

Department of Commerce ▪ National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration ▪ National Weather Service

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE ALASKA REGION SUPPLEMENT 07-2003

APPLICABLE TO NWSI 10-921

MARCH 1, 2019

Operations and Services

Hydrologic Services Program, NWSPD 10-9

Weather Forecast Office Hydrologic Operations, NWSI 10-921

ALASKA WEATHER FORECAST OFFICE HYDROLOGIC OPERATIONS

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OPR: W/AR2 (S. Lindsey)

Certified by: W/AR2 (S.Lindsey)

Type of Issuance: Routine

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This supplement supersedes NWS Alaska Region Supplement (ARS) 07-2003, dated July 26, 2012, applicable to National Weather Service Instruction (NWSI) 10-921. This supplement reflects changes to the coordination process between Alaska weather forecast offices and the Alaska-Pacific River Forecast Center in issuance of hydrologic warning products. References to WSOs issuing hydrologic products were removed.

SIGNED

February 15, 2019

Carven Scott

Date

Regional Director

Alaska Weather Forecast Office Hydrologic Operations

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1. Introduction. This supplement addresses the national instructions for hydrologic operations at Alaska Region weather forecast offices (WFO) and weather service offices (WSO). This supplement identifies unique customer/partner requirements within hydrologic service areas (HSA) in the Region.

2. WFO Hydrologic Functions.

2.1 Hydrologic Forecast and Warning Operations. NWSI 10-921 states that operational responsibility for the hydrologic products identified in NWSI 10-922 resides with the WFO. WFOs are responsible for the quality of their hydrologic products and services, and customer outreach. In Alaska, the WFO may delegate authority to generate some of these hydrologic products to the Alaska-Pacific River Forecast Center (APRFC). This delegation may be a blanket delegation, as has been given to the APRFC to issue routine hydrologic products, or it may be given for informational statements during a particular event by the WFO lead forecaster in consultation with the staff of the APRFC. Blanket delegations should be reviewed annually by the WFO and APRFC with agreed upon changes completed before spring breakup drills. During service interruptions, the APRFC may provide service backup or backup support with respect to the issuance of hydrologic warning products. At all other times, the APRFC will provide operational support to the hydrologic warning program by coordinating with and providing a detailed hydrologic coordination message (HCM) to the WFO with responsibility for areas at risk of flooding.

WFOs or the APRFC may suggest hydrologic product and service changes to the regional hydrologist, but they will not make those changes until the recommendation has been coordinated and approved and customers have been notified. The table below lists the responsible issuing office (R) and offices that may be authorized (A) to generate hydrologic products issued in Alaska Region and described in NWSI 10-922 and ARS 08-2003, applicable to NWSI 10-922.

Hydrologic Warning and Forecast Products	WFO	APRFC
Hydrologic Outlook (ESF) for Hydrologic Service Area (HSA)	R	A
ESF for multiple HSAs		R
Flash Flood Warning (FFW)	R	A
Flash Flood Statement (FFS)	R	A
Flood/Flash Flood Watch (FFA)	R	A
Flood Warning (FLW)	R	A
Flood Statements (FLS)	R	A
Hydrologic Coordination Message (HCM)	R	R
Hydrologic Statements (RVS) for HSA	R	A
RVS for multiple HSAs		R
1Public Information Statement (PNS) ¹	R	R
Hydrologic Summary (RVA) ²	R	A
Daily River and Lake Summary (RVD) ²	R	A
Hydrologic Data Products		
Hydrologic Data Report 1 (RR1)	R	R
Hydrologic Data Report 3 (RR3)	R	R
Hydrologic Data Report 5 (RR5)	R	R
Hydrologic Data Report 6 (RR6)	R	R
Hydrologic Data Report 7 (RR7)	R	R

Table 1 – Hydrologic Product Responsibility/Authorized

The WFO may request assistance from the APRFC 24 hours a day, 7 days a week using the schedule of duty forecasters and contact information. When the APRFC is not staffed, the lead forecaster at any WFO may contact the duty forecasters, the Hydrologist in Charge, the Development and Operations Hydrologist, or the Service Coordination Hydrologist to request information or support. Contact procedures for the APRFC will be part of the WFO and APRFC local station policy.

¹ PNS is not discussed in NWSI 10-921, but it may be issued to discuss hydrologic conditions or events

² The APRFC issues the routine RVA and RVD products for all WFOs.

2.2 Hydrology Program Leadership Activities. While the leadership activities performed by the WFO service hydrologist include coordination, training, post event surveys, and data network maintenance for the WFO's hydrology program, the program leader may request support for these activities from other members of the WFO staff, from the WSOs, from the APRFC, or from the Region as necessary. The service hydrologist will work with the warning coordination meteorologist to develop a strong program of community outreach and training. Customer outreach may also be shared with or delegated to the APRFC as part of each WFO's operations plan.

2.3 River Forecast Center Support. When hydrologic events are imminent or occurring, the WFO should ensure the duty forecaster at the APRFC is aware of changing conditions when the office is not staffed and should coordinate with the APRFC on the impact of those conditions when it is staffed.