NFUSE Steering Team  
March 14, 2007 Meeting Minutes

Attendees:
Paul Hirschberg  
Doug Hilderbrand  
Andrea Bleistein  
Lee Anderson  
Suzanne Lenihan  
Harry Glahn  
Zoltan Toth  
Kenneth Johnson  
Mary Mullusky  
David Myrick  
John Gaynor  
Tom Hamill

Topics and Summary:

1) Approval of Minutes
2) Action Item Review
   • Feb 27 meeting minutes approved
   • Review of Existing Action Items
     – Action to provide Doug Hilderbrand with list of current uncertainty forecast (UF) related activities still open
3) Announcements
   • 22WAF18NWP Abstract submission
   • Ops. Comm briefing tentatively scheduled for March 28
   • NFUSE Bulletin board has been set up
   • Web site should hopefully be up and running by the next NFUSE meeting
4) HSD/OHD User Survey – Mary Mullusky

• Summary
  o Described what NWS AHPS is, what information is used and in what format data is in.
    ▪ Probability information is provided at ~1500 out of 4000 locations in AHPS
      • Weekly chance of exceeding a flood level for 90 days
      • Cumulative density functions
  o 2004 Customer satisfaction survey
    ▪ 77% satisfied for NWS hydrology based on > 2000 responses
    ▪ Probabilistic graphics were below overall satisfaction percent
      • Question: Is that because those who responded do not understand the information?
      • Question: What do those numbers really mean?
Probability Focus Group Study:
- Pre-recruited participants
  - Emergency managers and water resource managers were very interested
  - 50-60 in each group
- Question: What were discussions/questions focused on during study?
  - Not just about hyrdrology
  - Participants kept coming back to the need for all around communication with the NWS by the NWS
- Key Findings:
  - Probabilistic products and services need to be developed with the end-user in mind
  - Communication is key
  - Create a verification program to validate probabilistic forecasts

2006 Customer Satisfaction Survey – completed by CFI Group
- 78% for NWS hydrology services – better than Fed gov’t overall
- ~1668 responded
- Participants were asked to rate products and services information
- 92% of those who had interacted with NWS forecasters were satisfied
  - Communication is key!
- Only 20% of those who responded answered questions about the uncertainty and probability products
  - Short-term ensemble data had 92% interest percent
    - Point: Emergency managers are only interested in short term
    - Point: Still a dependency on who answered the survey
    - Point: Expected skill of products in long term vs. short term could also be a factor
  - Qualitative vs. Quantitative products are key

Future of NWS Hydrologic Program
- Bring in a social scientist – through a grant- to educate NWS

General Discussion
- Question: How will forecasts be verified? What statistics will be used?
  - Software is being developed to create a baseline
- Take-away message:
  - Communication
    - Give NWS the ability to talk/interact with people
    - Involve customers from the start of development of products and services
- Question: What is the private sector role? Concern/though?
  - Customized decision support for private sector
  - Any product changes should be worked with customers at the start

5) NFUSE Bulletin Board Discussion
• Topic 1:
  o Consider users beyond providers
  o Get a liaison from enterprise
  o What information do we already have?
    ▪ Services evolution plan can provide useful information to the team
• Topic 2:
  o Short-term plan and a long-term plan
  o High impact product changes are a great idea
    ▪ Still need to bring in social science
  o Add a hydrologic discussion at RFCs and change AFDs to plain English
    ▪ Identify that customers want these changes beforehand
  o Get ensemble information into AWIPS from NCEP
    ▪ What goes into the field?
    ▪ Make sure requirements are getting into the system
• Topic 3:
  o Interpretation and communication will be more of their role.
  o Training for WFO forecasters in using probability/statistics.
    ▪ COMET modules
• Other discussion items:
  o Uncertainty Forecast Requirements
  o Look at what products and services are needed up front
    ▪ Not necessarily focus on CONOPS
  o Forecasters need to be able to use products that can communicate qualitatively
    ▪ Does the public know how to interpret qualitative information?

Next Meeting: Wednesday, March 28, 2:30-4:00 EST
Topic:
  • Generating input for FY10-14 PPBES Cycle – Aimee Devaris
  • Planning discussions
  • If time: Follow up on Ensemble Workshop Recommendations - Zoltan Toth