Ken Drozd, SOO John Brost, ET Rick Leupold, ESA Chris Carney and MIC Glen Sampson. Photo by Glen's wife Laura, who was also part of the volunteer effort.

WFO Billings Participated in NWS Week of Community Service



Several employees from NWS Billings volunteered at the Billings Public School's "Saturday Live" on Saturday, 9/29/12. The event is the largest yearly fundraiser for School District 2, and it attended by thousands of people in our community.

A link to more information on the event is at: <http://www.billings.k12.mt.us/bpef/saturdaylive.html>

Keith Meier, Joe Lester (Forecaster), David Smith (ET) and Marc Singer (SOO) assisted event organizers in collecting trash and recycled materials for the entire afternoon, and provided clean-up support after the event was over. We also provided support to individual school booths by helping transport supplies and personnel around the event. Additionally, Virgil Middendorf (ITO) and his wife Becky volunteered at his children's school booth for the event. This is the second year in a row that WFO Billings has volunteered for this event, and we plan on making it a yearly tradition!

WFO Oxnard Participated in NWS Week of Community Service

The 8 of us were able to package 1300 lbs of food in a couple hours at the Oxnard Food. We were able to sort the food, then package for shipment the next day. Food Share does so much for the community including supplying food for several food pantries, soup kitchens as well as churches and anyone who comes in who needs food. It was a pleasure working with this organization. We will go back next spring and of course next fall.



From left to right: Alice Carretero, Kathy Hoxsie, Eric Boldt, Ron from Food Share, Mark Jackson, Curt Kaplan, Rich Thompson, Scott Sukup

WFO Reno Participated in NWS Week of Community Service

WFO Reno, NV had several employees participate in the National Week of Service. MIC Jon Mittelstadt, meteorologists Edan Lindaman and Alex Hoon, and Alex's wife Annie volunteered at St. Vincent's Food Pantry in downtown Reno, NV. They packed food staples into bags that were to be given out to families in need in the Reno/Tahoe vicinity. St. Vincent's Food Pantry is the busiest food distribution pantry in Northern Nevada and provides food to more than 9,000 people each month.



WFO Sacramento Participated in NWS Week of Community Service



L to R: The first shift: Darren Van Cleave, Forecaster; Gerry Deiotte, Facilities Engineering Technician; Rachel VanCleave; Chloe Haynes; Alan Haynes, SCH; Jamie Meier, HAS Forecaster; Shelia Deiotte, ESA; Johnnie Powell, HMT

L-R: The second shift: Craig Shoemaker, Lead; Johnnie Powell, HMT; Holly Osborne, Forecaster; Eric Kurth, Forecaster; and Cindy Matthews, SSH.

This year WFO Sacramento and the CNRFC organized both a passive and an active event for NWS Week of Community Service. For the second year the offices collected an impressive amount of donations for the Children's Receiving Home of Sacramento. Donations included but were not limited to cash, gift cards, clothing, appliances, school supplies, games, and medical supplies. As a more active event this year the two offices and several family members spent an afternoon and an evening at the Sacramento Area Food Bank and Family Services. The two shift team bundled three day supplies of emergency flood into packages for 577 families.

WFO Great Falls Participated in NWS Week of Community Service

Our office volunteered at FISH which is a local organization that feeds the hungry. FISH is located in the local food bank building along with Meals on Wheels. Volunteers worked from 9 am to 11 am October 1-4 handing out food, stocking shelves, filling bags with groceries, commodities, toiletries, and stamping bags. Those involved were Don Britton, Scott Coulston, Nick Langlieb, Megan VanDenHeuvel, Brian Waranauskas, Les Therio, and John Blank.



WFO Medford Participated in NWS Week of Community Service



WFO Medford participated in three community service projects. As an office, we collected four large boxes of food to donate to the local food bank. The food bank helps those in need, ranging from those who just need to supplement their food supply to those who have nothing. Another event was held at Don Jones Memorial Park; home to the Oregon Fallen War Heroes Memorial. The park honors citizens of Oregon lost in the Civil War, Spanish American War, World War I & II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Operation Desert Storm, and the Iraq War. The service project was the construction of 36 raised beds for a community garden at the park. The beds were built on site, filled with soil, and finally, the walkways between beds were covered

with gravel. The garden will be cared for by volunteers and the food will be shared with people in need throughout the community. The third event attended by some staff and their families, was the cleanup of Bear Creek which flows through the heart of Medford. The event was sponsored by local businesses and the Bear Creek Watershed Council. The businesses provided snacks and prizes. All three events were very successful and gave us a great chance to serve.

WFO Hanford Participated in NWS Week of Community Service

Staff and family from WFO San Joaquin Valley helped prepare and serve Sunday dinner at the Hanford Salvation Army on September 30th. Pictured are Toni Vasquez and her husband, Forecaster Modesto Vasquez, Forecaster Cindy Bean, WCM James Brotherton, Salvation Army Major Orpha Moody, ASA Terry Johnson, ET Tim Johnson, Intern Jim Andersen and his children Emily and Jimmy.



WFO San Diego Participated in NWS Week of Community Service



In support of the NWS National Week of Service, a group from the San Diego WFO volunteered at the San Diego Food Bank on September 27th. The group, consisting of MIC Roger Pierce, forecaster Brandt Maxwell and met intern Tina Stall, spent a two-hour shift packing boxes of food, assembly-line style, for the Senior Food Program. This particular program provides one box of supplemental food each month to eligible low-income senior citizens aged 60 and over. Tina, Brandt and Roger spent the evening opening boxes of the various foods and keeping the assembly line stocked with those items. The shift of approximately 30 people managed to pack 907 boxes of food, which

weighed in at a total of approximately 27,210 pounds! It was a fun and very rewarding evening for all involved. In addition to volunteering their time at the food bank itself, WFO San Diego also held a non-perishable food drive at the office and donated those items to the food bank. It was a fun and very rewarding event for all involved.

WFO Monterey Participated in NWS Week of Community Service

WFO Monterey participated in the NWS Week of Service by volunteering at the Monterey County Food Bank in Salinas, California. We had eleven members of our staff volunteer at the Food Bank. Over 1000 packages of food were packed over a two day period (October 1st and 2nd) by the WFO Monterey volunteers!



WFO Phoenix Participated in NWS Week of Community Service

On Saturday October 6th, General Forecaster Marvin Percha and his daughter participated in a fund raising walk in support of an autism research project being conducted at Arizona State University. Marvin's two young sons are involved in the project so it has special significance (no pictures available).

On October 11th and 18th, General Forecaster Austin Jamison attended Docent training for the Desert Foothills Land Trust (DFLT). The Trust has a number of land parcels that they manage for conservation purposes. The training so far has focused on botany in the field. Additional sessions will cover fauna and geology (the attachment is a picture and I am 4th from the left).



SOO Doug Green has been planning on participating in a fund raising walk for Autism Speaks later this month and ASA Kate Stockton has expressed interest in her family participating as well.

WR Headquarters Participated in NWS Week of Community Service



On Thursday evening, October 4, for the second year in a row, a group of employees from WRH volunteered an evening of their time to work at Salt Lake City's [Crossroads Urban Center](#). Crossroads Urban Center helps low-income people in Salt Lake City and throughout Utah. Crossroads operates one of the busiest emergency food pantries in the state and a free/low-cost thrift store. They are a nonprofit, grassroots organization that assists low income, disabled and minority Utahans meet basic survival needs and

addresses essential issues affecting their quality of life. They provide relief and hope to people who often don't have anywhere else to turn. This year, our merry band of 10 volunteers put a fresh coat of paint on the front porch of the Crossroads center, painted some interior stairs, prepared baby care and pet care to go packs and did some general cleaning. Additionally, we held an Italian luncheon for all employees at WRH on Tuesday, October 2, asking for donations of \$5 from those who had lunch. This voluntary fundraising effort generated \$130 that we were able to donate to Crossroads to help with increased assistance costs this winter. Glenn Bailey, executive director of Crossroads, wrote us a nice thank-you note for our efforts. "I just wanted to thank you again for the work and the donation of \$130 to Crossroads. You guys were great to work with! We really appreciate the help. Please express our appreciation to everyone involved."

WFO Portland Participated in NWS Week of Community Service

WFO Portland volunteered at the Northwest Children's Outreach, spending a few hours packing shoes, clothes, toys and school supplies for kids within families in need. It was a great time knowing we were helping these kids get excited to have warm clothes for school.

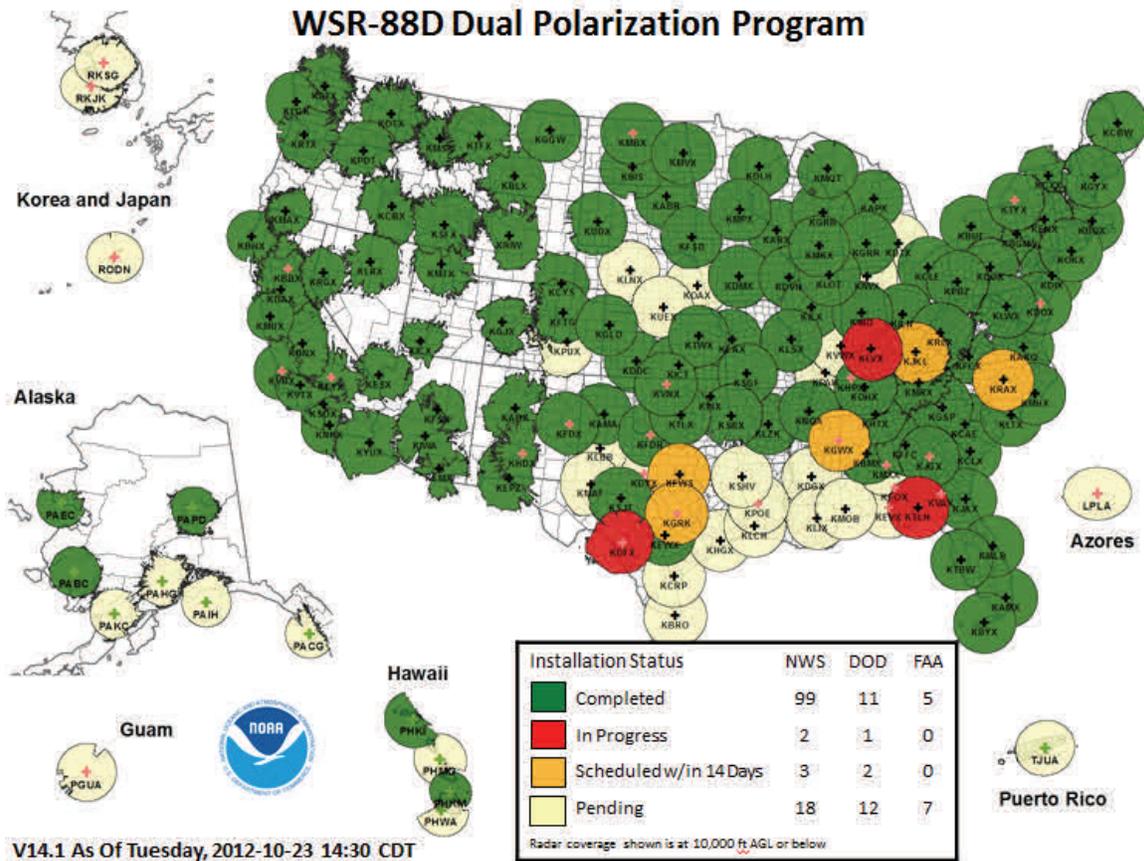
Volunteers from left to right: Liana Ramirez (Met Intern), Victor Stegemiller (HAS), Jacki Wilde, Lisa Todd, Steve Todd (MIC), Miles Higa (Forecaster), Tyree Wilde (WCM).



Milestone -- All radars in NWS Western Region have been upgraded to dual pol.

The National Weather Service dual pol installation team completed the upgrade of the Pocatello, Idaho WSR-88D radar on Saturday, October 20. ***This marks the 28th and final radar in NWS Western Region to be upgraded.*** The entire process took a little less than 18 months to complete and finished several months ahead of schedule. Dual Pol training is going very well with 92% of all WR forecasters having completed the training well ahead of schedule. The offices have been sharing initial dual pol experiences through the Warning Decision Training Branch (WDTB) "Storm of the Month" about a half-dozen email case study summaries with NWSHQ and WDTB. The two cases were the Phoenix dust storm and a small hail event in California.

Again -- thanks to everyone for helping get this upgrade completed!!



AWIPS-2: The upgrade of the AWIPS-2 workstation to a 64 bit Linux Operating system with additional memory has begun. The upgrade is being made to improve performance, especially for the GFE. WRHQ has already upgraded and the Billings WFO (AWIPS-2 Beta site) will be upgraded next week. This upgrade is planned for all offices this winter.

GOES-East Satellite: GOES-13 recovery and testing have been successful. The following operational changes have been implemented for the GOES-East satellite support.

- GOES-13 was put back into service as GOES-East on October 18.
- GOES-14 will stop its eastward movement and hold in standby mode at 89.5 degrees west. GOES-14 will serve as a temporarily backup should GOES-13 (75 degrees west) encounter another problem.
- None of this should affect GOES-West (15) operations.

Forecaster Confidence Tools – preparing for the Winter Season

The west has been in a drought most of the summer, but fall is approaching and the storm track will begin moving south again. STID has been sending a series of “Forecast Confidence” emails already highlighting some of the new short and long fused model tools that are emerging as better ways to examine significant regime changes and weather events. The web site can be found at: <https://sites.google.com/a/noaa.gov/wr-confidence/toolkit> We highly recommend that you start using these tools to help improve DSS messaging, improve lead time for significant events and assist with establishing the appropriate expectations for a significant event (ie wind versus snow event)

WR Forecast Confidence Toolkit

Toolkit Items

Methodology: Developing confidence in an event occurring can start with seeing deterministic model consistency, with the following products intended to help build confidence through effective use of ensemble and probabilistic information. Start by looking at the large scale anomalies and spreads to help keep situational awareness of potential high impact events, and then drill down by using plumes and probabilistic info to build confidence in the details of an event. Each item below is accompanied by a quick list of how it can help you build confidence in the forecast and also key limitations. More in depth training and documentation are provided in the Toolkit Training page (left hand menu).

Please share how these tools helped your assessment of confidence with your SOO!

Big Picture/Situational Awareness

- GEFS Anomalies** | [situational awareness table](#) | | [maps with axes](#) | | [backup](#) |
Look At: MSLP, Precip Water, 500 height, 700 wind, 700 temperature
Confidence: low spread + high anomalies = confidence in a significant event
Limitations: underdispersiveness of gfs, anomalies look weak when spread is high
- ECMWF Ensemble** | [hpc link](#) | | [NEW normalized spread maps](#) |
Look At: spaghetti plots, focus on bottom two images showing ecmwf gfs ensemble members
Confidence: due to underdispersiveness of gfs, when ecmwf ensemble is tightly clustered = increased confidence, lower than 1.0 normalized spread indicates lower than normal spread and, in theory, higher confidence.
Limitations: only a few 500 height contours available, ecmwf has more members so it can look noisier
- Reforecast Analogs** | [sref page](#) |
Look At: upper and lower tercile probs for days 4-6, 6-10, 8-14.
Confidence: high (above 40%) probs in either category suggest increased confidence for above/below normal precip.
Limitations: only looks at precip over a long forecast period.
- NCEP Relative Measure of Predictability** | [page](#) |
Look At: values of RMOP relative to significant trough features.
Confidence: high values indicate that GEFS mean is more likely to verify, low values indicate less probability
Limitations: only looking at GEFS mean, which will wash out smaller scale features when there is timespatial uncertainty

Details/Probabilities/Extremes

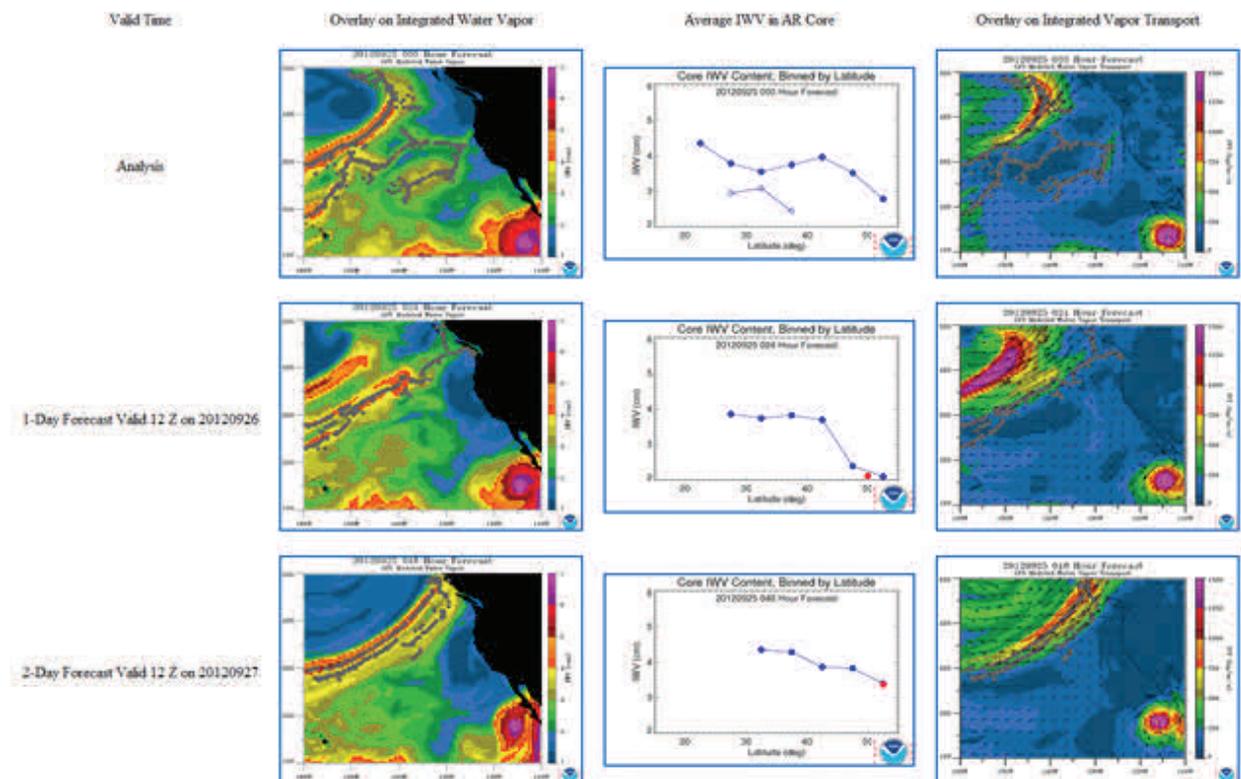
- Plumes** | [interactions_sref_plumes](#) | | [gfs plumes](#) |
Look At: 10m winds, precip/snow accumulations
Confidence: low spread between plumes = increased confidence, clusters can indicate other possible solutions/worst case scenarios
Limitations: need to evaluate many points keeping SREF resolution in mind, mean (black line) may be of limited use
- SREF Probabilities** | [sref page](#) | | [evolution](#) |
Look At: calibrated htr prob (post-processed guidance), wind/htr joint probs (fire weather), capex/htr joint prob (severe weather), various precip probs, note dPrngST functionality by clicking on forecast hour
Confidence: higher probs, especially multi-ingredient joint probs, indicate higher confidence
Limitations: sref resolution is marginal for terrain effects, changes coming to replace Eta and RSM member
- BUFKIT SREF** | [program download](#) | | [sref data](#) |
Look At: ensemble soundings (messy but has similar utility to that of spaghetti plot), plumes of wind gust, precip, snowfall under the OverView section (where you can also step through each member)
Confidence: low spread between plumes = increased confidence, clusters can indicate other possible solutions/worst case scenarios
Limitations: need to evaluate many points, keep SREF resolution in mind (wrf resolves terrain flows, and model smoothing of terrain may impact sounding elevation)
- CIPS Cold Season Analog Guidance** | [cips page](#) | [warm season](#) |
Look At: Western US domain, which moves based on the pattern, Impact Guidance graphics for probability at various thresholds (e.g. precip, wind, snowfall); List of analog dates are sorted by how they match forecast pattern overall
Confidence: Helps build confidence in the impacts, assuming the GFS forecast is the preferred model in a given situation
Limitations: Focuses on GFS output only; graphics will appear smoothed (e.g. no PRISM)

Atmospheric River (AR) Tools and Reference: Marty Ralph and the people at OAR have released an experimental AR Flux tool that helps characterize the strength of future AR event. The web site can be found at: http://www.esrl.noaa.gov/psd/psd2/coastal/satres/data/html/ar_detect_gfs.html.

A useful historical reference about AR events can be found at the OAR AR web site: <http://www.esrl.noaa.gov/psd/atmrivers/>

Automated Atmospheric River Detection Application to Current GFS Forecast Fields

Forecast Initialized 20120925 at 12 Z





Length of Service Awards



Kitsmiller, Jeffrey	WFO Missoula, MT	Meteorologist, General Forecaster	5 Years
Sawtelle, James	WFO Phoenix, AZ	Meteorologist Intern	10 Years
Kauwe, David	WFO Medford, OR	Electronics Technician	25 Years
Richmond, Albert	WFO Billings, MT	Meteorologist, Lead Forecaster	30 Years
Nester, Robert	WFO Missoula, MT	Meteorologist, Lead Forecaster	25 Years
Cross, Austin	WFO Monterey, CA	Meteorologist Intern	5 Years
Faucette, Mark	WFO Reno, NV	Meteorologist, Lead Forecaster	25 Years
Dietz, Barbara	WFO Salt Lake City, UT	Administrative Support Assistant	35 Years
Jimenez, Alberto	WFO Las Vegas, NV	Electronics Technician	20 Years
Bailey, Talmadge	WFO Monterey, CA	Electronics Systems Analyst	30 Years

New Hires in Western Region for October

Smallcomb, Chris	WFO Reno, NV	Warning Coordination Meteorologist	Selected from STID Deputy Division Chief position at WRH in Salt Lake City, UT
Clarstrom, Connie	WFO Medford, OR	Meteorologist, Senior Forecaster	Selected on station from a Meteorologist, Journey Forecaster position
Maliawco, Richard	WFO Glasgow, MT	Meteorologist, General Forecaster	Selected from private industry in Stoneham, MA
Wanek., Leslie	WRH/ODSD Salt Lake City, UT	Physical Scientist, Deputy Chief ODSD	Selected on station from a Program Manager position in ODSD
Mayer, Travis	WFO Boise, ID	Electronic Systems Analyst	Selected on station from an Electronics Technician position
Miller, Randy	WRH/SFD Salt Lake City, UT	Supervisory Facility Operations Specialist	Selected on station from an FET position

Please send newsletter submissions to:
laura.smith@noaa.gov and aaron.sorensen@noaa.gov
 by the **25th** of every month.