

AHPS Webpage FAQs

If you have a question and it is not on the list, contact our Webmaster at w-dmx.webmaster@noaa.gov.

WFO DMX AHPS Webpage: <http://www.weather.gov/dmx/water>

How do you get to the Webpage for a specific point? When I hover my mouse over it, just the hydrograph appears.

From the AHPS main page, click on the dot to bring up the Webpage for the specific point.

When the AHPS Webpage comes up, only the observations are shown in the dots. How do you display the forecasts?

From the AHPS main page, click on the River Forecasts tab above the map to display the river forecasts in dots. Click on the location of interest.

How do you display the long-range probabilistic forecasts?

There are a couple ways to display them. The first way is from the AHPS main page. Click on the River Forecasts tab above the map to display the river forecasts in dots. Then choose your location of interest. The second way is to bring up the forecast point from the AHPS main page. Click on the location. Then, hover over the “Probability Information” tab and choose your item of interest.

Why does my city not have a gage with observations and forecasts?

There may not be a streamgage in or around your town. If you are curious, contact the National Weather Service at the Webmaster e-mail address.

My city has a gage with observations. Why is there no forecast provided?

Some streamgages are forecast points while others are data points. Only forecasts are provided for forecast points. If you feel your data point deserves forecasts, contact the National Weather Service at the Webmaster e-mail address.

How often are river forecasts issued when there is expected or ongoing flooding? How often are they issued when there is no flooding expected?

When there is expected or ongoing flooding, the river forecasts are typically updated at least twice a day--in the morning and evening. They may be updated more often--perhaps in the afternoon or overnight--depending on conditions. When no flooding is expected, they may be daily river forecast points. In that case, river forecasts are updated in the morning.

How are the river categories (e.g. minor, moderate, major) defined?

River categories are defined as follows:

- Minor Flooding - minimal or no property damage, but possibly some public threat.
- Moderate Flooding - some inundation of structures and roads near stream. Some evacuations of people and/or transfer of property to higher elevations.
- Major Flooding - extensive inundation of structures and roads. Significant evacuations of people and/or transfer of property to higher elevations.

How often are the flood impacts updated? What if I notice an error or something that should be included? (my note: I realize it says to contact the webmaster, but might be another opportunity to get additional impacts)

Flood impacts are typically updated based on feedback from emergency managers and other local officials during and after flood evenings. If you notice errors or something that should be included, contact the National Weather Service at the Webmaster e-mail address.

How often are the graphics updated? For example, the observed or forecast stages?

The graphics are typically updated once an hour. Each NWS forecast office has a computer process that uploads the latest data to the AHPS Web servers. Typically those processes run once an hour.

Do the forecasts take into account forecast rainfall?

Typically they do. The river forecasts take into account observed rainfall, plus typically forecast rainfall. During the warm season, river forecasts typically take into account 24 hours of forecast rainfall from the forecast generation time. During the cool season, river forecasts typically take into account 48 hours of forecast rainfall from the forecast generation time. Note, however, that those time periods may change. For example, during the warm season, the river forecast may take into account more than 24 hours of forecast rainfall -- it may take into account 48 or more (or less) hours.

I noticed the observed data does not match up with the forecast data. What do I do?

The National Weather Service tries to monitor all of the data and make adjustments as necessary. Sometimes the observed and forecast data may not match up. If it is a big difference, contact the National Weather Service at the Webmaster e-mail address or call your local National Weather Service office. The phone number for your local National Weather Service office should be on the main Webpage for that office.

Do the forecasts take into account any water management practices (e.g. reservoir releases)?

Yes they do. The National Weather Service is in contact with reservoir owners to determine reservoir releases and include them in the forecasts.

What is the Zero Datum?

The Zero Datum is the elevation above sea level where the zero elevation for the gage exists. This Zero Datum allows the gage to report the stage in a local value -- say 22 feet, for example. If the Zero Datum did not exist, then the stage would be reported relative to sea level. For example, if the Zero Datum of the gage referenced above was 900 feet but did not actually exist, then the stage would be reported as 922 feet. This value is much harder to understand than 22 feet. Thus the Zero Datum allows for more understandable stage values.