Weather Activity Planner
Product Description Document (PDD)
12/7/06

Part I - Mission Connection

a. Product Description - The Weather Activity Planner (WAP) is an easy to use interface that permits public access to NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS) Weather Forecast Offices' (WFOs') local digital forecast data base. The web page interface allows an individual to enter a range of values for specific weather parameters and obtain a forecast for the defined area of interest. The output is forecast data pulled directly from the local WFO's digital forecast data base, and represents average conditions for the next 7 days across a 5 km grid nearest the user-selected point. The resulting data is presented graphically, highlighting periods when the selected range of values applies. The tool helps satisfy e-gov initiatives by offering an avenue to obtain government-provided data.

b. Purpose - The WAP allows for rapid access and visual scanning of 7 days of user-specified weather parameters. The WAP provides emergency responders and the general public a way to identify and organize local forecast information. This information can be used for general planning purposes, and to identify periods of time when forecasted weather parameters may impact public health, safety, or property.

c. Audience - The audience includes all emergency responders and the general public who have a need to assess forecast conditions for a defined set of parameters and associated thresholds at a specific location of interest.

d. Data Type/Presentation Format - All interaction occurs via a web page interface. Local forecast data base queries are entered via text boxes. Forecast data is displayed in a color coded bar graph format.

e. Feedback Method - We are always seeking to improve our products based on user feedback. Please submit your comments on these experimental elements by completing our brief experimental product survey during the **90-day experimental feedback period from December 7, 2006 through March 7, 2007.** Comments may also be submitted by clicking on the "Survey/Comments" links on the experimental WAP web pages. To provide additional comments/suggestions, or to request more information about the WAP, please contact:

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f. Example URL: http://www.crh.noaa.gov/ifps/wxplanner.php?site=eax

g. PDD approved by Dennis McCarthy, Director, Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services.

Part II - Technical Description

a. Format and Science Basis - This product was developed to provide requestors an easy method to access preliminary weather forecast conditions for individual parameters and thresholds defined by the requestor. The underlying digital forecast fields are created via the Interactive Forecast Preparation System (IFPS) Graphical Forecast Editor (GFE). Standard grid-editing tools are employed, which are available at every WFO, to create a 5 km resolution data base.

b. Product Availability - The experimental WAP will be available 24/7 on a select number of NWS WFO web pages across the nation during the user assessment period. If the Weather Activity Planner is determined to be appropriate as an operational product/service, it will be expanded to all NWS WFOs nationwide.

c. Parameters - Initial versions will create graphics of several sensible and derived surface weather fields to include temperature, dew point, relative humidity, chance of precipitation, sky cover, wind, and Heat Index.

d. Software Required - No special software is required. The user interface is a standard web browser. Output is a graphical display driven by HTML and java scripts.

e. Additional Information - Forecast output from this experimental application is not intended to be a substitute for any official, mission-critical forecast or warning issued by NWS. Rather, it is intended to allow a user to obtain a preliminary forecast in order to determine whether further forecast support may be required. It also serves to expose users to the NWS National Digital Forecast Database and provide a stimulus for the development of their own applications and utilities.