NWS Melbourne Marine Web Letter
November 2006

Request from NWS Headquarters

Dear National Weather Service marine customer:

NOAA's National Weather Service is working with NOAA's National Ocean Service to find ways to meet your marine weather and oceanographic needs in a coordinated and seamless fashion. We're contacting you as a valued National Weather Service customer to learn what types of National Ocean Service (NOS) products you also use.

1. Please share with us what NOS products you frequently use, and describe how you access the information.

2. Please also briefly outline cases where critical operations or decisions are based on information from both the NWS and NOS. An example would be using NWS wave forecasts and NOS charts and tide predictions to determine when a shoal is passable.

3. Any ideas on how the NWS and NOS can jointly serve you better would also be appreciated.

Thank you for taking the time to give us your thoughts. Send email to Randy.Lascody@noaa.gov .

Comments from the Program Leader

The hurricane season turned out to be quiet, a complete reversal from last year. We are now in the dry season but this is also the time of year where we are influenced frequently by mid latitude weather systems. This results in more frequent periods of breezy to windy conditions and disturbed seas. Boaters should also be aware of the increased threat of strong/severe storms this dry season due to the present El Niño. Usually we have a month or two of above normal rainfall under these conditions, with more instances of strong/severe storms accompanying the passage of cold fronts. Visit the Experimental Dry Season Forecast for a thorough discussion of how El Niño affects East Central Florida.

Interesting Tidbits

Just in case you missed it, there have been some welcome wave buoy additions just offshore Port Canaveral and Fort Pierce Inlet . These buoys are for the benefit of all and boaters should never attempt to tie up to them (or any data buoy).

A new video system has become available courtesy of the Sebastian Inlet District . There is also some meteorological data available. Other similar systems are at Jensen Beach and Jupiter Inlet .

In addition to the Coastal Waters Forecast, boaters are encouraged to read the Marine section of the Area Forecast Discussion and the Hazardous Weather Outlook . There is often information in these products that cannot be effectively communicated in the boating forecast.

Plans

There are longer periods of quiet weather this time of the year, which gives an opportunity to assess the Marine Program, and look into making improvements. Here are a couple of things we are working on.

Realignment of the Coastal Waters Forecast zones. We are currently in the process of assessing a change in zone boundaries. The proposed breakpoints would be:

AMZ 550 -- Flagler Beach to South End of Mosquito Lagoon 0-20nm
AMZ 570 -- Flagler Beach to South End of Mosquito Lagoon 20-60nm

AMZ 552 &#65533; South End of Mosquito Lagoon to Sebastian Inlet 0-20nm
AMZ 572 &#65533; South End of Mosquito Lagoon to Sebastian Inlet 20-60nm

AMZ 555 &#65533; Sebastian Inlet to Jupiter Inlet 0-20nm
AMZ 575 &#65533; Sebastian Inlet to Jupiter Inlet 20-60nm

This change would result in smaller zone groups and hopefully better forecasts. The zone realignment will also allow for a reduction in the number of zones played on NOAA Weather Radio, as the breakpoints were chosen to correspond with the broadcast range of the transmitters at Daytona Beach , Melbourne and Ft. Pierce .

Some boaters may desire to hear forecasts to the north or south of their location, but for the overall benefit of all NOAA Weather Radio listeners, we feel that it is best to limit which zones are broadcast. In general, these additional forecasts are for planning purposes and there are other methods to attain them (internet, phone recordings, etc.).

While out on the water, NOAA Weather Radio is the primary source of weather information for mariners. We will continue to try and make this information as useful as possible with frequent updates of the local weather.

The tentative date for implementation of this realignment is October 2007. If you would like to offer comments on this proposition, please email me .

I have mentioned in previous Web Letters that we continue to investigate how best to implement a near shore wave model. The process has been slow, but it has not come to a halt. Many NWS offices are interested in utilizing the higher resolution wind fields being generated by models and using them as input into a near shore wave model. I will continue to keep you informed of developments in this quest.

The next Marine web letter can be expected in February or March 2007. Feel free to contact me by email, Randy.Lascody@noaa.gov .

Randy Lascody