

Question #2: What is the best way to minimize discrepancies and produce a near seamless NDFD while not sacrificing accuracy or efficiency?

GENERAL COMMENTS: The main message in the regional team responses to this question was to improve both collaboration and grid editing techniques. There were quite a few specific suggestions on how to achieve this, some of which were common to more than one of the teams. These common suggestions will be the primary focus of this brief summary. However, many specific suggestions unique to only one team's response are also worth further exploration, and these will be listed as well.

COMMON SUGGESTIONS: The ideas that showed up more than once in the regional responses represent a strong message from the field on how best to achieve a solution to the question posed above. They are not prioritized or listed in any particular order, and also, on a few, include some preliminary input from the ISST:

- Better leadership is needed at all levels, and especially a stronger, more authoritative voice from the national level (which argues the need for a dedicated DSPO);
- Standardization of best practices for methodologies and tools (but with some local flexibility still allowed), also avoid mandating one model solution as a starting point for the entire US since that would rarely be appropriate). The ISST would like to emphasize more standardization of the overall forecast process relative to the national standardization of tools;
- Better overall communication between offices (forecaster exchange, sub-regional workshops, inter-office team building exercises, understanding neighboring office local shift schedules, etc);
- Better collaboration software/methods (graphical sharing, conference calls or audio/video conferencing, etc);
- LDFD vs. NDFD concept, which might even include a three-tiered approach with an RDFD as well). A relaxed inter-site collaboration policy for an LDFD would allow specific event-driven forecasting and customization for local weather information users;
- Emphasize forecast accuracy as a way of improving collaboration, or tying in accuracy incentives with collaboration “smiley faces”; using gridded verification (especially real-time feedback) will not only help with the accuracy issue, but also improve collaboration (this was a strong message);
- Collaborate earlier in the process on the large scale; edit in ISC mode and send ISC grids frequently (with some caveats and system performance issues, although we support improving system performance to handle collaboration needs);

- Enforce use of consistency checks and better define collaboration thresholds based on science. The ISST would add better definitions of the elements themselves are very important.