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PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 23-78
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD
500 PM EDT Thu Jun 29 2023

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

From: Stephen Bieda, III, Chief
 Severe, Fire, Public and Winter Weather Services Branch

Subject: Changes to Public and Fire Weather Forecast Zones for WFO
Fairbanks, AK: Effective September 19, 2023

Effective September 19, 2023, at 1:00 PM Alaska Daylight Time (AKDT), 2100 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Office in Fairbanks, Alaska (AFG) will complete changes to Public and Fire Weather Forecast Zones throughout the County Warning Area (CWA). After this change, all forecasts and related products will use the zone numbers and names shown in Table 2 below.

If September 19, 2023 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation will be postponed to September 21, 2023 at 2100 UTC.

Minor adjustments are also being made to land/marine boundaries in the public and marine weather forecast zones. These changes and the changes noted above will result in more geographically precise forecast, watch, warning and advisory products for the general public and fire partners and will enhance web-based graphical product consistency and appearance. These changes are also intended to help reduce the over-alerting effects from the current zones in warnings via NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) and the Emergency Alert System (EAS) dissemination modalities.

NWR users with Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) receivers do not need to make any changes to their current SAME location code or to the transmitter they have been monitoring to continue receiving warning notifications for their county equivalent. However, all listeners will notice the elimination of existing public forecast zone names and/or the introduction of new public forecast zone names with NWR broadcasts as detailed in Tables 1 and 2.

27 current zones will be converted into 52 separate zones. These new zones are being divided to optimize the issuance of hazard products for conditions that vary significantly throughout the NWS Fairbanks CWA. In Alaska, all Universal Geographic Codes (UGC) use the UGC-Zone (UGC-Z) format.

Table 1: Universal Geographic Codes (UGCs): Current Public and Fire Forecast Zone Names

AKZ201: Western Arctic Coast
AKZ202: Northern Arctic Coast
AKZ203: Central Beaufort Sea Coast
AKZ204: Eastern Beaufort Sea Coast
AKZ205: Northwestern Brooks Range
AKZ206: Northeastern Brooks Range
AKZ207: Chukchi Sea Coast
AKZ208: Lower Kobuk and Noatak Valleys
AKZ209: Baldwin Peninsula and Selawik Valley
AKZ210: Northern and Interior Seward
AKZ211: Southern Seward Peninsula Coast
AKZ212: Eastern Norton Sound and Nulato Hills
AKZ213: St Lawrence Island and Bering Strait
AKZ214: Yukon Delta
AKZ215: Lower Yukon Valley
AKZ216: Lower Koyukuk and Middle Yukon Valleys
AKZ217: Upper Kobuk and Noatak Valleys
AKZ218: Southeastern Brooks Range
AKZ219: Upper Koyukuk Valley
AKZ220: Yukon Flats and Surrounding Uplands
AKZ221: Central Interior
AKZ222: Middle Tanana Valley
AKZ223: Deltana and Tanana Flats
AKZ224: Upper Tanana Valley and the Fortymile Country
AKZ225: Denali
AKZ226: Eastern Alaska Range
AKZ227: Upper Kuskokwim Valley

Table 2: UGC: New Public and Fire Forecast Zone Names

AKZ801: Western Arctic Coast
AKZ802: Northwest Arctic Coast
AKZ803: Northern Arctic Coast
AKZ804: Central Beaufort Sea Coast
AKZ805: Eastern Beaufort Sea Coast
AKZ806: Western Arctic Plains
AKZ807: Howard Pass and the DeLong Mountains
AKZ808: Central Arctic Plains
AKZ809: Central Brooks Range
AKZ810: Romanzof Mountains
AKZ811: South Slopes of the Eastern Brooks Range
AKZ812: South Slopes of the Central Brooks Range
AKZ813: South Slopes of the Western Brooks Range
AKZ814: Noatak Valley
AKZ815: Kivalina and Red Dog Dock
AKZ816: Lower Kobuk Valley
AKZ817: Baldwin Peninsula
AKZ818: Northern Seward Peninsula
AKZ819: Upper Kobuk Valleys
AKZ820: Shishmaref
AKZ821: Bering Strait Coast

AKZ822: Southern Seward Peninsula Coast
 AKZ823: Interior Seward Peninsula
 AKZ824: Eastern Norton Sound and Nulato Hills
 AKZ825: Yukon Delta Coast
 AKZ826: Lower Yukon River
 AKZ827: St. Lawrence Island
 AKZ828: Lower Koyukuk Valley
 AKZ829: Middle Yukon Valley
 AKZ830: Lower Yukon and Innoko Valleys
 AKZ831: Upper Koyukuk Valley
 AKZ832: Dalton Highway Summits
 AKZ833: Yukon Flats
 AKZ834: White Mountains and High Terrain South of the Yukon River
 AKZ835: Fortymile Country
 AKZ836: Upper Tanana Valley
 AKZ837: Delta Junction
 AKZ838: Upper Chena River Valley
 AKZ839: Tanana Flats
 AKZ840: Eielson Air Force Base and Salcha
 AKZ841: Goldstream Valley and Nenana Hills
 AKZ842: Chatanika River Valley
 AKZ843: Two Rivers
 AKZ844: Fairbanks Metro Area
 AKZ845: Nenana
 AKZ846: Central Interior
 AKZ847: Northern Denali Borough
 AKZ848: Southern Denali Borough
 AKZ849: Eastern Alaska Range North of Trims Camp
 AKZ850: Eastern Alaska Range South of Trims Camp
 AKZ851: North Slopes of the Western Alaska Range
 AKZ852: Upper Kuskokwim Valley

Table 3: NWS Products Affected by these Public and Fire Weather Forecast Zone Changes

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
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Air Quality Alert	AEAK79 PAFG	AQAAFG
Area Forecast Discussion	FXAK67 PAFG	AFDAFG
Avalanche Forecast	FWAK49 PAFG	AVGAFG
Coastal Flood Watch/Warning/Statement	WHAK49 PAFG	CFWAFG
Special Weather Statement	WWAK83 PAFG	SPSAFG
Special Weather Statement	WWAK81 PAFG	SPSNSB
Special Weather Statement	WWAK82 PAFG	SPSWCZ
Public Information Statement	NOAK49 PAFG	PNSAFG
Zone Forecast Interior Alaska	FPAK53 PAFG	ZFPAFG
Zone Forecast North Slope Alaska	FPAK51 PAFG	ZFPNSB
Zone Forecast West Coast Alaska	FPAK52 PAFG	ZFPWCZ
Winter Weather Watch/Warning/Advisory	WWAK43 PAFG	WSWAFG
Winter Weather Watch/Warning/Advisory	WWAK41 PAFG	WSWNSB
Winter Weather Watch/Warning/Advisory	WWAK42 PAFG	WSWWCZ
Non-Precipitation Watch/Warning/Advisory	WWAK73 PAFG	NPWAFG
Non-Precipitation Watch/Warning/Advisory	WWAK71 PAFG	NPWNSB
Non-Precipitation Watch/Warning/Advisory	WWAK72 PAFG	NPWWCZ

Product Name -----	WMO Heading -----	AWIPS ID -----
Fire Weather Forecast	FNAK53 PAFG	FWFAFG
Fire Weather Forecast	FNAK51 PAFG	FWFNSB
Fire Weather Forecast	FNAK52 PAFG	FWFWCZ
Red Flag Warning	WWAK63 PAFG	RFWAFG
Red Flag Warning	WWAK61 PAFG	RFWNSB
Red Flag Warning	WWAK62 PAFG	RFWWCZ
Tsunami Warning	WEPA41 PAAQ	TSUWCA
Flood/Flash Flood Watch	WGAK69 PAFG	FFAAFG
Flood Warning	WGAK49 PAFG	FLWAFG
Flash Flood Warning	WGAK59 PAFG	FFWAFG
Flood Statement	WGAK89 PAFG	FLSAFG
Point Forecast Matrix	FOAK59 PAJK	PFMAFG
Short Term Forecast	FPAK79 PAFG	NOWAFG
Recreational Forecast	SXAK79 PAFG	RECAFG

NWS partners and users will need to make necessary changes to their communications systems to accommodate these weather forecast zone changes.

Preliminary shapefiles for public and fire weather forecast zones are available online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/gis/PublicZones>
<https://www.weather.gov/gis/FireZones>
<https://www.weather.gov/gis/Counties>
<https://www.weather.gov/gis/MarineZones>

Since there are NWS partners with systems associating NWS public zones with county equivalent names and/or Federal Information Processing Series (FIPS) codes, the updated zone-county correlation file is online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/gis/ZoneCounty>

Final versions of these shapefiles will be available on or around Tuesday, July 18, 2023.

A graphical depiction of this change is online at:

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/366db15c8baf49cbbce82f1809d4720a>

For more information, please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

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

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