

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-505

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Operations and Services

Public Weather Services, NWSPD 10-5

PUBLIC ZONE CHANGE PROCESS

NOTICE: This publication is available at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/>.

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWSI 10-505, “Public Zone Change Process,” dated December 5, 2012. Change made: Updated Approving Official. There are no content changes to this policy.

Signed _____ 2/2/2015 _____
Andrew D. Stern Date
Acting Director, Office of Climate,
Water, and Weather Services

Public Zone Change Process

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1. Introduction. This procedural instruction describes the process for requesting, coordinating and implementing changes to public zone maps and zone listing files in the National Weather Service (NWS) Directives System (NDS).
2. Types of Zone Map and Zone Listing Changes. Three different types of zone map and zone listing changes are described below.
 - 2.1 Corrections for Errors on Zone Maps and/or in Zone Listings. These changes are necessary to correct errors in names and area designators, numbers, codes, identifications (ID) and indicators (WFO/county pointers on maps), or any errors of omission.
 - 2.2 Realignment/Reconfiguration. Realignment and reconfiguration changes involve the movement of current zone boundaries, and/or the creation of new zones.
 - 2.3 Zone/County/WFO Name, Code or ID Alterations. These changes result from a justifiable need to modify a Weather Forecast Office (WFO) name or ID; zone or county name; or zone or Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) code.
3. Request Procedures and Levels of Approval. Follow the procedures below to submit requests and gain approval for zone map and listing changes. Public (and Fire) zone name, number and boundary changes will be processed for bimonthly implementation occurring during the first full week of February, April, June, August, October, and December. In addition, Public zone and/or boundary changes for, Eastern Region (ER), Pacific Region (PR), Southern Region (SR) or Western Region (WR) which impact adjacent Marine zones and the National Hurricane Center's Tropical Cyclone Watch/Warning products (TCVs) will not be implemented during tropical storm season (June 1st through November 30th). Exceptions to the above implementation guidelines may be made based upon operational necessity and the approval of the Chief, Fire and Public Weather Services Branch (W/OS22) in the Office of Climate, Water and Weather Services.
 - 3.1 Corrections for Errors on Zone Maps and/or in Zone Listings. All requests for revisions due to errors found on zone maps and/or in zone listings are submitted to the respective regional Meteorological Services Division (MSD) Chief (or regional equivalent). The MSD Chief (or regional equivalent) verifies the error(s), and forwards the correction request to W/OS22. W/OS22 coordinates the zone map and/or listing corrections process to ensure timely and proper execution.
 - 3.2 Realignment/Reconfiguration. Requests for realignment/reconfiguration are submitted to the respective regional MSD Chief (or regional equivalent) after preliminary coordination with users. Requests will contain written justification for the change. A clearly labeled map depicting the realignment/reconfiguration should be included. The MSD Chief (or regional equivalent) evaluates the request. If supported, the entire request package should be forwarded to W/OS22. Approval for such requests is granted by the W/OS22 Branch Chief upon the recommendation of

the designated W/OS22 focal point. If W/OS22 and the requesting NWS Region/Weather Forecast Office deem the realignment/reconfiguration to be significant, (e.g., a large spatial shift, or a modification affecting the zone climatology, population center, or major geographical feature) they will collaborate with the affected WFO(s) to uniquely rename and or renumber the affected zone(s).

Note: If a zone number is retired, the final Zone Forecast Product issuance should indicate that it will be the final forecast issuance for that zone and provide a URL for more information. For example,

”THIS ZONE FORECAST HAS BEEN DISCONTINUED. PLEASE SEE <URL to WFO homepage> FOR CURRENT FORECAST, OR <URL TO SCN...>.”

3.3 Name, Code, or Identification Changes. Requests for revisions to zone or WFO name, zone or FIPS code, or WFO ID are submitted to the respective Regional MSD Chief (or regional equivalent). Requests will contain written justification for the change. If necessary for clarification, a clearly labeled map depicting the name, code, or ID change should be included. The MSD Chief (or regional equivalent) evaluates the request. If supported, the requested changes should be forwarded to W/OS22. Approval for such requests is granted by the W/OS22 Branch Chief upon the recommendation of the designated W/OS22 focal point.

4. Regional Headquarters Responsibility. NWS regional headquarters are the points of contact for all change requests received from their respective NWS field offices. The MSD Chief (or regional equivalent) is responsible for reviewing requests (e.g., ensuring sound reasoning and adequate justification) and coordinating their submission to W/OS22. If an approved change requires public notification, regional headquarters should either create and submit a draft Service Change Notice (SCN) to W/OS22, or coordinate the WFO submission of a draft SCN to W/OS22. In addition to W/OS22 administrative processing time, advance lead times for user notification is located in [NWSI 10-1805, National Service Change and Technical Implementation Notices](#).

5. NWS Headquarters Roles and Responsibilities. The NWS Headquarters offices involved with the public zone change process are: the Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services (W/OS), the Office of Science and Technology (W/OST), and the Office of Operational Systems (W/OPS).

5.1 Office of Climate, Water, and Weather Services (W/OS). W/OS22 within OCWWS has the responsibility to ensure zone maps and zone listings are updated as necessary. W/OS22 has the final approving authority for all public zone related changes and subsequent updates to [NWSM 10-507, Public Geographic Areas of Responsibility](#). W/OS22 will respond to zone change requests from regional headquarters within two weeks of receipt, and has oversight responsibility for the overall zone change process. W/OS22 will coordinate with affected offices within NWS Headquarters (e.g., Public zone changes affecting adjacent marine coastal waters will be coordinated with the W/OS21 Marine/Tropical/Tsunami focal point), regional

headquarters, and, depending upon the required changes, may communicate directly with involved WFOs. Specifically, W/OS22 is responsible for the following:

- a. Evaluating and approving public zone change requests.
- b. Coordinating the details of all zone related changes (e.g., zone numbers, maps, impacts) with the NWS Headquarters affected entities.
- c. Coordinate with the requesting WFO to ensure the revised shapefiles are correct before posting to the AWIPS Map Database Catalog.
- d. Processing the public zone change SCN (i.e., ensuring technical accuracy, correct syntax, and format; determining appropriate user notification lead time; approving final draft; and submitting to notify@nws.noaa.gov for dissemination).
- e. Maintaining accurate records of all zone map and listing changes.
- f. Ensuring that [*NWSM 10-507, Public Geographic Areas of Responsibility*](#) is updated in a timely manner to accurately reflect the latest changes.

5.2 Office of Science and Technology (W/OST). W/OST has the responsibility to modify the Geographic Information System (GIS) map shapefiles. After modification, the shapefiles are posted to the NOAA1 server for testing by the WFO on AWIPS. If no errors are found, the revised shapefiles are posted to the AWIPS Map Database Catalog for public access, and replaced on the NOAA1 secure server if necessary. W/OST transmits a notice via AWIPSINFO indicating that the revised zone map has been posted to the AWIPS Map Database Catalog, and transmits a “notification of change” e-mail to W/OPS and the designated focal point in W/OS22.

5.3 Office of Operational Systems (W/OPS). W/OPS is responsible for assessing web impacts of public zone changes and relaying information on any potential issues to W/OS22. In addition, W/OPS is responsible for coordinating any necessary modifications to ensure web interfaces and linkages reflect the most current zone configurations. W/OPS is also responsible for tasking individuals with specific assignments to make the required zone map and/or zone listing changes.

5.3.1 W/OPS Zone Listing Change Procedure. W/OPS modifies the zone listing files using standard NWS word processing software. The revised files are attached to an e-mail and sent to W/OS22 for review. Once approved, W/OPS posts the modified zone listing files to the appointed server in (.PDF) format.

5.3.2 W/OPS Zone Map Change Procedure. W/OPS uses GIS compatible software to make the zone map revisions. Once approved, W/OPS posts the updated maps to the appointed server in (.JPG) and (.PDF) formats for viewing and printing. Clearly label all zone maps with the date of the most recent revision. A “notification of map posting” e-mail is then sent to the designated

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focal point in W/OS22, and the Management and Organization Division of the Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer (W/CFO3).