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Service Change Notice 11-36
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
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From: Eli Jacks
 Chief, Fire and Public Weather Services Branch

Subject: Implementation of Improved Public Zone Coverage for
Southwestern/South Central New Mexico and Far West Texas: Effective
February 23, 2012

Effective Thursday, February 23, 2012, at 3:00 pm Mountain Standard Time (MST), 2200 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Office (WFO) in Santa Teresa, NM, (EPZ), will issue public weather forecast and warning products using new public zones.

WFO EPZ public zone boundaries are being changed to better incorporate local topography and climatology across southern New Mexico and far west Texas. Several existing zones have been reconfigured to mitigate the significant variances in climate and elevation in the zones currently in use.

Some of the major changes to the current zone configuration include:

- Differentiation between the eastern and western slopes of the southern Sacramento Mountains.
- Division of El Paso county to reflect the differences in wind and temperature within the city of El Paso on either side of the Franklin Mountains.
- Reduction in size of several zones that currently have great ranges in temperature and elevation.
- Improvement in separation of mountains and valleys across the southern Gila region.

More detail regarding why these public zone changes are being made, graphical depictions of the current and new public zones, text listings of old and new public zone names with Universal Geographic Codes (UGCs), and a table of WFO EPZ products affected by these changes is online at:

<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/media/epz/newzones/epznewzones.pdf>

Table 1: Retiring WFO EPZ Public Zone Numbers and Names

Retiring Zone Number	Retiring Zone Name
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NMZ022	Southwest Mountains/Lower Gila Region
NMZ023	Sierra County Lakes Region
NMZ024	Tularosa Basin/Southern Desert
NMZ025	Southern Sacramento Mountains
NMZ030	Southwest Desert/Bootheel
NMZ031	Southwest Desert/Mimbres Basin
NMZ032	Southern Desert
TXZ055	El Paso
TXZ056	Hudspeth

Table 2: New WFO EPZ Public Zone Numbers and Names

New Zone Number	New Zone Name
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NMZ401	Upper Gila River Valley
NMZ402	Southern Gila Highlands/Black Range
NMZ403	Southern Gila Foothills/Mimbres Valley
NMZ404	Southwest Desert/Lower Gila River Valley
NMZ405	Lowlands of the Bootheel
NMZ406	Uplands of the Bootheel
NMZ407	Southwest Desert/Mimbres Basin
NMZ408	Eastern Black Range Foothills
NMZ409	Sierra County Lakes
NMZ410	Northern Dona Ana County
NMZ411	Southern Dona Ana County/Mesilla Valley
NMZ412	Central Tularosa Basin
NMZ413	Southern Tularosa Basin
NMZ414	West Slopes Sacramento Mountains Below 7,500 Feet
NMZ415	Sacramento Mountains Above 7,500 Feet
NMZ416	East Slopes Sacramento Mountains Below 7,500 Feet

Table 2: New WFO EPZ Public Zone Numbers and Names (continued)

New Zone Number	New Zone Name
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NMZ417	Otero Mesa
TXZ418	Western El Paso County
TXZ419	Eastern/Central El Paso County
TXZ420	Northern Hudspeth Highlands/Hueco Mountains
TXZ421	Salt Basin
TXZ422	Southern Hudspeth Highlands
TXZ423	Rio Grande Valley of Eastern El Paso/Western Hudspeth Counties
TXZ424	Rio Grande Valley of Eastern Hudspeth County

Partners and other users must take appropriate action to continue correctly processing all WFO EPZ products.

Updated public zone map shapefiles are available for download online at:

www.weather.gov/geodata/catalog/wsom/html/pubzone.htm

The changes are to WFO EPZ public zones only. WFO EPZ fire weather zones will remain unchanged.

If you have any questions, please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

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