



Celebrating Our Past, Defining Our Future

The year 2020 marks two monumental anniversaries within the weather, water, and climate community:

NOAA celebrates 50 years since its founding, as the National Weather Service celebrates 150 years saving lives, protecting property, and enhancing the nation’s economy!

In observation of these milestones, NWS is recognizing the events, advances in science and technology, and most importantly, the stories of the people that shaped the agency over the last 150 years, making it what it is today.



“ As we look back, we also look forward. Our heritage provides the context and inspiration for sustaining the NWS well into the future. ”
– Louis W. Uccellini, Ph.D., Director, National Weather Service



Everything Has Changed But The Mission

The NWS of today and tomorrow was built on a 150-year-old foundation of science and service. Over time, advances in science, technology, and engineering have accelerated our understanding of the natural world, continually allowing us to better predict weather, water, and climate events.

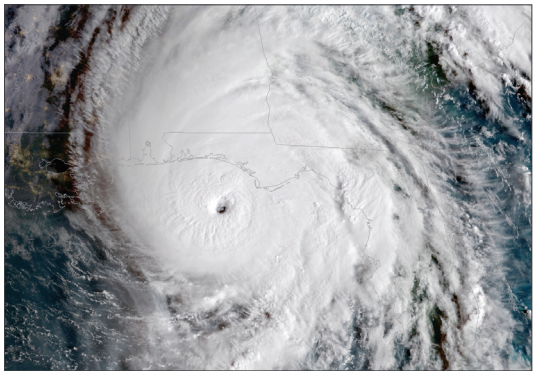
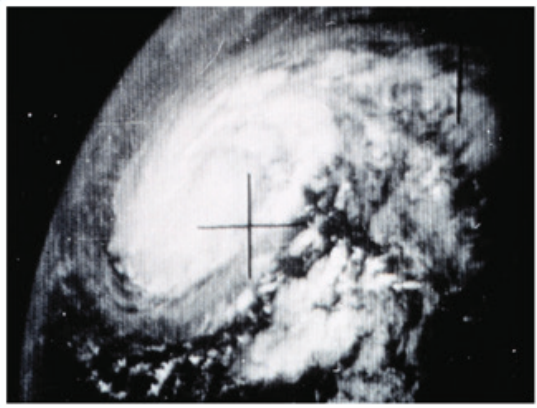
Furthermore, while the NWS jobs of today are vastly changed from those 150 years ago and in-between, our staff’s **dedication** to meet the mission continues to be one of our biggest strengths.

As the needs of society have changed, so has the NWS. However, the fundamental mission has not: save lives, protect property, and enhance the nation’s economy. From the very beginning, this has been the agency’s fundamental focus.

Drivers Of Change

Throughout its history, the NWS has continually evolved, driven by:

- » **Advances** in science, technology, and engineering that have accelerated our understanding of the natural world, leading to better predictions of weather, water, and climate events.
- » National and Global **Economic Transitions**, including the shift from agrarian to industrial economies, the growth of aviation, World Wars, internationalization, and the continual push-pull between serving public vs. commercial needs.
- » Catalyzing **Events**, e.g., 1888 Blizzards, 1900 Galveston Hurricane, 1938 Long Island Express Hurricane, 1974 Super Outbreak of Tornadoes, and the 2011 Super Outbreak of Tornadoes in the Southeast that led to today's overarching goal to Build a Weather-Ready Nation and focus on providing Impact-based Decision Support Services.



“ Not only does the interest of commerce and navigation, but also that of humanity itself, demand that something should be done, if possible, to prevent the fearful loss of life and property on our great lakes. ”

– Increase A. Lapham, in a Memorial to Congress, December 1869

Recognizing Our Heritage, Now And For Future Generations

The NWS is recognizing the events, advances in science and technology, and the **people** that shaped the agency over the last 150 years, working to preserving this heritage for future generations. NWS is developing new tools and systems to better collect, catalog, and **share** the documents, research, and personal stories that comprise our agency's history.

This information is being compiled in a new website – **weather.gov/heritage** – that brings the story of the organization to life. The website is a public portal to the agency's rich history that also features links to and from other NOAA Heritage sites. New information is being added weekly with the goal of creating a true compendium of information about the agency's heritage and a jumping-off point for those who wish to dig deeper into NWS heritage topics. Feedback and contributions to the site are welcomed.

In addition, in the 150 days preceding its 150th Anniversary and throughout 2020, NWS is sharing a daily dose of historical information via its social media channels. These items showcase the science and technology, events, and people that made history and formed its 150-year-old foundation.

