
Recognizing IDSS in Our Mission Statement

By: Louis Uccellini, NWS Director

On Thursday, October 14, I spoke to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Science, Space and Technology about the National Weather Service.

A part of my message to the Committee was that I am adding the words “impact-based decision support services” to our mission statement.

IDSS is now as much a part of our mission as forecasts and warnings, and reflects the realization that IDSS is actually an essential element for realizing the second half of the existing mission statement related to the protection of life and property.



Thus, recognizing that fact in our mission statement is warranted. This update aligns the mission statement with the National Weather Service’s current policy and practices, its ten-year strategic outcome of Building a Weather-Ready Nation (including the current NWS Strategic Plan), and with Congressional Direction as specified in the Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017.

Mission Statement

Provide weather, water and climate data, forecasts, warnings, and impact-based decision support services for the protection of life and property and enhancement of the national economy.

By updating our mission, we acknowledge that, to keep Americans safe and to enhance the economy, we must look beyond the forecast to transform the way people receive, understand, and act on information. We would not be at this point were it not for the field’s leadership on this front. The National Weather Service has embraced IDSS with remarkable and measurable results in such a short time.

This update of the mission statement means that the National Weather Service’s ongoing efforts to provide timely and accurate weather, water, and climate information to support core partners in emergency management, water resource management, and public safety at the Federal, state, local, and tribal levels is appropriately reflected in our mission. It highlights the importance of NWS and its partners in the Weather, Water, and Climate Enterprise serving the local needs of America’s diverse communities with the information and format they need to prepare for and respond to impacts caused by extreme events.

Mark Your October Calendar for Winter Preparation Events

By: Monica Parker, NWS Aware Editor



This October features two online opportunities to prepare for winter. Whether you are already familiar with annual winter resources or looking for new ways to get ahead of the season, don't forget to check in!

On October 21, NOAA's Climate Prediction Center will issue its official seasonal Winter Outlook. The annual Winter Outlook will be available on the [NOAA homepage](#) and will include the likelihood of above, below, or near-normal temperature and precipitation for the U.S. meteorological winter, which extends from December 2021 through February 2022.

On October 26, the National Weather Service invites you to join us from 2PM to 3PM EST for a webinar briefing aimed at our partners who have an interest in the NWS Winter Weather Program. The briefing will include the following:

- A short review of winter 2020-2021 and the Winter Weather Program initiatives
- A preview of the 2021-2022 Winter Weather Program planned efforts
- A discussion on the vision, messaging, and future initiatives for the Winter Weather Program
- An open discussion among all participants.

To register for this briefing, see the [registration page](#), where you can check the briefing time according to your local time zone. For more information on the upcoming briefing, please contact Stephen.Baxter@noaa.gov or Sarah.Perfater@noaa.gov.

The Avalanche Weather Guidance Product is Seeking Feedback

By: Monica Parker, NWS Aware Editor

Beginning on or about November 1, 2021, the NWS is expanding its experimental Avalanche Weather Guidance (AVG) products, available via NWS web pages and other NWS dissemination systems, to include 27 additional Weather Forecast Offices. Based on user feedback, the AVG display will also include variable time resolution and a 12 and 24-hour clock.

The experimental AVG products were originally produced during the winter of 2020-2021 at select WFOs across the United States, providing local avalanche centers with forecast meteorological parameters critical to the centers' forecasts of avalanche conditions and risk. These forecasts were also used by state and local departments of transportation, emergency management, search and rescue operations, commercial entities, recreation areas, and backcountry enthusiasts to help prepare for expected weather conditions in avalanche-prone areas.

Feedback is important to the development of these products, which were highlighted as a critical resource in helping avalanche forecasters predict avalanche stability and threats to life. For this purpose, the NWS is seeking continued comments on the AVG products through April 30, 2022. A link to the survey and relevant contacts, along with the full list of WFOs that will provide these products, is available in the original [Public Information Statement](#). The NWS thanks you for your feedback, which will help determine the next steps for the AVG products.

NWS Honolulu Enhances and Expands the Highly Popular Surf Forecast

By: NWS Insider Staff



Hawaii County Ocean Safety Division crew at the Kua Bay lifeguard tower.

The surf forecast has historically been the most popular product issued by the NWS Honolulu Forecast Office. Since the 1970s, the official surf forecast issued by the NWS Honolulu Forecast Office only covered the island of Oahu, as the complexity caused by island shadowing and a 360-degree swell approach window was not handled well by models of the day. With the introduction and refinement of high-resolution nearshore wave modeling, as well as having this data in the gridded forecast editor, the office was able to expand and enhance this popular forecast beyond the island of Oahu. During a three year process, the local office surf team gathered data and input, planned, provided outreach and coordination with core partners, and offered training for forecasters to make this technical transition a success.

During the spring of 2021, NWS Honolulu virtually gathered with our Core Partners, which included Ocean Safety and Emergency Managers, to discuss the new statewide surf product that now includes the islands of Kauai, Maui, and the Big Island. Other topics discussed included impacts from high surf, critical operational thresholds, and the emergency management level planning that happens ahead of these high surf events. Ricky Alvarez from Big Island Ocean Safety was very pleased with the new statewide surf product and said “[NWS] forecasts, especially advisory and warning events, have been spot on”. NWS Honolulu also learned from Ricky that a new lifeguard tower was recently set up at Kua Bay, and the WFO is now receiving daily surf observations from Kua Bay.



Kua Bay lifeguard tower, western Big Island.

The statewide surf forecast in an enhanced format has added critical public and media awareness of the surf hazards and associated risks in the lesser known areas, as well as enhanced outreach that helps government and beach safety officials make well-informed decisions.



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