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PNSWSH

Public Information Statement 18-28  
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD  
730 AM EDT Tue Sep 25 2018

To:           Subscribers  
              -NOAA Weather Wire Service  
              -Emergency Managers Weather Information Network  
              -NOAAPort  
              Other NWS Partners and NWS Employees

From:        Michelle Hawkins, Chief  
              Severe, Fire, Public and Winter Weather Services  
              Branch Chief

Subject:     Soliciting comments on NWS provision of Avalanche  
              information through October 31 2018

NWS provides a suite of information for the dangers associated with avalanches. We are collecting comments through October 31 2018, on a proposal to improve and more consistently deliver this suite of information. Products and services currently disseminated by the NWS and related to the avalanche hazard are described below.

Avalanche Watches and Warnings: Authorized alerting authorities at state and federal avalanche centers issue Avalanche Watches (AVAs) and Avalanche Warnings (AVWs). In turn, the NWS conveys these messages via NWS dissemination systems, including NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR). In accordance with state and local Emergency Alert System (EAS) Plans, these watches and warnings may also be conveyed to the EAS to more broadly increase public awareness of these potentially life-threatening hazards. An example of an Avalanche Warning is below.

<https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/ref/avw.docx>

Special Avalanche Bulletin (SAB) products: Authorized alerting authorities at some state and federal avalanche centers issue additional avalanche information, such as Avalanche Advisories. In turn, some NWS offices convey these messages in SAB text products via NWS dissemination systems. Some offices also disseminate the information via NWR, depending on the product's content. SAB product formats vary across NWS Weather Forecast Offices (WFO) and are configured to meet the specific information needs of local partners and stakeholders. In accordance with Federal Communications Commission rules, this information is not conveyed to EAS. SAB products are at the link below:

<https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/ref/sab.docx>

The following WFOs currently provide SAB products:

WFO	WMO Header	AWIPS ID
Billings	WWUS85 KBYZ	SABBIL, SABBYZ
Boise	WWUS85 KBOI	SABBOI
Boulder	WWUS85 KBOU	SABCO
Cheyenne	WWUS85 KCYS	SABCYS
Denver	WWUS85 KDEN	SABDEN
Las Vegas	WWUS85 KVEF	SABVEF, SABLAS
Missoula	WWUS85 KMSO	SABFCA, SABGPI, SABMSO
Pocatello	WWUS85 KPIH	SABPIH
Portland,OR	WWUS86 KPQR	SABOR, SABPQR, SABSOR
Reno	WWUS85 KREV	SABREV, SABRNO
Riverton	WWSU85 KRIW	SABRIW
Sacramento	WWUS85 KSTO	SABSTO
Salt Lake City	WWUS97 KSLC	SABSLC
Seattle	WWUS86 KSEW	SABSEA, SABNW, SABSAS SABSEW, SABSOR, SABWA

Snow Avalanche Guidance (SAG) products: In 2007, WFO Reno began issuing the operational Web-based Sierra Backcountry Forecast; this product provides the local avalanche center with forecasted meteorological parameters critical to the center's forecasts of avalanche conditions. Backcountry enthusiasts also use the forecast to prepare for weather conditions they may expect to encounter in avalanche prone areas.

The NWS has expanded the scope of this product to some additional offices as the experimental SAG. This experimental SAG is available as a web based product and also via NWS dissemination systems as a text-based product. The Experimental SAG product formats vary across WFOs in accordance with the specific avalanche information needs of local partners and stakeholders. SAG information is provided on NWS dissemination systems; it is sometimes broadcast on NWR, depending on the product content.

The following WFOs currently provide experimental SAG products:

WFO	WMO Header	AWIPS ID
Albuquerque	FWUS45 KABQ	SAGABQ
Great Falls	FWUS45 KTFX	SAGTFX
Missoula	FWUS45 KMSO	SAGGPI and SAGMSO
Pendleton	FWUS45 KPDT	SAGPDT
Pocatello	FWUS45 KPIH	SAGPIH
Reno	FWUS45 KREV	SAGREV
Riverton	FWUS45 KRIW	SAGRIW

Examples of SAG products are provided online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/media/notification/ref/sag.docx>

A Product Description Document for NWS Provision of Avalanche Information is provided on line at:

[https://nws.weather.gov/products/PDD/Avalanche\\_PDD\\_05-18-18.pdf](https://nws.weather.gov/products/PDD/Avalanche_PDD_05-18-18.pdf)

The NWS is seeking comments on the Experimental SAG products for the next 60 days via the online survey at:

<http://www.weather.gov/survey/nws-survey.php?code=AVALANCHE>

If feedback concerning the SAG products is favorable, they will be considered for operational implementation.

The NWS is seeking comments on the current suite of SAB products issued to convey avalanche messages on behalf of the avalanche alerting authorities.

Please submit comments to [SABproducts@noaa.gov](mailto:SABproducts@noaa.gov)

If you have questions, please contact:

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NWS Public Information Statements are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/notification>

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