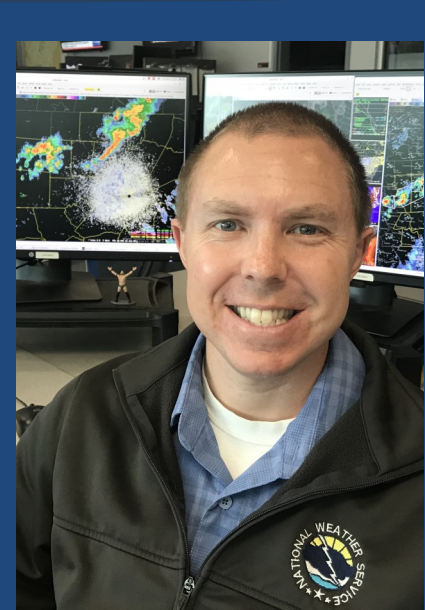


Q & A with NWS Raleigh Forecaster Jimmy Taeger



Jimmy Taeger

Position: Lead Forecaster

Education: B.S and M.S. from Florida State University

Hometown: Wellington, Florida

Where did you go to school and what made you want to work at The National Weather Service? I went to Florida State University for my bachelor's and master's degrees. The mission of the NWS to protect lives and property has always been something that I have wanted to be a part of. I have always had great respect for the agency and wanted to work for them for as long as I can remember.

What was your NWS Career Path to get to NWS Raleigh and how long have you been at WFO RAH? After earning a summer mentorship at the Tallahassee, FL Weather Forecast Office, I was hired at the Bismarck, ND WFO as an Intern Meteorologist (Entry-Level Meteorologist) where I spent a year and a half getting spun up on agency policies, radar operations and forecasting methods. Then, I transferred to the San Diego, CA WFO as a General Forecaster where I spent the last 8 years focusing on Fire Weather Services, Aviation Services, CoCoRaHS expansion across CA. In addition, I helped with Decision Support Services locally in San Diego and at times at the State Operations Center in Sacramento. I've recently transferred to Raleigh as a Lead Forecaster and have been here for around 2 months now.

What got you into weather? Severe thunderstorms and tropical cyclones really sparked my interest in meteorology. I would always get excited when a hurricane formed in the Atlantic or Gulf of Mexico, and especially when there was the possibility I could see the effects of it firsthand. I found it intriguing that Mother Nature could create such a giant and dangerous storm, and I knew that meteorology was the field for me.



What is your current role here at NWS Raleigh? Lead Forecaster, and Fire weather program leader.

What is your favorite type of weather to forecast? I find forecasting severe weather to be the most interesting.

What is the most memorable weather event you have experienced? In 2005, I lived in south Florida and got to experience the full effects of Hurricane Wilma. I will never forget seeing the damage the winds did in my hometown and how quickly the winds increased again after the eye moved over.

What is your most memorable event that you have covered in your career? In 2018, strong and dangerous Santa Ana winds were forecast, which would contribute to extreme fire weather conditions. With all of the fatal fires that occurred in northern CA in the previous few years, many were on high alert in southern CA given the expected conditions. As fires ignited and impacted the public and our partners, I was able to brief numerous fire agencies in staging areas to help them prepare to fight the ongoing fires.

What non-weather hobbies do you enjoy? I enjoy spending quality time with my family, running, hiking, going to the beach, kayaking, and basically anything outdoors.

What is the most challenging part of your job? The most challenging part is doing my best to make critical decisions on upcoming hazardous weather that affect people's lives and jobs. We as an agency do our best to use the tools we have to make the best decisions possible to inform the public and our partners on upcoming/impending weather that could affect them. At times, this can be quite challenging.