



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
1325 East-West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3283
July 28, 2006

MEMORANDUM FOR: All Affected Offices

FROM: W/OS Glenn Austin, <signed>
Digital Services Transition Manager

THROUGH: Digital Services Planning and Action Committee (DSPAC)

SUBJECT: Local Actions Needed to Support NDFD File Split on September 6, 2006

We need your assistance to support a fundamental change in the way our digital data is hosted and made available to users. Some operating procedures may need to be adapted. The Digital Services Planning and Action Committee (DSPAC) requests that all NWS headquarters, regions, national centers, and field offices review the following and ensure local procedures support the full integration of all forecast grid elements in National Digital Forecast Database (NDFD) to meet the prescribed schedule. Applicable procedural changes described in this document are planned for inclusion in future policy revision.

Background: The current NDFD processing can produce files too large for reliable data transfers from the NDFD Central Server to the NWS Telecommunication Gateway (NWSTG) File Transfer Protocol (FTP), and then to our users. Further, maximum processing is focused during a single time period each hour. Changes are necessary to free up both NWS and customer system resources, process new forecast elements, and provide hourly grids on Day 1 (planned for 2007.)

Overview: On September 6, 2006, the NWS plans to split the 7-day files available in the NDFD into two files to improve the efficiency of file transfers. This plan was announced to users through the following two Technical Implementation Notices (TINs):

TIN 06-30: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/notification/tin06-30ndfd_split.txt
TIN 06-39: http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/notification/tin06-39ndfd_splitd4-7.txt

More specific information about the impacts of this change for FTP users, graphics users, and XML users and benefits of this change are available at the following URL: http://www.weather.gov/ndfd/oper_implem.htm.

Basic Plan: With the September 6th change, the Days 4-7 graphics, in addition to the collated grids offered via FTP, will only be updated in the NDFD Central Server four times per day at 0000, 0600, 1200, 1800 UTC. The Days 1-3 NDFD element files will continue to be updated hourly and posted at the top of the hour.

Benefits: The benefits of this change include: (1) more reliable data transfers, (2) more efficient use of IT resources, and, (3) more opportunities for collaboration on significant weather events.

Operational Impacts from Process Change: Forecasters should publish Days 4-7 grids to the official database no later than 1130, 1730, 2330 and 0530 UTC to ensure inclusion in the NDFD at the top of the following hour. **Please Note:** Six hourly updates will mean that Days 4-7 grids in excess of collaboration thresholds or with technical or transmission delays cannot be updated or corrected for six hours. **No changes** are required with regard to local generation and distribution of Days 1-3 WFO grids.

Feedback Mechanism: All questions and comments should be directed to your DSPAC Representative.