



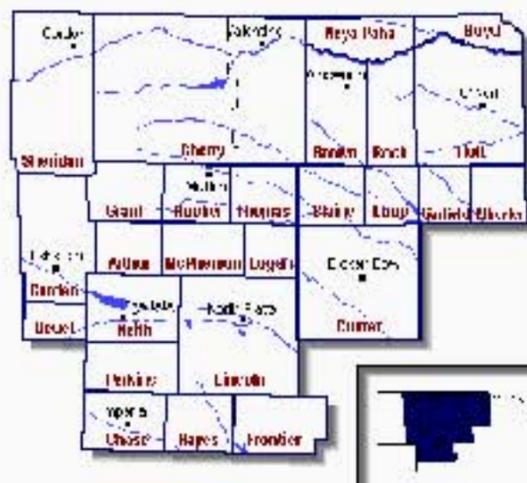
# About the National Weather Service Forecast Office North Platte, Nebraska



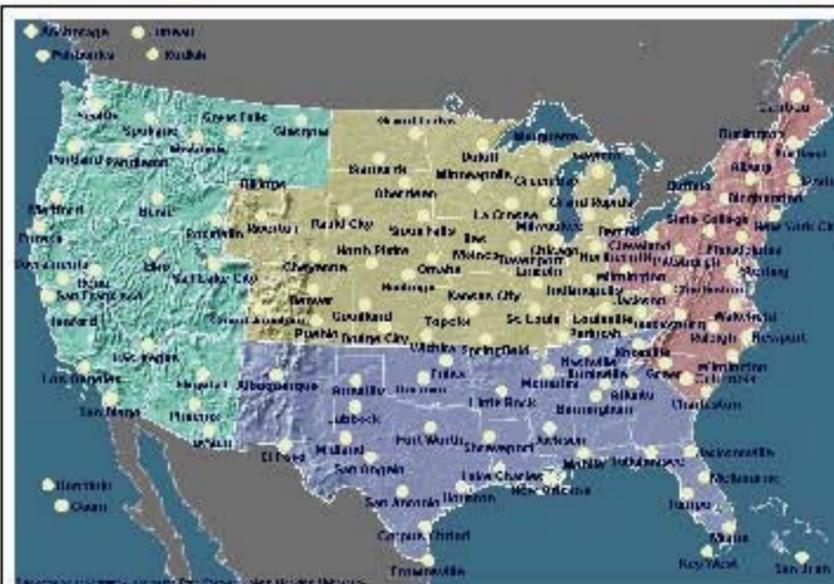
## National Weather Service Mission Statement

*"The National Weather Service (NWS) provides weather, hydrologic, and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters and ocean areas, for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. NWS data and products form a national information database and infrastructure which can be used by other governmental agencies, the private sector, the public, and the global community."*

Our office is one of 123 forecast offices within the United States. Our county warning area (CWA) is comprised of 26 counties within western and north-central Nebraska. We are staffed around the clock, 365 days a year. Teamwork is vital for our 22 dedicated NWS employees to provide severe weather warnings, winter weather watches and warnings, as well as 7-day forecasts. The team "line-up" includes 17 meteorologists, 4 electronics and information specialists, and 1 administrative assistant. Several river systems run through the CWA including, the Niobrara, the North, Middle and South Loup, the Calamus, the Snake, the Elkhorn, the Dismal, and the North and South Platte Rivers. **A little know fact of Nebraska: the state has more miles of rivers than any other state in the Union.** The terrain in the 26 counties varies from farm lands that are relatively flat to rolling sand hills and canyons. The CWA also contains 2 National forests and 7 reservoirs.



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The map of all the National Weather Service Office locations within the United States. The field structure and operations are divided into six regions., Eastern (pink), Southern (purple), Central (yellow), Western (green), Alaska, and Pacific.

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## Our Core Values...

- Service above self,
- Our customers and partners,
- Respect and trust of others and the diversity of our agency,
- The open exchange of information and ideas,
- Commitment to integrity, teamwork, self-improvement, high standards, and the scientific approach to our mission, and
- An innovative and empowered workforce

...Have been recognized by the following awards our office has received throughout the years.

- **1966:** From the Director of the US Department of Commerce (DOC), Environmental Science Service Administration, Weather Bureau, Central Region: "For the Exemplary service in connection with the intense Blizzard of the North Central United States of March 22-24, 1966."
- **1981:** Recognition award for greatest achievement among Central Region offices in reducing the 1981 upper-air observation error rate over that of the previous year.
- **1982:** Recognition award for greatest achievement among Central Region offices in reducing the surface observation error rate over that of the previous year.
- **1983:** Recognition award for achieving 3rd place among Central Region offices in excellence of upper-air observations during 1983.
- **1996:** From National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA): WebShop '96 for best WWW page of the NWS.
- **2000:** Regional Excellence Award, from the NWS Central Region: "For outstanding performance in the severe weather warning program, Dramatic improvement in verification statistics."
- **2001:** US DOC Bronze Medal Award, "For superior federal service for provision of severe weather forecasting service to the residents of western and north-central Nebraska."
- **2002:** Office of Mayor of North Platte, NE, "For superlative performance, ranked 1st of 121 offices in the nation for accuracy of predicting severe weather over the last 6 years."
- **2003:** From the US DOC/NOAA/ NWS, "For exemplary achievement in implementing the interactive forecast preparation system."

## Office History

The North Platte Weather Office has changed locations many times since it was first established September 18th, 1874 at the new school building in town. The office began as a surface observation site. Weather observations were taken by Sgt. Ino R. Williams of the Signal Service of the United States of America (SSUSA). Almost 2 years later on June 21st, 1876 the weather office moved 300 feet west to the courthouse. The responsibility of taking observations was given to Sgt. J. B. Campbell. On February 11th, 1882 the weather office was moved to the Old Fellows Hall on the corner of 5th and Dewey (picture to the left). The new Weather Bureau building was moved December 1, 1905 to 214 West 5th Street (picture to right). In 1940 the office was established at Lee Bird Field (LBF) with offices set up in the "old hanger". The office became an upper air site as well in 1945. Pilot balloon wind observations of the upper atmosphere were initiated on October 11th. On January 15, 1952 the Weather Bureau moved to the airport administration building. In 1974 the upper air building was moved to its current location. In the summer of 1995 the office moved into its current location, but it wasn't until the lead forecasters were on site that the office became established as a forecast office in 1998.

