

# NWS Melbourne Marine Web Letter

February 2009

## News

### Point & Click Forecasts

Marine Point & Click forecasts are now available on the [NWS Melbourne homepage](#). By clicking on the point of interest, you will go to a page that displays the zone forecast that boaters are familiar with, but there will be an added ability to click in an adjacent box to get the actual point forecast. As of the writing of this web letter, there are still some adjustments that need to be made to the formatter that produces the point forecasts. So, continue to look at the [Coastal Waters Forecast](#) generated by NWS Melbourne meteorologists.

### Near Shore Wind/Wave Model

NWS Melbourne is receiving real-time data from the a high resolution wave model into our workstations. Evaluations of this data are ongoing and changes to the model are still being made to improve accuracy and timeliness. The National Weather Service is committed to providing more accurate near shore boating forecasts, and the near shore wave model will be one of the tools to accomplish this goal during the coming year.

### Gulf Stream West Wall Positions in the Coastal Waters Forecast

A new position was recently added for St. Lucie Inlet. The Gulf Stream west wall is quite close to the coast there (about 13nm on average), and in the past it has sometimes been difficult to determine the position. However, high resolution satellite data (MODIS) was recently added to our workstations, which is making it easier to determine the location of the west wall off of St. Lucie Inlet.

## Plans

### Inclusion of the wave period in the Coastal Waters Forecast

Boaters are generally familiar with the spectrum of waves that occur in the ocean that often leads to a chaotic looking sea surface. However, even in chaotic looking conditions, there is a dominant wave period that exists. Most simply, this is the wave that has the most energy. Whether the dominant wave period is a wind wave or a swell is important to boaters. For instance, small craft operators will be substantially affected by 4 foot waves with a 4-5 second period (wind waves). However, if the 4 foot waves have a 13 second period (swell), then conditions are usually good for small craft.

Currently, NWS Melbourne forecasts will often include statements such as, "Seas 3-5 feet, mainly in a northeast swell." Boaters can also utilize buoy observations to determine what the current wave period is. In the future, NWS Melbourne hopes to include the dominant wave period in the first 2-3 periods of the forecast. Examples: Seas 3-5 feet, with a dominant period of 5 seconds, or Seas 3-5 feet, with a dominant period of 12 seconds.

### Brevard County Comprehensive Maritime Management Master Plan (CM3P)

The Natural Resource Management Office and the University of Florida Brevard County Extension Service have initiated and are jointly sponsoring the development of the [Brevard County Comprehensive Maritime Management Master Plan \(CM3P\)](#). In development of the plan, a series of public meetings are to be held to address and balance environmental, recreational, and economic issues

affecting the future of Brevard County's waterways. If you are interested in attending, see the web site link above.

## **Talks**

If you have a group that would like a speaker about marine forecasting, feel free to contact me. There is still time during the (less busy) cool season for me to get out of the office and give talks.

The next Marine Web Letter can be expected in April or May.

*Randy Lascody*

[email](#)