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Service Change Notice 14-36
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
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From: Deirdre R. Jones
Acting Director, NWS Office of Operational Systems

Subject: Termination of Continental United States Wind Profiler
Observation Data on or about August 30, 2014

A recent NOAA study concluded that wind, temperature, and moisture observations measured by sensors on commercial aircraft and those taken by equipment on weather balloons provide data that are superior to the NOAA 22-year-old Wind Profiler Network (NPN) for short-range weather forecasts. The combination of tight economic conditions and wind profiler system obsolescence, in addition to the limited geographic scope of the NPN, led NOAA to recommend discontinuing the use of the Wind Profiler Network in a report to Congress in May 2013.

Subsequently, the Fiscal Year 2014 Presidential Budget Request and the FY14 Omnibus Appropriations Act (PL 113-76) eliminated funding for the NPN within the continental United States (CONUS). As a result, preparations are underway to begin decommissioning the CONUS NPN. The first step in the decommissioning process is to deactivate the NPN data feed to NWS websites. NWS will cease ingesting and recording site data from NPN sites in Texas, Missouri, Wisconsin, Arkansas, Colorado, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Wyoming, Iowa, Indiana, Illinois, Louisiana, New Mexico and New York on or about August 30, 2014.

Retiring the NPN will not have an adverse impact to the NOAA forecast and warning services. Vast improvements in computer model and data assimilation systems, in addition to the use of modern atmospheric data sampling via aircraft observations, dual polarization Doppler radar and geostationary and polar satellites, will continue to provide the quality data necessary for NWS models, forecasts and services. Additionally, using Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013 funds, the NWS plans to expand in coverage and increase the number of wind, temperature, and moisture measurements from sensors available on commercial aircraft.

NWS is planning additional decommissioning steps for the eventual removal of these NPN sites. NPN program information is online at:

<http://www.profiler.noaa.gov/npn/>

For questions concerning these changes, please contact:

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All NWS National Service Change Notices are available online at:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/notif.htm>

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