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Tallahassee *topics*

NEWS AND NOTES FROM YOUR LOCAL NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE OFFICE.

The National Weather Service (NWS) office in Tallahassee, FL provides weather, hydrologic, and climate forecasts and warnings for Southeast Alabama, Southwest & South Central Georgia, the Florida Panhandle and Big Bend, and the adjacent Gulf of Mexico coastal waters. Our primary mission is the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the local economy.

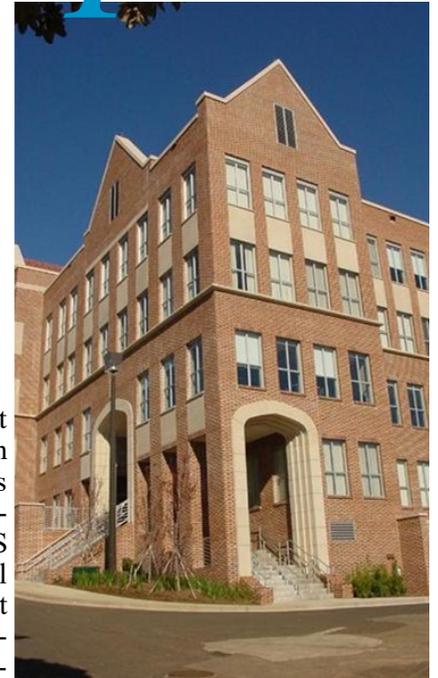
January Winter Storms

By Katie Nguyen

NWS Tallahassee’s forecast area saw two rounds of winter storms this January. Our first round of wintry precipitation came the morning of January 3rd when portions of north Florida and south Georgia saw snow and ice accumulations. The heaviest snow totals were in south Georgia where amounts ranged from 0.5” to 2”. In north Florida, snow accumulations were mostly less than 0.5”. NWS Tallahassee and the Tallahassee International Airport both recorded 0.1”, making this event our first measurable snow event since December 1989! It was also the first recorded measurable snow event in the month of January in our period of record, which goes back to April 1885. In the Suwannee River Valley, the precipitation was primarily freezing rain. Ice accretions were greater than 0.25” in that area, which was enough to cause several power outages.



Photo of snow in Ozark, AL on Jan 17, 2018 courtesy of Carrie Palas



The second winter weather event occurred only 2 weeks later on January 17th. This time, the area saw snow and sleet across portions of the Florida Panhandle, southeast Alabama, and southwest Georgia. Snowfall accumulations were around an inch in northern Dale and Henry counties in Alabama, as well as Quitman and Clay counties in southwest Georgia. From there down to a line from Dothan, AL to Fitzgerald, GA, snowfall totals were around 0.5” to 0.9”. Finally snow/sleet accumulations less than 0.5” were seen down to a line from Inlet Beach, FL to Moultrie, GA.

Be sure to check out our event summary webpages for the [January 3rd](#) and [January 17th](#) winter weather events to learn more and see more southern snow photos!

NWS Tallahassee Participates in Annual Marine Seminar

By Mark Wool

On Saturday, February 24th, members of the NWS Tallahassee office, NOAA Office of Coast Survey, and U.S. Power Squadron participated in the 14th annual NOAA Weather & Navigation Seminar. The seminar is hosted by MarineMax Marina in Panama City Beach, FL and organized by broker and sales associate, Bob Fowler. The class mainly targets local recreational boaters and

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fishermen and was attended by around 30 people. This year, Warning Coordination Meteorologist, Mark Wool, discussed NWS marine forecast and warning services with a special emphasis on forecasts of significant wave heights and how to properly interpret them. Mark also spoke about how to obtain data from the National Data Buoy Center's marine observation platforms as well as various ways to receive NWS forecasts and warnings and provide reports of observed conditions to the NWS.

Tim Osborn of the NOAA Office of Coast Survey discussed how to obtain and properly interpret navigational charts that are critical for safe boating. Dr. Wil Hugli of the U.S. Power Squadron discussed boating safety procedures including the use of emergency position-indicating radio beacons, or EPIRBs.

This seminar is an excellent example of the private and public sector working together to spread weather safety information and promote a Weather-Ready Nation.

Pictured from left to right: Dr. Wil Hugli of the U.S. Power Squadron, WFO TAE WCM Mark Wool, MIC Jane Hollingsworth, Tim Osborne of the NOAA Office of Coast Survey, and Bob Fowler, broker at MarineMax Marina in Panama City Beach, FL.



Steven Cooper Visits WFO Tallahassee

By Katie Nguyen

The director of NWS Southern Region, Steven Cooper, visited NWS Tallahassee while in town for a meeting with the Florida Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH). Cooper sat down with the office as a group and responded to questions and concerns about everything from staffing to the budget. After the meeting, individuals had the opportunity to meet with Cooper individually. The office was glad to have the opportunity to talk in person with regional leadership. Thank you for visiting us Steven!

Pictured from left to right: Ricardo Humphreys, Don Van Dyke, Toan Tran, Mark Wool, Katie Nguyen, Steven Cooper, Tim Barry, Jane Hollingsworth, Justin Pullin, and Donal Harrigan



More Office Outreach

By Mark Wool

On December 4th, NWS Tallahassee had the rare opportunity to host foreign nationals from Costa Rica's Instituto Meteorológico Nacional. The visitors were interested in touring the KTLH radar. The climb to the radome gave them a first-hand look at the WSR-88D as the nation prepares to buy its first Doppler radars. During the holidays, all eyes were focused on the potential for wintry weather and many media interviews were conducted. In the beginning of January, the interviews were focused on our two winter storms (see page 1). Later in January, the focus was on Florida's Severe Weather Awareness Week. In addition to more media interviews, forecaster, Justin Pullin, conducted public storm spotter training at Tallahassee's Leroy Collins Public Library. On that same date, WCM Mark Wool and forecaster, Andy Lahr (pictured), manned a booth at The Museum of Florida History's Children's Day. Kids marveled at our tornado-in-a-bottle and cloud-in-a-bottle demonstrations. On January 23rd, Mark traveled to Albany, GA to help program NOAA Weather Radios along with on-air meteorologists from WALB TV, Chris Zelman and Yolanda Amadeo. This event commemorated the one-year anniversary of the deadly EF-3 tornado that ripped across the southern part of the city in 2017. On January 30th, Mark and forecaster, Katie Moore, traveled to the Bay County EOC for the purposes of reaffirming that county's status as a [StormReady](#) community. In February, the office supported Severe Weather Awareness Weeks in both Georgia and Alabama and participated in the marine seminar detailed at the top of this page.





Winter Climate Summary

By Tim Barry

The climate for Tallahassee during the 3-month period of December 2017 through February 2018 saw temperatures that were warmer than normal. The average temperature for winter was 56.2°F, 3.2°F above normal. January was the only month cooler than normal with an average temperature of 48.1°F, 3.1°F below normal. February 2018 was the 2nd warmest February on record with an average temperature of 65.1°F, 10.4 degrees above normal. The highest temperature recorded at the Tallahassee International Airport was 84°F on February 16th. There were four records tied, all occurring in the month of February; 83°F on the 18th, 23rd and 24th, and 82 degrees on the 21st. The lowest temperature was 20°F on January 18th which was Tallahassee’s only hard freeze of the winter. The coldest maximum temperature occurred on January 1st and 2nd with a high of only 44°F. There were twenty days with minimum temperatures at or below freezing this past winter, 4 below normal.

During winter we normally see 13.09” of rain and this past winter we received only 7.92”, 5.17” below normal. All three months had below normal rainfall with January coming in as the driest with only 1.73” reported. The greatest amount in a 24-hr period was 1.17” on February 11th. There were two days in January when wintry precipitation was observed in Tallahassee’s forecast area. A combination of light snow and sleet accumulated to one-tenth of an inch (0.10”) on January 3rd at the Tallahassee International Airport which was a new record for that day. It was the first time since December 23rd, 1989 that Tallahassee had measurable snowfall and the first time ever that Tallahassee had measurable snow in the month of January.

For the calendar year 2017, the total rainfall measured at the Tallahassee International Airport was 59.19” which was only 0.04” below normal. The peak wind gust recorded at the airport was 36 MPH from the south on February 4th.

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Toan Tran, ITO
Kelly Godsey, Hydrologist

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Donal Harrigan
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Journeyman Forecasters

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Climate Outlook for Spring

By Tim Barry

The latest outlook for spring (March through May) from the Climate Prediction Center calls for an enhanced chance for experiencing above normal temperatures and equal chances of experiencing above, below or near normal rainfall. The average temperature for Tallahassee during spring is 66.9°F and the average rainfall is 12.47”. The current El Nino Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycle across the eastern-central Pacific is a weak La Niña, but is expected to transition to ENSO-neutral conditions during Spring 2018. The ENSO cycle has little impact on our local weather during the spring.

Other Office Updates

By Katie Nguyen

Every year, the Community Collaborative Rain, Hail, and Snow (CoCoRaHS) network has a “CoCo March Madness” competition, where all 50 states compete to recruit the most observers to the CoCoRaHS community during the 31 days of March. There are 2 winners—one by a “traditional count” (greatest number of observers) and one “per capita” (greatest number of new observers per million residents of the state). In the 2017 CoCo March Madness competition, the state of Florida won the traditional count competition by recruiting a total of 135 new observers. Florida also ranked #9 by the per capita count. The winning state in each category receives the “CoCoRaHS cup” to keep and exhibit for a year until the following year’s contest. The CoCoRaHS cup has been making its rounds across the state and finally reached our office in March!



From left to right: Ricardo Humphreys, Doug Sherrick, Daniel Brouillette of the Florida Climate Center, Jane Hollingsworth, Tim Barry, Ron Eimiller, Donal Harrigan, and Craig Carpenter with the CoCoRaHS Cup

This month, the office said farewell to Florida Division of Emergency Management’s Assistant State Meteorologist and NWS volunteer, William Watson, who will be officially joining the NWS family in April by becoming a Meteorologist Intern at NWS Gray/Portland, ME. We’d like to wish William the best of luck in his future endeavors!



William Watson