

# MARINER'S WEATHER GUIDE

## Gulf of Alaska Coastal Waters Including the Inside Passage, Prince William Sound and the Kodiak Island Waters



Pete Hanson



(800) 472-0391  
www.arh.noaa.gov

### SAFE BOATING

#### Before Setting Out:

1. Check local weather and sea conditions.
2. Get the latest marine weather forecast for your area.
3. When warnings are in effect, do not go out unless you are confident your boat can be navigated safely under forecast conditions.

#### After Setting Out:

1. Watch the weather for:
  - the approach of dark, threatening clouds which may foretell a squall or thunderstorm.
  - a steady increase in wind or sea
  - any increase in wind opposite in direction to a strong tidal current, which may lead to steep waves.
2. Check NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts for the latest warnings, forecasts, and observations.
3. Pay close attention to updates or changes in the marine weather forecast.



### MARINE FORECAST CONTENT

The following information is provided in all Coastal Waters and Offshore Forecasts:

#### Synopsis

Located at the beginning of the marine forecast, it describes the location and intensity of the weather systems which will affect Alaskan waters. It indicates what their movements will be during the forecast period.

#### Wind Speed

The predominant wind speed expected over open water, given in knots. **Gusts** are mentioned when they are expected to be much higher than the average winds. Due to the rugged coastline of Alaska, considerable local variations from the forecast winds are possible.

#### Wind Direction

The direction from which the wind is blowing. Direction is based on true north, not magnetic bearings.

#### Sea State

The average height of the highest one-third of the wind wave and swell in the area, given in feet. Wind waves are waves generated by the local wind, and swell are long waves formed from a distant storm.

#### Weather and Visibility

Forecasts for rain, snow, showers, freezing spray, and fog are included, followed by visibility if it is expected to be below 1 nm.

#### Warnings and Advisories

Headlines for warnings and advisories valid for at least the first 24 hours of the forecast are included at the top.

### MARINE ADVISORY AND WARNING CRITERIA

<b>Small Craft Advisory:</b>	23 - 33 knots
<b>Small Craft Advisory Due to Seas:</b>	Locally Determined
<b>Gale Warning:</b>	34-47 knots
<b>Storm Warning:</b>	48 - 63 knots
<b>Hurricane Force Wind Warning*:</b>	64 knots or higher
<b>Heavy Freezing Spray Warning:</b>	0.3" or more ice accumulation per hour

\*Hurricane Force Wind Warning does **not** imply the presence of a hurricane, but only refers to winds 64 knots or higher.

#### Special Marine Warning:

A warning of potentially hazardous weather conditions usually of short duration (up to 2 hours) producing sustained marine thunderstorm winds or associated gusts of 34 knots or greater; and/or hail 3/4 inch or more in diameter; and/or waterspouts affecting areas included in a Coastal Waters Forecast.

#### Tsunami Warning/Watch:

Issued for long period water waves which were generated by an earthquake, and when issued as a warning are less than 2 hours travel time to the warning area. A watch is issued when waves are more than 2 hours travel time to the area.



**MAP LEGEND**

- ▲ Weather Buoys
- Observation Sites
- ◆ NOAA Weather Radio Transmitters
- ◆ Coast Guard High Sites
- Forecast Area Boundary

Map not to be used for navigational purposes.

**MARINE WEATHER REPORTING PROGRAM**

The National Weather Service has established a nationwide Mariner Report Program, or **MAREP**, to help improve marine forecasts and warnings. Through this cooperative effort, mariners make radio reports of sea and wind conditions to NWS forecasters. Marine observations can be reported via HF/SSB, VHF, cell phone, E-mail, or satellite to the NWS.

If you would like to learn more about this program, please contact your local weather office or the Port Meteorological Officer in Anchorage at (907) 271-5135.

**VOICE WEATHER BROADCASTS AND MARINE OBSERVATION REPORTING**

Voice weather broadcasts are provided on the upper sideband (USB) 4125 khz from the following stations and times:

Annette	KGD58	0700 and 1540
Kodiak	KWL38	0800 and 1800
Yakutat	KDG91	0515 and 1930

Stations also monitor Channel 16 to receive observations.

**TO OBTAIN INFORMATION**

**National Weather Service Offices**

Annette	886-3241
Juneau	790-6800
Kodiak	487-4338
Valdez	835-4505
Yakutat	784-3322

**Recorded Marine Forecasts**

Cordova	424-3333
Juneau	586-3997
Sitka	747-6011
Wrangell	874-3232
Yakutat	784-3654

**Alaska Weather Line**

Recorded Weather Statewide Menu	
Within Alaska	800-472-0391
In Anchorage	266-5145
In Juneau	790-6850

**NOAA WEATHER RADIO**

Continuous weather broadcasts are available from the National Weather Service and the U.S. Coast Guard. The Coast Guard communications "high sites" are being used to relay NOAA Weather Radio broadcasts across coastal Alaska, through the Weather Blanket partnership.

Weather information may be found on seven VHF high-band FM frequencies between 162.400 and 162.550 megahertz; weather channels 1 through 7. See the map for transmitter locations.

**FORECAST ISSUANCE TIMES**

**0400** hours and **1600** hours  
Daylight (ADT) and Standard (AST) time  
Marine warnings and amendments are issued as required.

**DIAL-A-BUOY**

This service provides wind and wave measurements taken within the last hour at stations located in coastal waters around the United States.

To access Dial-A-Buoy, dial (228) 688-1948, or visit this web site: [www.ndbc.noaa.gov](http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov). Use the station identifier to request the observation. Detailed marine weather information is available including temperature, wind direction and speed, wave height, swell, wave period, and steepness.

**INTERNET**

NWS Juneau	<a href="http://www.pajk.arh.noaa.gov">www.pajk.arh.noaa.gov</a>
NWS Anchorage	<a href="http://www.pafc.arh.noaa.gov">www.pafc.arh.noaa.gov</a>
NWS Alaska Region	<a href="http://www.arh.noaa.gov">www.arh.noaa.gov</a>
Environment Canada	<a href="http://www.weatheroffice.com">www.weatheroffice.com</a>
National Data Buoy Center	<a href="http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov">www.ndbc.noaa.gov</a>