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Public Information Notice, Comment Request: Amended
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
850 AM EST Tue Nov 18 2014

To: Subscribers:
-Family of Services
-NOAA Weather Wire Service
-Emergency Managers Weather Information Network
-NOAAPORT
Other NWS Partners and NWS Employees

FROM: Eli Jacks
Chief, Fire and Public Weather Services Branch

SUBJECT: Amended: Soliciting Comments through April 15, 2015, on
an Experimental Scaled Predictive Ice Storm Aftermath
Index at Select NWS Weather Forecast Offices

Amended to add WFO Atlanta (FFC) to the list of participating
WFOs and update PDD and WFO URLs.

NWS is accepting comments through April 15, 2015, on an
experimental Scaled Predictive Ice Storm Aftermath (SPIA) Index.

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=SPISA>

Select NWS Weather Forecast Offices (WFO) (Table 1) will produce
web graphics depicting the potential impact of freezing rain and
wind on exposed electrical systems to enhance their decision
support services.

Current NWS Ice Storm Warnings are issued based on forecast ice
accumulation only, typically one quarter of an inch or greater.
The combined effect of ice and wind, which more realistically
describes damage potential, is not formally set as warning
criteria.

By using the SPIA scaled index, NWS should be able to provide a
better understanding of ice storm impact potential to local,
state, and federal response entities. The potential impacts are
scaled from 0 to 5 and suggest potential electrical outage
coverage and duration.

Until now, the NWS has not attempted to routinely quantify the
impact of ice storms. The use of this scaled index will allow
the NWS to evaluate the potential of providing these specifics.
For example, a level 5 ice storm would be defined as one causing
catastrophic damage to entire exposed utility systems, including
both distribution and transmission networks. Outages could last
several weeks in some locations.

Graphics showing forecast index values will be available as part of the routine forecast provided online for the following WFOs:

Table 1: Participating WFOs and url:

WFO Atlanta (FFC)

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ffc/?n=ice_impact_index

WFO Tulsa (TSA)

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tsa/?n=ice_impact_index

WFO Little Rock (LZK)

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/lzk/?n=ice_impact_index

WFO Jackson (JAN)

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/jan/?n=ice_impact_index

WFO Nashville (OHX)

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/ohx/?n=ice_impact_index

WFO Memphis (MEG)

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/meg/?n=ice_impact_index

WFO Norman (OUN)

http://www.srh.noaa.gov/oun/?n=ice_impact_index

WFO Springfield (SGF)

http://www.crh.noaa.gov/sgf/?n=ice_impact_index

WFO Pleasant Hill (EAX)

http://www.crh.noaa.gov/eax/?n=ice_impact_index

WFO St. Louis (LSX)

http://www.crh.noaa.gov/lxx/?n=ice_impact_index

WFO Paducah (PAH)

http://www.crh.noaa.gov/pah/?n=ice_impact_index

More information regarding the SPIA index is online in a Product Description Document:

http://products.weather.gov/PDD/PDD-SPIA_November2014.pdf

During this comment period, a proactive effort will be made to educate users and partners of the product availability and use. At the end of the comment period, the NWS will make a decision on whether to transition the experimental SPIA Index to operational status. The experimental SPIA Index may also be considered for use at other WFOs and NWS Regions.

For more information please contact:

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National Public Information Notices are online at:

<http://www.weather.gov/os/notif.htm>

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