

CONSIDERING AN EXTRA TROPICAL STORM SURGE WATCH AND WARNING:

FORECASTER AND PARTNER FEEDBACK

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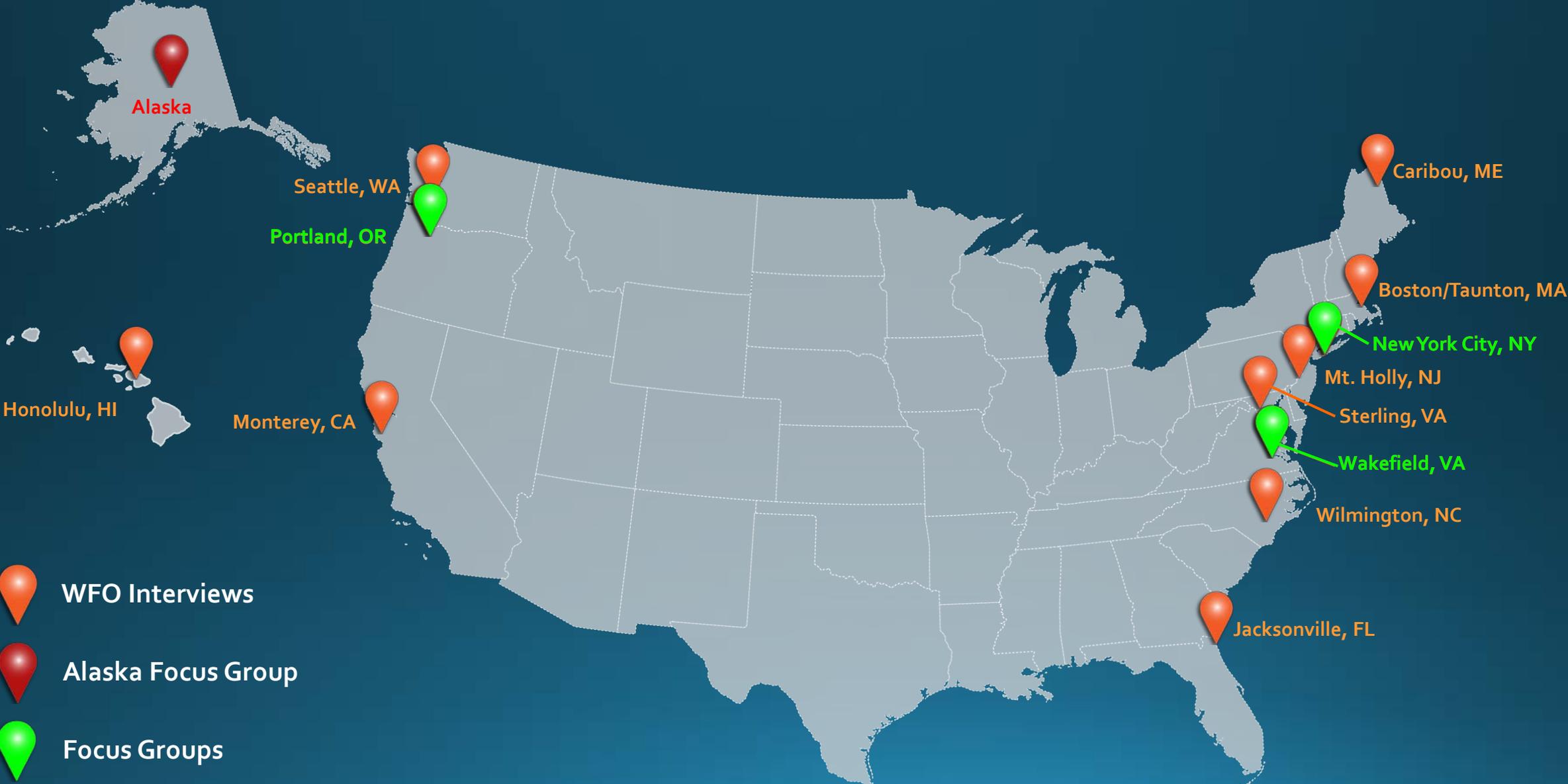


February 9, 2016

THE FOCUS

- ❑ To gather information on community vulnerability to ET surge
- ❑ To understand how the NWS and partners currently communicate ET surge
- ❑ To explore the feasibility of an extra tropical storm surge watch warning and determine whether it should be added to or replace the current coastal flood warning products
- ❑ To gather feedback on the utility of a storm surge flooding map for ET

WHO & WHERE?



-  WFO Interviews
-  Alaska Focus Group
-  Focus Groups

FINDINGS FROM WFO INTERVIEWS

📍 How WFO locations communicate ET surge now

- 📍 Use coastal flood product suite
- 📍 Minor (nuisance), Moderate, Major
- 📍 Categories are based on impacts, not arbitrary thresholds

- 📍 Feel current terms are meeting partner needs
Concern that SS is not well understood/associated with tropical



Alaska Focus Group

Focus Groups

FINDINGS FROM WFO INTERVIEWS

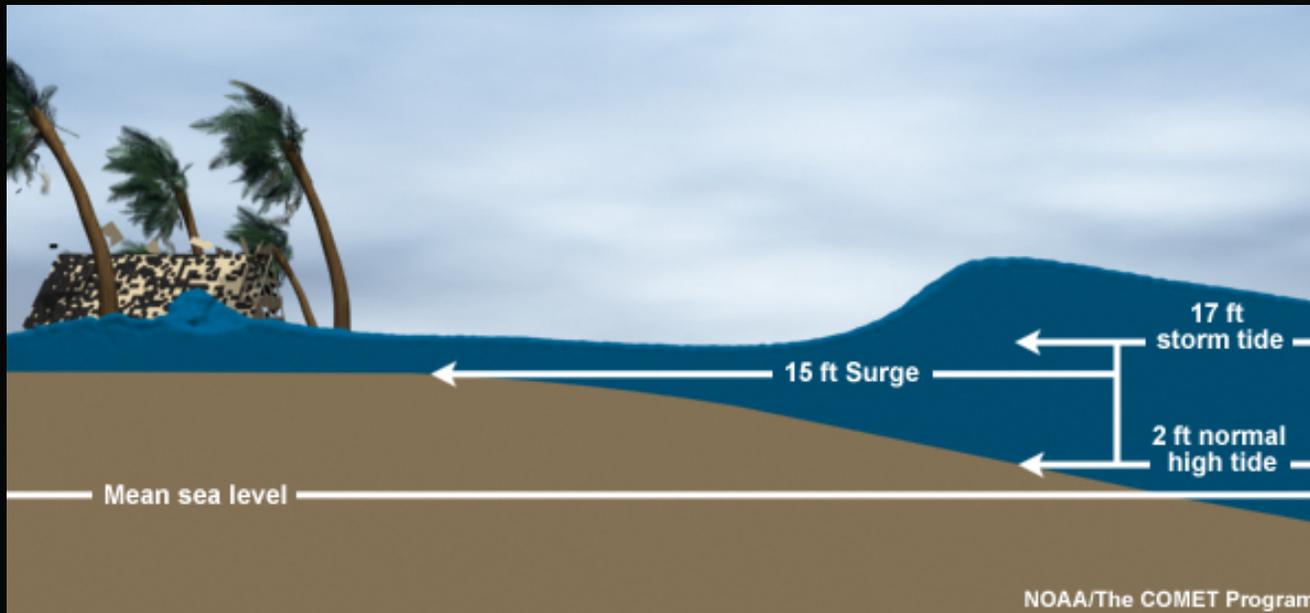
📍 Sentiments toward SS watch/warning

Replace

- 📍 Need consistency
- 📍 Reduce confusion/too many terms
- 📍 Too many products

Add

- 📍 Mischaracterizes the science (erosion and wave action)
- 📍 Using SS warning all the time too alarming
- 📍 Rarely will meet the criteria for life threatening
- 📍 Lose ability to warn for moderate impact



Training/education needed

FINDINGS FROM ALASKA FOCUS GROUP

📍 Sentiments toward SS watch/warning

- 📍 Alaskans *do not* use the term “storm surge”
- 📍 A storm surge warning could be confused with a tsunami warning
- 📍 Re-education would be necessary
- 📍 Communication in Alaska is a massive challenge



📍 Sentiments toward SS map

- 📍 Not practical for Alaska
- 📍 Media must cover the forecast for the entire state
- 📍 Concerns about viewing the map online
- 📍 Intricate coastline
- 📍 Lack of data



FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUPS

Portland, OR

Coastal Oregon

- Tidal overflows, landslides, tsunamis
- High, hurricane-speed winds
- Flooding rains and flash floods
- Storm surge is never used



New York City, NY

- Nor'easters a significant threat
- Estuaries and coastlines tend to flood
- Dense population centers/critical infrastructure
- Storm surge referenced mostly for tropical



New York City, NY

Wakefield, VA

Wakefield, VA

- River flooding with inland impacts
- Tidal surge + rainfall overwhelm watersheds
- Impacts compounded by older drainage systems, climate change
- Storm surge referenced mostly for tropical



FINDINGS FROM FOCUS GROUPS (continued)

📍 Sentiments towards SS watch/warning

- 📍 Add to current suite of products
- 📍 Use as the trigger point or “high card”
- 📍 Does not appropriately characterize the hazards on the West Coast
- 📍 Life-threatening threshold may not be descriptive enough in all locations
- 📍 Public education needed
- 📍 Must be issued in timely way



📍 Sentiments towards SS map

- 📍 Praise and enthusiasm!
- 📍 Concern with exceedance level
- 📍 Need river information
- 📍 Divided on need for wave action/erosion
- 📍 Want water levels in AGL



REGIONAL OBSERVATIONS



West vs. East

Alaska and Western Region



Commonalities

- Storm surge -- not common
- Current NWS products meet their needs
- Change would cause confusion and re-education
- Could confuse with a tsunami warning
- Inundation map not practical
- Want total water levels

Mid-Atlantic & Eastern Region

Commonalities

- “Storm surge” does not completely characterize ET hazards
- Storm surge warning could be useful for high-risk, coastal flooding events
- Praised and supported the inundation map... but want it to depict erosion and wave action
- Critical of the low-end category for up to three feet of surge above ground



Thank you to all the NWS offices and partners who participated!

