

Field Geospatial Workgroup Presents Dec 2021 Tornado Outbreak StoryMap Collection

By: NWS Staff

With the anniversary of the December 10-11, 2021 Tornado Outbreak (the deadliest December tornado outbreak in history), a [new ArcGIS StoryMap Collection](#) summarizes the prolific regional event and places the storm survey data collected in one place. A team of meteorologists from several of the offices affected by the outbreak spent several months carefully creating, organizing, and visualizing geospatial data to build a comprehensive interactive summary of the event. That group was organized by the NWS Field Geospatial Intelligence Workgroup (GIW), a cohort of NWS employees that provide GIS-related support and mutual aid to other offices. Given the expansive, interregional nature of the outbreak, building an immersive summary of the event that was worthy of its historic nature was necessary. Using ArcGIS to present the review gives viewers a unique ability to interact with and visualize the data from the outbreak.

The StoryMap Collection is actually three separate StoryMaps stitched together to lead viewers through the meteorology and messaging of the event, followed by what actually happened that night in mid-December 2021. The first StoryMap, “Forecasting and Communicating an Historic Outbreak,” details the science behind the event and the messaging that the several affected offices provided to the public. This section ends with a note on behalf of NWS forecasters honoring those who were significantly impacted by the outbreak. Next, viewers step through the event unfolding across the Mid-Mississippi Valley in the second StoryMap, “Missouri and Illinois: A Region in the Crosshairs,” including the deadly Defiance, MO and Edwardsville, IL tornadoes. The final StoryMap, “Damage and Devastation Across the Ohio and Tennessee Valleys,” details the numerous tornadoes that affected Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, and the Missouri Bootheel.



Throughout the Collection, interactive maps allow viewers to interrogate the data collected from the numerous storm surveys conducted over the course of several weeks by the WFOs and national experts. Several “before and after” sliders throughout the Collection also give unique perspective to the destruction this outbreak caused.

The Field GIW would like to extend its deep appreciation for the meteorologists who spent countless hours over the last several months to build this StoryMap Collection: **Matt Beitscher** (WFO LSX, team lead), **Caroline Adcock** (WFO OHX), **Robbie Commodari** (Millersville University/WFO CTP), **Gary Goggins** (WFO BMX), **Jessica Lee** (WFO LMK), **Marshall Pfahler** (WFO LSX), **Sean Poulos** (WFO PAH), **Andrea Schoettmer** (WFO LMK), **Derrick Snyder** (WFO PAH), and **Amanda Wagner** (WFO CTP).

NWS New Orleans/Baton Rouge and NOAA Sea Grant Pilot Project with the Pointe-au-Chien Tribe

By: NWS Staff

The National Weather Service Office in New Orleans/Baton Rouge has partnered with other NOAA representatives, Louisiana Sea Grant and the Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe (PACIT) to launch a new pilot project that builds relationships and strengthens community resilience to natural disasters and the effects of climate change. So far, NWS New Orleans has participated in numerous planning meetings with a core team, as well as with the tribe to learn more about their needs and climate related hazards. In September, the team, including NWS representatives, visited the community which included a boat ride to talk about the changing landscape and tribal history. Future work includes establishing a COOP or CoCoRaHS station, enhanced DSS when needed, school visits and tribe presentations to enhance weather safety and information.

“We have been adapting to the changing environment for decades, but the changes to the land have intensified over the past few decades,” said Second Chairman Donald Dardar of the Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe. “This project is important to support our adaptation and resilience efforts as we work to maintain our cultural heritage and way of life for future generations. We welcome the opportunity to be part of discussions that value our traditional knowledge and will be used to create specific resources tailored to our Tribal community.”



Representatives from the Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe (PACIT), Louisiana Sea Grant and NOAA meet to see and learn about the Tribe's resilience priorities and build connections for adaptation and resilience. Pictured from left to right are: Julie Falgout (Louisiana Sea Grant), Brian LaMarre (NWS Tampa), Kristin Ransom (NOAA), Matt Bethel (Louisiana Sea Grant), Grace Gray (NOAA), Lauren Nash (NWS New Orleans), Cherie Matherne (PACIT), Haley Gambill (Louisiana Sea Grant), Sharon Mesick (NOAA), Second Chairman Donald Dardar (PACIT Tribal Council).

WARN Teams Up With *The Budget* Amish Newspaper

By: NWS Staff



The Weather Awareness for a Rural Nation (WARN) task force has been working hard and has great things to pass along concerning work with the Amish communities! For a refresher on WARN and its activities, check out the previous [Insider Article](#) and [PNS](#).

WARN is excited about the opportunity to partner with *The Budget* Newspaper. *The Budget* is a weekly circulation that started in 1890 and is the main newspaper for all Amish and other Plain communities across the United States. Their weekly readership is around 50,000 people, and it is the primary way that Plain communities are able to share news and communicate back and forth. The publisher of the newspaper, Milo Miller, reached out to the WARN task force after

having met several of them at an Amish Conference in June 2022. Up until this point, the newspaper did not include weather information for its readers. Milo not only recognized the lack of weather information reaching the Amish communities, but also the vital role weather plays within everyday life. This is evidenced by the fact that most of the community columns start out talking about the weather.

Milo asked if WARN would be willing to partner with *The Budget* and begin supplying the newspaper with articles highlighting weather safety and climate outlooks, and WARN was happy to oblige and be part of this effort. In October 2022, WARN submitted its first article to the newspaper, including an introduction to NWS authors and its objectives. To start, WARN is supplying an article once a month, to be included in the last issue of that month. The articles deal with weather impacts pertinent to that time of year. The newspaper hopes that these articles will have enough impact and demand moving forward that WARN can begin supplying them more frequently throughout the month.



In addition to the weather articles, Milo was thrilled with WARN's efforts to produce the first ever Amish Weather Radio. He even offered to run advertisements within the newspaper free of charge for the radios once they are in production. Readers will be able to order directly from the newspaper or from Midland. In his words, "The first place most readers look is the advertisement section. If an item is in this section, they know that it is 'Amish approved.' This will be a great place to help get the word out about the weather radios." This is a huge endorsement for the Amish Weather Radio, and also a large step forward for the WARN initiative!

Don't forget, all the work that the task force does, and materials they produce, are available in the [WARN Amish Toolkit](#), which is a shared repository of information and resources.

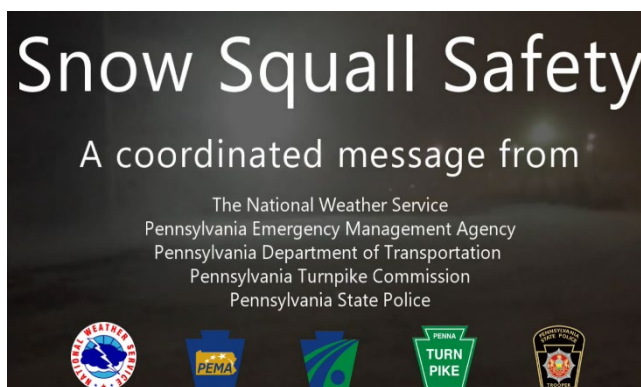
Other updates from WARN:

- WARN will officially be featured in the 2022 NOAA Education Accomplishments Report, which will be published in January. An Insider article will be sent out by the Education Council when the report is released.
- **Derrick Snyder**, a member of the WARN Task Force, was approached by an unlikely ally. Beth and Court from lifewithbethandcourt.com are full-time bloggers who travel the United States in their RV. They heard about the WARN task force and were excited to help out. They put together a public-facing fundraiser, including a Youtube video, to help raise money for purchasing Amish Weather Radios in Kentucky. The original goal was set at \$750, which would cover the cost for 25 weather radios. This goal was surpassed in less than a day. By the end of the first week, the fundraiser was up to \$2,000!

Snow Squall Safety Campaign Expands in Year Two

By: John Banghoff, NWS State College Meteorologist

The National Weather Service in State College, PA coordinated the second annual Snow Squall Awareness Week in Pennsylvania the week of November 14th-18th in collaboration with PennDOT, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA), and Pennsylvania State Police (PSP). Since the implementation of the Snow Squall Warning in 2018, it has become increasingly important to educate the public about the dangers associated with snow squalls to mitigate frequent major pileups on Pennsylvania highways. The PA campaign slogan captures the essence of the dangers of snow squalls: **There is no safe place on a highway during a snow squall.**



This year's safety campaign built off of an already-extensive repository of content focused on snow squall science, communication (Snow Squall Warnings), and safety developed in 2021. That first-ever 2021 campaign complemented a concurrent initiative by Sarah Perfater and Michael Muccilli of the NWS Winter Program to compile and nationally distribute [best practices](#) for snow squall warnings and effective messaging of potential events.

Through conversations with partner agencies following the major pileup on I-81 in Schuylkill County on March 28th, 2022, NWS State College led discussions to add a few new items for this year's campaign. Michael Colbert designed new graphics to address [what to do if caught in a pileup](#) (based on guidance from PA State Police) and [how to](#)

[identify a distant snow squall](#). John Banghoff developed a graphic to describe the new [Impact-Based Warning \(IBW\) tags](#) for Snow Squall Warnings. Perhaps the most notable new piece of content was a collaborated safety message that includes recorded video segments from all 4 partner agencies answering each of the questions outlined on this [Snow Squall FAQ document](#). This [4.5 minute video](#) edited and compiled by Michael Colbert perfectly encapsulates the spirit of the Pathfinder program and the value of interagency collaboration!



Snow Squall Awareness Week was a busy and fulfilling week with many hands on deck. Forecaster Rachel Buvala played an important role in scheduling posts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Warning Coordination Meteorologist Jonathan Guseman and Lead Forecaster Greg DeVoir (pictured, left) participated in a joint press conference on Monday at a PennDOT facility in Harrisburg with the PEMA Director, PA Turnpike Commission COO, PA State Police PIO, and PennDOT Acting Deputy Secretary for the Highway Administration to kick off the Second Annual Awareness week. The press conference (footage/photos [here](#)) highlighted the inter-agency collaboration present in Pennsylvania and provided the public with a clear understanding of the dangers of snow squalls and how to stay safe.

Throughout the week, NWS State College meteorologists participated in a variety of interviews including with [Fox Weather](#), [The Weather Channel](#), AccuWeather, [CNN](#), [Penn State's Weather World](#), and a variety of local stations to help further spread the word about this dangerous weather phenomena. Partner agencies and other NWS offices serving PA joined in posting snow squall related content using [#SnowSquallSafetyPA](#). A [Facebook Live broadcast](#) hosted by NWS State College on Thursday helped to further educate the public and field questions as the awareness week neared the end. As if right on cue, the week concluded with a line of snow squalls moving across Pennsylvania during the afternoon and evening of Friday November 18th. By Friday evening, 19 Snow Squall Warnings were issued in PA (State College: 10, Pittsburgh: 7, Binghamton & Philadelphia: 1 each), including several [WEA-alerting significant SQWs](#).

Snow squall safety campaign materials were made available to NWS offices nationally through the Winter Weather Service Program Team (SPT) this summer and were featured by a dozen northeast NWS offices for the first-ever Eastern Region Snow Squall Safety Day campaign on November 21. The full suite of graphics and a social media plan is available in this [Google Drive folder](#) for full agency use!

It was an incredible week of teamwork and partnership building, and we look forward to building on its success for many years to come!

We'd like to acknowledge the outstanding contributions of several individuals whose work has greatly facilitated and enriched our office's safety campaign: Sarah Perfater and Michael Muccilli at the NWS Winter Weather Program for tireless efforts to develop and promote NWS Field best practices guidelines and resources for snow squall warnings and forecasts; James LaDue and Sarah Cordidi of the Warning Decision Training Division (WDTD) and Pete Banacos (SOO BTV) for timely and effective LMS training module development; John Guiney and John Koch at NWS Eastern Region Headquarters for sponsoring the first-ever NWS ER Snow Squall Safety Day this November.

All campaign materials are also posted/available for use online at www.weather.gov/ctp/snowsquall.

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