

**NOAA/National Weather Service  
National Hurricane Center / Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch  
Decision Support Services (DSS) Graphicasts  
Product Description Document**

**13 June 2013**

**Part I. Mission Connection**

- a. Product Description** - The National Hurricane Center's Tropical Analysis and Forecast Branch (TAFB) is providing on **an operational basis** an event-driven Graphicast detailing the marine forecast issue(s) of the day in the Atlantic and East Pacific areas of responsibility (AOR – Figures 1 and 2) of TAFB. A Graphicast is produced for each basin. The graphicasts are intended to communicate to our users the most critical marine or other significant forecast issue(s) of the day (heavy precipitation/flooding, volcanic ash) in an effort to provide enhanced decision support services (EDSS) to them.
- b. Purpose** – The Graphicast provides a graphical depiction of the significant forecast issues of the day with our AOR in an effort to provide EDSS. The Graphicast is intended to enhance already existing text marine and tropical products issued by TAFB such as the High Seas and Offshore waters forecasts and the Tropical Weather Discussion.
- c. Audience** – The target audience for the Graphicast are primarily the marine community and forecast centers in the Caribbean, Mexico, Central and South America. However other potential users of the product include State emergency managers, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Coast Guard and other first responders in marine incidents. The centralized location of the Graphicast on the National Hurricane Center's web page makes it easy for these partners to view the product. Use will not be limited to those interested in large areas, however. Local emergency managers and the general public will also use these graphics to evaluate conditions at the local level.
- d. Presentation Format** – The Graphicasts are produced by the forecasters utilizing either the Advanced Weather Interactive Weather Processor (AWIPS) FX collaborate (FXC) software or the National Center AWIPS (NAWIPS) NMAP software. These software packages utilize drawing tools to depict and communicate to our users the marine or other significant weather forecast issue(s) of the day. The Graphicasts are web-based graphics, and can be viewed at the following URLs:

**Graphicast for the Atlantic basin:**

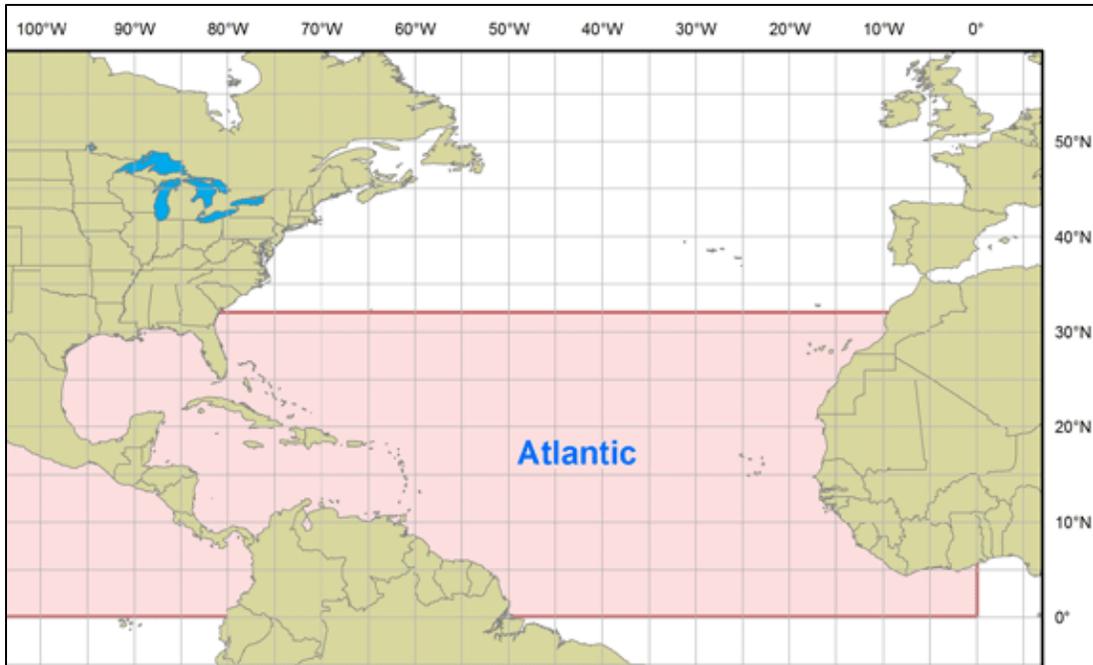
**[http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/tafb/fxc/index.php?large&current\\_issuance=latest\\_a](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/tafb/fxc/index.php?large&current_issuance=latest_a)**

**Graphicast for the East Pacific basin:**

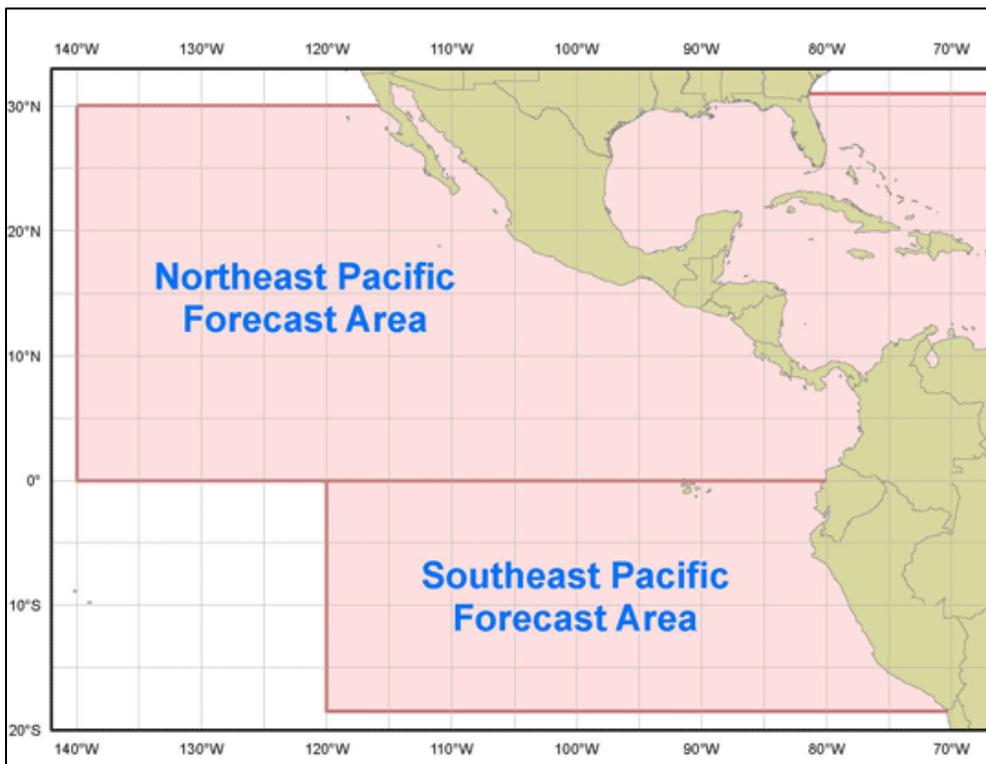
**[http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/tafb/fxc/index.php?large&current\\_issuance=latest\\_e](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/tafb/fxc/index.php?large&current_issuance=latest_e)**

## **Part II. Technical Description**

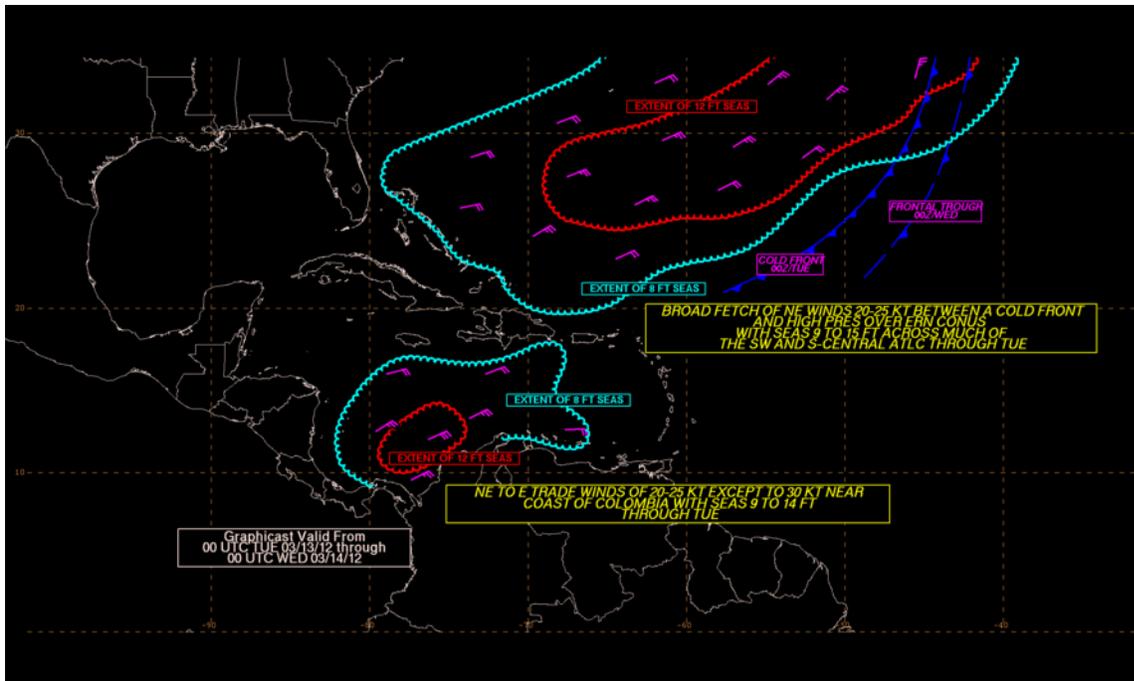
- a. Format and Science Basis** – The Graphicast represents a graphical summary of the most significant forecast issue(s) of the day. Forecasters prepares the graphics utilizing the (AWIPS) FX collaborate (FXC) software or the National Center AWIPS (NAWIPS) NMAP software. Web browsers using standard Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) can be used to display these graphics. Sample graphics are shown in Figures 3 and 4.
- b. Product Availability** - The Graphicasts are available once a day and are posted to the web at approximately 0000 UTC each day.
- c. Additional Information** - The following two (2) pages illustrate the two domains of the Graphicasts and also provide examples of the Graphicast for each basin.



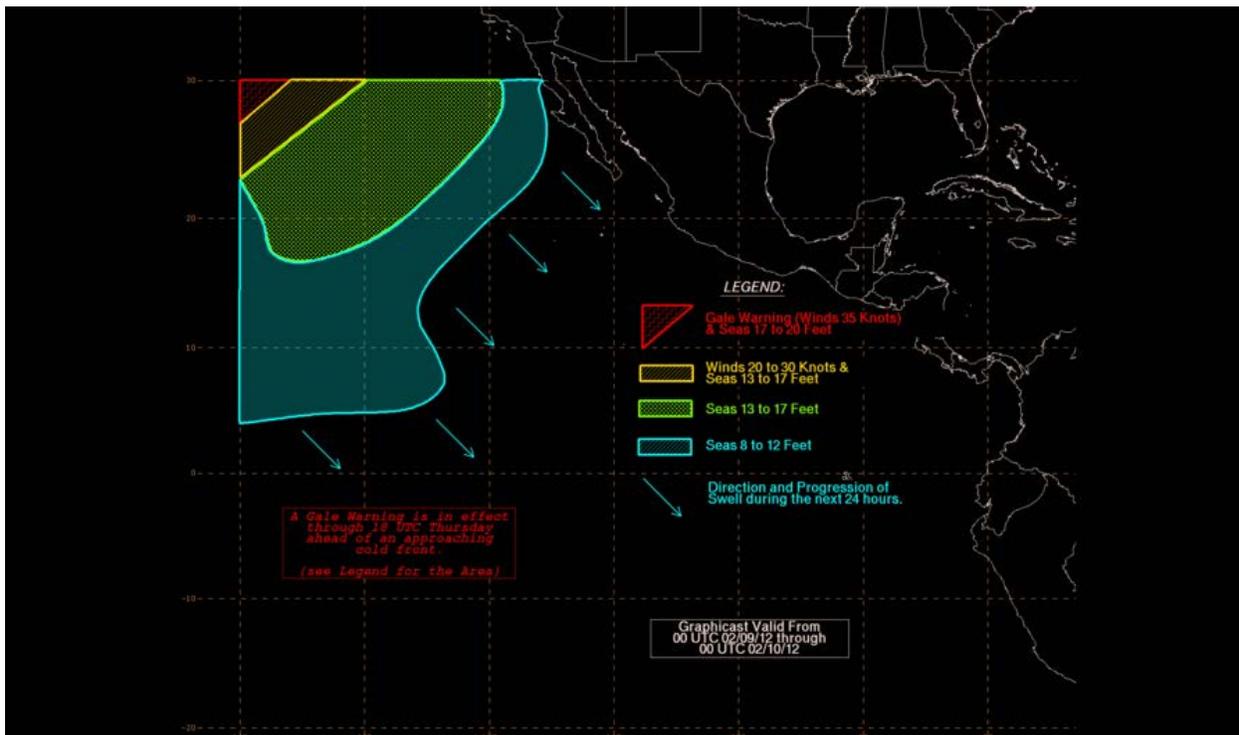
**Figure 1.** The Atlantic Graphicast encompasses the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico from the Equator to 31N and extends from the prime meridian (0W) to the east coast of Mexico and Central America.



**Figure 2.** The East Pacific Graphicast encompasses the Northeast Pacific Ocean from the Equator to 30N and extends from the west coast of Mexico and Central America to 140W. The Southeast Pacific area of coverage extends from the Equator to 20S and extends from the west coast of South America to 120W.



**Figure 3.** A full scale portion of the Atlantic Graphiccast highlighting significant marine forecast issues.



**Figure 4.** East Pacific Graphiccast depicting significant marine forecast issues over the central East Pacific Ocean.