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PNSWSH

PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT...COMMENT REQUEST  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE HEADQUARTERS WASHINGTON DC  
740 AM EDT TUE OCT 8 2008

TO: SUBSCRIBERS:  
-FAMILY OF SERVICES  
-NOAA WEATHER WIRE SERVICE  
-EMERGENCY MANAGERS WEATHER INFORMATION NETWORK  
OTHER NWS PARTNERS...USERS AND EMPLOYEES

FROM THOMAS GRAZIANO  
CHIEF...HYDROLOGIC SERVICES BRANCH

SUBJECT COMMENTS SOUGHT BY NOVEMBER 17 2008 ON POSSIBLE  
UNIFICATION OF EVENT-BASED FLOOD PRODUCTS UNDER THE  
FLOOD WARNING /FLW/ IDENTIFIER

NWS IS SEEKING COMMENTS BY NOVEMBER 17 2008 ON A PROPOSAL TO  
UNIFY ALL EVENT-BASED HYDROLOGIC PRODUCTS UNDER THE FLOOD  
WARNING /FLW/ IDENTIFIER. IF IMPLEMENTED THE CHANGE WOULD NOT  
OCCUR FOR THREE OR MORE YEARS. ADVANTAGES TO UNIFYING EVENT-  
BASED HYDROLOGIC PRODUCTS UNDER A SINGLE IDENTIFIER INCLUDE:

O SIMPLER CONFIGURATION - FOLLOWS THE APPROACH USED IN NWS  
WINTER STORM /WSW/ AND NON-PRECIPITATION /NPW/ PRODUCTS AND  
ELIMINATES THE CONFUSION CAUSED BY THE MULTIPLE IDENTIFIERS  
USED IN CURRENT FLOOD PRODUCTS.

O PROVIDES A NEW TRANSITION CAPABILITY. FOR EXAMPLE...IT WOULD  
BE POSSIBLE TO ISSUE A PRODUCT ANNOUNCING THE TRANSITION FROM  
A FLASH FLOOD WARNING TO A LONGER DURATION FLOOD WARNING.

O PROVIDES UPGRADE AND DOWNGRADE CAPABILITIES. FOR EXAMPLE...IT  
WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ISSUE A PRODUCT ANNOUNCING THE UPGRADE OF  
A FLOOD WATCH TO A FLOOD WARNING.

O PROVIDES MAXIMUM ABILITY TO ISSUE PRODUCTS COMBINING DIFFERENT  
TYPES OF WATCHES...WARNINGS AND/OR ADVISORIES FOR EXAMPLE...  
IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ISSUE A SINGLE PRODUCT WITH MULTIPLE  
SEGMENTS FOR A POINT-BASED FLOOD WARNING FOR ONE OR MORE  
RIVER LOCATIONS...A POINT-BASED FLOOD ADVISORY FOR ONE OR  
MORE LOCATIONS...A POINT-BASED FLOOD WATCH FOR ONE OR MORE  
LOCATIONS ...AND AN AREAL FLOOD WARNING FOR ALL OR PART OF THE  
RIVER BASIN AFFECTED BY WIDESPREAD SMALL STREAM FLOODING.

O PLACES EMPHASIS ON THE VERSITILE INFORMATION CONTAINED WITHIN  
VALID TIME EVENT CODE /VTEC/ RATHER THAN PRODUCT IDENTIFIERS.

POSSIBLE FUTURE PRODUCTS SHOWING BENEFITS OF UNIFYING EVENT-

BASED HYDROLOGIC PRODUCTS UNDER THE FLW IDENTIFIER CAN BE FOUND ON THE HYDROLOGIC VTEC WEB PAGE AT /USE LOWER CASE/:

[HTTP://WWW.NWS.NOAA.GOV/OS/VTEC/HYDRO\\_VTEC.SHTML](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/vtec/hydro_vtec.shtml)

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE EVENT-BASED PRODUCTS THAT WOULD BE UNIFIED UNDER THE FLOOD WARNING /FLW/ IDENTIFIER:

CURRENT PRODUCT  
IDENTIFIER NAME

FFA	FLOOD WATCH /AREAL/
FFA	FLASH FLOOD WATCH /AREAL/
FFA	FLOOD WATCH FOR FORECAST POINTS
FFW	FLASH FLOOD WARNING
FFS	FLASH FLOOD STATEMENT
FLW	FLOOD WARNING FOR FORECAST POINTS
FLS	FLOOD STATEMENT - FOLLOW-UP TO FLOOD WARNING FOR FORECAST POINTS
FLW	AREAL FLOOD WARNING
FLS	FLOOD STATEMENT - FOLLOW-UP TO AREAL FLOOD WARNING
FLS	FLOOD STATEMENT - AREAL ADVISORIES
FLS	FLOOD STATEMENT - FLOOD ADVISORY FOR FORECAST POINTS

EVEN THOUGH IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO INCLUDE MULTIPLE SEGMENTS IN A FLW PRODUCT...WARNINGS OF HIGH URGENCY SUCH AS FLASH FLOODS WOULD CONTINUE TO BE ISSUED AS STAND-ALONE PRODUCTS TO ENSURE THEY ARE NOT LOST AMONG OTHER SEGMENTS.

THE CHANGE...IF IMPLEMENTED...WOULD MAINLY AFFECT USERS WHO AUTOMATICALLY PROCESS AND DISTRIBUTE NWS PRODUCTS TO THEIR CUSTOMERS SUCH AS RADIO AND TV STATIONS. THE CHANGE WOULD BE COORDINATED WELL IN ADVANCE WITH THESE DISTRIBUTORS AND WOULD OCCUR ON A WELL PUBLICIZED DATE. THEREFORE IT WOULD NOT AFFECT HOW THE GENERAL PUBLIC RECEIVES PRODUCTS FROM THE INTERNET... NOAA WEATHER RADIO ALL HAZARDS...OR MEDIA SUCH AS TELEVISION OR RADIO. ALL CURRENT WATCHES... WARNINGS AND ADVISORIES WOULD CONTINUE TO BE ISSUED AND EACH TYPE OF ISSUANCE WOULD BE CLEARLY IDENTIFIED WITHIN EACH FLW PRODUCT.

IF EVENT-BASED HYDROLOGIC PRODUCTS ARE UNIFIED UNDER THE FLW IDENTIFIER...AUTOMATED PROCESSING OF FLW PRODUCTS WOULD REQUIRE PARSING OF VTEC ACTION...PHENOMENON AND SIGNIFICANCE CODES CONTAINED IN EACH SEGMENT. THIS PARSING OF VTEC WOULD REVEAL THE CURRENT STATUS OF EACH WATCH...WARNING AND/OR ADVISORY CONTAINED IN THE PRODUCT AND WHETHER IT IS A NEW ISSUANCE... CONTINUATION ...EXTENSION...CANCELLATION...ETC.

A ONE-PAGE SUMMARY OF VTEC IS AVAILABLE AT /USE LOWER CASE/:

[HTTP://WWW.WEATHER.GOV/OS/VTEC/PDFS/VTEC\\_EXPLANATION6.PDF](http://www.weather.gov/os/vtec/pdfs/vtec_explanation6.pdf)

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS ON OTHER WAYS THE NWS CAN IMPROVE FLOOD PRODUCTS AND THE COMMUNICATION OF FLOOD RISK ALSO ARE WELCOME.

IF A DECISION IS MADE TO PROCEED WITH THE PROPOSAL... ADDITIONAL PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENTS WILL BE ISSUED OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS TO PROVIDE UPDATES ON PLANS FOR FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION. THE NWS ALSO WILL ESTABLISH AN ONGOING DIALOG WITH PARTNERS AND OTHER USERS ON ANY CHANGES THROUGH THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS.

IF YOU HAVE COMMENTS OR QUESTIONS...PLEASE CONTACT:

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NWS PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENTS ARE ONLINE AT /USE LOWER CASE/

[HTTP://WWW.WEATHER.GOV/OS/NOTIF.HTM](http://www.weather.gov/os/notif.htm)

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