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Public Information Notice, Comment Request
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
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FROM: Anthony Siebers
Acting Director, Ocean Prediction Center

SUBJECT: Soliciting Comments until June 3, 2014 on an
Experimental Lightning Strike Density product
(Offshore Waters)

The NWS National Centers for Environmental Prediction's (NCEP) Ocean Prediction Center (OPC) is accepting comments until June 30, 2014, on an experimental gridded lightning strike density product.

Thunderstorm activity at sea can have significant impacts to the safety of mariners and impact operations. Presently, only satellite imagery gives mariners at sea an indication of thunderstorm activity beyond the NWS WSR-88D weather radar coverage. Satellite imagery provides the large scale view but does not provide definitive information concerning whether a particular cloud system is producing lightning.

The purpose of this product is to enhance awareness of developing and transitory thunderstorm activity by giving users the ability to determine whether a cloud system is producing lightning, if that activity is increasing or decreasing, and to emulate the future GOES-R Global Lightning Mapper (GLM) data.

The Experimental Lightning Strike Density product produced by OPC will be available in gridded form (GRIB2) and also have complementary web images. The base data uses the Vaisala GLD360 land based detection system. The experimental gridded product is considered a derived product and is therefore acceptable for distribution to the public. The product contains the number of lightning strikes per square meter per second. Users should remember that a lightning flash may be comprised of several or many cloud-to-ground strikes.

GRIB2 data will be available on the OPC FTP server, accessible via FTP and HTTP protocols:

ftp://ftp.opc.ncep.noaa.gov/grids/experimental/lightning_density

http://ftp.opc.ncep.noaa.gov/grids/experimental/lightning_density

Graphical images of the gridded product with GOES satellite visible and IR satellite imagery will be available on the Atlantic and Pacific pages of the Ocean Prediction Center web page at:

<http://www.opc.ncep.noaa.gov/lightning>

Please fill out a short survey at the following link:

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

To provide comments or request more information contact:

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National Public Information Notices are online at:

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

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