



The NHWC Transmission

August 2014

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Hazard Communication and Public Awareness in Clark County, Nevada

Erin Neff

Clark County Regional Flood Control District

The Clark County Regional Flood Control District's Public Information Program is designed to complement the District's core mission of keeping floods away from people by giving residents the tools they need to keep away from floods.

Traditionally that meant a catchy jingle from a 30-second TV ad. Nowadays, while the District is still on TV, it's also online, on smartphones, on social media and all with potentially lifesaving information as it happens.

"We know people are getting information from many more places than they used to," said Gale Fraser, the District's general manager and chief engineer. "If just one person's life is saved by heeding a message they saw when they stopped for gas or when they checked the weather on their smartphone, the entire public awareness program is a success."

The District's new smartphone app (available for both Apple iOS and Android mobile operating systems) puts flood safety information directly into the public's hands. FloodSpot allows District staff to push notifications and safety information about flooding in real time. Additionally, users of the app can submit photos of flood conditions and help District staff monitor conditions on the ground as events unfold.

"This is really a cutting-edge way not only to give out important information, but to learn more about what's happening in areas where we may not have immediate access to data," Fraser said. "We find that during a flood event, use of the app and downloads of the app go through the roof."

While the app is most used during a flood event, it also features a game for kids; allows users to report clogged storm drains; shows maps of flood zones and provides information on flood insurance and where to buy it.

The app is also a perfect complement to the District's social media efforts. During a flood event, District staff is on Facebook, on Twitter and on the phone with media. Most of the messaging during a flood event is designed to keep people out of harm's way.

And one of the best ways to do that is to show the public exactly where the problem areas are. The District's website (www.regionalflood.org) is a





Interactive **Flood Zones** Map, **Weather Reports**, quick **Flood Reporting** with photo/video uploading, a fun for all-ages educational **Interactive Game** and much more.

one-stop shop to get up-to-the minute information about flood control facilities, rain gauge totals, water levels, traffic cameras and live radar imaging.

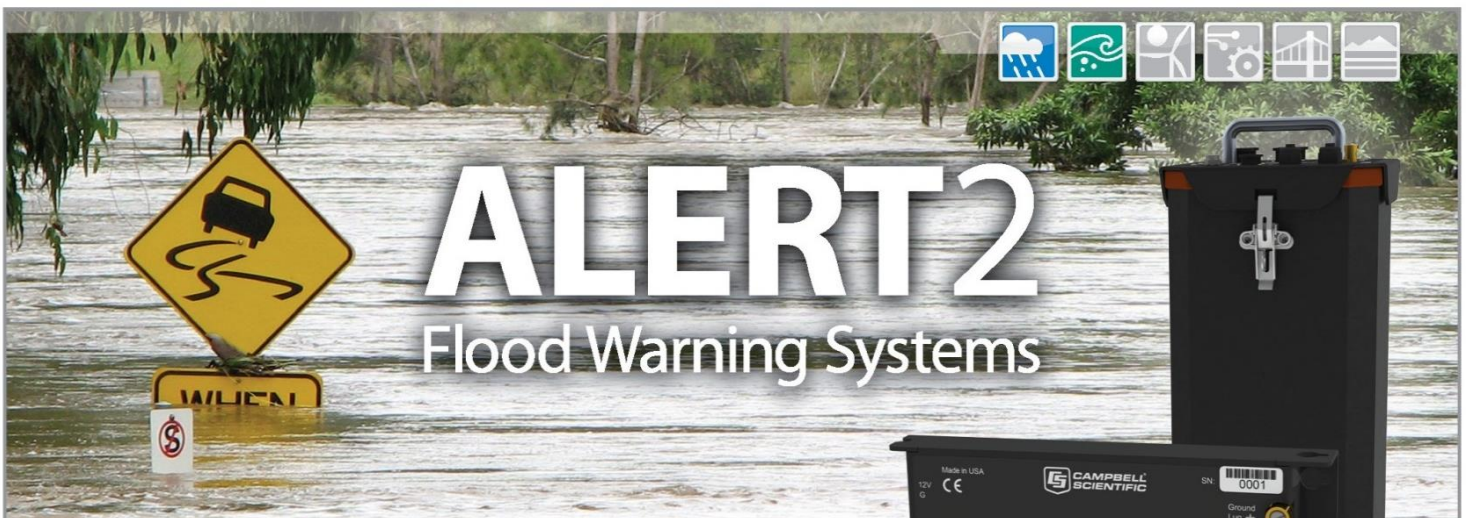
“You can see where the storm is heading, how much rain has fallen and how the system is collecting that runoff,” said Erin Neff, the District’s public information manager. “The tools we provide are really designed to give as much information to the public as possible during a flood event.”

Research and surveys indicate Clark County residents get their information from a wide variety of sources and are increasingly aware of the District’s website and social media channels. Still, many residents get their information from traditional sources.

That’s why during Flash Flood Season (July through September) the District is also on TV; in newspapers; in the mail box; on the radio; at gas stations and community events.

Information is also available in both English and Spanish; it reaches both urban and rural populations and targets those who have lived here for generations and those who are new to the area. During the school year, the District also provides safety information to thousands of elementary students in a fun and engaging way.

“All of our efforts are used to reinforce the core safety message,” Neff said. “You may see a billboard on your way to work or hear an ad on the radio when you’re out doing errands. We want to be sure our messaging is reaching all people throughout the District.”



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The District produces The Flood Channel, a 30-minute television program showcasing both flood control projects and flood safety information. And while the program airs on traditional cable television, the District also works to repackage information into smaller bites for our [YouTube](#) channel.

“Some people have 30 minutes,” Fraser said. “Some have 30 seconds. The hazard communication and public awareness landscape is changing rapidly and we’re trying to keep up with breaking trends while at the same time recognizing traditional messaging opportunities.” 🌊

Streamgages ~ Follow the Flow: Congress and Staff Briefing

NHWC Members **Kevin Stewart** (center) and **Ernie Wells** (second from right) joined with others on May 2nd in Washington, D.C. to brief members of Congress and staff on the vital role the USGS stream gaging program plays to help local emergency responders and resource managers fulfil their roles to enhance public safety and manage surface water resources.

To find out more about this briefing and the USGS Briefing Series go to <http://www.usgs.gov/solutions/>



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ALERT2 Source Address Management System (SAMS) Request for Funding Support

ALERT2 source addresses must be assigned in a sustainable way to ensure uniqueness across large geographic areas. To find out more about how your agency can help support SAMS, please click this [link](#). A small contribution will help everyone avoid damaging data conflicts later.

Pacific Northwest Advanced Flood Warning System Workshop October 21-22, 2014 Grand Mound, WA

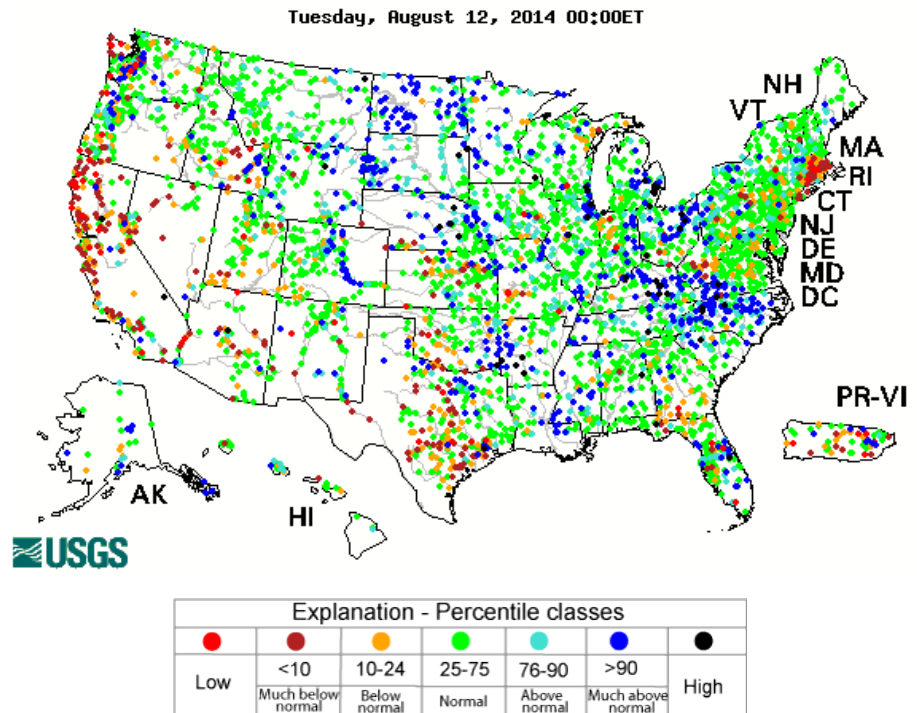
Join friends and colleagues to discuss best practices for developing and operating successful flood warning systems in the Pacific Northwest during this two-day NHC event.

A few of the topics to be covered include:

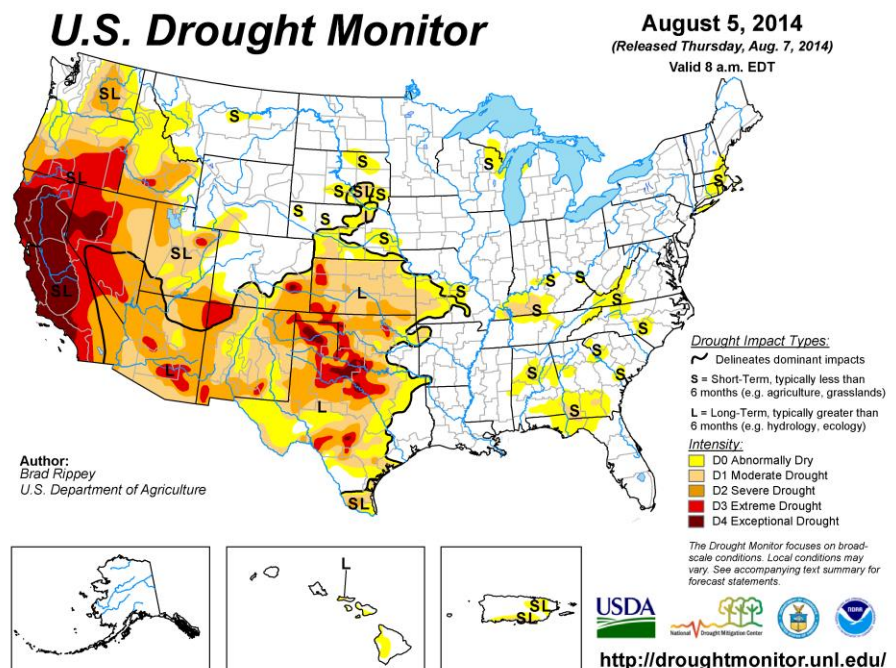
- Overview of successful flood warning systems across the US
- Designing and implementing flood warning systems
- Creating natural hazard monitoring and prediction systems for floods, landslides and wildfires
- Coalition-building among flood warning system owners/operators
- Emerging flood warning system technologies
- Securing CRS credit for flood warning programs

More information can be found at this [link](#).

Hydrologic Conditions in the United States Through July, 2014



Latest stream flow conditions in the United States. (courtesy USGS)



Latest drought conditions in the United States.
(courtesy National Drought Mitigation Center)

September Newsletter Articles Focus: Modeling & Analysis

The NHWC is requesting articles that focus on practices, technologies and tools used to model/predict hydro-meteorological events and to support decision making for emergency response and floodplain management.

Submit your article to:

editor@hydrologicwarning.org

September 5th is the deadline for inclusion in the September issue.

Future Newsletter Articles Focus

To give you more time to prepare articles, below is the article focus schedule for the next four months:

Sep - Modeling/Analysis
Oct - Data Collection
Nov - Hydrology
Dec - Hazard
Communication & Public Awareness

NHWC Calendar

October 21-22, 2014 – [Pacific Northwest Advanced Flood Warning System Workshop](#), Great Wolf Lodge in Grand Mount, Washington

June 15-18, 2015 - NHWC 2015 Training Conference & Exposition, Indianapolis, Indiana

General Interest Calendar

September 2-5, 2014 - [Floodplain Management Annual Conference](#), Santa Clara, California

September 21-25, 2014 - [Dam Safety National Conference](#), San Diego, California

October 16, 2014 – [ALERT User's Group 2014 Fall Workshop](#), Riverside County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, 1995 Market Street, Riverside, California 92501

November 5-7, 2014 – Arizona Floodplain management Association 2014 Fall Conference, Prescott, Arizona

(see the [event calendar](#) on the NHWC website for more information)

Parting Shot

Pungo River at Belhaven, North Carolina GOES Station. This is one of four stations around the Pamlico Sound reporting water levels and various weather parameters. This station is owned and operated by the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management, Office of Geospatial and Technology Management. Data collected by this and other stations in the system can be viewed using the smartphone app ReadyNC.



Photo by David Haynes
Distinctive AFWS Designs

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