

Experimental Fire Weather Planning Forecast (FWF) Text Format

Part I - Mission Connection

- a. Product Description – Due to varied terrain, vegetation and climatology, the Fire Weather Planning Forecast (FWF) in the western U.S. requires varying amounts of forecaster editing following production of draft text from GFE formatters. In the Western Region, fire weather core partner agencies and WFOs will optionally test the format shown below that can ease text editing by the NWS forecaster. This experimental FWF text format utilizes left-justified asterisks to begin each line of text. The asterisks help maintain proper word wrapping and indentations in the AWIPS text editor, significantly reducing the amount of time needed to “post edit” the product before dissemination. The format change is accomplished through use of a FWF GFE formatter developed by Western Region. The rest of the FWF product is left unchanged. A portion of a sample product is listed below:

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.TODAY...
* SKY/WEATHER.....SUNNY IN THE MORNING...BECOMING
  PARTLY CLOUDY IN THE AFTERNOON WITH A SLIGHT CHANCE OF
  SHOWERS.
* LAL.....1.
* MAX TEMPERATURE.....62-68 VALLEYS AND 54-62 MOUNTAINS.
* 24 HR TREND.....1 DEGREE WARMER.
* MIN HUMIDITY.....30-45 PERCENT.
* 24 HR TREND.....5 PERCENT DRIER VALLEYS AND 5
PERCENT
  WETTER MOUNTAINS.
* 20-FOOT WIND.....
* VALLEYS/LWR SLOPES...UPSLOPE/UPVALLEY 2 TO 5 MPH.
* RIDGES/UPR SLOPES...VARIABLE 2 TO 5 MPH.
* HAINES INDEX.....2 VERY LOW.
* MIXING HEIGHT.....3000 FT AGL.
* TRANSPORT WINDS.....WEST 3 TO 7 MPH IN THE MORNING
  SHIFTING TO THE SOUTHWEST IN THE AFTERNOON.
* CWR (> 0.10 IN).....0 PERCENT.
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The FWF is typically updated twice a day during the fire weather season and is disseminated through AWIPS under the product ID NNNFWFXXX where NNN is the node and XXX is the issuing WFO. For example, the product ID for WFO Pendleton, Oregon is PDXFWFPDT. The WMO header for PDT is FNUS56 KPDT. The FWF product can also be found on WFO web pages under the “fire weather” section of the website.

This experimental format has been coordinated with major fire agencies in the Western Region, including the USFS and BLM. This experimental format was successfully tested in the Pacific NW in 2011.

- b. Product Type – Experimental.
- c. Purpose - The purpose of this experimental change is to reduce the amount of time needed to post edit the FWF without impacting users of the product. This change allows more time for customer interaction and decision support activities.
- d. Audience- The primary audience is comprised of core fire weather partner agencies in Western Region.
- e. Presentation Format – Dissemination occurs through normal NWS channels, including NWS web pages. Based on results and feedback from the 2011 test in the Pacific Northwest, there is no impact to dissemination systems with this optional format.
- f. Feedback Method – As was done in 2011, feedback will be requested by participating NWS offices via personal contact with local fire agencies, as part of routine fire weather outreach and coordination activities. The period of evaluation will be from June 1, 2012 through December 1, 2012.
- g. Example URL:
WFO Pendleton, OR
http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/total_forecast/getprod.php?wfo= PDT&pil=FWF&sid=PDT
- h. PDD Approved by David Brandon, NWS Western Region Deputy Director

Part II - Technical Description

- a. Format and Science Basis - This experimental text format is being developed to reduce the amount of time needed to manually edit the Fire Weather Planning Forecast (FWF) prior to dissemination. This will allow NWS forecasters more time to focus on activities such as fire weather customer briefings and decision support.
- b. Availability – The FWF is routinely issued twice per day (once in the morning and again in the afternoon) during the fire weather season and updated on an unscheduled basis as conditions warrant.
- c. Additional Information – This format test is being conducted by several WFOs in the Western Region.

Customer feedback from the Pacific Northwest test in 2011 was all positive. Based on those responses, the test has been expanded to include all WFOs in Western Region optionally, based on office need and customer concurrence.

Each office that chooses to test this format in 2012 per the dates above will issue their own Service Change Notice.