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PNSWSH

Technical Implementation Notice 11-54, Amended
National Weather Service Headquarters Washington DC
720 AM EST Fri Mar 16 2012

To: Subscribers:
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    -NOAA Weather Wire Service
    -Emergency Managers Weather Information Network
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From: Tim McClung
        Chief, Science Plans Branch
        Office of Science and Technology

Subject: Amended: Change to First Guess Used by Real-Time
        Mesoscale Analysis to Rapid Refresh (RAP):
        Effective Date Postponed

NCEP is delaying this implementation for at least one week due
to the delay in the implementation of the Rapid Refresh model. A
notification will be sent out as soon as the new date has been
determined

On a date to be determined, with the 1200 Coordinated
Universal Time (UTC) run, the Real-Time Mesoscale Analysis
(RTMA) for CONUS at both 5-km and 2.5-km resolution will use the
Rapid Refresh (RAP) instead of the Rapid Update Cycle (RUC) as
the forecast model that provides the first guess. The current
5- and 2.5-km resolution RTMA terrain fields, which were created
at ESRL/GSD, will also be replaced by terrain fields created at
NCEP/EMC.

The RTMA is a set of gridded surface and near-surface analyses
that are created by combining observations with the first guess,
weighted by their error statistics.

The change of the first guess is necessary since the RUC is
being replaced by the RAP on that same date (see NWS Technical
Implementation Notice 11-53 for details of the RUC to RAP
transition). The main impact of this change will occur in areas
of sparse observational data where the RTMA analysis relies more
heavily on the guess field than in areas with greater
observational coverage. While the use of the new RTMA terrain
will have little impact on the overall analysis on scales larger
than a few grid lengths, users who might be using the RTMA
terrain to locally adjust the analysis are advised of the need
to use the updated terrain provided in the output files.

NCEP urges all users to ensure their decoders can handle changes

in content order, changes in the scaling factor component within the product definition section (PDS) of the GRIB files, changes to the GRIB Bit Map Section (BMS), and volume changes. These elements may change with future NCEP model implementations. NCEP will make every attempt to alert users to these changes before implementation.

For questions regarding these changes, please contact:

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NWS National Technical Implementation Notices are online at:

  http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/notif.htm

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