



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Public Zone Boundaries will Support more Geographically-Targeted Forecasts and Warnings

In an effort to provide more specific land-based weather information to our partners and the public, the National Weather Service (NWS) Weather Forecast Office (WFO) Anchorage has realigned Southern Alaska's (land-based) public forecast zones, due to be implemented on **March 18, 2025**.

The planned changes will result in more geographically-representative forecasts, advisory, watch, and warning products. This will be achieved with the creation of new zones that will pare down very large geographic areas, and focus on more climatologically relevant areas. In the past, NWS WFO Anchorage has hosted 18 public forecast zones that grouped numerous microclimates together, combined alerting needs, and crossed Borough and Census Boundaries. This led to a blending of forecast needs and impacts, and to overalerting of regions to impacts not realized in some local communities.

In an effort to redefine our public forecast zones, and be more in-tune with regional and local forecast needs, our forecast office worked closely with local community leadership and incorporated climatology and alert needs in the implementation of our new public forecast areas. With this September's upgrade, NWS WFO Anchorage will host 51 forecast zones, more than double the number of zones previously forecast for. We believe this will provide a vast improvement in service and provide better service equity to those who live across Southern Alaska. Due to the scope of these changes, all forecast zone names and numbers in Southern Alaska will change.

The National Weather Service will be coordinating with partners and media outlets from across the state to facilitate greater awareness of these planned changes. These changes are part of a long-term National Weather Service improvement plan to provide the public with forecasts and alerts more relevant to their area of concern.

For more information about the planned (land-based) public zone changes and access to all material created to help educate the public, please refer to the National Weather Service website at www.weather.gov/afc/NWSAnchorageLandBasedForecastChanges.

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