

Comment

1 I agree with the proposed policy. The findings that setting rigid guidelines in the technology rich environment is extremely counter-productive! The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

2 "To whom It May Concern, I would like to comment on the proposed policy on partnerships. On the whole it seems to be an acceptable document. I do not see much in there that differs from the present operating environment of the NWS. The first comment I would like to make is that I feel there must be a statement in this policy that the maintenance and expansion of a robust network of meteorological observation stations that provide this timely data collection and dissemination is critical to the core mission of the NWS (promoting the safety of life and property) and will remain a top funding priority, over and above the installation of any new products or services. Additionally, I feel there must be a paragraph in this policy that explicitly states that the NWS will not enter into any contracts or agreements with a non-governmental entity to provide weather data collection or the issuance of NWS approved forecasts or alerts. These goods and services must remain in the full control of the NWS to assure dat quality and full and unrestricted access. It is my belief that for-profit contractors will seek to provide these goods and services to the government at the lowest cost to themselves. As a result the quality and timeliness of the goods and services will necessarily suffer. Additionally, a commercial entity would continually push to restrict access to certain types of ""value added"" data/services to ""subscribers"". It has been my experience that many of these ""value added"" data/services are nothing beyond what the entity was contracted to deliver in the first place and is simply a way for the contracting entity to make more money outside the contract. With regard to the wording of the proposed policy (policy wording within >>>> >>>>) ... >>> NWS will promote the open and unrestricted exchange of weather, water, climate, and related environmental information worldwide, and seek to improve global opportunities for development of the partnership. >>> In the above section, there must be a provision that equitable reciprocity from foreign weather agencies be guaranteed. We should not be granting unrestricted access to our data to countries who do not grant us equivalent access to their data. >>>> 8. NWS's participation in the weather, water, and climate enterprise will be founded on the following principles: ... * No surprises: Unless public safety or national security concerns dictate otherwise, NWS will provide all users, including those in the private and academic sectors, adequate notice and opportunity for input into decisions regarding the development and dissemination of significant products and services, and their discontinuance. >>>> Please define ""adequate notice"" - I would recommend defining it as ""a period of time not less than 60 days"" and also provide a means by which stakeholders can opt in to a notification system (e.g., e-mail list). >>>> * Equity: NWS will be equitable in dealings with various classes of entities and will not show favoritism to particular classes of partners or individual entities, particularly those in the academic and commercial sectors. NWS will not provide a service to a segment of the user community that cannot be provided to all similar types of users. >>>> Please consider changing the last sentence from ""all similar types of users"" to ""all users"". In its present context it may be construed to restrict access to certain types of data or information by ""users"" who do not meet a certain commercial or academic criteria. This conflicts with the ""full and unrestricted access"" mentioned in a previous section. >>>> * Maintain and explain the routine: When faced with requests for specifically tailored services, NWS will make sure the customer fully understands products NWS ""routinely"" provides (e.g. forecasts, watches, warnings and data sets) and the ability of private sector providers to meet needs outside these routine services. >>>> In the above section, a comprehensive web page and/or one-page letter with this information must be created and maintained with regularity. Furthermore, if a request is made to the NWS for specifically tailored services that the NWS considers adopting as a provided service, the NWS should publicly disseminate such a list of such requests (including the sector of the requestor) and allow for comments as per a previous section on

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""No surprises"". Lastly, I would suggest a statement in the policy that requires NWS to compile a year end public document detailing efforts it undertook and/or accomplished during the past year, and initiatives it plans to take in the upcoming year in terms of adhering to this policy. The latter should be open to public comment. Those are all the comments I have for now. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding my comments and/or use of NWS services. Sincerely, Karsten Shein Assistant Professor - Meteorology and Climatology Department of Geography and Earth Sciences Shippensburg University Shippensburg, PA 17257 <http://www.ship.edu/~kashei> kashei@wharf.ship.edu The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

3 "I feel that any changes that make for better dissemination of timely information for use in the private sector is desirable, but should be offset by any return flow of information from private sector to noaa. keep up the good work. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

4 "As a private citizen user of NWS services, I object to the ""Fair weather Policy"" published on the NWS web site. I think it is a poor response to the NRC white paper and a not so subtle move to the eventual privatization of the NWS. Its main feature is a broad expansion of giving ""weather"" information and services to private companies who have no liability for the accuracy of their information. If people die as a result of ""company"" errors, they will not be held liable for their actions because they will claim that the NWS was the source of their information. Privatization of vital NASA duties and a subsequent corporate coverup and whitewash led to the deaths of seven astronauts, Is NOAA set on the track for a similar disaster ??? Rethink this policy. It is seriously flawed..... D. Meisel The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

5 "Thank you for the opportunity to comment. The ""bottom line"" of any policy like this is to make sure that the general public, in particular the taxpayers, are not ultimately driven to a ""pay for data"" scenerio. NOAA and other governmental agencies associated with protecting the health and welfare of the nation's citizens should not be placing important information in the hands of the private sector for regurgitation to the public at a profit. Please keep this issue in mind as NOAA moves through finalization of this and future policies. Again, thank you for the opportunity to comment. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

6 "My comment concerns your two paragraphs as quoted below: IT'S ABOUT TIME!! I was getting the distinct feeling that commercial entities were being favored by the NWS. I could see the day coming when I would have to pay for any weather info not provided by public broadcasters. You might, though, include something stronger about obtaining and maintaining resources. I hope we don't get to a place where users must provide their own very expensive resources to obtain and use your products. This would favor large entities and stiff the public. So, thank you; and let's get this done as soon as possible. ~~~~~
""# Open information dissemination: NWS recognizes that open and unrestricted dissemination of high quality publicly funded information, as appropriate and within resource constraints, is good policy and is the law. # Equity: NWS will be equitable in dealings with various classes of entities and will not show favoritism to particular classes of partners or individual entities, particularly those in the academic and commercial sectors. NWS will not provide a service to a segment of the user community that cannot be provided to all similar types of users."" The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

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7 I believe anytime an agency of the government tries to become more efficient they should do so. so long as the cost involved is not to DEAR. Joe Martie.. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

8 "To whom It May Concern , I'm the DOT Bridge Inspection Supervisor for Western North Carolina . I'm responsible for 31 counties . I have six two man crews that are scattered throughout western North Carolina . The weather reports which you provide are very important to us all . In this area more real time reports will be a blessing . Thank you all for your hard work . Mark Callis The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

9 "It would be correct to charge the private sector for data collected by NOAA if the data is used to generate income. Entities such as the weather Channel and software companies that write programs using automatic updates to NOAA/NWS sites as features should not get this information at no cost. Universities, schools, researchers and other not for profit organizations using the information should not be charged. Individuals who seek the data for nothing other than their own information(ie. going on a picnic in 20 minutes and want to know if it is going to rain) should not be charge. Their taxes helped pay for the information and shouldn't be charged again. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

10 "Please remember the public, the people who pay for this service. I would like to be able to access more of the service also. I do not understand why I cannot have full access without going through third parties. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

11 "Paragraph 1 of the Proposed Policy identifies three groups served by NOAA: Public (defined as federal, state, or local government); Academic (implying association with an academic institution); or, private (defined as weather service companies, consultants, etc.). A fourth major group is ignored, and it seems by implication excluded. The seemingly excluded group is all individual citizen taxpayers who want either simplified products or access to highly technical information for any legal purpose. These people are the ultimate consumers as well as the ultimate owners of all the data and employers of the service providers. In paragraph 3 it states ""These policies are based on the premise that government information is a valuable national resource, and the economic benefits to society are maximized when government information is available in a timely and equitable manner to all."" ALL must by simple definition include the aforementioned fourth category. Best Regards, Gene Pharr gene@pharr.com The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

12 "I believe this policy is a good proactive issue. After all...cooperation is very important in this day and time. D J RAY P O Box 296 Gardendale, Tx 79758 The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

13 "If the overall impact of any changes proposed is a net reduction in costs to the American Taxpayer then by all means DO IT! Otherwise, what difference does it make? The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

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14 "THESE WEATHER LINKS ARE VERY IMPOTRANT TO ME AS A MARITIME OFFICER, ANY AND ALL INFO IS NEEDED. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

15 "Please do NOT adopt the Proposed Policy on Partnerships. NOAA weather radar in near real-time is an absolute MUST here in central Illinois, where tonight we have a tornado watch. Just try to get the same up-to-the-minute info. on private sector so-called WEATHER Channel (er, the COMMERCIAL Channel's) ""local forecast""...almost always 45 minutes or more out of date (i.e., when it's working). PLEASE!! Keep provision of vital weather information in the PUBLIC sector. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

16 "The new policy provides no clear direction, as did the 1991 policy, concerning the separation of public vs private competition. This is of concern given the fact that the NWS is already in violation of the 1991 policy since there are many examples whereby they are providing services and competing directly with the private sector. NWS representatives in the webcast stated that it was not their intent to broaden their scope into those services. If that is the case then they should have no objection to stating so in the newer policy. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

17 "Good Day: I am a VFR private pilot (Piper Cherokee) with military (Air Weather Service) training as a forecaster and observer (synoptic, radiosonde, dropsonds, etc.) I cannot get a briefing from a forecaster anymore. A few summers ago I was caught in the Smoke from Canadian forest fires (3000 ft to 9000 ft) returning from Cleveland to Washington, DC. I was not briefed on this. VSBY was marginal VFR throughout the flight. The weather briefer said the flight would be ""VFR"", not marginal. The ADDS products that I use to look at flight conditions are great, but I have no access to any such products once in the air except through spoken radio. The planned ""two way"" ADS-B (acft to gnd) are very expensive, and I have no room for such in my little plane. I can hear weather radio, but it no longer has VFR info such as cloud layers (ceilings!) and restriction to visibility. I can tune in a nearby AWOS, but by then, I am very close to the AWOS and ""in the weather"" I want to know about before I get there. I can ask for A C assist, on an ""as available"" basis. I can call any nearby FBOs, but that is ""iffy"". I can quit whining and ""take my chances"". I can stay home and leave the VFR skys to IFR pilots and airliners. Perhaps I can get the high price ADS-B connectivity to my tiny cockpit using a portable radio? (not planned) Well, how about I get a discrete transponder code for my entire VFR flight, and the NWS weather radio stations broadcast a subchannel digital feed I can dump into my PalmPilot Tungstin, or HP Jordana, from a special wx radio reciever with an RS-232 port on it. I would get, via WX local radio stations, position reports, ATC info, hazards to navigation, instant updates on special TFRs, ATC instructions, etc. What, no MFD? Probably not. It will cost as much as my aircraft engine unless it is subsidized. I.e., I may not be able to afford it. What do you think? Am I offering a good idead or two, or am I just ""not with the program""? Michael F. Winthrop The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

18 "I am in favor of allowing the private sector like myself access to all the information gathered by all agencies since it is tax dollars that fund the agencies, I don't like being shut out of data that I can use on a daily basis. Thanks The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

19 "Hello! As a final end user (i.e. a private citizen) and amateur meteorologist, I do not see anything wrong with the proposed new policy. I do wonder however if the tens of thousands of amateur-owned and -operated factory-built weather stations ought to be specifically mentioned in the policy. As the technology advances the capabilities and accuracy of these factory-built stations steadily climbs, while the cost of installing these stations continues to drop rapidly. Many of these stations generate data that ends up being shared regionally (nationally?), thus becoming part of the permanent record. Perhaps something should be said in the policy that strongly encourages (requires?) periodic calibration checks by amateur station owners. Does the existing metadata currently specify details about amateur-collected data? As an end user, I would like to know if data did NOT come from a professional source. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

20 "I support the NOAA's Comment on NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. I realize others are pressuring you to stop so that they can sell us the data, however there is plenty of room for innovation by these companies if they wish to offer value added product. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

21 the idea of combining these areas for the advancement of all is a splended idea if the main intention is to improve communication between all! but my concerns would be that the administration of such a plan would not serve the interests of all three! who would be in charge of such an endeavour and who would have what say in the applications of such a partnership! remember that absolute power in the hands of a few could spell trouble and have a negative impact on what is now a workable system! The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

22 "Greetings.... Recognizing our needs as well as our ability to meet them is worthy of a policy all on its own. Our development as a nation sometimes happens in small, un-noticable steps, and sometimes in giant leaps..(911 attack). We must have permission to succeed, to better ourselves and our world. As a sailboat owner, I depend on some of the technology that makes my life safer, more useful, and convenient. As an emergency manager, I depend on technology to keep me informed and manage life and death missions and the risk. without interagency co-operation and the availability of accurate, current information and the tools used to capture and manage it, the ability to mitigate a safe and predicted outcome becomes at risk. Please encourage all our contributors to continue developing and sharing the tools and experience so that our sometimes stubborn and ignorant leaders will live long enough to learn the ropes and maybe actually do a good job one day. Andrew McGregor
The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

23 "I particularly support the following item: ""... NWS recognizes that open and unrestricted dissemination of high quality publicly funded information, as appropriate and within resource constraints, is good policy and is the law."" This recognizes the right of the public to access the information and services for which they have paid. I hope that prices for your archival products can be kept low, because I believe that many important research discoveries result from giving easy, inexpensive access to a wide variety of researchers, both university and entrepreneurial. That said, I am troubled by the item that precedes it, ""... Unless public safety or national security concerns dictate otherwise, NWS will provide all users, including those in the private and academic sectors, adequate notice and opportunity for input into decisions regarding the development and dissemination of significant products and services, and their discontinuance.""

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Many of the best ideas come from the NWS people who work most regularly with the data, and the clients for that data. Having heard many of my fellow Certified Consulting Meteorologists complain about competition from the government, I see this policy as likely to deter NWS innovation. I foresee endless complaints launched about new products that obviously serve the general public's needs, but offend some in the private sector. I hope my comments are helpful. Thank you for the opportunity to express an opinion. Francis L. Ludwig, PhD, CCM Consulting Professor Environmental Fluid Mechanics Laboratory Dept. of Civil and Environmental Engineering Stanford, CA 94305-4020 phone: 650-366 5901 e-mail: fludwig@stanford.edu The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

24 "Our taxes support NOAA. I oppose all efforts to transform the wholesale public product of our national weather centers into a private commodity available only to retail weather outlets. Unless private marketers resell a significantly "value added" weather product, they should not be allowed to repackage and resell weather information at all. The roles of government should be strictly limited, but the dissemination of timely and cogent weather information on demand, as needed, to any citizen, is certainly one of them. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

25 "Dear Sir/Ma'am, Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed rule change. I use the products almost on a daily basis for activities as varied as flight planning or bicycling to work. I have grown to trust the products produced by the NWS and how to better interpret the information available. Also, as a former government representative, I understand the employees of the NWS are dedicated to serving the public as they have been entrusted by the public to provide the most accurate and unbiased information they can with no hidden agendas or special interest considerations. For this reason, I would ask that this agreement be tailored to include a section that would address the sharing of data between NWS and academia private companies at no cost to NWS. Also, any data received from the before mentioned entities (academia and private companies) can be distributed to the public at no cost when life or property are at risk. Lastly I ask that you please modify section three as follows: 3. In furtherance of these policies, NWS will continue to carry out all current and planned activities which contribute to its mission, including collecting and archiving data; ensuring their quality; issuing forecasts, warnings, and advisories; and providing unrestricted access to publicly funded observations, analyses, model results, forecasts, and related information products in a timely manner and at the lowest possible cost to users. Thank you, Dan Guillaume The referring webpage:"

26 "To whom it may concern: Please keep the private sector out of the government meteorological operations! The only exception should be for University/College partnering done fairly and equally. Private sector interaction results in double taxation: vendors are driven to make profits off of government products that are free to them. Working in the commercial TV broadcast sector, we are often price-gauged for data from vendors. Another different instance: The AMS has raised their Seal renewal fee from \$70 per year 4 years ago, to \$230 this year. Their costs for issuing the seal have not risen. If the AMS government partnership is furthered, they could charge us for using 'AMS approved' weather data. Sincerely, John Fuller TV Meteorologist (25 years experience) The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

27 I think the policy statement is fine. I use the NOAA on line service a lot. I do this because I feel that the commercial forecasters tend to slant their

forecast to suit some purpose other than pure weather forecasting. Keep up the good work. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

28 "It is essential, in my opinion, that NWS forecast information be made available directly to the public thru such avenues as the internet and weather radio broadcasts. I want to know that information I get from NOAA broadcasts and from NWS website is the latest up to date information available. Secondly, I think that commercially available weather information reflecting NWS forecasts should be identified as such. I should be able to know if commercially broadcast weather information is reflective of NWS forecasts or if it is the product of a particular announcer or non NWS organization. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

29 "I am in support of the proposed policy and hope that the three major parties can work together in a way that supports and improves the services provided to the community. We all benefit from shared resources and are grateful to those who combine them in a way that helps us as a whole. Best regards for a bright future, Luis Marroquin The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

30 "Ummmmm, guys - gals - those with, and those without PHD's... It just seems to me, and old fat guy without any letters after his name or credentials, that the best way to get along - is to not get along. What I mean, is to have you all form a fourth agency, equally funded, staffed, and with one general manager from each of the three area's. Make it the central clearing house for weather dissemination to all three area's, and make sure it has all of the latest innovations in forecast models, equipment, etc... Ohh yea, it must be autonymous from everyone else as far as control, politics, etc. is concerned yet given the authority to request, and get, exactly what - or who it needs, to stay on top. Might be a pretty good idea to make the appointments to the new agency short lived - like two years or so, and non-repeatable. It is my opinion that three massive high pressure systems will never come together in the publics' best interest in any other way. Not a criticism of anyone at all, cause everyone does a great job at what they do. But shoot, nobody wants to come in second, or be the last pup to the meal donchaknow. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

31 I approve the policy only if it leads to better forecasting and information gathering. I DO NOT want the private sector making a profit from the info that the NWS disseminates. Such as downloading the NWS servers and using it help their paysites. They should link their sites to NWS servers. (Climate Data) The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

32 "Please keep my e-mail address confidential, i.e. for the purposes of this communication only and no commercial (etc.) spam. I have only three comments, and they are brief. The last thing needed are heavy regulations on how things are done in this realm. It would kill the current forward motion toward providing the best service. What's being done now is quite usefull and should be enhanced or expanded prudently without limitations. The Canadians call their weather service ""Environment Canada."" You may consider renaming yourselves if you are expanding IS functionality. In my area at least, there are numerous personal weather stations of high or at least defined accuracy. They are severely underutilized in gathering conditions and annual data. Seems like they would be at least as valuable as the WX bouys floating at sea. You're welcome to look at mine: <http://home.earthlink.net/~creesesc/wxdata.html> It uses the Davis weather Monitor

II hardware. Regards, Kris Harrison The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

33 "I agree and concur wholeheartedly with your proposal to make all disseminated data available to all interested parties without regard to their personal, academic or commercial standing. This is a very positive move by NOAA/NWS. Oh - I think ""Partnership"" should be defined as the NOAA/NWS relationship with ""all"" users and not simply those with whom NOAA/NWS has traditionally cooperated. I believe that, over time, you will be pleasantly surprised by the information, feedback and applications resulting from this change of policy. Respectfully, Tom Brown Wake Forest, NC The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

34 "As a recent addition to the private sector, I believe that the proposed Policy is appropriate and will generate much needed dialogue between the three parties as to their intentions and aspirations. The momentum of rapid advancements in the field of meteorology over the past one hundred years will continue into the future. Partnership and cooperation between the three sectors will continue to push us toward our mutual goal: to disseminate weather information to the general public in a timely and accurate fashion. It is important that we keep this in mind to prevent stringent guidelines and uncooperative members of the three parties from slowing progress. I do not share the views of many employees of the private sector who believe the innovation of new products by the National Weather Service (NWS) will lead to the demise of many companies. Quite the contrary, I believe new products will continue to foster growth and new ideas in the private sector that will better serve their clients. In addition, the NWS will provide the public, academic and public sectors with better products that will ultimately allow us to create better weather forecasts. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

35 "The data gathered by NWS should be left in the public domain and the current process of dissemination should be continued. The timely forecast maps, radar reports and the ability to get a standardized forecast is invaluable to the public. What to wear, should I leave the car windows closed, can I cut the grass tomorrow, are all questions the web site answers admirably. Private firms frequently issue forecasts by a Meteorologist who is unfamiliar with the local area. Topography plays a role in the formation of Thunder storms and Tornadoes the two most dangerous short notice weather phenomena and NWS really should look into the location factor. The two largest Tornadoes to strike in the Dallas Ft. Worth area formed within a half mile of my home in Benbrook, Tx. They formed above the head of a small canyon downwind of a lake where the prevailing wind is somewhat focused. For my two cents worth keep the web site as is and channel resources to improving on the forecasting technique. A live Doppler radar that can be localized by zooming would be a great addition for rural families like my wife's father. I used a Doppler radar feed from a TV station to warn them that a severe storm was approaching their location and later found out the storm had produced a Tornado less than an hour before it got to them. In fact dust picked up by the Tornado was still in the air when the storm got to them. The rural community has virtually no warning system available on very short notice in fact the lack of local TV stations (fifty miles or so away) is not terribly reliable as the coverage varies greatly from one station to the other. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

36 "I often review forecasts and weather data for Northern California from the National Weather Service, the Weather Channel and AccuWeather for the same period. The Weather Channel is generally incorrect in their day 2 and day three forecast,

and often give different data -such as current temperature- for identical locations for the current day. Accu weather is incorrect on almost everything they provide. It is hard to see how a partnership between NOAA and these (and perhaps others like them) can do anything but lessen the current level of service provided by the National Weather Service. Remember; if it ain't broken, don't fix it. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

37 "My primary concern is that the NOAA's policy will never include private software, similar to the health care policy using index numbers copyrighted by the American Chemical Society, where users are forced to pay monies to private copyright holders in order to use government products. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

38 "I have three comments on the policy statement posted by the NWS on-line at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php> A) Comment on item 3 of Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information ""3. In furtherance of these policies, NWS will carry out activities which contribute to its mission, including collecting and archiving data; ..."" The above sentence should state ""3. In furtherance of these policies, NOAA and the NWS will carry out activities which contribute to its mission, including collecting and archiving data; ..."" NESDIS is the agency primarily charged with archiving weather data, hence, the need to broaden the above statement. B) Comment on item 4. ""4. To advance the weather, water, and climate enterprise, NWS will provide information in forms accessible to the public as well as underlying data in forms convenient to additional processing by others. NWS will make its data and products available in Internet-accessible form to the extent practicable and within resource constraints, and will use other dissemination technologies, e.g. satellite broadcast and NOAA Weather Radio, as appropriate."" NOAA Weather Radio forms the backbone of an all-hazard system and the policy should emphasize NOAA Weather Radio as a primary source that anyone can turn to receive weather information. The policy should include language already promulgated by the NWS, such as: NOAA Weather Radio and the Emergency Alert System (EAS) use the same digital protocols, and NOAA Weather Radio is the primary means for NWS alerts to activate the Emergency Alert System (adapted from < http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/NWS_EAS_chg_impl.pdf >). C) Comment on a caption listed under item 8. ""Equity: NWS will be equitable in dealings with various classes of entities and will not show favoritism to particular classes of partners or individual entities, particularly those in the academic and commercial sectors. NWS will not provide a service to a segment of the user community that cannot be provided to all similar types of users."" My question is whether the above clause should be included in the policy? Exceptions seem to always arise. If the above statement must be included, consider deleting the end of the first sentence to get rid of the ""particularly those in the academic and commercial sectors."" The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

39 "Dear NOAA and NWS Staff, This plan sounds like a great idea. I think the focus on trying to address all user groups equally, and as well, the increasing use of TCP/IP and the internet to address more and more of your services to the public is a great thing and should be encouraged. You can level the playing field more between which services you provide big business and the general tax paying public by providing some sort of ""open source"" XML data set and services to everyone. You might focus on very simple but highly structured and diverse XML strategies and designs that address both public and private needs online, if need be, but where one group may access additional specialized pieces on top of a common data set that's shared among all groups concerned. XML and similar online data sets will allow you to use that. I also recommend you put a lot of energy and thought into how you will be structuring any public data sets and formats online before you deliver them to the public, so that a long term universality and ""Standards Compliance"" (see

www.w3c.com) can be achieved among all groups sharing that data and possibly exchanging it between software vendors and services. This includes schemas and DTD's. When the next great data services technology comes along that replaces XML, I would be prepared with a good overall delivery backbone and data structure that can easily grow into those next generation demands (wireless, alert systems, satellite data exchanges, new analog format delivery, etc.) XML, itself provides you the flexibility to grow and adapt to any need you may have data-wise, but its up to the design group to make sure the structure you place on yourself in terms of node names, heirarchy, data groupings, and web services is flexible enough to grow as well. Finally, there is alot of people in the public sector...amateur weather folks, who need more free, easily obtainable and reliable data from the National weather Service. Many of these people will drive the next generation developmnet of small businesses based in part or in whole on your public sector data. So, make sure that data is as widely accessible, fast, and adaptable as possible to those groups as they grow. (I feel strongly you will see more public sector groups and individuals focused on alerting systems using online data, so it needs to be reliable and fast. XML web Services using weather data exchanges and alerts, for example.) Again we love your services and keep up the great work. And keep going forward with internet accessible data strategies to the public at large. Dont forget about the little guy!
Mitchell Stokely - Dallas, TX The referring webpage:"

40 "I think this policy will be very beneficial to the public, and as an aviator, especially helpful. The availability of private sector companies to access NWS data, and deliver it to me in a timely and convenient format, in near real time, is a valuable and potentially life saving tool. Paul Fertitta The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

41 "I would like to see both sectors work together. The more people who work on weather related subjects as a group could do nothing but improve knowlege of the end result, INFORMATION!!! The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

42 "My primary concern is the availability of NOAA forecasts and climate/weather related products to the general public. The quality of so-called private sector forecasts has deteriorated significantly over the last 20 years (as has almost all media). They are more interested in stroking presenters egos and ensuring commercials are presented than in thorough coverage. Sincerely, James Lindsay The referring webpage:"

43 This sounds like a good policy. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

44 Being a retired National weather Service employee an also retired National VP of weather Service Employees Union...I believe after working for 35 years 38 years total time that all parties using the data that the NWS works up an sends out online should have to PAY FOR THE DATA RECEIVED FROM THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE...this would bring the cost to the government down an costs to National weather Service. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

45 "I'm not sure exactly what the proposed policy will do to NOAA weather reporting and the wealth of information that can be obtained from NOAA. My comment

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is that I am not for the change if it will reduce the information I can get from NOAA (& the NWS). What I mainly use is the NWS for personal reasons for boating, flying (light aircraft) and land based activities. I also use NOAA information for Great Lake water level information. My main source of this information is weather radio or the internet. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

46 "As a resident of FL's Gulf Coast, I rely on noaa and nhc to keep me informed during hurricane season. Your websites are easy to navigate and very informative, both in general, and for specific info. I would support any efforts aimed at increasing capability and accuracy in forecasting storms, but worry about the ability to perform the services so superbly provided if these partnerships become a draw on noaa or nhc resources. please keep up the outstanding work, and insist on funding to allow you to go forward. Thank You, Larry Folta The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

47 "It would be fantastic to have the wide array of tools currently offered by proprietary companies and organizations in addition to those supplied by the NWS made available at a single point that would be accessible to the general public. As a SKYWARN spotter, it is extremely frustrating to require subscription service weather providers to attain some of the data which could be made public. In example, storm echo tops are one of the displays currently only available via subscription, yet the source of the information is the WSR-88D radar sets operated by the NWS. I don't believe that it is possible to provide too much data to the public, quite to the contrary! Those who would seek information like storm echo tops, current lightning activity or the VIL display are more attuned to the advanced products and have educated themselves regarding the usefulness of the tools...providing they can access them. wireless laptops computers are now common among storm spotters/chasers for the current (most of the time) data that is being gathered through a variety of sensors operated by the NWS. Decisions based upon the data provided that are made by spotters/chasers can aid in providing additional lead time for issuing warnings or watches based upon trained observer reports, the data provided to those in the field should be as complete and up to date as possible. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

48 I encourage the various agencies to do just as outlined and overall I think that the quality of work is good. I do wish that the local radars could display higher detail images of the location of precipitation as some local TV stations have this ability. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

49 "i am glad to be able to see this policy. i read it several times, and i am not sure what to think about it, mostly because i do not have a context for understanding it. my suggestion would be to have a preface (either as a part of or separate from the policy) that explains in common english why the policy is being changed, what the difference between the old and the new policy is, and what the practical implications will be if the new policy is adopted and implemented. what i am suggesting is to include something similar to the common language preface to insurance policies, voter initiatives, and other similar document. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

50 "Restrictions appear restrictive, even for Domain Admin. jonb jonb@lava.net The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

51 "I am very interested in the new changes. The private sector has available technology that contributes to a more precise reading of local conditions during hurricanes and severe storms. In ecruing wind data for analysis after several hurricanes and tropical storms that hit or moved close to southeast Massachusetts in the last fifteen years,it was more than apparent that the private sector was not only availing themselves of the latest technology but out in the actual storms taking wind readings...the weather service for the most part disregarded or disputed private sector readings and therefore the historical record has been obstructed in several cases,This was very obvious during hurricane Bob in 1991,Edouard in 1996,and Floyd in 1999. The historical record to this day fails to mention that the shores of Lake Champlain and much of the higher terrain in western and northern New England received hurricane force wind gusts as Floyd in 1999 moved over New England which caused substatial vegetation,recreational,and in several notable cases structural damage. In 1991,hurricane Bob caused spectacular instantaneous bursts of wind in the area of the Massachusetts coastline along the southwest shores of Buzzards Bay east just east of Narragansett Bay. The NWS in Taunton,Ma. which actually received much lower winds being in a very weak sector of the north- northwest eye barely concedes that winds were 40-50 mph higher in some gusts only 20-25 miles away.....none of their personnel were in the outside exposed areas that more ""efficient and dedicated"" storm watchers positioned themselves in....Desk-top weather staticians need to be more involved or be braver in their roles.In the 1950's and 1960's when weather technology was far less sophisticated,there consisted of a much broader,completer record of peak wind gusts in the many hurricanes that hit that region. Now the private sector has taken up the effort and still is challenged,if not altogether disregarded when private state of the art wind instruments abound and are utilized. Also,when the private sector actually reports seeing funnels and the NWS insists there is only straight-line damage,we have another problem. I have actually been to a site where the NWS had just left and they actually ignored walking/driving a short distance from the inspection site and therefore completely ignored swirl damage on the ground. we all need to redirect energy to building better partnerships to aquire a more complete historical record. Respectfully submitted, Sarah BIs hop Valentejn The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

52 "I FOR ONE TOTALLY AGREE AND RECOMEND THE ACTIONS SET FORTH IN THE PROPOSAL. IN A TME WHEN INFORMATION IS AT AN ALL TIME HIGH, THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD UTILIZE ANY AND ALL INFORMATION SOURCES AT ITS DISPOSAL. THEREFORE, I STRONGLY URGE THE COMMISSION TO PASS THE RESOLUTION IN A TIMELY MANNER. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

53 "I have read much of the material on the ""Fair weather"" proposal, including comments by the weather industry front organization, CCAI, at <http://www.cciagnet.org/press/00/0321.php3>, in which they claim that government agencies (i.e. NOAA) is ""unfairly competing"" against the private interests (i.e. weather businesses). Such a claim is nonsense, of course, because the internet and cable weather companies DO NOT create their own image data, they get it from NOAA and repackage it. So they are consumers just like I am and they are not entitled to special access to the images NOR should the public access to any of the images be excluded so that these companies can make a profit on the backs of tax paying citizens. The most likely target for supression by the CCAI clients would be the TIMELY LOOPING radar images. This MUST NOT happen. I believe that NOAA will be fullfilling its public obligations by leaving its ""National weather Service"" websites running exactly as they presently are. They supply looping radar images in a timely manner, freely accessible to the public in a browser NEUTRAL manner, and that is what they should continue to do. So, regardless of what computer operating system or browser you use you can freely access the latest weather images. By contrast, weather.com is advertizing a proprietary ""Desktop weather"" application

that serves only those using the windows 98/ME/2000/XP platforms, and give no more information than the NOAA National Weather Service websites give, except for the ads, and except for the fact that only 75 cities have access. All the rest can go fish. All this for \$30 per year! These are giant steps backwards from what NOAA is offering the citizen-taxpayer now. Any ""policy"" which forces NOAA to do less than it is doing now is betraying the trust of the American taxpayers. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

54 "On the face, the policy looks great. It will be fantastic to get real time radar and other weather information over the internet, rather than delayed information. After all, we're paying for it, we should get it in the most timely manner possible! Thanks for all the work you do. Yours is truly a good and worthwhile organization! The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

55 "I support this proposed policy. This proposed policy can: 1) Greatly enhance the ability of the NOAA, NWS, OAR and NOS to accurately provide real-time and improving information that can be utilized to effect public SAFETY; 2) Improve the ability of the public and industry to appropriately (via greater accuracy) employ other activities that affect the economy - outdoor events such as music/art events, boating and many other recreational activities that provide fiscal benefits to cities, counties, and private businesses alike. 3) Because of greater predictions, metrics, etc., all of these increase the quality of life ofr thew American public, whether it be from a reduction in loss of life/injuries or an enjoyable day at the beach or ampitheatre, which again has a large trickle-effect of benefits in local communities and regions across the United States. Also, it promotes an atmosphere of teamwork which will help improve our technological advances and potentially open new resources/funding to continue our development as we become much more technologically intelligent as we have the past 50 years! Please enact this policy to the benefit of all people, not even just Americans...we are truly one species on this planet, the better we understand our environment, its' changes and how we affect it, the better off we all will be and our children. Last - it might behoove us to look at if the USGS can affect such a policy in the interest of public welfare also. Thank you. Todd M. Ravazza
Father/Husband/Surfer/Safety Manager The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

56 "The proposed policy seems to make a great deal of sense from my viewpoint in the Transportation Maintenance Division of the New York State Department of Transportation. I have managed many of this agency's efforts to acquire timely, accurate weather information to support activities like snow & ice control and highway repairs over the last ten years. I strongly support the recommendations noted in the proposed policy and referenced material. Thank you. -Joseph F. Doherty, P.E. Maintenance Div./NYSDOT The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

57 "I would hope that the current availability of weather information from NOAA remains at it's current high standards and is not in any way affected by private for-profit business concerns. With the trend towards media conglomeration (ie: Clearchannel,etc.)the choices are lessened and smaller communities are left out. I can only guess there might be a certain number of entities that would like a monopoly of weather information and would dare use the ""Get the government out of competing with us...."" meaning FREE and open accesss to PUBLIC information. The National weather service is an important source of information that affects the safety and well-being of citizens of the United States and should continue it's

stellar job. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

58 I don not believe the policy whould be changed. I have observed there is a tendency for news organizations to exagerate the potential of storm threats for commercial gain in an effort to increase their viewership. The referring webpage:

59 i did not even have a computer in 1991. how is this different from the policy that was in place at that time? Chuck The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

60 "Hello, I'm very glad that your service is a free one, I have the weather bug and am always appreciative of your forcasts, plus long range outlooks through human input reading computer models. I would like to add my own input, via observations that i collect through my own weather data from multiple locations. I work in the town of Aloha, OR...and live in Beavertown, OR...which is only 5 miles away. I am interested in (micro-climatology). I would like to be able to let weather nuts like myself, as well as the weather service know that the readings they take maybe completely different than what I'm seeing at my graveyard shift between those locations. If I can be of service to provide weather stats, or provide interesting happenings I get to observe because I work when everone's still sleeping, then please let me know. I'll give a few examples... Last night the low temp for Portland recorded to be 39OF... In Aloha, I had to scrape frost off my windshield, it was 30 OF...such a descrepncy for a few miles away...I got the chance to see meteors when the glance off the atmosphere and no one reported it cause they were asleep, it snowed in Beaverton, but at the same elevation 5 miles away, it's raining... Since I was 13...now 33... I've had weather instruments of my own, I would appreciate knowing if my skills and observations would be of interest, or where to go to post comments on such local weather phenomna. Thankyou again for your continued climatology service and the freindly people that work so hard for the love of weather!!!! Sincerely, Garron. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

61 "I fully agree with NOAA's proposed policy on partnerships.As a geologist, I'm for anything that helps to smooth the way for relationships in research, education, ""use-of"" data, and anything else that might be helpful in the fields of environmental science. We're all in this together! The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

62 "Sounds reasonable. Safety before ""Empires""! I say. Just look at the decrease in aviation accidents in 50 years due to weather awareness and avaiability. Bill Retired FAA Pilot Weather Briefer/USAFR Crewmember/Pilot and Aircraft owner. The referring webpage:"

63 "I full-heartedly agree with the proposal set forth, that the evolution of technology allows for more rapid acquisition and dissemination of global data, and the cross-over inclusion of all related entities in acting on and relaying of that information should be boundary-free. - Caren Quisenberry The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

64 "The current distribution of weather information via the National weather Service works fine as it currently exists. The private media frequently make errors in reporting weather information and/or insert their own views which may in some instances prevent persons from taking necessary precautions during life-threatening severe weather conditions. Therefore, I feel the proposed changes are unnecessary and irresponsible. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

65 "I am the Director of the Delavan Emergency Services and Disaster Agency. We use the weather maps for severe weather. How is this going to change the maps for tracking severe weather, and will this be real time maps, or how long will it take to update the maps. Thank you Ron The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

66 "Does this new policy mean that I, as a private citizen, will no longer have access to the tools I currently use on the NOAA website? I routinely check my local radar loop at: <http://weather.noaa.gov/radar//loop/DS.p19r0/si.kdcox.shtml> forecast and my local forecast at: <http://weather.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/iwszone?Sites=:mdz015#t1> and <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/forecasts/MDZ015.php?warncounty=MDC035&city=Chester> I also enjoy browsing through the website reading about various special interest subjects such as El Nino and hurricanes such as Isabel. In reading the Proposed Policy I am a little afraid that I will no longer be able to. My first impression was that private companies such as The weather Channel are trying to limit access to your website in order to protect their advertisers. Being a satellite television customer, The weather Channel does not meet my needs for weather information. Thank you for allowing me express my concern. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

67 "I think it sucks. But based on that directive from OMB(?), what choice do you have? Assigning equivalency between government and private sources of information toward the performance of agency missions is just wrong. I notice all of the nice satellite composites and analyses are gone. I think it's unfortunate when such things are removed from free public use just so someone else can line their own pockets. were they really so expensive to produce, or is it even worse than that - are they still being produced but restricted to other government agencies? Anyway, keep up the good work, to the degree you're allowed, at least. Chris The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

68 "March 13, 2004 To whom It May Concern: While I am in no way a scientist, I am a citizen, who relies on the National weather Service for information and checks your site regularly. I want to be able to trust the information that comes from the NWS. Before addressing things that seem to be unclear in the new policy, I'd like to thank you for requesting public commentary. Again, I am not in politics, just a citizen, so my reading of the policy is such that I have little context regarding the "friction" that the introduction to the policy discusses. "[private sector] works with the NWS to communicate forecasts and warnings that may affect public safety." The language "works with" is not clear to me. Does this statement suggest that possibly, the Government would give some or all responsibility of informing the public through private media outlets? Does this not happen already? How does the Government benefit by working with the private sector to communicate information? "providing unrestricted access to publicly funded observations, analyses, model results, forecasts, and related information products in a timely manner and at the lowest possible cost to users." who are the users? will the NWS site begin to have pop-up ads and subscriptions, like Carnegie Mellon's old weather Underground has? If you charge ordinary citizens for the information that NWS supplies, then why should citizens pay taxes that go, in part, to NWS? Are the

users private companies, who will pay fees to the Government for their information? I just do not understand this wording. NOAA recognizes the public interest is served by the ability of private sector entities and the academic and research community to provide diverse services to meet the varied needs of specific individuals, organizations, and economic entities. NWS will give due consideration to these abilities, within the bounds of its mission responsibilities as an agent of the US government. The above section concerns me, because, as we know the FCC has shown to be too much under the influence of private interests in the past year. The precedent of how a partnership between business interests and Government agencies that seems to have been set in that case, suggests to me that when a partnership is established, the private interests really outweigh those of the people, whom the Government is supposed to represent. Overall, the language of this policy seems to consider academia and the private sector on an even plane (or even privileges the private sector), but I question the wording. I think that at all costs, the Government and academia should remain more aligned with each other and that the private sector should be subordinate to the needs and work of real scientists. For example, the following suggests that private business should have the exact same access to information as academia has: "NWS will be equitable in dealings with various classes of entities and will not show favoritism to particular classes of partners or individual entities, particularly those in the academic and commercial sectors. NWS will not provide a service to a segment of the user community that cannot be provided to all similar types of users." The use of information by scientists and businessmen are completely different, aimed at different ends. Treating them the same does not make sense to me. The very next point in the policy makes it sound as if the NWS will operate like a business: "Maintain and explain the routine: when faced with requests for specifically tailored services, NWS will make sure the customer fully understands products NWS routinely provides (e.g. forecasts, watches, warnings and data sets) and the ability of private sector providers to meet needs outside these routine services." The NWS has "customers"? What I do not see in this policy is an interest in science and scientists, who should be given budgets that help them to do their work as they see fit and to disseminate information as they see fit; they should not have to negotiate, make deals with, or entertain the interests of the private sector. If private companies play a role in their work, fine, but having a policy that builds the private sector into the roles of the Government is disturbing to me. Furthermore, the policy's repeated emphasis on "unrestricted access" to information is extremely disconcerting. Like I said above, I am not a scientist. However, I respect what scientists do, and I would worry about what would happen if their work became compromised by interests that are not theirs. I see this policy as opening the door to such a compromise. Thanks for asking for input! I do appreciate the work of the NWS. Sincerely, Elizabeth Rich The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

69 "Private meteorology companies would like the public to pay them for weather info. This desire threatens the safety of the public and the meaningful thus effectiveness of NOAA. The more you give away, the more you'll regret it in the future. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

70 "I am encouraged with the apparent change in philosophy by the NWS concerning control of information gathered by tax payer funded resources. I am concerned, however, that the focus will be on discerning this information to the academic and meteorological business communities. There is a wide base of private citizens to whom weather and meteorological activities are an avocation. I do not wish to find any of the information available to me, a private citizen, via the NWS at the present time to become unavailable due to any change in policy to make information more available to private companies and academic circles. I would not mind having more information available to me, but I do not wish to see less availability. Thanks for providing the forum to offer feedback on this issue. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

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71 "Very good idea. As a retiree living in a rural area, NOAA radar is my best source for the location of weather events. Please continue and expand the available information. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

72 "As a radio weathercaster/producer, I think the proposed policy will do a great deal to eliminate the ridiculous and shameful disagreements between certain members of the private sector, and the NWS over supposed competition between the two. I have always believed that private forecasters can best make a profitable living by creating high quality, tailored products for customers, and not by trying to reduce or degrade the public service aspect of the science of meteorology. I think that any private sector company or individual who has to rely on eliminating so called government competition does not belong in the business in the first place. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

73 "Pretty good, but there should a clearer statement that NWS exists to provide a public service above and before assisting education or private enterprise. Public money should provide benefit to the public (i.e. taxpayers and private citizens) first. For example, this means that cutting funding for NOAA weather radio stations in order to collect more data for the weather Channel would not be acceptable. Thanks for the chance for input. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

74 "I am not sure what the policy means, just keep it free like it is now, on the net. Thank you The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

75 "I have read the Policy in detail. While I do not claim to understand all the legal-ese involved in it, I did notice that the roll of the private sector was primarily 'communication' and the roll of the NWS was 'observation' and 'prediction.' My concern is that once the Policy is adopted, the private sector can cry 'foul' for the NWS making data and predictions publicly available on their website, because the public distribution of data and predictions is supposed to be the private domain. I am in staunch opposition to any policy that may interfere with the NWS conveying unbiased and uncluttered observation and prediction information directly to the American taxpayer. The NWS website, and all the information available on it, is one of the finest examples of how a government funded organization can meet and exceed its duty to the public. It was unclear whether the æPolicyÆ will increase or decrease the NWSÆs ability to continue to provide this kind of service directly to the people. If the æPolicyÆ decreases the NWSÆs ability to provide data to the public, unclouded with pop-ups and advertisements and other sorts of media bombardment, then it should not be adopted. Otherwise, it seems fine. -Robert Campbell Civil Engineer and Recreational Sailor. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

76 "wouldn't it be beneficial to all said parties to be able to pool their knowledge and collected data together for the good of all? The referring webpage: "

77 There can be only 1 voice for severe weather. This should rest with the NWS. More than 1 voice invites misinterpretation of the intent of the warning to

the general public by adding sensationalism to the warning for the purpose of gaining an audience for profit. It also weakens the foundation of the issuing location and confuses the general public on where to go for information. For 2 (myself and my wife) we absolutely disagree with the thinking of the proposal. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

78 "Increasing the scope of certain functions of the NWS will only add to the amount of work needed to produce that particular product. Tensengrity suggests the best way, this word which I believe has to do with the sharring of stress between all members of particular system, I think would best apply. This is best done by free and easy transfer of information. More simply, I suggest looking at a biological system as a guide for the development of the NWS, such as an animal organ and how it relates the whole organism. The biggest thing this shows is that there has to be a - free - flow of information between the parts, as well as specific functions for all the systems pieces. NASA for instance has experimental data that comes from GOES satelites that produces artificial skew-t log-p aerosonde charts for places like Raleigh NC, where I live that could be added to the Greensboro and Morehead City real balloon tests to enhance or perhaps compare with while making forecasts. The Oklahoma University produces grid sizes for certain weather products less than 20 kms, productions like this could add or at least be intergrated into the picture that NWS meteorologists use to make forecasts. The one complaint I have personally heard is that there is to much information and it takes to long to get to all of it, so try to synthesize differing pieces of information into a more concrete model, and give the meteorologists the quickest way to the widest range of data. A hierarchal graphical map database where one idea like convection leads to an array of sub maps each with its own maps, or perhaps live data, from that. A map databse branched like a tree root system, or multiple root systems. Human beings being visual creatures can read a map many times faster than a log of numbers so perhaps continual research and ""product testing"" of new more powerful maps would be helpful. Increase the amount of automated systems for collection, would also be helpful. What if every mile highway mile marker had a solar powered temperature guage that transmitted that information to the next mile marker that in relay passed it to a node for collection? Say put this with a simple humidity dectector... This would greatly help the differing weather models output. Main point is for the NWS to be better there has to be competition to succeed, better free flow of information between the parts, and easier access to what is already available. Thank you for letting me air my comments, good luck! Stewart Alexander The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

79 "In reading between the lines of the reasons for the proposed new policy I must question the intentions of the entities causing the ""tension"". I do not know what these ""tensions"" are but I can imagine. I am fortunate enough to log-on to the NWS site at least once a day to plan my business and personal activities based on the data I receive and I rely exclusively on your services for this. I also tune into local and national broadcasts mainly to confirm why I rely on your service for accuracy. This is not to say that the broadcast media does not provide a valuable service. For those who cannot directly access your services on-line it may be their only access. As for Academia and Private entities I have no first hand knowledge. One could argue that I profit from the data that I receive from your service but I do not profit from ""resale"" of that data in any form. If the ""tensions"" that are mentioned are caused by entities that profit from the ""resale"" of your data I must register my objection to any new policy that would accomadate them if it costs the public one penny more to establish and maintain this policy. I further suggest that your agency consider a fee for any data that is used for ""resale"". I am sure this would cause some real ""tension"". I, for one, appreciate the accurate and timely service you provide. I oppose any policy established that adversely affects the operation of your agency in any way, shape or form. Thank you, Duncan Lamb The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

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80 We have every faith in NOAA and its proposal! We have followed your organization for 40 years and we believe in your organizations judgements and ideas. We support your efforts and will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Thank you for being so accessible and for producing a vehicle of such complete information in an exceptionally easy format. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

81 "Being a weather enthusiast for many years, I find the idea of limiting or even prohibiting satellite data to the general public(ie weather enthusiasts) both uncalled for and unfair. My tax money pays for these satellites and the people who monitor them and their data. I also think there are other alternatives such as mirror servers or repeat loops in crucial situations such as landfalling storms or severe weather outbreaks. This would help with bandwidth issues. I think everyone with an interest in weather who chooses to use these satellites has the right. It would be a big blow to the weather enthusiasts and Skywarn community to prohibit us from this data. I belong to a weather enthusiasts web site Storm2k.org and we hope that these satellites and there data will always be available to us. Thanks for your time. The referring webpage: <http://www.storm2k.org/phpbb2/viewtopic.php?p=442882>"

82 "dear NWS; regarding partnerships in providing weather data. in our home, we visit NWS .gov sites on a daily basis. it is the first thing we do in the morning, to decide what activities we will be pursuing- based on our weather forecast. in the past, we did try to use private websites, but in recent years we check your .gov site almost exclusively. our preference for the .gov sites, is that they are faster, we like the narrative style with complete explanations, that we feel are trustworthy. at times we have found that the private websites do not have the same information, and that causes us to mistrust them. also, the privates do decide what information they feel is most useful to the public and edit accordingly. we want access to all the information that the NWS makes available, and then we will decide. by using NWS information direct, we are as up to date as we can be. thank you for this opportunity to comment. keep up the good work. curt The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

83 "Any process that potentially gives more timely weather information to the public is of substantial benefit to all. While many private weather forecasting firms exist, most exist to serve specific needs and those needs would not be threatened by a more open and proactive policy by the NWS. As a pleasure boater, I have personally experienced situations where more timely weather information would have been of great value. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

84 "Your proposed Policy on Partnerships disregards the most important Partnership that NOAA has. That between you and the final recipients of the information your systems gather, analyze and predict. The information available on the various NWS sites is *by far* the most complete weather information available from any source. This policy opens the doors for the private sector to quietly seek ""Establishing procedures for seeking input and suggestions to create, modify, or discontinue products and services"" that would dramatically reduce the usefulness of the information that the National weather Service provides to the public today. This is wrong. The very purpose of the National weather Service is to make this publicly funded information as available to ALL as reasonably possible. The purpose of the private sector is solely to make money for their investors. Because of the differing focus, there will always be tension between the parties. Do not forget

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that your first mission is to the American public. You provide invaluable information to protect life and property as well as invaluable information to plan simple personal events. On a personal note, I find that I can almost always get a more accurate forecast from using the information on your site than any other available source. Find another source that actually has the isobaric map available, for instance. I therefore suggest, that there be specific language added to section 6 that protects information made freely available to the public from the National Weather Service from encroachment by the private sector. Thanks for your consideration of my comments. Sincerely, Greg Bishop. 4794 Tapestry Dr. Fairfax, VA 22032 The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

85 "As a boater and a fisherman on the Monterey Bay, I appreciate the equity in dealing with all parties of interest. Your information is paramount in our safety and success. Thanks AL # Equity: NWS will be equitable in dealings with various classes of entities and will not show favoritism to particular classes of partners or individual entities, particularly those in the academic and commercial sectors. NWS will not provide a service to a segment of the user community that cannot be provided to all similar types of users. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

86 "DATA EXCHANGE IS ALWAYS THE BEST PROCEEDURE AS ALL BENEFIT FROM SUCH OPEN ENDED DIALOUGE, AND THE SOURCES ARE EXPANDED... THAT IS WHAT THE INTERNET IS ALL ABOUT ANYWAY... BESIDES THAT YOU FOLKS HAVE A GREAT PRODUCT THAT I USE EVERYDAY! MAHALO! The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

87 "I came upon this Proposed Policy on Partnerships while searching for weather information. I was happy to find that organizations are coming together to improve the prediction, monitoring, and early warnings of our sourrounding outdoor enviroment that we all live in. I would think with co-operation and working together that the results would be postive. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

88 "Even as an engineer and a pilot, I can not understand what your policy change accomplishes. It seems to be written in ""committee speak"" or ""governmentese"" Can you rephrase it to plane speaking such as ""in the past we wanted to provide raw data and finished forecast in our own format and let the citizens figure out with industry and academic help what we meant to say.--Now we are going to provide data and finished forecast in formats everyone can understand."" ... or what ever you meant to say... The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

89 "NWS: I applaud the efforts involved to update the 1991 NWS Partnership Policy. I am not totally familiar as to the complete history to facilitate this effort, but I do believe that more clarification of roles between the NWS, private sector and academia is needed. This policy statement appears to address how the NWS will ""conduct"" its business relating to its mission statement and coexist with the private sector and academia. Great detail is provided as to how the NWS will distribute its data, communicate data modifications and changes, provide advance notice of all changes etc. I believe this is a great to see the NWS take these issues detailing its implied service level agreements with its partners. However, I believe it should go further and set expectations as to how its product set will be used by its partners including the private sector and academia. In short, taxpayer funds go into the creation and collection of the data and information and it should

be treated as copyrighted material. Too often, the private sector has misled parties into believing certain forecasts, data sets or forecasting models are the result of internal efforts. The private sector should not have the right to issue severe weather warnings that contradict the NWS warnings. The private sector should not be able to take NWS information and distribute it as ""their own"" product without giving source credit to the NWS. The private sector should have to provide credit to the NWS for any product that it simply ""redistributes"" with or without and value-added capability. In addition, academia should not be allowed to compete with the NWS or the private sector. Specifically, if a forecast model was created by a research institution using public funds that model should be freely available to all. Also, universities should not have the ""right"" to provide operational forecasts to the media, aviation or other public or commercial entity other than being used the internal use of that institution of learning. I believe academia has and should continue to be closely associated with the NWS for research purposes and not be in the position of trying to compete with either the private sector or the NWS. Lastly, on item 8 last bullet - I'm not sure of the intent of this section. I don't understand how the ""NWS will make sure the customer fully understands products NWS ""routinely"" provides...."". The NWS can explain the products and services it offers, but it can not assume that the customer will understand. I believe a better way of wording this would be that the ""NWS will communicate its offering of products that it ""routinely"" provides..."". Also, I do not believe that it is the appropriate role of the NWS to provide ""the ability of private sector providers to meet needs outside these routine services"". I believe this entire paragraph is not specific enough as it defines roles among the three entities (NWS, private sector, and academia). I believe many areas of conflict could be avoided if this paragraph simply stated that the NWS will adhere to its mission statement, and it will not produce products for specific users other than government entities (military, federal, state and local governments) and will only be done so on an as needed and short-term basis. If a request is received by the NWS which conflicts with the above then it needs to simply urge the requestor to contact a private sector organization. I'm afraid the way it is written in the policy statement the definition of roles is not clear enough. Thanks you very much for creating this policy statement. The NWS clearly is the world's leading public weather service. You do great work with the resources provided. Southwest Airline is the largest domestic airline which solely uses NWS forecasts for operational decision making. We fully support and appreciate the NWS in every way possible. This policy statement provides the NWS the opportunity to copyright and take credit for all its products. As future funding pressure is placed upon NOAA and the NWS it is essential that our lawmakers fully understand the quality, quantity and usage NWS products get. Without clear identification of NWS products (ie. others taking credit for them) it is easy for our policy makers to underestimate the role of NOAA and the NWS. Rick Curtis Southwest Airlines (214) 792-5317 The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

90 "I greatly appreciate the information on the NOAA site in terms of up to the minute data from the bouys. I am also in favor of resources being shared as ultimately the data users (all of us) benefit. I would like to see a system developed that could feed live weather/sea conditions via the GPS system. Imagine the simplicity and safety of sailing in the ocean miles from the coast and being able to receive current weather on your handheld GPS. For example, if you were off the coast of NJ heading for Block Island, you could select your ""go to"" waypoints (Block Island) and see what lay ahead. All sailors could have a listing of the data bouys in listed on the GPS. They would type in the bouy number and presto, all they want to know. Remember, if this doesn't already exist, I thought of it first. Thanks for all you do. Bob Bottinelli The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

91 "The policy sounds very reasonable. Is there any thought given for creating a registry of parties interested in changes to formats or data provided by noaa. So

for example, if newer technology dictated a change to the TAF format is there a mechanism for identifying those parties that would need to know that the data format they were acquiring was going to be changing? The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

92 "As a private pilot I rely on accurate and fairly 'real time' weather information. I use a variety of weather information sources, and the faster that information is disseminated is important to me. It is hard, sometimes, to discern how old that data is. If there is more cooperation amongst the generators of the data, the 'compilers and presenters' of the data and the 'disseminators', then our ability to receive pertinent information quickly can only enhance the safety and useability aspects of gathering weather data. As our weather technology increases, I'd like to see the weather information transmitted via satellite. Yes, the information is already available by satellite, but at significant cost to the user. As the software becomes available, automated gathering and mapping will become more accurate and timely, and that cost savings needs to be passed on to the public as weather is probably the most widespread 'item' that affects our daily lives. Thanks for the opportunity to comment. Linn Walters The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

93 "REF: New ERA of Cooperation between NWS and the others outside the NWS. I was an NWS employee for many years. This new policy tells me one thing. That the Management NWS sees it as a desirable activity. FRANKLY as an employee of the NWS and a NON FIREABLE employee (no one gets fired from the NWS no matter how incompetent they are) such as many idiot bosses in the NWS I had) (not mentioning names like Mogil) As a longtime NWS employee I don't have to do anything but forecast and many in the NWS don't give a [word deleted] what Management says. They are mostly there to watch the weather and draw a paycheck ...what could be better. Other interaction with academia ...IN YOUR DREAMS , NWS MANAGEMENT !!! It will never happen. I found that half of the NWS employees were the laziest bunch of [word deleted] I ever knew. Dave Texas The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

94 "Quality and accurate weather forecasting is of great value to individuals and businesses in agriculture, transportation, and just about any outdoor activity. It is vital that the government scientists maintain a strong hand on acquiring and interpreting this information lest we all be forced to either pay a private disseminator to give us (taxpayer paid for) data or else choose to forego the information. It is for the benefit of the citizens for their safety and economic well being that this data and analysis continue to be provided free. Private analysts are free to use the data further for their clients, but let's not let them muffle government scientists' analysis. I use the information for farm operations, ski weekends, and private flying information. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

95 "I am employed by a large school district and I use NOAA forecasts daily to see to see what wx is going to effect our area and operation. Whatever your policies are, I request that you still make your products available to the general public, as it is the quickest most accurate information available to us. Thank You Bill Roller The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

96 wonderful safety feature! Long overdue! The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

97 I am a college educated individual and your proposal makes no sense to me. I still do not know what it is you are proposing and how that is different from the existing system. I am a private sector individual who uses both NWS products and private products to facilitate my business and protect my customers from potential weather threats. I suspect that your proposal will affect my access to weather products so I would like to understand what is being proposed. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

98 "Thank you for the consultation opportunity. i don't have sufficient knowledge of the intricacies of definition between the three roles commented upon in your policy but I do have the following observations. I along with many water sports enthusiasts use your buoy data before every trip out to sea, all of the data you offer at present: wind direction and wind speed are essential but the ability to view the previous 24 hrs gives great insight into trends for the day. wave height and interval allows me to make prediction for surf conditions. Coupling this with trends from other buoys allows a picture to develop of conditions and when the best conditions are likely to be. Pressure and rate of rise help me to understand how reliable my wind will be and whether it is likely to drop off or not. And the wind and air temp gives me a good indication of which gear to take with me and how long I should stay in the water. This helps me to let others know when i should be back (safety for me.) I confess I don't understand dew point fully but use it as a measure of how moist the air is and therefore get an understanding of how much force a given wind speed has. The more dense the air the more powerful in my kitew (18m sq +) In closing I'd just like to ask that when you rationalise your provision of data please allow for lay weather watchers like myself who draw useful inference from these reports and are able to gain far better use of their limited time off by going to the right place at the right time with the right equipment thanks in no small part to your instruments. Thanks, Hope this wasn't too far off your remit. Dai Swan The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

99 "Dear NOAA Policy Makers, As an individual representative of the PUBLIC INTEREST and free of corporate interests, a citizen of the United States, a taxpayer, and non-entity of any private interest group, I feel this policy is a fantastic step forward in attempting to address the deperate need for public dessimination of data that by law (I would guess), is the rightful ownership of every taxpaying citizen. To be brief, Im a weather buff and visit the storm prediction center often, but often realize the difficult connection I and the public sector have to this and other data, which sometimes seems is applied favorably and even exclusively to certain private sector or business/academic sector organizations. This is unfair, if true, and the policy you guys describe seems to address that, as well as the desperate need for XML and other interent driven data to us. We would very much benefit from a policy of increased public data delivery and policy settings on every level, which we (should) have the FREEDOM to use for our own interest, whether in software, web development, or alerting systems to protect life and property, or for personal interest. For example, Im not completely familiar with your lightning data programs, EMWIN data, or radar information, but seems in the past that companies like lightningstorm.com and others, for example, have some sort of exclusive rights to some of this data, but which is either resold exclusively to the public and/or that the public has difficulty accessing that data. Sometimes the format seems almost proprietary to the interest groups involved. As a taxpayer, if this is true, we feel this is wrong. We also pay for that data, and so I would be in favor of this new policy if it would ""open up"" or make universal those data channels and make that information more accessible for free public consumption, within the bounds of security constraints, of course. So, ""kudos"" to you and your group for realizing this, and moving forward with more forward thinking in addressing the need for service reviews concerning all user groups under

the policy, and for looking into new technologies to do so. I hope this translates into more free XML exploration, for example, that is internet accessible, correctly DTD'ed and organized, consistent among all organizations, and accessible not only by select groups, but shared by all groups. We all benefit! Mitchell Stokely - Dallas, Texas The referring webpage:"

100 "Equal access must be maintained. In order to avoid any appearance of inpropriety or favoritism (which is a violation of the Code of Federal Regulations), delete the words ""similar types of"" from paragraph 8, bullet 4 as follows: ò Equity: NWS will be equitable in dealings with various classes of entities and will not show favoritism to particular classes of partners or individual entities, particularly those in the academic and commercial sectors. NWS will not provide a service to a segment of the user community that cannot be provided to all users. The referring webpage:"

101 I do not believe that the NWS should interfere with the NOAA. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

102 I noticed that the policy does not refer to WMO or ICAO standards for international cooperation in weather matters. It would appera that NOAA has decided to go its own way on the international cooperation issue. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

103 "Fair weather sounds great. As a weather consultant I would like access to AWIPS datasets using my PC as a terminal in the same way the weather service offices aquire the most current data. I noticed the AWIPS home page was changed, from: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/msm/awips/awipsmsm.htm> To: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/ost/awipsprog.html> The new AWIPS home page is no longer available to the public and there is a message that if the user is not on a NOAA server, the page is no longer available. Gerald Singleton at Gerald.Singleton@noaa.gov is the contact. I don't know how or if any of this applies to the proposed policy, but it seems relevant to me. Regards, Andrew Gaines The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

104 "Generally sounds pretty good - a bit wordy, but it is a large subject, so that might be expected. The most important result I feel is to achieve what in the aerial photo interpretation business is called ""ground truth"" - what's really out there. I recall a comment that someone made at a flight service station - ""tell him to look out the window"". Thanks for opportunity to comment. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

105 "The policy as stated seems worthwhile. It is important that direct access to NWS products, such as ADDS, be continued. I agree the ""partnership"" idea works best, i.e. all entities contribute and overlap. Rigidity is unwise. Thanks for your long time service. The referring webpage:"

106 "I wish you government guys could learn to speak like regular people. If you are asking if this site is a benefit to all , very definitely yes. you should advertise it's existence so people know it is here. I travel up and down the state of Illinois every week and I wouldn't leave home without consulting the site.

Thanks for offering it. Connie Butler The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

107 "This is in response to your request to provide feedback to the proposed policy on partnerships. Overlapping roles of each sector may produce gray areas that could lead to uncertainty in providing environmental information services to our respective customers. It is most encouraging to hear of National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's efforts to adopt a new partnership policy, which intends to strengthen the relationships between academia, government, and the private sectors. I fully concur with the proposal's intent to improve the processes in which we interact with one another. Establishing rigid boundaries is counterproductive as indicated by the National Research Council's study in the matter. Therefore, it should be of little concern when an organization enters the gray area. Working closer together should increase awareness that will only benefit the services we provide to the public. Sincerely, Richard A. Shema, President WeatherGuy.com, LLP 970 N. Kalaheo Ave. Suite C-104 Kailua, HI 96734 Toll Free: 866-882-WXGY (9949) Mobile: 808-291-WXGY (9949) Office: 808-254-2525 Fax: 808-254-1525 Email: rick@weatherguy.com website: <http://www.weatherguy.com> The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

108 "What you are doing is wonderful!! WE need more interaction like this. Please, keep up the excellent work. Dennis The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

109 "The proposed policy, you wish comments on, I know little, about. But to have safety & turn a profit, ect. One needs all the current info, one can gather...I just have property along a remote hwy in a remote area, with a interest in a weather station, cell tower-internet--wind--solar , ect. But no money and to busy trying to paddle to keep my nose from all but going under with the rest, to really go after my interests The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

110 "Any sharing and distributing of information should not be limited. Anyone fearing the flow of information has most likely personal gain in limiting that information. An example of this is the limited information on the Gulf Stream provided by the NWS Marine weather office. This information is important to Mariners, and is distributed by others for a fee. This information is created by Government funded groups and should be available to those who need it and have payed for it. I 'm sure there are other examples of conflicts that benefit a few at the cost of many. Regards Ed Witts The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

111 "Unless things have changed recently, it would seem that the NESDIS policy of charging for the data they provide to their customers is not in accord with the spirit of this policy. I recognize that NESDIS, although part of NOAA, is not an NWS organization. Nevertheless, I recommend the policy be applied NOAA-wide and specifically include NESDIS as well as NWS. That would ensure that data are freely available from origin to archival destination. R. Whiton Office (618) 624-9005 Home (618) 344-7194 rwhiton@ezl.com The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

112 "I would hate to see an organization like "weather dot com" become

involved in your websites. They would have it full of annoying pop-up advertisements. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

113 "I would like to know how this new policy will affect the various NWS Forecast offices around the country. Will there be cuts to the staff, and will part of the forecasting and warning responsibility be passed on to the private sector. Please Reply\ Joseph Pennington The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

114 "I know that if there is a partnership such as the ADD program I believe that more definitive information can be sent out to the different users. Between NOAA, NHC, Nasa, and maritime information a user would be able to look at a complete situation even for future forecasting. Falcon712@msn.com Jay T. Rhoads {KD4QOV} The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

115 "Gentlemen, My wife and I are recreational boaters, using the buoys for ""real time"" updates and misc. info. I was a navigator in the USAF for many years, so having good wx info is not just important, it is critical and many times a lifesaver. IF YOU CAN GET THESE THREE GROUPS TO WORK TOGETHER, IT SHOULD BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO EVERYONE. Period!! Elimination of duplication is the first advantage I think of. The second is getting a better product to the public. Is the military on board? The Navy & USCG have facilities & data that could help us. If the inter-service rivalries can be avoided. I wish you had video-cams on the buoys. Or a digital camera that transmits one color photo per minute. It would be an opportunity to SEE what is happening. A visual reinforcement of data. If a boater wasn't sure what 20 ft swells at 20 seconds apart meant, he could actually see it. Seeing this might save lives. Good luck with your endeavors, we will look forward to a brighter future thanks to you and your dedicated staff. Regards, David Loving The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

116 "I strongly support the proposed policy and recommend creation of improved NWS services in the Grand Isle, LA area specifically the NWS radio service. The signal strength for the NWS Radio Service does not reach the Grand Isle, LA area. I also strongly recommend creation of modern and up-to-date tidal and weather station in Port Fourchon, LA. As a federal search and rescue and law enforcement agency, we rely solely on NWS for accurate weather information. We also host NOAA station GDIL1 on our base and look forward to future improvements and complete cooperation with NOAA services. I would personally like to thank the efforts of Tim Osborn, Regional Operations, NOAA CSC, Lafayette, LA for his continued and dedicated support to the local Coast Guard units within his region. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

117 "thank you for asking. I feel strongly that we should have the most open free communication possible to fill as many minds with information on each of these topics throughout the world. then when we go to other countries and its people, living here or around the world they will be open to help our world oceans collectively. we need to show leadership in each of these areas throughout the world. we all are flying everywhere and word gets out. Thank you for all your past work and new and exciting work ahead, with the new technology to help foster it faster. In gratitude for the many people that don't even know you exist and for the future generations. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

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118 "Although I am not familiar with the details of this policy shift, as a consumer of weather information, and based on the info provided on this website it sounds good. I should also note, it would be nice to be able to get weather data/info more easily directly from the NWS especially for local conditions/data. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

119 "It seems that the proposed idea is not only necessary, but far over due. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

120 "With respect to the ""Comment on NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information"", I emphatically stress the need for NOAA to always maintain a free access to public weather information for the following reasons: 1) Critical weather forecasts are needed for life-threatening events and must never be denied to those unable to pay. 2) The public has already paid, and continues to pay for this government infrastructure. The public must always have access to the services it pays for. Sincerely, Ken Bauer, PE The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

121 "I suggest that if a U.S Government agency (NOAA, NWS, etc.) gathers weather information, that the information should be available to the public, and NOT be given only to a private entity for distribution to the public for a fee. This seems to be unfair to the public who have actually already funded the cost of gathering the information through taxation. The Agency has the information and it should belong to the public, not be withheld from the public. A good example is the fact that some years ago the location of the Gulf Stream was available to the public, but due to some quirk of private interest, IE the ability to charge money to the public for information that used to be free, The public has been unable to access this Gulf Stream information for some time now. This information used to be broadcast on NOAA weather radio and was useful for many private fishermen in south Florida. I would like to be granted access to this information again. Thank you for your consideration on this matter. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

122 "As a sportsfishing enthusiast, I have been using information from your National Data Buoy project and its links to NWS forecasts to plan my expeditions. This has been a fabulous service, and any policy that improves the information available or broadens the scope of the project has my endorsement. The policy I just read seems to indicate that you will continue to make this information publicly accessible. I hope you will continue to fund this project. Thanks for this service and this opportunity to praise it. Chris Brincefield Statesville, NC The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

123 "No strict boundaries should be in place, and the proposed policy should be expanded to include similar activities of NESDIS, OAR, and the National Ocean Service. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

124 I can remember a few years back when I was frustrated by the untimeliness of radar images I was able to view on certain internet sites. I knew that the government WSR-88D radar sites were pretty much the only source of radar data so I

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did some research to find out how I could access these images. I hit a brick wall when I discovered only certain companies were allowed access to the data from the radar sites and I would have to pay a large sum of money to access the data from one of these companies. I soon gave up on the idea. A little while later I discovered that the government was going to allow access to the data on it's servers to the general public and I was thrilled. I discovered that the data was not stored in image format so I learned how to program in C++ just so I could view the data in an image format. I have since written my own software for my own research and have never attempted to make any money off of this software. I think it is a great thing the NWS and NOAA have done and I am looking forward to more great things. Keep up the good work. The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

125 "Upon review of your recommendations for ongoing partnerships I would like to offer my opinion given below. I do not believe that the weather service should regulate what tools may be used by participants of the program. However, I continue to very strongly in that only NOAA or the NWS shall be authorized to produce weather advisories, warnings, and various public service announcements regarding severe or dangerous weather conditions. I believe that permitting corporations or other non-governmental agencies the power to issue such announcements will inevitably be abused to promote or advance their business interests to their financial benefit and possibly to the harm of the general public. Just my humble opinion. Thank you for your offer to hear the opinions of the public. --Steve The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/feedback.php>"

126 "As always if you ask a group outside NOAA or NWS about the jobs of both entities they almost always side with the Private Sector which has more clout and money to use to convince Congress. The protection of life and property in the U.S., public forecasting, and collection of the data for these products should be left in the hands of a Government Agency aka the National weather Service. The public already pays tax dollars to support this and get the information for less money than any other source in Government or the Private Sector. Anyone who is trying to make a profit should not be involved in this as there is always a problem with conflict of interest. The data that the NWS collects should be given to the public at low cost or free as they have already paid to have it collected. The Private Sector takes the data and tailors it to the groups that they deal with who want the forecasts. Most of the animosity that I have heard of is with the Private Sector companies that want to get the data collected by the NWS and sell it to other at a profit. The NWS does not want to go into private forecasting as we have a job to do already for the public. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

127 "I have a 38 foot boat, it is capable of costal crusing. I also own a computer program Nobletc.Nobletic would lie to charge me 500.00 dollars a year to over lay my electronic charts which they also got from the government,for which I as a taxpayer helped pay for.I think the government should giveit to the people who paid for it and not to special Intrests. Thanks for the free weather ,John Holt The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

128 "I am not sure how the policy change will affect access to the information you provide, but as a science teacher, I find the information you provide via the Internet a tremendous classroom resource. I hope a policy change will not diminish this educational resource. Terry Uselton The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

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129 "I believe that over the last few years the National weather Service has taken great advantage of the opportunities presented by the internet to disseminate high quality information to interested users. I have become a regular user of my local forecast office web site. I appreciate both the immediacy of the access to data and the very high quality of the data available. I take every opportunity to recommend these sites to others. I have read the proposed policy, and I am particularly glad to see that it incorporates the principles of "Open information dissemination" and "Equity", as I understand them from the description. I believe that the excellent web services that I am using exemplify these principles. I believe that your policy statement will help guide the NWS to continue to develop its services along the excellent path it has begun. I believe that your efforts to supply ready access to better quality data fill a strongly felt public need. I believe that public experience with this service will increase the public level of sophistication about and interest in weather services and will lead to greater success in the NWS fulfilling its primary mission. (i.e. right on guys!) The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

130 "I believe the interactive partnership is essential in bringing to the general public; advisories, watches and warnings which relate to weather information. Weather obviously affects everyone's day to day activities and the general public needs daily updated weather information. This partnership will enhance the gathering and expedite the distribution of weather information. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

131 "Dear Gentlemen: I am a "weather buff". By profession, I am an educator. I enjoy the variety of products that are available to me as a member of the general public. I appreciate having the ability to go online and find the forecast, including graphs, charts, and more, for an area that my wife and I are planning to visit. I compare your services with those of www.weather.com and www.accuweather.com and find that while forecasts may differ, there are valid reasons for those differences. Please do not shut out the general public from appreciating your hard work. Rather, continue to draw the various resources together to become even more effective in forecasting and analyzing weather information. Your consideration of my comments is appreciated. Thomas Keener The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

132 "I am a private pilot, living in a geographically diverse area of the country. I rely on high-quality weather information for safety when I fly, and in making decisions whether to fly. I have made particular use of the java-based tools, as well as skew-t products available through, or based upon, noaa observations. I would most strenuously object to any warping of the proposed rules to give a financial advantage to a private sector entity, or to restrict information available from taxpayer-based sources. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

133 "It seems that NOAA's many regional operations do a superb job with " on the ground " local work (ie- Riverton,WY,with a huge area to cover,both geographical and areas of responsibility...wind,rain,snow,blizzard,drought,flood,tornado,fire weather,avalanche weather,tremendous cold,tremendous heat,etc. etc. etc.---- while the private companies do a better job with "big picture stuff",and a much better job with graphics and public relations. Competition is the #1 sickness in this country. Should it not be the opposite?-working together,sharing,listening,learning? In all of life,none of us "makes it" until we all do--together! Should it not be so with the weather

enterprises? Should not the goal be ""letting the other 'win', even though you know you can clobber 'em."" ? (Lucy-in Charles Shultz's ""Peanuts"" } Good Luck! The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

134 "The Proposed Policy would seem to be a logical step in integrating various weather reporting modalities. There are few, if any reasons, that a more integrated policy should not be put in place. I see no major proposals in the new policy that I disagree with. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

135 "No reply is necessary to this comment. Proposed policy appears to ensure that the NWS info that we - as private citizens with no commercial interest - use will remain available. NWS info and forecasts are valuable to us. In addition, NWS data archives - of both raw data and subsequent forecasts - are likely to be indispensable for refining future models for forecasting. Relying on the private sector to retain such data is problematic and, for the greater public good, probably not a wise idea. Thanks. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

136 "I fully support the policy as it is outlined on-line. The only suggestion I have is to provide a detailed, though understandable to a layperson, explanation of the differences between the major computer models. I am living in New Orleans and am from the Mid-Atlantic. When one or more computer tracks take a hurricane to myself or my family I'd like to know how that model differs from the others. Keep up the good work! The referring webpage:"

137 "The proposed policies seem quite reasonable, especially the policy of non-discriminatory issuing of data. I firmly believe that the information captured and developed by the NWS should be freely available to the public, through the Internet as well as through traditional methods. After all, the public is, through taxes, paying for the activities of the NWS. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

138 "Greetings from NCDC- I am PI on a National and International pilot project (ESDIM) for the open exchange of NWP and Climate models and related observational data. The effort is called NOMADS (see <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/climate/nomads/nomads.html>) for further information. This comment is related to the above in the sense that broad inter-and intra Agency cooperation has been forged at the grass roots level in order to provide model intercomparison, and a general framework for high volume data transport. Within your proposed policy statement you list the collection and ""archive"" of weather data and suggest that the mission of archive exceeds that of the NWS and rests with NCDC. However, as the policy proposes- an expansion of the policy should include NESDIS and other LO's. Each LO, acts independantly- in terms of data collection and dissemination and this thus inheirently creates difficulties in the ability to study multiple earth systems under a sustainable system architecture. NOAA, as already recommended in FAIR WEATHER needs to aggressively pursue data access capabilities due the ever growing volumes in Sat and Radar. How is this to be achieved if NOAA does not promote data format issues? NOMADS uses XML, and the OPeNDAP (and SOAP, and others), data subsetting distributed data formats. NOMADS (and OPeNDAP/DODS) participants have agreed to the most commonly used formats, and proceeded to build API libraies to users clients- and in turn meet the needs of what users actually use. The NOMADS framework not only supports models (NWP: Grib/BUFR/ascii; Climate GCM's: NetCDF; Satellite: HDF(x)); but other data fomrs

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such as long-term climate reference data sets, sst's, and Radar data. The FAIR WEATHER document is a great document, except for the Networking Box 5.4 which proposes the use of database technology and even suggests NDFD as a database. My understanding of NDFD is that it is flat files in GRIB2 format. Relational databases cannot deal with this volumes. NOMADS can, and has been prosed to be used with NDFD (subsetting in parameter time and space). Given the trend over the last 25 years or so, Networks will lag behind cpu speed and I expect this trend to continue. Subsetting, but the user, rather than push technologies will soon be the standard. XML is the future and NWS and NOAA needs to pursue these technologies. This is not achived at the Programmatic level: it is achived at the DATA level. It may be funded at the program level but a new paradigm is taking shape and data interoperability is driving the new visions- surfing the web for data just as we surf for static html today. I propose NOAA/NWS consider advancing a NOMADS-like capability by advancing XML/OPeNDAP and creating a framework where NOAA programs fund a portion (5%?) of their base to support data interoperabilty - across all of NOAA. In this way- data will be useable in all it's forms: operational real-time to retrospective (archived) research mode. This way- studies of earth systems across multiple sciences (ocean, climate and weather) can be developed and advnaced. For the NCDC NOMADS data access page see: <http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/model/model-resources.html> Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have and thank you for the opportunity to comment. Sorry for the length. Regards, Glenn The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

139 "I encourage the further involvement of the private sector in the future planning of the NWS and its products. I run a service named ProAlert.us where we offer warnings, alerts etc. to the public. Most of the information comes from links to the EMWIN system and weatherwire. We supply many Skywarn and Emergency personnel information at no cost and will continue to do so. We also offer this to the public for a small charge. It is important to insure that folks like myself are kept in the loop and listened to as we are face to face with the public on a daily basis. This interface allows us to judge just how affective the system is. Some changes to the EMWIN products and miss use of said products currently cause issues with the way we handle the alerts and how they are formatted/coded. The non speed increase with the new proposed EMWIN and the N-sat. It does not make any since that the speed of the EMWIN downlink would remain as 9600. An increase in speed to 19200 would allow for some much more timely delivery of statements and images along with room for future expansion and usage. Please consider having third party entities such as myself to be part of this new and exciting future before us. Tim Shriver ProAlert.us The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

140 "Be very careful if you do, indeed, decide to create a new, written policy. The description of the NRC's findings do not seem to describe what forthcoming role the private sector will play and how THEY will contribute and benefit the NWS. The ""private sector"" tends to be grabby and selfish; taking all it can FOR FREE and giving nothing in return. Unless the private weather organization, i.e. TV weather broadcasters, etc are truly being deined current up-to-date information (which I seriously doubt), then, in my opinion, think the agreement as it stands should remain. The technology gets shared in the end. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

141 "I agree that all sectors, public & private, sshould be able to draw on each others resources not only to aid in more accurate weather forecasts but also to share information that may be vital or even critical to the well being of all persons living in the world . I live in the southwest and hold a private pilots license. As a pilot I have to have trust and faith of true and accurate weather forecasts prior to making a decission on if I plan to fly or not. If the

information I receive is not accurate or up to date then the consequences can adversely affect the air craft that I am in and my passengers well being. Aviation weather changes all the time and peoples lives are at risk if the information is hours old. Weather aloft often changes sometimes for the better and sometimes for the worse and it is a pilots duty to be aware of those changes or at least have resourses to be able to make course changes with actual and specific conditions both measured and observed. with this information at hand and available tragedies can be turned into a good situation for those in the air as well as for those on the ground. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

142 "Representative: The Public Sector interest does not appear to be clearly and specifically mentioned or represented as a significant participant in these events, the impact of which, will effect all Americans. Academia and the Private Sector are specifically mentioned, while the Public Sector interest has no citation in the document. This lack of attention to the Public Sector will allow the Bias of the Academic and Private Sector to prevail in this so-called ""Partnership"" development. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

143 I would encourage NWS and NOAA to cooperate more closely with and hopefully enter into more two-way information exchanges with academia and private forecasting companies globally. There are many highly skilled and civic minded forecasters in the private sector with valuable insights for NWS. Greater real-time sharing of data can only improve the accuracy of forecasts. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

144 Favorable comment. Proceed. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

145 "I travel extensively across the U.S. and use both the NWS and TWC to keep a close watch on the weather in various places that I visit across the country. I support the proposed policy and believe that the public, private and academic sectors wpould mutually benefit from the new policy."

146 "I will encourage NWS to steer clear of the creation of more products of a nitch of specialized nature that are or could be done by private meteoroloigst, especially derivatives of forecast information for weather-sensative business ventures, and apart from immediate public safety. I would be happy to discuss specific areas where NWS has encroached on my products over recent years. The referring webpage:"

147 "I quickly reviewed the proposed policy and have the following question, will the general public see continued improvements in WEB based content and will images such as radar continue to be timely? Thanks Dan Zorbini 406 Petrick Ave Mingo Junction, Ohio 43938 (We are located approx. 30 miles west of Pittsburgh Pa.) The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

148 "I feel the information NOAA releases to the private sector for no fee should be released to the public also. Anyone requesting specific data desimation should pay a fee-for-service. When specialized services are requested and the

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company uses that information to promote the sale of said information via internet or any other communication, that service should be paid for by that vendor. The Government should not be in the business of compiling information for no fee that a private sector is going to sell to the public. The vast amount of profit the private sector makes from data the received from government units for free is positively revolting. As much as I admire the efforts of NOAA forecasting the weather, I am sorry to admit that the windows of my house are often far more accurate. Especially when combined with a mercury barameter and a good temperature display. Respecfully Submitted, Jack Lemley/N6SYJ La Porte, IN 46350 The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

149 "I am writing to express my support for the proposed changes that were recommended in the NRC ""Fairweather"" report. My support is based in part on actually reading the NRC report; in part on my experience as an active pilot, which has been made safer and more efficient thanks to various NWS products now available on the Internet; and in part on considering and disagreeing with the positions stated by the commercial weather services. The info technology of this era is completely different from what prevailed at the time of the 1991 agreements, and it would be a disservice to the taxpayer and the public for the NWS not to help the public take full advantage of what technology now makes possible. Sincerely, J Fallows, fallows@aol.com The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

150 "My, my, what a lovely policy."

151 "As a taxpaying US citizen, I support the dissemination of weather information by the NWS directly to the public in the most accessible manner. NOAA/NWS should resist political pressure to favor private interests by restricting the direct provision of weather information to the public in order to force the public to access this information through private publishers. The cost of making weather information directly available through the internet is trivial in comparison to the cost of generating the information. Since we have already paid for this, we should have direct access to the product. Any move to restrict public direct access to weather information or curtail NWS's direct dissemination of this information to the public will be recognized as a political favor to profitmaking private interests by the present administration, at the expense of the public interest. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

152 very good policy on weather and climate

153 I wholeheartdly agree with the proposed policy. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

154 "I've read only the material available on the web site, having linked from NWS Seattle home page. From what I've been able to tell, the policy appears sensible, if vague. The important point, I think, is free access to the public to forecasts, satellite and radar images, forecast discussions, etc. Several years ago local weather radar was only available through a private contractor. At the time, I was associated with the University of Washington, so I had access through the UW and the Dept. of Atmospheric Science. After I left the UW, I no longer had access. Policy changed, and I can now get images again, through the NWS site, which is

terrific. I believe that we pay for the collection and processing of this data, and we shouldn't have to pay a for profit business to get access to it, or be confronted with ads, or otherwise hindered. We're recreational boaters, so use forecasts extensively, and use access to the images and some of the data behind the forecasts.

When I was working at the UW, I'd look at local weather radar to decide whether I needed rain gear for my bicycle commute. I particularly value the ""forecast discussion"". I usually find that I can get a much better sense of what, and how likely, conditions will be. I think there's real value in the exchange of information between NOAA and academic institutions. I suspect the flow of value with regard to private enterprises is more one way. I don't have a problem with private enterprise making money by ""adding value"" to NOAA information. I just don't want to have to pay them for access to public data. I like the information I'm able to get from NWS/ NOAA online and in VHF marine broadcasts. I certainly don't want to see that information, or access to it, diminished. Thanks. Allen Rosenberg
Seattle The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

155 "I have noticed that most loops on the NOAA sites are set at about 3 hours maximum. As a storm spotter, there are often times I have wondered what the radar or satellite might have looked like when I was out sitting on a hill somewhere, or what triggered the call for spotters in the first place. Many times, by the time I get home, I can't see images that far back. I realize that there are limitations to the images shown. I also realize that you don't just dispose of the images either. Is there a place that I can go and view them in either a longer loop (further back in time) or maybe a site where there is no loop but image by image display? Other web sites seem to feel extremely proud of their products, which are worth something financially, but are often over-priced. I donate many hours of my personal time to the protection of lives and property from weather related issues. I would like to see what I missed when I was out in the elements providing this service. I believe that Governmental agencies and their staff (paid and volunteer) should be afforded access to be able to view more than the average person. Anything you can offer would be of assistance. Thank you. Scott Crippen N7RVN Lincoln, Nebraska The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

156 "Finally, government agencies working together for the good of the private sector. About time!! Keep up the good work guys. As a weather spotter, we rely on you guys so much. Again, keep up the good work."

157 "I believe that the new policies set forth by NOAA, are within the best interest of the public and private sectors. Sincerely, Dana L. Hawn The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

158 "To whom it May Concern: I find your proposed policy inclusive and proactive. My comments are limited to minor grammatical suggestions/modifications. They are as follows: Policy Item #1, first bullet - The word ""observing"" should probably be changed to ""observation"". Policy Item #4 - Suggest replacing the first sentence with ""To advance the weather, water and climate enterprise, the NWS will provide information to the public and other partners in the enterprise. Underlying (or supporting) data will be available for additional processing by others. Policy Item #6 - Suggest rephrasing first sentence to read ""To the fullest extent practicable, the NWS will use appropriate mechanisms to encourage the timely input from, and collaboration with all interested parties on decisions affecting the weather, water and climate enterprise."" I hope these suggestions are helpful to you, and wish you success in your efforts. Thank you for your service and the opportunity to comment. Sincerely, Barry Simpson The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

159 "As a simple end-user of the forecast and radar products for simple things like deciding on indoor or outdoor activities I have been more than happy with the products NOAA has been making available to me. That said, I fully support equal access to the raw data for those that need more specific products and wish to invest time/money/effort to produce them. The new policy would be fair to all and seems to me to have only positive effects on end users like myself. So, bottom line, I support the proposed policy. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

160 "As a meteorologist, I am very interested in following the development and implementation of this policy. Over the past 10 years, I have worked in both the private sector and the academic sector and know many great folks that have gone on from these areas to work for the NWS in various locations around the country. I am glad to hear that the NWS is working diligently to ensure that all three areas compliment each other and most importantly, provide the end users with all means necessary to protect life and property. The small amount of information I was able to gather from your website sounds like a good start. Please let me know how I can best stay informed of the development and implementation of this policy in the future. Sincerely, Theresa Brooks Meteorologist 106 East 13th Street Edmond, OK 73034 The referring webpage:"

161 "I applaud NOAA's proposed policy on partnerships 100%. This information will be vital to assorted interests whether it be private or governmental. Reagrds, A. Wright The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

162 To bad the NWS cannot stay out of the realm of private interest. Commericalization of the NWS is not in the public interest. Keep the best weather resource free. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

163 "The availability of weaher and climate information from all sources helps to make weather forecasting that much more reliable and accurate. It also helps develop new technologies to make current products better, and create new products. As a Skywarn Spotter here in Medina, Ohio, the more resources available, the better picture I get of what is going on in my immediate area, and what I can later expect. My only concern, and one that crept up a few years ago, is that there has to be ONLY ONE SOURCE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF EMERGENCY WEATHER INFORMATION. I utilize NOAA, WEATHER CHANNEL, OHIO STATE WX, IWIN, and WEATHER BUG PRO to make a complete picture of what events are of immediate concern, and those potentially dangerous later on. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

164 "I feel the policy as stated is reasonable. I would like to know, however, whether private meteorologists who tailor products and services for paying clients, pay a reasonable share to support the tax-supported federal infrastructure, such as radar, satellite imagery, numerical modeling, software development, etc., that provide them the ability to provide their tailored services. I realize they pay taxes like we all do. However, they are turning what is provided to all through Congressional appropriation into a profit-making activity. Therefore, it is reasonable that for any who receive special products, services, or access for the purpose of business for profit, to compensate for a reasonable amount of the associated overhead. Thanks. The referring webpage:

<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

165 "Great! Please, please, please start serving forecasts and observations in an XML format. That would be great! The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

166 "`This is just another bad step in the wrong direction.....part of the ""privatizing of Government functions"" operation which started at least 15 years ago, and is a political game. The privatization will not improve service to the public at all. In fact, the service will get worse, and it will be easier for businessmen alone to control the policies of government. The term partnership is a joke of course, which only means we will get our foot into the door first, before we boot you government employess out eventually, via more political pressure. Of course it has been a Republican goal since the days of the hog Newt Gingrich (or has some people call him, the Toad). But of course as the administrations keep appointing more of their party members to the highest government posts, it will be impossible for the Government to hold on to any function at all. And of course the great disservice to the general public will be that these services will be paid for by taxes, but there wil;l be no accountability anywhere, as the government will say ""we contracted out those services"". and the contractor will say ""so sue us"". It is a very sneaky and deceptive way of shirking responsibility, whils getting one's family or friends some work, and still having the taxpayers pay their profits. This will no longer be a democracy where people are protected by Governmental bodies, but will end up being victimized by deregulated rules and prices. It's capitalism in it's worst form.....growing like a fungus which infects and affects us all, while feeding and growing obese again at the public trough. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

167 "NOAA and NWS should activate policies that allows gathering and sharing of the most information possible, for all agencies, public and private. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

168 "as usual, bureacracies request approval of things they should have done years ago without being prodded by congress, etc. - the tension, naturally, is the product of turf wars over funding - which ties directly to job security and pay - issues far more vital than providing the best weather information to the most people. wrd The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

169 "I'm an individual consumer of data from the NWS site(s). I find the level of data available here to be more useful that that in commercial sites. I mostly look at local forecasts, some model output, radar and satellite images. A good example is of the radar displays here. Many commercial web site displays are loaded up with graphics, overlays, etc. that often don't add value. Not to speak of advertising. I would be most unhappy if policy changes were to limit my free access to the products available on this web sites. And, after all, it is my tax dollars that have paid for the equipment and manpower to produce this information. It is unclear what the implications of this policy change are for users like me. Perhaps you should add a description of implications or possible outcomes. Is the issue whether or not commercial parties should license this data? Or is it whether they should become the primary conduit for it? The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

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170 "As a farmer I hope we will be able to access all information from NOAA that we have had available in the past. This includes radar, temp, forecasts etc. I hope we will not have to go to another commercial site or look at advertisements to obtain WX info. I feel as a taxpayer I should not have to pay again for information. Thank You Glenn Kullman Smithville, MO The referring webpage:"

171 "Madam/Sir: I believe paragraph four (4) should mention timeliness. It should also consider returning products that I sorely miss: weather observations on NOAA weather radio including current weather, clouds, winds, barometric pressure, altimeter, obstructions to vision, and remarks. One should note that hikers, small boaters, VFR pilots (crop dusters, recreational, etc.), and POV drivers (cars, trucks, farm tractors, etc.) use portable NOAA weather receivers. I have a portable Cobra Citizens Band radio with NOAA Wx as well as a handheld aircraft transceiver with NOAA Wx. Currently I have to find a local commercial radio station and wait for single location information in my car. Likewise, I have to call FBOs, look for individual AWOS sites, etc. to get single site local weather when I fly. The NOAA synopsis of weather is too vague to be useful. "Cloudy and 80 degrees" is not a substitute for "Thunderstorms west moving northeast at 20 mph, bases at 3000 feet, 5/8 coverage, hail reported Gainesville" Thanks for your time, Michael Winthrop The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

172 "Under item #1 academia is mentioned solely with regard to advances and education. Although it is mentioned that overlap exists and that the entities are often complementary; this fails to recognize the complexity of the real situation. For example, many academic units with meteorology/climatology/similar also manage operational entities on campus including weather and forecast labs, climate services, and offer temporary and sometimes dedicated media connections and products. These are provided nominally for the opportunity for students (undergraduate and graduate) to obtain professional experiences. However, they often involve (to some extent) revenues to either defray expenses or generate revenue for the facility and its staffing. They also can exhibit or infer preferential treatment or advertisement in a local region or market. In other words, some academic units (and there are many today) may be competing directly with private sector interests with regard to weather, water, climate and related environmental information. Additionally, academic units also very often provide dissemination services based on local product generation (both observational and forecast), local studies (results and applications), and mesoscale modeling (forecast products). Therefore, the statement within #1 is somewhat false and misleading, even if it were specified that academia primarily advances the science and educates; since many university activities are, by design, entrepreneurial in nature. Now if it is countered that item #5 addresses these, why has NOAA not held a significant number of forums for the university community as have been accomplished for the private sector? Yes, certainly efforts to connect; have been made through AMS meetings and UCAR as portals or vectors for communication, but this is not an adequate substitute for engaging the broader academic community; and it could appear as either favoritism or representation by proxy. To fully and effectively discuss issues with academia involved in the weather, water, climate and related environmental information would require a different method or approach. In other words, to ensure equity (a point made in item #8) and contact there is need for a new or different conduit for discussion and interaction. Personally and professionally I believe NOAA has been attempting to reach the broader academic community; and in some cases has done a very good job. However, I also see how others could have difficulty with the present thinking, approach, and level of engagement. Thank you for the opportunity to relay these thoughts, I hope they are of some use to NOAA; paul croft. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

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173 "I am vehemently opposed to any stifling of the information as is being sought by ""PRIVATE INTERESTS"" seeking to ""PROFIT"" by selling of vital potentially lifesaving weather information.....it's a disgrace and a shame. These people are trying to make a business out of the fear created by lack of access to information potentially threatening to life and property.....this in it's simplest analysis is ""terrorism"". The favorite ""TOOL"" of the ""PRIVATE INTERESTS"" signed....who owns you?!"

174 ""NWS will promote the open and unrestricted exchange of weather, water, climate, and related environmental information worldwide, and seek to improve global opportunities for development of the partnership. "" -----
It is an ideal policy! I congratulate you. We unwashed here in the hustings marvel at the information provided by NOAA. AND delighted to share a peek with >academia< bless their pointy heads. NO REPLY EXPECTED Walter Maurer 80 year old retired lawyer and still curious about everything. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

175 "I oppose any changes that will decrease the services provided by NOAA national weather service directly to the public. I enjoy and make use of the availability of weather forecasts and forecast information such as radar, snow cover, satellite maps etc. on the NWS websites. I would oppose any curtailing of those portals for information. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

176 "The national weather service raw data should be widely available to not only private industry, and the ""public sector"" but to individuals. Make [word deleted] sure that I can access raw data via wireless service (apps for cell phones are easy to create). Now, I must subscribe to a service with a monthly charge. The NWS is a taxpayer funded organization. It would be sweet if your raw data was available to me, a law abiding USA citizen. What number do I call to get a local radar. My living and contribution to the tax base rely on accurate and timely weather information. Make the availability of radar data available to us as individuals. We support your cause and we vote. Thank You! Peace, Tom. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

177 "Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this proposed Policy. I am a NWS-certified and local Kansas county certified storm spotter who relies heavily on data collected and disseminated by my government agencies. I applaud the proposed changes to open availability of all data and repositories to the general public and others. I feel that this is the right direction for these agencies since there is little reason for secrets to be kept regarding the weather and environment and, since my taxes help support the collection of the data, I don't feel that I should have to pay a commercial enterprise to relay that information to me or to be able to access it before I am able to. Respectfully, William D. James Lenexa, KS The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

178 "I would only ask that we have access to the radar info, in a timely manner during tornado season, via the internet. I don't feel that I should have to sign up and pay for a up to date radar picture that my federal tax dollars is supporting. Private industry has far too many favors given to them. Carl Sanders 311 West Garfield Lindsborg, KS 674546 The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

179 "I do not approve of any more involvement by the private sector in the activities of NOAA. The private sector, business in general, has clearly shown that its goals are very narrow and self serving. The government agencies, such as NOAA, should remain totally independent, period. Larry Royster."

180 "Dear Sir/Ms.: I support making NOAA weather data products available to the commercial and academic sector's; however, I believe that the public sector (Joe Taxpayer) should have free access to these products since it is our (middle class) tax dollars that makes production of these products possible. As it appears to me, NOAA and other government agencies are limiting public access to these products so that commercial firms can profit by selling them back to us. Sincerely distressed ...john naas in Burke, VA. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

181 "I support the Proposed Policy as I read it. It has always aggravated me to some extent when I have to pay to receive information which I, as a taxpayer, have paid for already. If the intent of these changes is to make all information collected and disseminated by NOAA available to the general public, you have my full support. Mike McNichol The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

182 "We the taxpayers, did not support the origination and continuance of NOAA for the BENEFIT of the ""private sector"". We look to you for the Official word and workings of weather reporting and record-keeping. The private sector, I am sure, wishes to utilize your (our - you and the taxpayers) expertise and systems. Fine, I am sure you are aware of agendas from all parties concerned - please continue the fine work. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

183 This project sounds like a decent proposal. I would also like to see NOAA perform more tasks pertaining to environmental and climatic health.

184 "I read the policy. Obviously private companies are trying to sell what you provide as a service. I am an aviator, I think that it is in the public's interest that the govt provide the best available weather information for several reasons, which include the safety of aircraft. This is a public issue, aircraft involved in weather related accidents can cause great harm to many innocent persons. It is absurd that private companies should try to make money of a service that protects the citizens of the US. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

185 "I feel that this proposal is excellent, and will help benefit everyone from the professional meteorological community to the average citizen of the United States. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

186 "I agree that the existing policy needs to be updated and I am in agreement with the bulk of the proposed policy. I feel compelled to state, however, that free and fair access to timely information about weather is beneficial to everyone and that every practical effort needs to be made to ensure that the public at large is

made aware of the existence, location, and possible uses and benefits of freely available weather information. Thank you for your continuing efforts. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

187 what is this? Some sort of thinly veiled attempt by the present administration to prevent US taxpayers from having full access to weather information funded directly by our tax dollars? More corporate welfare? Is there no limit to their greed? How many people will die because they couldn't wait for a dozen pop-up ads to clear before the weather information they needed was available? The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

188 "I think that this new policy is pretty cool guys. Strengthening the bond between NOAA, NWS and the public is a terrific idea. I've been a NWS Spotter for a few years now. Being able to get even more information to assist me in assisting the NWS would certainly help. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

189 "Just hope we can continue to access the radar screen via the internet, we rely on that all the time to plan both work and liesure times. Thanks. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

190 "My primary concern was borne out when I tried to follow the link on the NOAA page to the NRC paper ""Fair Weather: Effective Partnerships in Weather and Climate Services"". I ended up at a page where a private enterprise was charging \$24 to download a pdf file. I think any policy should include the following: 1. Taxpayer funded information should not be sold to private enterprises that in turn will resell it to the public. 2. Public agencies should budget the relatively small amount needed to distribute information they develop over the Internet. In general public agencies should give away the information they develop for their own use in fulfilling their stated mission. This will encourage private enterprises to add value to the information enabling them to sell their products. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

191 "I applaud your commitment to provide timely and accurate information to ALL which has been generated by public funding. Due to my location and FCC restrictions, I am in between broadcast markets and am unable to watch local channels when severe weather occurs. I do have access to cable channels but The weather Channel provides information that is spotty, untimely and sometimes, inaccurate. This is why I rely on the National Weather Service and the weather Radio to obtain information that will protect life and property. Please do not ever limit the scope of information to the public or any other entity. I am writing this e-mail during a storm which is not severe but the last few weeks have seen some troubling times for my area. In every case, I was unable to obtain timely and accurate information from any source except the National weather Service. Thank you very much for your time and it is my priveledge to contribute my tax dollars so you may provide unrestr iced information that saves lives! The referring webpage:"

192 Hello. I think the new policy is a good idea. The more information the public has the better they can prepare for it. I would like to be keepest up-to-date on this issue my e-mail is wildbuckeye_07@msn.com The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

193 "while many aspects of this policy are of interest to me, I wish to concentrate here on the observing mission of the NWS. In the first bullet after ""POLICY"", we have ""To carry out this mission, it develops and maintains an infrastructure of observing, telecommunications, and prediction systems on which the public (federal, state, and local government agencies), private, and academic sectors rely."" This is, of course, incomplete. The NWS uses data from a variety of non-NWS entities to carry out its mission. Examples include data from local mesonets run by universities, data from NASA satellites, data it partially buys from airlines (ACARS) and data it totally buys from the private sector (lightning data). I think the NWS should acknowledge these existing partnership activities it already has with the academic and private sectors. My second comment has to do with item #3 under ""POLICY"" where it states: ""In furtherance of these policies, NWS will carry out activities which contribute to its mission, including collecting and archiving data; ensuring their quality; issuing forecasts, warnings, and advisories;....."" This sentence does not even mention that development and maintenance of observing systems is part of its future mission. I submit that it is imperative for the NWS to be continually looking to upgrade its capacity to observe the atmosphere at increasing spatial and temporal resolution. Furthermore, just as the current observing systems are not totally funded by the NWS, neither should they be in the future. To me, the quintessential example of improving public, private and academic partnerships is in the realm of observing systems. The NWS knows how difficult it is to deploy new, innovative and often expensive observing systems in a timely manner. The NWS should pledge to work together with the private and academic sectors to develop new observing capacity. Such partnerships can develop prototype observing networks that the NWS can use to both enhance its mission and at the same time evaluate the optimal mix of observations it should support in the future. The NWS needs to embrace the increased role the private and academic sectors will play in observing systems of the future so that both the scientific community and the public can benefit from enhanced observational infrastructure. Sincerely, Fred Carr Director, School of Meteorology University of Oklahoma The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

194 "NOAA is a government agency funded by taxpayers and it OWES the people of the United States any and all information that is not related to national security. The career politicians that have managed to make NOAA, NASA, etc their own private domain are sorely misguided. It is truly disgusting that you all need to ask if it is ok to share information. Wake up !! I could go on and on about the weather radar debacle, but I won't. I sure hope things change for the better Sincerely, Phil Sanders The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

195 "while this proposed policy seems reasonable (isn't it being done already?), I hope that it will not in any way reduce the excellence of NWS's on-line forecasting ""products"" including both country-wide forecasts and radar images distributed over the Internet. If the current policy is working so well, why institute a new policy? The referring webpage:"

196 "I like to go directly to the source. It is useful to get analysis from commercial sources, but I like to see the data and get the NWS analysis. The policy proposal suggests to me that commercial interests will have greater access to NWS data and analysis than the public, ""because of budget constraints"". The public pays for this service through taxes and we will now have to pay a second time to get the information for which we have paid. I object. The referring webpage:"

197 "Dear Webmaster, I am submitting the following comments regarding ""NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information."" I am a private citizen, not connected with any media business. I do not own a television and do not rely on that media for current information. I regularly use, for both professional and personal purposes, the NOAA NWS online information resources. I have used the information to plan driving trips across the state to minimize my risk of encountering severe weather. I believe that government information should be accessible readily and without charge to members of the public. Private media outlets that would use such information for their commercial purposes, but seek to restrict citizen access to that information, act in a duplicitous manner; they seek to exploit for commercial purposes the taxes paid to create the information, while claiming that they are essential to preserving open government. I believe that the information should be of high-quality and available real time. To that end, I support the policy and specifically the following points:
Policy û Point 2. These policies are based on the premise that government information is a valuable national resource, and the economic benefits to society are maximized when government information is available in a timely and equitable manner to all. Policy û Point 3. NWS will carry out activities which contribute to its mission, including collecting and archiving data; ensuring their quality; issuing forecasts, warnings, and advisories; and providing unrestricted access to publicly funded observations, analyses, model results, forecasts, and related information products in a timely manner and at the lowest possible cost to users. Policy û Point 4. NWS will make its data and products available in Internet-accessible form to the extent practicable and within resource constraints, and will use other dissemination technologies, e.g. satellite broadcast and NOAA Weather Radio, as appropriate. Information contained in databases will be based on recognized standards, formats, and metadata descriptions to ensure data from different observing platforms, databases, and models can be integrated and used by all interested parties in the weather, water, and climate enterprise. Policy û Point 8. Open information dissemination: NWS recognizes that open and unrestricted dissemination of high quality publicly funded information, as appropriate and within resource constraints, is good policy and is the law. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

198 "Dear NOAA Policy Task Force: As a private citizen I want to emphatically state that NOAA/NWS publicly accessible internet & HF Fax analysis and forecast products immeasurably enhance our ability to plan for safe and enjoyable offshore sailing excursions, both within and between our Portland, Oregon home port and Pacific offshore and Canadian waters. Please maintain and continue to improve NOAA/NWS's current high standards and both the depth and breadth of publicly accessible internet information. Please refrain from taking any actions that might diminish the scope of internet weather information, particularly ""raw"" information, that is now at our fingertips. Please, do not ever place or allow private sector ""intermediaries"" to stand between ourselves and the data that you now provide so well through the public internet environment. Respectfully, Wm. R. Maris, S/V Woodwind, Portland, OR The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

199 "I am concerned that the public, meaning random citizens such as myself, should always have easy and timely access to weather products produced by the NWS. I also feel that it is natural that the NWS should produce products explicitly for us, such as the very excellent web interface found at <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/> If we were to rely on a private venture to do this it would be hard to use, full of ads, and leave off important information (compare with weather.com for example). I do not feel that the proposed fairweather policy adequately protects the interests of the public - it seems to only protect the interests of academia and private commercial ventures. The only things we seem to be guaranteed by the policy are emergency warnings. I do not restrict my desires to what us non-meterologists

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normally think of as weather, but also include easy and timely access to your ocean current information, aviation forecasts, drought condition information, etc. Weather observation and forecasts are one of the best examples of a "public good" in the economics sense that there can be! Josh Steinhurst Chapel Hill, NC The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

200 "As Chair of the UCAR Unidata Policy Committee, I would like to provide feedback that our Committee views the paragraph on "Equity" near the end of the statement to be unclear and subject to misinterpretation. The phrase "NWS....will not show favoritism to particular classes of partners or individual entities, particularly those in academic and commercial sectors" seems to imply that academic (and commercial) users of information pose a particular threat to the NWS mission and may actually be singled out for NON-preferential treatment. The academic sector contributes in many ways towards the education of and provision of services to the public that increases the value of environmental information without use of government funds. I suggest that the last portion of the phrase ("particularly those....") is not needed. The referring webpage:"

201 "Hello, I think that all the scientific work going on with saving lives should be public. I think the more people we have to work on it the more lives that may be saved. I currently use accuweather.com's professional site and weather.gov's public site to keep on top of severe weather in our area and learn about it others by watching what is going on. So in conclusion, I think that the science of weather should remain open. Our Tax dollars pay for it, and we should also have access to it. (like we do now)"

202 "I object to the new policy on the grounds that academia should be granted greater preference to NWS resources than the commercial sector. I feel that private commercial interests can afford their own resources, for which they charge their clients, and should not be given more free access to publicly funded data & resources than they currently have. Thank you Tom Westbrook 710 W 33rd St Minneapolis, MN 55408 The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

203 "I oppose this proposed policy change if it results in a diminishment of National Weather Service products on the Internet. I do not expect to buy weather information from NWS or a private weather company-- I already pay taxes for NWS and I feel that I'm getting my money's worth now. If the NWS products available on the Internet are removed then I would expect a reduction in the NWS budget. The argument that a private company "adds value" to a product often is superficial-- an adding of a company logo. Thanks :) The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

204 "I have read the new policy and find nothing objectionable. I consider myself a 'consumer', particularly a rural one with very little accessibility to wx services apart from internet (dial-up). "No surprises..." Re: discontinuance; this language keeps me happy :-). The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

205 "I consider myself one who is against the nrc findings, and believes that there is good reason to be suspicious of the private sector's true intentions. I would like to see the national weather service take a more protected approach to the

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release of taxpayer paid-for weather data and systems like the Canadian AES does. It is not right for a few individuals to be allowed to profit (in some cases, exorbitantly) on the backs of the taxpayer as such. I fear that the NRC's finding will only lead to a more diminished role for the NWS in the long run, and lead to a privatized weather forecasting system where many areas of the country will be neglected simply because its "not profitable to do so" and would not be in the public's best interest. This policy needs to be tossed out, and the NWS needs to have its "turf" protected as the nation's true weather guardian. A role that private industry can not, and will not fulfill. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

206 GREAT idea as we have already seen where the linking MIGHT have helped warn of high winds. The more inputs - the better a tool this becomes. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

207 "It seems that the various organizations, private and government that are predicting climate, should remain separate and independent to me. In spite of the redundancy, it seems to me that the public will benefit the most from separate entities making independent observations of climate. I believe this is so, because I feel that the current National Weather Service has become too reliant on computer models for their forecasts, giving the computer an almost God like status with respect to its projections. Some of the local meteorologist seem to understand that the computer models are not very reliable, and can handle different event/situations better than others, however, the human mind is vastly superior to computers in every respect. Furthermore, there is an ongoing debate about climate change that should require independent observations, after all how can science verify findings without separate observations?? I believe it would be best if NOAA maintains its "status Quo" and the current observations are made from different organizations. There are organizations that are using climate data incorrectly, projecting climate changes that may never happen, and trying to scare people about the future of the earth's climate, hoping to reap the rewards of money for their personal projects....namely those in the UN's IPCC. NOAA should strongly defend its independence and data and continue to keep the facts in the picture. I realize my remarks are very generalized, but I hope you will consider carefully what you are doing with your system and how it may be used by others to further some hidden agenda. Thank you for your time. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

208 Please don't let this highly valuable service rot on the vine. Please continue to update your online services.

209 The proposal as written sounds very good as it puts in the hands that fund these government agencies the information that the taxpayers have paid for. The NOAA has been one of the better agencies that gives the data that is collected back to the tax payers in an easy to use and easy to access form. Anything that would benefit getting more data from the NOAA and other agencies would be a plus. As long as business who use the NOAA data for profit making purposes all the accessing of their own data to the NOAA and the taxpayers this could only benefit everyone. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

210 make this out to public in real words to understand!!!!!!! The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

211 "I am a pilot who uses the experimental ADDS- Aviation Digital Data Service weather service frequently. I am also an Attorney of the State of NJ. I have read the Proposed Policy and I agree with it. I think the best use of future products will result from a synergy of cooperation with the various public and private entities involved. For what it is worth, Sincerely, Dave Affinito The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

212 "The text of the proposed policy makes it clear that NOAA as an entity perceived, and more importantly understood, the significant changes that occurred since formulation of the current policy. While I'm truly encouraged, the simple and straight-forward verbage of the proposed policy barely presage the battles that will be fought and the money it will cost to bring the vision to fruition. Having said that, it's a great start and I encourage the adoption of the proposed policy. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

213 "Gentle Folk: Subject: Comment on proposed NOAA Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information The policy certainly does not build walls between the three subdivisions. The free sharing of data and information is most welcome to all interested in weather related activities. would like to suggest a forth segment for ævolunteersÆ. For many years there has been a good cooperative relationship between storm spotters and local weather service offices. This includes The Hurricane watch Net, Skywarn and other volunteer activities. While these services may be contained in the new policy, it would be good to have the public know that these are still supported. 73Æs Dwight Holtzen ARES, SKYWARN The referring webpage:"

214 "I understand and realise that funding for the NWS and other public and private agencies is paramount for operation. I further realise the importance of the agencies to be recognized for their contribution to the advancement of this service, be they governmental or private. I also realise the need for some type of governing rules to keep confusion from being main place as well. I don't understand why in the protection of property and mainly life why such rules have to have been so restrictive. It doesn't matter which sector can save the lives or property rather that all sectors can work together and improve upon each sectors strengths and weakness equally. Such a fear of lost funding sets the stage for failure and loss of life than it does the future success of NWS and other sectors. My point being, as a team of professionals, instead of a team of suspicious entities, the safety and well being of our nation would be unquestioned and unprejudiced. Just my thoughts. I think the fact that the NWS has taken these steps is a great leap forward and I would hope that further communication and cooperation with public and private sectors (both ways) will continue. Just in closing it is sad that when all is said and done it is all over the cost of saving lives and not the reward in saving lives. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

215 Lightning is a significant hazard...how about having real-time display on the internet...or is this item tied up by the private sector? The referring webpage:

216 "I believe NOAA should make available, free of additional charge, to the public, all available product in a user friendly way . . . value-added providers should be given access to the ""raw data"" but not to the exclusion of public

publication in a usable real-time form."

217 yes i thank they should

218 This sounds great. I hope it works out. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

219 "The NWS provides a very valuable service to the general public. I am concerned that somehow the phrase ""within resource constraints"" in the sentence below will allow the NWS to limit information available to the general public while providing the information to parties that offer or are solicited for payment. ""NWS will make its data and products available in Internet-accessible form to the extent practicable and within resource constraints"" To avoid this problem, the NWS should provide an online catalog of data that is available on a fee basis. The fee should be the same for all recipients, based on the cost of production and the expected numbers of buyers. The referring webpage:"

220 "As with all documents of this nature, the average citizen is unable to read between the lines to determine how this policy would affect him or her. I just want to take this opportunity to say that I appreciate the fine internet services that NWS provides. As a small time farmer, and a motorcyclist, I find them invaluable in planning my day/week. I also use commercial sites such as Intellicast. They also provide excellent services. I like the competitive nature of the weather services, and often use your service as the ""gold standard"". I hope that nothing in this new policy would change the present internet environment. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

221 "As a pilot and as a business owner, I am very grateful for the near instant weather that is available on the internet. It is a true economic benefit. Please be vigilant about special interests trying to gain control of the weather information and data for their economic gain. This would be very counterproductive regardless of how it might be framed to make sense. As wireless and portable internet becomes more prevalent and cheaper, the money the government spends collecting weather becomes more and more cost effective as more citizens have nearly instant access. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

222 appreciate your work. did cost me a beer the other day but i will win in the end. please keep up the great work. its appreciated. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

223 "I have made this comment previously but did not receive a reply so am uncertain if it was received. When I tried to access the document you referred to I came to a web site where a private company was asking for over \$20 to download a pdf file that apparently was prepared completely or largely at taxpayer expense. This is an example of the exact situation that I am concerned about. The information is developed at taxpayer expense then sold or transferred to a private company that re-sells it to the very taxpayers that paid for it in the first place. I believe taxpayer funded information should be given away freely, not sold. This will encourage private companies to add value to the information if they want to attract

customers. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

224 You need to provide weather forecasts and warnings to the country and not be restricted by the private sector. Many small communities would not be of interest to commercial forecasters. NWS has a responsibility to stay the course. That is what I am paying my tax dollars to you for. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

225 "Anything that would improve the dissemination of weather and climate would be beneficial. However. I REALLY DO OBJECT to private business charging for material that has been obtained from government sources, satellites and other weather sensing sources. I would much rather obtain the data directly from the source rather than third parties The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

226 "Current interest: Applied for Patent for system and apparatus to provide regional proactive warnings for recreational and small commercial marine vessels (14 to 40 feet and < 40 passengers). Predictive and proactive warnings based on weather and sea conditions as well as navigation threats. This system is to be purchased, implemented and maintained within the private sector as a private enterprise with the necessary 'hooks' to interface with International Maritime Shipping - AIS, Local Emergency Services, Resecue 21 and Homeland Security. Comment: I think most certainly that the Private Sector and NOAA work together cooperatively to develop and implement weather monitoring and analyses technology that is focused to save lives, reduce injuries and avoid serious property damage. Utmost emphasis must be placed on encouragement and implementation of specific Collaborative Technological efforts to best utilize modern computer monitoring, enviromental simulations have real-time calibration from existing weather instrumentation, expansion of facilities to achieve specific life and property goals. These goals must be placed at the highest priority over creature comforts, entertainment, etc. An most important consideration is ensuring there is indeed a Private/NOAA short range plans in place and an umbrella available to submit proposals for funding, etc. in order to achieve these specific Collaborative Technology goals. Most certainly an increase in NOAA measurement capability and digital interfacing to that capability is improved beyond its current status. For example, routine digital transmission of packet data from strategically placed buoys, weather stations. Likely life-taking accidents like the Staten Island Ferry and the Baltimore Taxi will have been avoided had a more complete monitoring and computer modelling/analyses infrastructure been in-place. Feel free to contact me directly to discuss these matters, C. David Rogers, P.E. Consulting Engineer 2830 Chablis Drive Erie, PA 16506 Home Office: 1-814-838-7250 The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

227 "I have no doubt that the people and businesses of the United States receive the best, most cost effective and most beneficial weather information in the world. I believe that the primary reason for this is the strength of the Commercial weather Industry, which serves to distribute National weather Service warnings and data, creates forecasts and other services customized for specific user-groups and end-users, creates innovative new products and services, and spurs the National weather Service to enhance the accuracy and value of its products. The reason the Commercial weather Industry has been able to grow, I believe, is due to the structure and policies of the United States government, which favor uncensored distribution of data and information, competition within the private sector, and a government role of providing basic infrastructure and enhancing commerce and public safety. The National weather Service plays an important and essential role in

providing public benefit through a working partnership with the Commercial weather Industry and the research community. However, the activities of the National Weather Service do not necessarily benefit the public, and providing products and services that compete with those offered by the Commercial weather Industry do the public welfare great harm. Not only is this duplicative activity wasteful of public funds, but it also has the potential to impede or even destroy the Commercial weather Industry. As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (now the National Weather Service) and commercial meteorologists. Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today. That policy was the first time since the National weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service (NWS) views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry. In addition, the policy stated: "The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law." The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy." It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels. Recently, the National Research Council (NRC) made a recommendation that the National weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the private sector. The Commercial weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise. Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation. Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are: òThe new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended. òThe non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) òRecognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted. òThe mission of the National weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped. òThe complaint and appeal process is eradicated. In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public. An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology. We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

228 "I would like to say that the current array of web based weather products represents one of the best uses of my tax dollars that I send to the federal government. I benefit from these services each and every day. As a traveler, I really appreciate the uniform and concise display of weather forecasts, radar and satellite imagery for any location in the United States. In a matter of seconds I can access the most recent and accurate forecast available. I can access the

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forecast when and where I want to. I do not have to wait until the TV, or radio, or cable station decides to provide the forecast. As a weather enthusiast I appreciate both the depth of information available within each local forecast office web site and the variety of information presented at each web site. As you look to foster partnerships in the provision of information please make sure that you both maintain the present level of web based services (I would call them free but they are not as I have paid for them with my taxes already) and maintain flexibility to expand and enhance them as the technology and weather information available for distribution changes in the coming years. Please continue the excellent work. Thank you Chip ward The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

229 It is disingenous to request comment on the proposed changes without providing sufficient detail to allow assessing the impacts of such. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

230 "As a private citizen I rely on information I obtain from NOAA,concerning forecast,severe weather watches and warnings.I have some aviation weather training from past employment in the airline industry/27 years/ where I plotted flight routes.I find the information NOAA provides very accurate,for travel enroute weather and for my personal,family plans and protection.I would object to any reduction in your service,fees and my ability to access your site.Any additional information you may provide would be a plus.Any TENTION between the groups mentioned should be cleared by whatever methods resolves the problem.I support NOAA 100% and as we know there are no real facts,to determine how many lives have been saved by NOAA/NWS service. THANK YOU.... The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

231 "It is unconscionable if noaa data produced with taxpayers money is not made freely available to the public and would otherwise be allowed to be appropriated by third party intermediaries for resale to the public, all to the detriment of we the taxpayers who paid for the data in the first place Charles M. Steinberg Chicago, IL The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

232 "From someone with no connection other than being a pure weather geek, just an average person...Please. Keep the data publicly available. AccuWeather and similar enterprises may be great for media or business, but the average person depends on NWS. We *trust* NWS, more than we might trust the local TV weather guy, ecause there's no interest in hyping things. As it is, there seems to be less and less available in the public domain. That, in my view, is a bad idea. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

233 "NORMALLY provides? That's the sticky point with me ... weather info should be sent without hesitation, no matter what the situation may be The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

234 "I think taking away public data from the public and giving preferential treatment to anyone is OUTRAGEOUS! whoever proposed this policy should be tarred & feathered. when does pandering to big business finally end? Does anyone in ""civil service"" even remember what it was like to want to serve the public rather than ""Daddy Big Bucks""? I guess I've grown too old. I used to admire my government. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

235 "The effort to enjoin all involved is noteworthy, but the final responsibility for control of the satellites and the core production of strategic weather information should fall to the Federal government. This responsibility is too important to decentralize! The economical production of weather information to pilots is too critical to the safety of passengers to be decentralized. I fear that involving too many players will result in the deaths of many due to differences of opinion and varying reporting standards. sdsieg@msn.com The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

236 "I find your proposed policy to be excellent, especially item #3 dealing with the continued availability of computer products to the general public. I have a Ph.D in meteorology from NYU, I taught at the college level for nearly 30 years, and have been a private radio-TV meteorologist for even longer. I think it is important for those of us who do pay the freight for these services that we benefit directly from them without going to a third party. I think your statement gets to that point. Good Luck, Dr. Mel The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

237 I agree with the policy statement and it will bring the NOAA into the current times with it. Good job. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

238 "I'm in favor of the proposed policy, and I hope it can be implemented for the public benefit. Although I find that NWS weather data currently available on the web is very useful, I'm a little mystified about the lack of lightning data on your websites. It appears that data relating to the frequency and distribution of lightning strikes has been almost completely privatized. Yet lightning is one of the main weather-related hazards to life and health. I volunteer at a sailing camp in the summer, and lightning hitting a camper or many campers is my greatest fear. I urge you to make comprehensive and comprehensible lightning data available to the public. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

239 "All the legal talk withstanding, or not as the case may be. I am only, as a private citizen concerned with access to readily available radar images which give me information updated in such a timely manner as to allow me to forecast impending weather conditions of which I have immediate concern. As long as this policy will not impede or change the nature of the information which is already available and not restrict but seeks only to improve that accessibility to everyone regardless of their financial capability of supporting this site (In other words, I want it to continue to be free) Then, my concerns and needs will be addressed. Let it be known to the committee overlooking this policy change that small, individual, sitting in my home watching television and the weather - that we use these services and let us not be forgotten. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

240 "The policy appears to be based on solid ground, furthering cooperation between public and private sectors."

241 "I prefer to receive weather information from NWS products. For example, I think the new NWS graphical forecasts are outstanding. I do not like private providers such as AccuWeather."

242 "I am a TV meteorologist in Grand Rapids, Michigan. At the recent AMS Broadcast Convention, a number of my fellow broadcast meteorologists expressed concerns about the impending policy changes. At this point, I am not alarmed by the proposed changes. I am a big supporter of the National Weather Service, and see them as partners. Here in Grand Rapids, I believe there is an excellent relationship between the local National Weather Service and those of us in the private sector (we do TV, radio, phone lines, newspaper and writing). We work together during severe weather. In fact, I'd go as far as to suggest (as I did 25 years ago) that it might be worth our while to explore having NWS break into every TV and radio station at the same time with tornado warnings. I'll also add that the National Weather Service has improved greatly over the 30 years of my career. The data, the models, the forecasts, the warnings have all improved significantly. I often cite the NWS as a good example of tax money well spent. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

243 "Weather forecasts are a public service. We have a right to know, and to know without paying. Further, we have a right to know without the inconvenience of payment. Weather forecasts, like the weather itself, is, always has been and always should be free. If you want money, perhaps you can get sponsors."

244 "Please don't privatize weather. It's bad enough I already have to pay a cable company for access to the weather forecast, but by privatizing it means that not every will have access to it, and for many people the weather is a big part of their life."

245 "We do already pay for this in taxes, so are we just wasting taxes on you if you are going to require us to pay again to access data from sources that we have paid for? We bought the sensors, the servers, the connection, so why should we pay you again for data which our money collected in the first place?"

246 "As a tax-paying US citizen, I applaud your decision to provide me with unrestricted access in an open format to information my tax dollars have already paid for. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

247 "I think the open digital services provided are the largest contribution to our society you are making. Please extend your open services on the internet. If private companies feel the need to sell the weather maybe they can fund their own satellites or find some way to add value? The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

248 "I applaud your efforts on making weather data freely accessible. Thank you. Please don't listen to the weather industry. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

249 "I strongly support any new NOAA policies which will support the direct

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dissemination of weather forecasts and other data directly to the public. The NWS does a better, more accurate, and more timely job than the commercial vendors of weather information. Weather data and forecasts are generated by my tax dollars and should be provided free, not through some company out to make a buck off this information. Thanks! -Bill The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

250 "You MUST make this information available to all public users in a well documented and open format. The documentation and 'reasonable' use of the data must be free. Anything else is a ploy by established companies to artificially preserve their place in the market. They have no right to exist per se, if the need for them goes away they will have to adapt or fail. Do not strangle the public at large, those you serve, just to prolong the buisnesses of the few."

251 "we taxpayers provide the funds to acquire a huge quantity of weather related data that the private weather use to prepare their forecasts. we the people own and have paid for that data and we should not have to pay for it a second time by having to go to private weather to get weather information. If the private companies want to enhance their weather information and people are willing to pay for it fine, but the NWS should not have its hands tied by profit oriented weather services. Thank God we have the NWS. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

252 "Please keep the data free. This is not particularly concerning for myself, as an Australian citizen, but I personally love our Bureau of Meterology's (bom.gov.au) approach of making all forecasts available in plain text, free for all; citizens should not have to pay private companies for data the government has collected and supplied (!). Open data formats for open data. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

253 "I heartily agree with this proposal. My tax dollars are paying for this service and making the data free and widely available is the right thing to do. Private companies should be able to make money from this data BUT only by adding on some sort of value, NOT by having data paid for by the taxpayers kept from the taxpayers. I see only good things coming from releasing this data free of charge. More eyes will look at it, more research can be done using it, more answers can be found using it. Please pass this proposal as soon as possible. This is the type of policy that every agency in the government should have. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=flat&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

254 The proposed policy is definitely the way to go. Putting the data on the internet is clearly the most effective way of maximizing its benefit to the public. Cheers.

255 "I think that the XML feeds should continue and continue to be free, just because somebody else can make a profit from the ouput of a a Government body, (funded by the tax payer) doesn't mean they should then have the right to prevent the tax payer from accessing the same information freely, or force them to pay twice for the privilege."

256 "I strongly support the free dissemination of weather and climatological data from NOAA on the Internet. This is data that we, the tax payers, own and have

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paid for. We should have free and real-time access to it for our own use. The private sector can still find profitable business in repackaging this data in useful and innovative ways for the consumer. Having to compete against the free NOAA data will drive innovation in product segmentation, graphic designs and other areas. Regards, Ron McCoy 400 Wilby Drive Charlotte, NC 28270 rmccoy@yalesecurity.com
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

257 "Please continue to keep weather data free, and please do what you can to expand your free offerings. I know that there are certain business and industry interests that would like you to privatize weather data, but as a US citizen and taxpayer, I would prefer to continue to be able to use weather data (both purely as a consumer, as well as as a developer of software) without having to pay a fee to do so. Thanks very much, Malcolm Gin The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

258 "I understand that NWS is considering making public electronic release of their data ""official"" and that corporations like Accuweather are opposed to this. PLEASE do not be influenced by corporations who want to force the people to pay for access to weather information. I can not tell you how valuable my family and I find the weather information that NWS provides, both in terms of planning, but also for safety. Spring and summer storms usually result in two open laptops and regular checking of various NWS products to make sure we understand the state of the weather and the location of nearby severe storms. We regard the NWS as one of the best services that the government provides for the people at large, and it would be a shame for corporations to disrupt that simply for their own economic interests. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

259 "A good policy. Maximize use of open standards and freely available data exchange in order to allow as yet unknown distribution methods to take root. Please do not permit third party weather ""reporters"" to influence policy decisions, as the simple factor of ease of access (e.g., the instant availability of weather on television) will ensure that those entities will still get a very substantial audience and thus be able to sell their wares in exchange for providing the media exposure the NWS cannot normally provide for itself. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

260 "I am all for your proposal that will allow weather data to be posted in an open format, free of any proprietary encumbrances. As a non-Windows computer user, it is also very important to me that weather data be available to me in a non-windows format. If Accuweather offered a version of their weather client, I might be interested in their services. However, here is the information Accuweather has for their 'premium' client: Downloading AccuWeather.com Desktop is Easy. Before you download, just make sure your computer has the minimum requirements to run this application: Internet connection. Windows 95/98/ME/NT/2000/XP (Mac OS currently not supported.) Internet Explorer 5 or higher 5 MB of disk space So my concern lies with the fact that if I want to get my weather application from AW, I have to use an operating system with known security and virus/work infestation issues. Please give us, the taxpayers, open access to the weather data we pay for. Sincerely, Dave Emmons The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

261 "Dear Sir/Madam, I would not look favorably on any proposal to grant the private sector a monopoly over the distribution of weather information that I have already paid for. Private weather services also bundle their offerings with paid advertising and therefore have no need of additional income sources. Should these

proposals advance any further then you will incur the wrath of my public grass roots organization, Citizens for free public service announcements. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

262 "In regards to the NWS 1991 policy update I would like to say the following. I appreciate the weather information provided in a simple XML format. It makes for a more open and easily accessible method to receive weather information. I specifically use an application called kweather that relies on these feeds. Please continue to provide the XML service. I appreciate its benefit to me and the freedom it allows me to choose where I get my weather information from. I personally feel that keeping weather information in an open and free format to the public from government agencies is the best possible solution. Please keep the weather feeds in an open format and free to everyone from big corporations to amateurs and hobbyists who want to make good use of the data for their daily lives. If you do however decide to change the format to another digital format, at least consider keeping it in a format that's freely useable by the general public. It would be a shame to lose such a wonderful resource and have it locked up only to be given out by commercial interests. Especially since my tax dollars help gather this information in the first place. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

263 "As a tax-payer, I not only encourage the open exchange and availability of weather data, I demand it. If people desire to profit from weather data, let it be from their own contributions to what they do to that data, no one should be permitted to 'sell' NOAA data to me. An open NOAA I support. A closed one, I'd reject with great energy. -Mike The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

264 "I read your proposed policy change and would like to register a concern. I believe the NWS should be providing more information via the internet rather than deliberately restricting the format. As a taxpayer, I have paid for this information once. I think forcing the consumer to pay for weather information by making the information ""specialized"" is a mistake. Next thing you know we'll be paying for tornado alerts out here in tornado alley!"

265 "It should, by no means, be necessary for the public to pay for something that is already funded through taxes."

266 "I find it laughable, at best, that a publicly funded organization, would want to prevent the free public access to information, that the publicly funded group creates. NOAA better wake to the fact that the American tax payer, not some corporation, pays its bills, and allows it to make its payroll. If NOAA wants to charge the American public a fee, to access weather data it collects, to aid private groups, get ready. Hope those groups have deep pockets, us taxpayers could just decide to cut ALL public funding, since you have decided to stop serving the American public. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

267 "If NWS charges for information that should be free, NWS will quickly become obsolete. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

268 "This is totally ridiculous. These private companies essentially want the NWS to limit availability of weather information on the internet, only to have the general public have to pay for it from them. My tax dollars pay for the collection of the data....why should I have to pay again from some un-needed middle man? The only place on the internet that I go to for weather information is the NWS' website. The format that you present the forecasts and radar and sat information in is vastly superior to anything else out there. It would bother me greatly if that service were to go away and I would have to pay to get weather forecasts on the internet. I saw this good quote on an internet message board and it sums up my thoughts entirely: ""Either the weather information we pay for through our taxes is provided to the public for free... or Accuweather can foot the entire bill for weather collection and charge whatever it see's as a fair market price for the service.""
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

269 The weather information should be free. This is a government service and should be provided to anyone without payment required.

270 You want me to pay you for something that is already generated by my tax dollars? Are you nuts?

271 "I've read your policy proposal and fully support it. For years I have been using a small program (WetSock) to present NWS weather data *including warnings* to me in an easy to digest format, and have found this package of NWS data and the program to be invaluable. While there are good arguments that the government should not compete with the private sector, the NWS is the primary collector of data, and for the government's own purposes must make forecasts. If the ""retail"" level of service I and others use is sustainable by the NWS, it would be silly and economically unjustifiable to deny it to all but a select few private would be rent seeking monopolists. Therefore the work products of the NWS should be available to all on equitable terms, which is what I gather this new policy codifies. Thank you very much, and keep up the good work! - Harold
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

272 The people of your country already pay millions for this weather data through their taxes.

273 "It is precisely correct that a government agency should not be granting anyone exclusive access to data such as weather reports. Firstly, the service is paid for by the taxpayers. The taxpayers do not gain by exclusion. Second, it is not the government's role to provide a product for anyone to derive profit. Their role is to spend my tax dollars to benefit me. To do anything else makes taxation extortion."

274 This information is too important to allow commercial exploitation to get in the way of ensuring peoples safety. The only sensible course of action is to allow a level playing field where open source and commercial interests have equal access to data then let the people choose!

275 Pay twice for forecasts?

276 "As a weather data services industry employee at a firm that uses a variety of NOAAPORT distributed products as well as FTP'd GRIB-format GFS data, let me commend NOAA for its efforts to place data into freely-available open-standard formats, such as XML. Though some weather industry members have expressed concerns that such data may negatively impact their ability to corner the market, the availability of such data will, I believe, lead to long-term market innovation and can only be a good thing. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

277 stop this madness. don't you pigs make enough money?

278 ""everybody talks about it, but nobody does anything about it""

279 "Executive Summary: weather Data should remain free and publicly available. As a taxpayer, I have already technically paid to have access to this data. I find it outrageous to think that selected corporations would be given some kind of exclusive access to this data and force those who paid for its creation to have to pay AGAIN to access it. NWS already does a superb public service by making this important information available to all who need it. I hope you will continue to do so! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

280 "Weather Data should be free, and freely available. And thanks to the NOAA CWOP programme, it always will be. Private companies should have access to data, that they can 'value Add' to, but it should not be exclusive. Darryl The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

281 "To whom it may concern: The NWS should make widely and freely available detailed weather data. The availability of such data will drive a new generation of applications just as the free, near-ubiquitous availability of Global Positioning System data has driven the development of innovative geospatial applications. The government has a unique roll to play in laying the foundation for such applications, and limiting the availability, resolution, timeliness, or structure of weather data will harm the public interest while providing benefit to only a small number of businesses that hope to sell to Americans data that has been developed at taxpayer expense. Regards, Ed Watkeys The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

282 "As a taxpayer, I feel it is my right to receive the results of the research I pay for. Thus, it only seems natural to me that the NWS ought to be publishing as much data in any many formats as it can, including freely-available internet formats such as XML. Private weather groups, while extremely vital, are special interests who wish to impede technological progress when it threatens their old business models. Please don't reward their selfishness by holding back distribution of the terrific information the NWS produces. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

283 "Please continue to do the right thing and keep the weather data free. Your efforts shouldn't be the cause of the private weather sector getting rich from charging me money for your (our) data. As Bob Dylan sort of said, 'You don't need a private sector weatherman to know which way the wind blows'. Oh, and also, keep up the excellent work. It goes without saying NOAA is number one in world class. The

referring webpage:

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<http://slashdot.org/>

284 "I believe that the NOAA's proposed policy is a good one. Making NOAA's data freely available to both public and private areas is a good thing. Being a member of the public, I am concerned that limiting the public's access to this Federally-funded source of data will eventually result in a situation where the public would have to pay twice for the data. First, to fund the NOAA and related groups, and secondly, to pay for access to this data through a private, fee-based, proprietary service. I believe that to the maximize the utility of this data to the public, while minimizing cost, is best served by making the data freely available to both the public and to private firms. ...I have been using the NOAA website as my primary source of weather data for several months. I find that removing unnecessary levels of middlemen (Weather.com, etc) has given me a better understanding of forecast data and weather information. In conclusion, please don't limit access to NOAA data to private firms. The public will be best served by making your data freely available to both the public and private sectors. -- Bill Brant The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

285 "Hello, I have seen a call for action from Barry Myers of Accuweather to try to prevent the NWS from making its data available in a convenient digital form to the public. I energetically support the new NWS policy of making weather data easily available to the public, and am shocked and disgusted by the behavior of the private weather companies in trying to get exclusive access to weather data, and then resell it at a premium to the public. The National weather Service [noaa.gov], a part of NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration), is funded by taxes. It's already been paid for. The need for accurate weather information is extremely important for the military. Because it's almost as important for civilian use, the information is made available to the public. Pilots, farmers, businesses and municipalities need this weather information, and in the U.S., weather is almost an obsession (Weather Channel [weather.com], anyone?) There is no national or continental weather service in Europe; private pilots have to pay for information, usually in the form of two daily faxes. This means that European pilots have to know even more about weather than their American counterparts because they must be able to predict conditions, whereas U.S. pilots can get up-to-the-minute information [duats.com]. In a nutshell, the Private weather Sector want to be a middleman, themselves continuing to get the information for free and then charging others for what they (the public) have already paid for. Please do not give in to private weather interests' campaign of intimidation and extortion. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

286 "I am impressed by your service- it is easy to use and very intuitive. It is great to see a government agency providing useful information in an easy to use format. I would urge you to maintain this as a free source for all citizens, rather than sell out to craven corporations which would attempt to profit off information collected with the public's tax dollars. Thank you."

287 "To whom it may concern, I recently read an article that the NWS was revising their policy regarding public access to online weather data. As one that has relied on free third party weather software as well as your web site, I am concerned that you would consider any possible reduction in the amount or accessibility of that information. For your public users - not a commercial interest - I can't suggest strongly enough that you preserve and continue to provide as free and openly formatted information as possible! Thank you, Paul Sadlik McLean, VA The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

288 "Since the National weather Service is a taxpayer funded gov't service the data it compiles SHOULD REMAIN FREE. I applaud your efforts. If private enterprise (Accuweather etc) can do it better/more accurately great, they can charge for these services. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

289 "I think weather data collection, analysis, and free distribution of that information is an important government service which I'd like to see continue and expand as new information technology become available. Sincerely, Elliot wisotsky Vernonia, Oregon The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

290 I support the new policy. As tax funded entity making the data you collect available to the public in a easily usable format makes good sense. Please do not listen to corporations that wish you to limit the release of information so that they can profit from it.

291 "I would like to encourage NOAA to provide the maximum possible public access to both new and historic weather information. The value of this information to the public enormous. Private corporations play a valuable role in collating, analysing and formatting this information, but should not be allowed to prevent public access to data collected using taxpayer funding. Thanks, Dean The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

292 "NOAA and the NWS are taxpayer supported entities, and as such their work products should be freely available to the individuals that provide the financial support. Previously, this was an overly burdensome requirement, given the labor and technical requirements for transmitting the data. Now, with advances in technology (i.e., the internet), this information can be made available without any substantial increase in effort or cost. The information should be freely available to those who have paid for it. By extension, due to the world-wide nature of the internet, the information can also be made available to all who seek it, without respect to national or corporate boundaries. Private commercial interests, while providing substantial presentation and interpretation value, should not be allowed to monopolize the data and force the public to pay TWICE for access to the data. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

293 "This policy is a breath of fresh air (no pun intended). Charging taxpayers for the data they have already paid for in the name of protecting commercial interests is asinine. I applaud the NWS for taking this approach, and hope that you will not be swayed from it by the corporate astroturfers. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=nested&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99&threshold=1>"

294 "I feel that, as a taxpayer, all weather collected by the government should be available on the web free of any charge other than the taxes that we already pay. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

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295 "I'd like to add my support for the NWS to make it's forecasts and information totally free on the Internet. I don't believe at all that you should bow to people like Barry Myers, the president of Accuweather, who wants people to have to pay...a second time mind you after we already pay with our tax dollars...for getting this information on the Internet. We as taxpayers already pay for this, so it should be up to US on how we recieve this info. Mr. Myers and Accuweather wish to charge for this, then they can foot the entire bill for weather collection and charge whatever it see's as a fair market price for the service. But I'm not paying for this service twice...first with my taxes and then with some company. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

296 "As a tax payer living in the US it greatly upsets me to see that my government is even wasting it time considering this type of proposal. I paid for your gathering, analysis and storage of the weather information. It should be posted on the Internet and distributed free of charge. It is my understanding that some companies that operate weather sites utilize your data and want you to shut down certain data feeds to the general public. HOW DARE YOU EVEN CONSIDER THIS PROPOSAL! If they want to have data to sell, let them create it! My tax dollars should not be spent to support their effort. I should not have to pay them to gain access to that data. TELL THEM TO TAKE THEIR PROPOSAL AND SHOVE IT! Richard Davis richard@brick.net The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

297 I am in favor of the proposed policy. Data generated by NOAA should be freely available. The internet is the best current technology to deseminete this information.

298 "we are already paying for the information through taxes. Either shut down NOAA (which would be stupid, not to mention dangerous) or keep the data free. why should we have to pay because companies like Accuweather have a business model based on freely (free as in already paid for) available information."

299 "weather infomation should be free on the i-net, we should not have to pay to get the weather information from the i-net, and it should be avial in MULTI formats for eaiser inclusion in websites. --Reggie The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

300 "I enthusiastically support the NWS in providing detailed weather information in a ready accessible data format while showing no favoritism to various entities. The corporate entities which prefer a more proprietary approach are, in my opinion, attempting to maintain the previous weather data distribution networks under a new wrapper. I hope the NWS will go foward with its policy supporting equality of data access. Let the coporations prosper by creating novel systems for utilizing and formatting the data, not from hording it. Kind regards, Theron Trout The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

301 "I developed the computer system which feeds the Citizen weather reports to FSL in Boulder, and received the NOAA Environmental Hero Award for this work two years years ago. Our system continues to improve, currently sending about 80,000 weather reports to MADIS a day. This is possible through the efforts of thousands of volunteers, most of whom use the internet to get information back from the NWS. It is important that the flow of information continue in both directions, unfettered by commercial interests. Products from the NWS are important in protection of human

life as well as property. No pecuniary interest should be allowed to jeopardize the widest possible distribution of these products. I strongly support the proposed change in policy. Steven S. Dimse MD The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&>"

302 "Weather forecasts and similar data generated by US government agencies are paid for by US taxpayers and should be provided to US citizens for free. This data must be provided in free, open protocols/formats (not proprietary encoded formats) that any US taxpayer can decode with open source or commercial programs of their choice. rhaskins@cnetwork.com The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

303 "Paying for weather information sucks - If somebody really wants to save lives, they should provide this service to everybody - means FREE."

304 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public."

305 "Please do NOT allow Barry Myers, president of Accuweather have his way in that he wants you to have pay before using Kweather and other similar tools which use the weather information ALLREADY PAID FOR by our tax dollars. Thank You The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

306 "Hi, As an individual IT consultant, I'm the author of ZWeatherApplet, a Zope (<http://www.zope.org>) applet which displays weather information, extracted from freely available NOAA METAR reports, on Zope powered websites, possibly used by hundreds of corporations and individuals over the world. This software, being Free Software published under the terms of the GNU General Public License, is available for all at no cost. I'm very concerned about weather data continuing to be available free of charge for all people in your country and in the world. In my own country (France) this is unfortunately not the case and this is really bad, that's why we use NOAA reports for things like my little software. So please, ensure information already paid by the taxpayers remains available freely and at no additionnal cost. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

307 "Please put into effect the recommendations of the new, proposed policy. The more people and/or enties can ,make use of weather data and tools supplied by the NWS, the more society at large benefits. New, innovative uses for weather data will only come about as a large population of new users have access to weather data. Additionally, since the NWS is a publicly funded entity, it has an obligation to supply the fruit of it's labor directly to the public at large, rather than through commecial gatekeepers. The referring webpage:"

308 "Our tax dollars have already paid for this information once. Let's not have to pay for it twice. And keep the RIAA, MPAA, and SCO out of it or they will all try to sue us! =(The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

309 Keep the internet based weather free please. it is

310 "I appreciate your efforts with regard for sharing data for which the US taxpayer has already paid. I understand that the private weather industry has interests in protecting their market. I believe, though, in the long run, forcing more competition among them will enliven the industry and spur innovation. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

311 weather data should remain free. Free access stimulates people to learn more about the weather.

312 "The NWS should by all means continue to use the current and cheaply available technology to disseminate taxpayer-funded information. The NWS should continue to use XML and other OPEN standard formats to make this information maximally useful to the public. Should the NWS consider closing any of its formats to deliver information to private sector companies, then the companies should be charge fees large enough to offset the cost to the taxpayer for the collection of weather data. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

313 "Please continue to provide weather data collected/ developed using taxpayer dollars for FREE on the internet. In fact, I would hope you will expand the offerings! The XML feeds are wonderful. Do NOT cave in to pressures from private, for-profit companies. Thanks, Colin Valentine The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

314 "Opening weather information to the masses would be excellent. we pay for the National weather Service through our tax dollars, but we have to pay to get the information? That makes no sense. One of two things needs to happen: private industry financing the National weather Service to be able to sell the information, or we get the information directly from you (Not for free either, we've paid for it with our tax dollars)."

315 "This comment is in response to Barry Myers request to have the public pay for weather information. He needs to be reminded that organizations like noaa were created as a service to the people, not a means of making money for certain individuals. The taxpayers are already paying for this service, why should we have to pay twice? The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

316 "I think that limiting the information that the NWS publishes freely is completely wrong. If you people need more money, then have some balls, and either cut back services to demonstrate lack of funds, or go the House and get yourself reclassified as a military expense. There seems to be lots of money for military expenses. GPS information is free and usefull. weather information is free and critical. Don't bow down to corporate pressure. Free market doesn't work with limited resources. The consumer and the economy don't need another parasitic drain because some middleman wants to control taxpayer-bought mission critical information! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

317 Please keep weather free! Do not give into Accuweather.

318 "Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I do monitor the weather via the internet. I also run a local baseball league website, and we have a live weather feed page. So our youth and parents can see if danger is approaching. Please keep the feeds free! We are paying for it now, and don't need to pay twice. Regards, Rod Longhofer The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99&threshold=-1>"

319 I support opening up the weather data available to the public. Such open access would be very useful for amateur meteorologists and application developers who want to include weather data. Please do not allow industry lobbyists to delay this important project. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

320 "Gentlemen: As a taxpayer, I have already paid for the generation/collection of the weather data. I would prefer not to have to pay for it twice. Making weather data the exclusive province of a limited number of for-profit entities does not seem to me to be in the best interest of the taxpayer. I applaud your efforts to open the data to the general public. Thank you. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

321 "Inasmuch as NOAA is a tax-funded government agency, the idea that private industry would have any kind of means of interfering with its data being provided to the public without charge is simply outrageous. The vital services provided by NOAA need to be freely available in the public domain, notwithstanding the ambition of certain elements of private industry to lock up these products and repackaging them for their own profit. In summary, the taxpayer should not be put in a position of having to pay more than once for the products of NOAA. Thank you. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=nested&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

322 "I think your proposed new policy is great. As a pilot, I'm looking for all the weather data I can find before a flight. I find most commercial web sites provide ""cute"" general weather overviews designed for the general public which are useless to me, and to anybody seeking more detail. It would be good to have better access to direct NWS products."

323 "Concerning your policy changes: There has been discussion online that these policy changes could result in a discontinuation of freely available NOAA weather data. I am a US taxpayer citizen. I am opposed to any policy changes that would result in a discontinuation of free NOAA weather data and information. I am also a computer programmer, open source contributor and amateur weather geek. I am in favor of any policy changes that result in a continuation and/or improvement of freely available weather data and information. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

324 "The data that NOAA collects should be free for all who want to use it. There is no reason that weather data, that we the taxpayers have already paid for, should be up for sale to the highest bidder. We have already paid for the data, now we would like to have complete and free access to it. The referring webpage:

<http://slashdot.org/>"

325 "I approve of the new National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National weather Service (NOAA/NWS) ""Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information"". The primary stakeholders in the Federal Government - US Citizens - clearly deserve equal and direct access to the data generated by the NOAA/NWS, and that data should be in easily disseminated, publicly documented formats. This Proposed Policy goes a long way towards recognizing these requirements. As an example, the XML data feeds available at <http://weather.gov/xml/> are an excellent tool for public access to weather data in a clearly defined format that can be easily parsed for a variety of display and warning purposes. Bravo! The Commercial weather Services Association (CWSA) appears to be opposed to and actively lobbying against the new policy. I say that the Federal government in general, and the NOAA/NWS in particular have no responsibility to restrict public availability of data or access thereto in order to enhance the worth of CWSA member businesses. The government did not ban automobiles to protect buggy whip manufacturers, and has no such mandate for the CWSA, either. I support the clear and specific language of the new Proposed Policy. I support equal public access to the data generated by the NOAA/NWS. I am sending copies of this comment to my Representative and Senators, as well as other interested parties, and posting it on my website. Best regards, Brian P. Bilbrey, Bowie, MD USA The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

326 Free weather data should be available to every US citizen.

327 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. I urge NOAA to use open and modern standards (e.g. XML) for the distribution of weather data. Given the proposed new digital data formats, it is trivial to create XML output of that data for public consumption. Sincerely, -John Duksta The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

328 I strongly endorse and agree with the proposed policy of making NWS data available by XML and RSS feeds. Please do NOT be dissuaded by those that want to limit the availability of this data to a proprietary format or channel. I've been blown away by the quality of this website and the information provided on it. Outstanding! Please keep the NWS information and feeds free and open. PEB The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

329 If the public is already paying for this information then you're behind the curve if you're not publishing it on the web. Maybe we should [word deleted]can the whole goobermint weather operation before you double-dip with Accuweather.

330 Free flow of information is important. Giving this information to companies for free only to have them turn around and charge for it is ridiculous. Please don't close out the little guy.

331 "Dear Sir, I use free weather forecast from the Internet all the time. I am a private pilot and need to obtain all the weather information I need. For each flight I use the Flight Service and internet services that show current maps and give weather forecast. Since the data is collected by government agencies financed by the taxpayers, it does not seem fair that we should have to pay again (!) for the same data. Thank you.. Richard Bielak The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

332 "with regard to the policy, I observe that the mission statement on this page is ""working together to save lives"". I suggest that the policy support that mission statement by including as many informative data as possible. It would be hard to square the mission statement with restrictive data formats when the alternative is easily available and more widely useful. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>"

333 I think this is a great update to the 1991 policy. Making weather data available like this is the right thing to do. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

334 "Open access to comprehensible data formats is a great idea! Though the commercial weather sector may be worried about this, I can't see how there's really a lot of room for complaint given that the data in question is being collected at taxpayer expense. The wider selection of weather interpretation tools will provide significant direct and indirect economic benefit, I'm sure. Once again, this is a great idea - I'm looking forward to seeing its implementation. Phil The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

335 "The national weather service is part of the US Dept of Commerce. It is paid for with tax dollars. Therefore, it is only right that this information be made available for free to tax payers. It's as simple as that. If you want to make the information not free, then your only option is to stop using tax money."

336 "I think it would be great if more weather and climate data were available for free on the internet. I understand that some groups are trying to make this information be available for-fee only. I think that's fine for large scale commercial use, but I think it's very important that individuals have free access to this data in convenient web compatible formats such as XML. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

337 "I want to register my support of NOAA providing weather data to the public through the Internet at no charge. The citizens of this country paid for this data to be collected and assimilated. There is no guarantee of a profit for companies that come on, harvest this data, and sell it -- citizens should not have to purchase the data twice. NOAA has done an excellent job providing critical weather data for decades. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

338 "A weather forecast is information that can (and does) save people's lives; to withhold it from those in need in favor of a fee is irresponsible. This is the Information Age, and selling information is obsolete. Making money on the Internet in today's society involves selling advertising on sites that offer frequently updated information."

339 "I feel that anything that provides more open access to weather data and services is an EXCELLENT idea. Your new policy/framework looks like it's intended to do this, and I'm all for it. I wish you luck and strength in facing down the greedy private interests that would seek to restrict access to the great national resource embodied in NOAA products and output. NOAA ROCKS! :-) The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

340 "RE: Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information Please keep all taxpayer funded data/information free to the public. Tony Scislaw Cocoa, FL The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

341 I believe that it would be a good thing to revise your policies as you propose. This would allow the free exchange of accurate information without having to go through the intrusive registration process and/or payment processes of many weather-for-money outfits. Thank you!

342 "Hi, The policy is a good one. If I understand correctly, the policy calls for NOAA to publish information on the internet in a open and easy way for the public to be able to directly access forecasts and data. Being in Florida, weather is especially important. Thank you for continuing to move forward in sharing weather data. Knox North The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

343 "I believe the information you provide should continue to be made free to the public. If this is a TAXPAYER supported agency, then it should make available to the public the information it collects, FREE. Michael G. Skuczias The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

344 "Please don't do this. What is needed is for individuals to really study the issue, show that you have more than one or two brain cells, and intelligently explain why you may support/not support the new policy changes, and potentially suggest new directions to look at with this. There are many very intelligent individuals here on /. of a very diverse background. What is needed here is not raw activism of the typical D.C. type, but rather people from outside the "weather" industry that can thoughtfully explain how data should not be kept locked up by private companies but needs to be kept free. There seems to be a kneejerk reaction here with the /. crowd thinking NOAA is going to close up the electronic data products and make them only available to private industry for a high per user cost (like much else in the computer industry from stock quotes to mapping data). The truth is that I don't see any of this sort of thing going on, but rather some very hard working people in a low profit-margin business (even the most profitable

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companies don't really make that much money off of weather related products, and there is quite a bit of competition, not to mention relatively low barriers to entry, particularly compared to other industries). They are asking for legitimate debate, so study the facts first. Honestly, I don't know what the issue is about specialized data formats other than XML. XML has its uses, but it is not necessarily the best data format for every situation. If you are a software developer worth anything, you should be able to take data in any binary data format, even if encrypted, and be able to pull all of the data out of that data format. XML is only one way to provide that data. I will say that in addition to having much of the weather data collecting/processing being done at taxpayer expense, much of the weather data collection is done through a system that is largely volunteers. If you are interested in monitoring weather conditions, particularly if you live in a largely rural area (although urban areas can be of interest as well... it is just that there are many more people per sq. mile), you can volunteer to set up a weather station in your backyard and send the weather data to NOAA. Depending on the equipment you are willing to purchase, you can measure just about any atmospheric information that you can imagine, from pollution levels to current temperature and rainfall levels. Every data point that gives more detailed information helps to make the forecasting models more accurate. Sometimes NOAA will provide equipment, but you don't have wait for them to get it to you if you really want to volunteer and do this yourself (it just takes you own money if you go that route.) This is a stealthy Seti@Home like data project that has been going on for over 100 years, which is why you don't hear too much about it. Some commercial enterprises (particularly local radio and television stations, as well as a few private airports, seaports, and trucking companies) have their own weather stations that even by themselves could provide a local forecast, but there is a data sharing agreement between everybody involved (even competing TV stations, for example) to share weather related data. Obviously this can be a very bandwidth intensive operation if you really think about all of the information that can be collected. Who pays for this bandwidth? There is nothing in the current proposals that would stop a distributed P2P weather data group from forming, and indeed it would probably be encouraged if you could come up with a good system. Really. The commercial weather guys would love it on many levels. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/index.pl>"

345 I agree with and encourage the government to formalize the proposed policy. I strongly feel technologies such as XML distribution of weather information should be continued and expanded to the public sector. Any effort to restrict availability of weather information to selected private industries or charge for it would be counter to this effort. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

346 "The National weather Service exists the benefit the public and save lives, and should therefore do anything it can at all to accomplish those goals. NOAA/Academia/Private Sector cooperation exists to benefit the public--if changes to that relationship would benefit the public anymore, then by all means change that relationship however you see fit. You exist to serve the public, not the Commercial weather Services."

347 "I strongly support adoption of the NWS ""Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information"". The proposal makes a great deal of sense, in terms of updating the legal framework NWS operates within to reflect changes in technology. If for no other reason, as a tax-paying citizen I expect to have the greatest degree of access possible to public-sector data that my taxes have contributed towards developing in the first place. I am a regular user of NWS website, and find the information it presents to be most valuable. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

348 "Since the information the NOAA collects is entirely at the public's expense, then the information that NOAA produces similarly should be completely open to the public. Withholding public data from the public is unethical as it forces the public to pay twice for its rightful information-- once to the collector in the form of taxes, and once to a private broker, in the form of fees. The private sector weather companies are not sources of weather data; they are middlemen seeking to pressure the NOAA to create an artificial scarcity of information in order to enhance their businesses. No business deserves a guarantee of profits from any arm of the government. The NOAA should continue to collect, analyze, and distribute weather data, analysis and predictions-- for free. The referring webpage:"

349 "I tend to agree with your proposed policy. NWS data is generated with public money and should be freely available to the public in usable forms. To produce only datasets usable by sophisticated private interests would be effectively stealing from the commons. Such data should probably also be made available to anyone who can use it, however. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

350 "Keep our weather free. Ok, at least I'd like to not to have to pay twice. My taxes already support the NWS and I resent attempts by private weather services to take away my rights as a taxpayer. Lets keep the NWS available for all and I appreciate the wonderful job you folks do. Accuweather and others can kiss my grits! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

351 "The data is already paid for by the tax payers. It should be provided free via the Internet, just as are proposing. Keep up the good work."

352 "I would like to say that the NWS weather feeds is a public service I value greatly. Please do not discontinue this service. Thank you. Sincerely, Dave Lozier
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

353 "I was pleased to see that NOAA is contemplating this change in policy. I believe that weather data (or any other data, for that matter) paid for with public funds, should be fully available to the public, in whatever forms the public finds most useful. I call upon NOAA to resist the inevitable calls from the ""weather industry"" to restrict the public's access to government data. Sean Peters
Fredericksburg, VA The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

354 "Dear NOAA, Its recently come to my attention that private weather companies would like to end the free dissemination of weather forecasts via electronic means. First of all, weather information is a valueable LIFE SAVING service. The NOAA is payed by everyones TAX dollars, not just those of the private weather companies. If they would like to front the full cost of the weather service this might be a different story, but putting a barrier to private use is unacceptable. The ability for anyone to grab the forecast and use it in unthought of, or unprofitable ways are endless. The reason we pay for commercial weather services is that they are supposed to provide a value-added service. Sometimes that value is drawing pretty graphics on TV, or having a news caster explain what a High Pressure system means. They

should not be allowed to simply free ride on the TAX payer funded data. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

355 "Please make national weather service information available freely. We pay for the information with our tax dollars, and we should not have to pay for it twice. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

356 I fully support the proposed policy and cannot emphasize strongly enough that all publicly-funded information be made available via the internet to all interested parties. Doing so will provide a larger number of secondary outlets of weather information and speed dissemination to the public.

357 Shamefull.... The greed that people are building up has the potential to kill the internet....

358 "Please continue with your proposal. I use your data for local and aviation weather and would like access to as much as possible. Digital weather formats should be available to us in a standard format and not something that helps the private weather industry make money. Thanks, Mark The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

359 "As an emergency volunteer, I know the importance of timely weather information. My tax dollars are already paying a significant amount of money for NOAA, which is a worthwhile and important service branch. If private firms wish to take your publicly available data, repackage it, and convince people this is a good reason to subscribe or view their ads, fine, but for those of us who depend on weather to protect life and property, and who will make the effort technically to access NOAA services directly, the private sector cannot be allowed to block or impede our access, nor should we have to wait for an ad to load before deciding to weather to launch a SAR team. Please take whatever steps are necessary to insure the entirety of your data is publicly available via modern standards. Thank you, Bob Williams Chicago, IL The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

360 "As a government agency, funded by the people of this country, your information should be freely available, without restriction, to all. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

361 "I am writing in solely to oppose Barry Myers' (of Accuweather) stance on the proposed policy. He has urged his cohorts and business partners to oppose the new policy, but I am speaking the voice of the people. His commercial interest is in obfuscating the data provided to the taxpayers. This data is funded BY the taxpayers, so we rightfully should have access to it. Commercial lobbyist interests are not a valid reason to withhold data. If Accuweather wants to make money selling a product, they will have to provide something above and beyond providing the data that taxpayers fund. Please don't take away our access to use our own community-driven tools (like the ""kweather"" program) to access public information weather data. Thanks, Ken The referring webpage: <http://alterslash.org/>"

362 Please continue to make the weather and climate data increasingly more

accessible to the general public. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

363 I urge you to disregard and actively fight Accuweather's campaign to keep (and/or make) weather data a pay service.

364 Make weather free! We have a right to know whether or not we should be hiding in the basement whether or not we pay money. I certainly would. Isn't that the job of weather forecasting? To save lives!

365 "Since we already help fund the NWS thru our taxes, to charge again for the weather information the Service gathers is ridiculous. A similiar issue happened in Hawaii, NOAA used to provide a surf-forecast service that was better than any private pay site. It was shut down for other reasons, and now NOAA is having problems trying to reinstate the service becuase of complaints by these private companies. Personally, I would like to see thiese private companies forced to surf in the conditions they forecast, they suck! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

366 "I find the NOAA website to be a valuable tool in helping to determine the weather conditions for the various gardening projects I have started recently. Also, living in an area that is sometimes frequented by violent storms during the summer months, I find the NOAA data feeds invaluable. For these reasons, plus the fact that I am a big advocate of open standards and open source, I applaud this move to make the continued free availability of this data part of your official policy."

367 Support for XML weather feeds. I just want to thank you for the XML feeds of weather data. I use them every day. -Brian Skahan The referring webpage:

368 Information wants to be free!

369 "This is an excellent move by the weather service, choosing to us an open format, XML, that will let individual storm spotters, home users and businesses all to get access to the data they need. I understand that some believe that the NWS weather feed should be a pay only service, but that defeats the purpose of the NWS as a service for the people, that is informative and saves lives. Restricting the data feed would only hinder those purposes. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

370 "As a taxpayer, I expect that your policies put the interests of the Public ahead of special interests or commercial concerns. The Public pays for your operation and deserves the benefits. I am for any policy that makes for the broadest free and open access to the information you collect. I am against any policy that limits the accessibility to any information that I pay for. Best Regards, gene The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

371 "Your products are funded by tax dollars I pay, I should have full access to
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them. Expand the xml and rss feeds!! Freedom of Information is the sign of a strong democracy!! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

372 "This policy is definitely one I, as a US citizen and taxpayer support. In particular items 3 and 4 of your proposal are well-thought out and represent a commendable position. This freedom of information should be one of the cornerstones of a free society, such as the US should be. Thank you, Paul Stolp The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/feedback.php>"

373 "NOAA, As a member of the Naval service I know how vital weather information is. The government has a duty to its citizens to provide as much free weather information as it can. This will help the citizens in many ways: saving lives, improving crop yields, improving civil planning, ect. I'm sure you are better aware of all the uses than I am. Do not be pressured into letting commercial companies into removing or degrading the weather information you provide. This would be tantamount to saying that the profits of a few companies are more important than the lives many people. The referring webpage:"

374 "PLEASE, let common sense prevail. As long as its gov. funded it should be offered to all interested parties. We're not all idiots out here. Technology works both ways, look at all the datapoints dsl/cable users can now provide with broadband alone. I cant tell you how many times a stormfront was approaching in the last several years, that I could NOT get timely info from the media sources, it was always a commercial, or them trying to be the history channel, I want the weather NOW. 15minute nexrad has been wonderful. with wireless devices and wifi beginning to catch on, and the inevitable mesh networking public and private sector will have data in their hands, no matter what the conditions. Adding new data will be educational and informative, something that can only improve our lifestyles. Thanks for everything you do, its appreciated by more folks than you know. John Decatur (ka2qhd) The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

375 "I applaud the proposed changes to make NWS information more available to the public. The information NWS creates is funded by public money, and derives in part from amateur radio operators like myself who donate our time for the public good. Therefore, the dissemination of this information to the public should be as wide as possible *as they have already paid for it*. Requiring ""specialized"" programs and non-Free software in order to access this information is NOT in the public interest - using open formats (like XML) and programs is. The referring webpage:"

376 "Dear NWS: I understand there is a move afoot by the commercial weather industry to try to get NWS to discontinue various free weather feeds, so that they may ""value add"" to them. I ask you to not do that. I run a community portal website for Brooklyn, New York. For years now, our visitors have enjoyed timely and accurate weather information, provided by your services (mostly extracted via METAR, but also radar & forecast products, and we've started experimenting with the XML feeds). If we had to pay for these feeds, we would have to discontinue the service. There is no funding for our site, and advertising revenue barely covers hosting fees. Please continue your excellent services; our visitors greatly appreciate them. Jim Bay webmaster Brooklyn.com The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

377 why should hard working tax paying computer users have to pay twice for

access to weather information. Not everyone goes to the media for information.

378 "It is my taxes that is paying for the collection of this data. Since I have paid for it once, why should I have to pay a private individual for it again? If the private sector wants to make money on the distribution of weather information then they need to be responsible for the cost involved to collect that data. I work hard for the money I earn and don't expect the tax payers to pay my wages. Why should the private weather services expect the tax payers to pay for their wages. The American tax payers has paid for this information, it should be theirs and not some private individuals. As an additional note: timely weather information may also save lives. Is it right that only those that can afford this information have the best chance of survival? As a tax payer I believe every one has the right to the MOST up-to-date weather information for their own personal safety. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

379 "I believe that making any and all of your data public is a good thing. The taxpayers of this country fund the service and should thus derive any benefits the data may provide. Private sector companies will be able to use the data, add their own value through the packaging and presentation of the data, and derive profit. The public will benefit by having ready availability of this data and the ability to make economic and safety decisions. Competition will arise in the dissemination and presentation of the data, but the base data that the taxpayers have already paid for will be useable by all. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

380 "I think you guys do a great job, and I think the more data you can make available freely for everyone on the net, the better you serve the US taxpayer. Thanks for all your hard work. The referring webpage:"

381 "The public benefits from open and free data, processes, and standards. Please don't let anyone create artificial barriers to the flow of weather data. Proprietary formats, standards, data, or processes are a trick to steal value from the public commons and turn it into a privately held good/service. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

382 "I feel that accuweather, weather.com bring a value added service to the weather data."

383 "Please excuse me if I ramble, but I am happy to take this chance to comment on the proposed policy of information dissemination with respect to the weather. The lion's share of my comment focuses on point number 4 of the proposal which, as I read it, commits the NWS/NOAA to providing information gathered about the weather in the US to all parties in a free and easily manageable format. I know that this could become very contentious for organizations that profit over the dissemination of weather data. However, as a citizen who has partially paid for that data through taxes and economic participation, I feel like I own my share of that information already. At one point it was a cost effective decision to publish weather data through specified channels which could then use the data to make money, but times have changed and so have delivery methods. The internet provides a highly cost-effective way to disseminate data to a wide audience and I feel that it is the duty of any gov't organization to release information to its constituency in the most cost-effective manner possible. I agree with the language of the proposal as it stands and I believe that it leaves room for private companies to work with the

data and deliver it in a form that is more friendly to those who would consume it. It is the job of the NWS/NOAA to resist pressure from private companies to obfuscate the data as it is posted by the NWS/NOAA so that it is difficult for smaller companies or individuals to use that data. Thanks for your time. -Brent Ellis
The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

384 "Hello, I am a private weather forecaster, of sorts. I do surf forecasting, and weather forecasting relevant for surfers. I run a small web site, at blakestah.com, with about 800 daily readers. Of course, I rely heavily upon NOAA, NWS, and FNMOC, for their raw data. A policy which increasingly restricts, or creates barriers to access of, such information would have a pronounced impact upon my forecasting. I would need to write programs to decode all of your data formats to basically recreate the pages you now provide for free. And I am not certain I would do that. What is clear is that all of the large forecasting corporations, such as Accuweather, would benefit tremendously from such a move. They would profit by having the NWS throttle information to smaller forecasters. My view is that the basic forecasting information that everyone uses is from the government. Most forecasters know this. The service provided by forecasting is the reading of data, and packaging it so that it is easily digestible by the public. In my case, I translate the available weather data for surfers. This is a wonderful service, and an alteration in policy would increase the value of any forecasting service, with a fixed cost for all to pay to be able to access the data (programming tools to decode the data). Many many smaller forecasting services will stop entirely. And, the largest services will benefit the most. Accuweather is essentially asking you to levy a fixed tax on anyone who wants to forecast. This will have a chilling effect on weather forecasting, with a decrease in the quality of information available to the public, and an increase of financial gain to larger forecasters. I urge you to not only not decrease the support for your weather pages, but to increase it, for the good of the public at large. Accurate weather information saves lives and money for everyone. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

385 "I firmly support the timely access to accurate weather products. Such products certainly must be made easily available to as many tax payers as possible in a free and open format. Businesses and corporations should not be allowed to thwart free access by those who ultimately have paid the bills to build, launch, and operate space assets, develop and run computer models used to produce the weather products. Such corporations need to enhance these basic products with value added activities of their own rather than rely on the government to subsidize them. I applaud your move to enhance the distribution of weather, water, and climate data via the internet in an unencumbered manner. Sincerely, Dr. Joseph M. Zawodny The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

386 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public."

387 I believe the new policy meets the needs of the public and private sectors. I support this new policy. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

388 "As taxpayers we've already paid in full for the excellent meteorological information generated by NOAA and we are therefore fully entitled to it at no additional charge. If the private forecasting industry can't persuade potential

customers that they provide added value beyond what's available from NOAA, too bad - the citizens are under no obligation to 'protect' those private ventures. It would be improper for NOAA to hold its meteorological data (for which we the citizens have already paid) hostage just to please the private forecasting industry. --MO'D The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

389 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

390 "It is tantamount to graft that a government agency would even consider a request by a private firm to make the results of taxpayer funded operations be subject to a usury fee, or otherwise restrict access to the information. It is incumbent upon NOAA and other government agencies to serve the taxpaying citizen first, and private corporate interests last. I must ask you to maintain open access to information as published in accepted standards such as XML. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

391 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

392 Please do not let corporations influence your decision on any policy. They are only out to make a profit and not better any situation but for themselves. I think if any tax dollars goes towards this then I think everyone should benefit from making the data free. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

393 "It is important to keep these information products open and accessible to all people. The more available the information is, the more useful it is for all. The policy does not prevent private use of the information , it also does not prevent value-added services from using MWS information in their own products. It actually creates more opportunities for private use while still preserving public access. The referring webpage:

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/feedback.php>"

394 "I believe NOAA weather information should be made available to everyone in open, standard, digital formats such as XML. I resent companies such as Accuweather demanding that such feeds be shut down. As a taxpayer, I feel I have already paid for this weather data and I don't think companies like Accuweather should be able to charge me a second time for access to data my tax dollars helped to create. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

395 "I believe that going forward with providing all citizens with the data that we all help pay for through our tax dollars is a good thing. Please continue to work to open up this information to all of us. Thanks, Craig Piercy The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

396 I would like to comment that the NWS is already taxpayer funded so putting the information on the internet for no additional charge is the right thing to do. Having a private middleman will only discourage innovation. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

397 Excellent. Finally an open and clean policy. Keep it up guys.

398 "I'm writing in support of the Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. The policy would greatly enhance the weather information available to the taxpaying public. New technology has brought about an era of unprecedented information access and the new policy embraces that era admirably. The referring webpage: http://bloglines.com/myblogs_display?sub=1538654&site=219224"

399 "I am whole-heartedly in favor of removing any distribution restrictions on NWS data. We the taxpayers fund the NWS and should be given unrestricted access to the data that is collected with our tax dollars. The NWS exists to advise the public of weather conditions and provide data on both an informational and safety basis as a public service. It does not and should not exist as a limited-access (non-public) data collection front-end to commercial companies who will then turn around provide the NWS collected data for a fee. Commercial companies should be allowed to re-sell NWS data, but they should not be allowed to restrict the public's free access to it through the NWS itself. Greg Kondrasuk MS Meteorology SDSM&T, 1994 The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

400 I am in favor of any changes that make the raw or minimally processed data more easily available to individuals. I am not in favor of any arrangements that require or favor the access of the data through third party providers that are setup to make a profit from it. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

401 "Publically funded services should make their data available to the public that funded them for free (we already paid for it) and in a common and well

documented format. Not succeeding in this mission would be a failure, especially when such important information is at stake! Please, move to make as much data as possible available to the public as soon as possible. Its the right step into the future and will set the standard for other organizations! John Armstrong Half Moon Bay, CA The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

402 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

403 "I want to urge the NWS to implement its proposed new policy of making weather data freely available on the internet, and support having such data in a standard XML-based format which is available for everybody to read. The taxpayers have already paid for this information to be gathered, and it makes no sense to restrict its distribution only to those who pay for it. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

404 "I am an American Citizen and I pay my federal taxes that fund your organization. I don't see very much return on what I pay in taxes, but there are always the little things that shine through that let me know that my tax money does some good and that some of it is working for me. I don't want to have to pay TWICE for my weather information. I already fund it once - I don't want to pay for it again. I like being able to get the weather forecasts via the internet. Please do not shutdown one of the few things I feel are worthwhile on the internet today. Thanks - Chris. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

405 "Thank you for making taxpayer funded data available in an open format, on the internet, free to the taxpayers. As a US citizen, I very much appreciate having access to this data. joel reed The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

406 "Because the NWS is a government agency and the information is created using my tax dollars, I strongly support the continued and expanding availability of free weather information on the internet and through other sources. Using this data it is perfectly acceptable for private industry to enhance the available information and charge for it. I have no problem with that. If third parties want to collect additional, proprietary data - for example in areas where NWS coverage is limited, that's fine too. They collect it, they own it. But the basic NWS information, collected using my tax dollars should be available without cost as a matter of government policy. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

407 I believe weather feeds should continue to be made free of charge available on the Internet. I utilize the data for my family activities and find this to be a

very useful tool. Adam The referring webpage:

408 "If one owns a television or radio then the forecast is free. Weather forecasts have become an expected way to know what the upcoming climate in the next few days, as well as the next few minutes will be so that one can prepare. In times of tornadoes and floods, weather people and weather services (because of the NWS) have become informants of deathly serious information. If this knowledge were to be stifled in any way then I am sure that human tragedy would ensue."

409 Keep it free of charge for everyone. Why should a few corporations be the only beneficiaries of products created with revenue from all taxpayers?

410 weather info should be free -- let it! The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

411 "I applaud NOAA's efforts to enact a policy that encourages a more open exchange of information. Embracing Open Standards, such as XML, for publishing weather data ensures that everyone has a fair opportunity to utilize the data in the manner most convenient and useful for them. I believe the proposed policy is a great leap in the right direction. I am a regular user of NOAA's various websites and data products. The service they provide is invaluable! The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

412 "I'd prefer that weather data be made available in XML, mostly so my screensaver of the world can still have real weather data mapped on to it, but also because letting Accuweather and Co become the only sources of weather data and then charge for it is a total ripoff."

413 I work as a volunteer for the local Sheriff's office and the US Forrest service. I am also a NWS weather spotter. I use the information provided by NWS daily in my efforts. It is important to me and is a great benefit to the taxpaying public that I be kept abreast of the latest weather information with the latest technology. I therefore encourage NWS to adopt their current proposal. Thanks so much for the great work you do. It saves dollars and most importantly lives. Steve Whitehead NV7V Utah County Sheriffs Communications Auxillary Team Communications Director Timpanogas Emergency Response Team The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

414 "I am in favor of the proposed policy of providing weather data free on the Internet. This is a valuable public service and, as I understand, paid for by public dollars. Sincerely, Kevin Rolfes The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

415 "The proposed changes appear to be beneficial to the public at large. Since 1991, the internet has enabled the cost-effective delivery of weather data and forecasts directly to the people. The National Digital Forecast Database creates the potential for not only simplifying the creation of specialized products to customers, but the creation of desktop weather apps not tied to any commercial entity. I am not a lawyer, but the complaints from the president of Accuweather on non-competes laws do not have merit. Accuweather is not capable of generating the

weather data or populating the grid. Why should the public pay for the distribution of data via a commercial entity when the NWS, a federal entity, can make the data available in a format where everyone can access the information. They'll still be needed to generate their products for their existing customers. It's not the federal government's job to create or maintain monopolies for commercial entities. As long as the commercial weather sector is using public data to produce their products, they should have to provide value to their customers, not be supported by a tax for distribution. When they can produce the information themselves, they can get indignant about the public accessing the information in an open format. But as long as I, a taxpayer, am funding the satellites and balloons, I want to be able to access the data in an open format, even if I choose not to. Best of luck, and remember there are 300 million Americans, and the NWS as a public entity should do what's in the best interest of the people, not the corporations or private entities.
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

416 "I would like to state my opinions in agreement on the proposed new rules regarding release of weather information openly on the Internet. I'm a firm believer that we should have the best, earliest access to weather resources available without being charged money (beyond what taxes already pay for) in order to know whether or not I'm going to get wet. Or buried in snow. Or roasted alive. Please keep up the good work of modernizing your offerings. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

417 "Hi, speaking only as a private citizen, I am in favor of the new policy. I have no further comment. Thank you. Stephen R. McIntyre stephen@oasis.novia.net
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

418 "The new policy seems to me to be a balanced and intelligent response to the continuing evolution of the information architecture of the United States. It is refreshing to see a government agency that recognizes the benefit of a healthy balance of government, industry, and *private citizens* interests. The only opposition to this that I have seen comes from the weather service industry, who apparently want to continue a free ride at taxpayer expense. As their business model becomes increasingly untenable -- intermediate weather interpreters are no longer the only or the ""ideal"" mechanism for getting weather data to end users -- they cry for governmental protection ... while simultaneously denouncing the government's involvement at all. I think dedication to open, public, and easy access to data collected -- *at taxpayer expense* -- is a sound and appropriate stance for the Weather Service. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

419 "widely distributed, freely available weather information will save lives."

420 "Please do not submit to the demands of organizations like the Private Weather Sector that would restrict information that all people have a right to. Weather information isn't something someone should have to pay for, it's something that all people have a right to have. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

421 "As a taxpayer, I support the new policy, primarily because I agree with the following statement, found in paragraph 8 of the policy: ""Open information dissemination: NWS recognizes that open and unrestricted dissemination of high

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quality publicly funded information, as appropriate and within resource constraints, is good policy and is the law." The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

422 I think it's a wonderful idea to expand the amount of data available. With a quality source of meteorological information I believe that new applications and uses can be found that were previously impossible. Kudos to the NOAA for pursuing a policy of openness in spite of the controversy commercial vendors are creating! The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>

423 "For reasons of commerce, national security, and personal safety, NOAA must gather significant amounts of weather data. Furthermore, to ensure that products like severe weather statements can be issued accurately, the organization must provide data such as current conditions and forecasts. An artificial scarcity of data does nothing to help the people paying for it via their taxes. It only serves to help the bottom lines of a few large corporations whose only responsibilities are to themselves, not the citizens of the United States. The services that are currently "experimental" or whose ultimate availability is unknown due to pressure from certain members of the Commercial Weather Industry should become permanently and freely available to anyone wishing access to it. Back when data dissemination costs were high, it made sense to limit the NWS role in giving data to the public. By allowing only a few organizations to have access to the data and allowing them to sell it, those organizations would pay the rather high costs to ensure the data was, in fact, available. However, now that communication costs are so low, such a method makes no sense. A recent letter from Barry Myers to members of the Commercial Weather Industry pleading for them to come out against the NWS Partnership Policy, he stated: "Industries grow where risk is controllable or predictable. The present path of the NWS- controlled federal policy introduces greater risk to the private sector. Not less." In this case, he is partially right. However, the risk he is actually talking about is the ability for large commercial weather organizations to maintain a stranglehold on the sector. You see, the products that NOAA currently offer, themselves, pose no threat to Accuweather or other large organizations. It is just data, and most people don't want to look at coded data. They want an end product. By allowing data to flow freely to the public, the NWS ENCOURAGES competition to the incumbents. Barriers that prevented bright entrepreneurs from pushing new services are greatly reduced and a new era of value-added products will be born. To this end, I see no alternative but for NOAA to provide the services it currently does in a permanent, free fashion as well as develop other offerings that benefit the taxpayers as it sees fit. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

424 "Weather forecasts by the National Weather Service are a taxpayer-funded public service. Please keep expanding your products and keep them available for free to the U.S. public as we pay for them. Thanks! Dan Dennison Santa Clarita, CA USA The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

425 "RE: NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information It is only fitting to open up the old policy to make the publication of taxpayer-paid weather data freely available to the public. The government is not responsible for protecting the outdated business models of entities that fail to reckon with the changes the Internet can bring. It IS responsible for returning to the public data which the public has paid for, and doing so in a manner that is both usable and timely. In doing so, I encourage the government to use whatever computer systems it deems the

most beneficial, but to publish the information in open source format so that the public may have the same opportunity to make their own computer system choices. Thank you for your attention. The referring webpage:"

426 Love the new SOAP service for digital weather data and would hope that a publicly funded agency would not require taxpayers to pay twice for the service. Commercial entities should not be able to profit at the expense of taxpayers. Please keep this data / service available to taxpayers for free. The referring webpage:

427 I applaud your efforts to make weather information more accessible to the public and am in favor of your proposed policy. The American tax payer will benefit from having this information available to him or her in many and varied formats. Those that wish to corner the market on weather information -- paid with tax dollars -- and act as a middleman between the government and the public are shamelessly seeking a protectionist policy for their industry. It would be unconscionable for your agency to act on their behalf. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

428 I think internet weather service should be free. My tax dollars have already helped to pay for the weather information NOAA provides. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

429 "I use NOAA/NWS forecast and climate data daily for personal purposes, and to plan my work activities. I support NWS's free services, and its plan to continue and expand free services. One of the biggest reasons that I support the concept of these ""free"" services is the fact that my tax dollars have already footed the bill. While I believe that NWS activities are a good use of public money, I think it would be unreasonable to ask consumers/ taxpayers to pay for NWS services twice. Thanks. -Dan Hauber The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

430 "I'm not an American citizen so the decision doesn't effect me either way, but what does affect me is that the people of America have paid for this information by paying their collective taxes to which payes for your salary... I say again ""that payes your wages"" If i asked you to pay me twice for a service that i did once?? I wonder if you would feel cheated and ripped off. Whether information is a resource that can prevervse a life or cost a life. Is a life your putting into harms way worth any money that you can make? One hopes that it isn't. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

431 "Since NOAA is funded by tax dollars, it important that the data that it collects is presently in a non-proprietary and free format, available for all to read. Thanks, Joe wobber The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

432 "Since I live in Iowa, a tornado frequented state, I value having weather information available at my fingertips. I am a working student bordering on poverty and I will not pay or be able to pay for weather information. I think that you would be putting a lot of americans basically in the dark for weather information and the number of injuries and deaths from tornados and other weather phenomena would increase substantially. I check the weather all of the time, but that is because I

am interested and the information is there. If the information cost money, I would never check again and would probably end up wet when I didn't bring my umbrella outside or in Kansas when the next tornado blows me away."

433 "Please continue to keep and further open all weather data to the public. I view this free, open access as a requirement for improved weather safety as well as education about weather. Please keep weather data open as well as expand the free, open access to data for current and future weather tracking systems as well as data formats. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

434 Our tax dollars already pay for the NWS data. Please keep it publically available in XML feeds. There are certain private interests that would be happy to injure the public interest so they can resell weather data for a profit. Please don't let that happen.

435 "I wholeheartedly support the proposed policy. Greater availability of weather information directly from the source will encourage an increased and more diverse use of that information, with widespread economic benefits for our country. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

436 "I think it is important to note that the National Weather Service (NWS) is a public entity funded by tax dollars. As such, the data from the NWS should be available for free to the public in just as much detail as to private companies in order to analyze it themselves. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

437 "As a teacher who works with 7th and 8th grade students in a public school, I will be disappointed to see the change from a free accessible "weather, water, Climate and Related Information." On a regular basis, I use NOAA as a source of information in my classroom. Students are encouraged to visit the same sites at home with parents to share what was learned in class. Typically, there may be a homework assignment that relates to the NOAA information. Making the change to a fee policy will eliminate the ability for my students to share their learning at home, as most parents will be unwilling to participate in a fee basis. In addition to the students I personally see, I teach workshops throughout the state of Utah. I have encouraged several hundred teachers, over the past five years, to utilize NOAA in their classrooms. Many have developed lessons which also have students doing homework using NOAA. I strongly urge you the recommendation that NOAA continue to keep their web weather information free to the public. Sincerely, Glen Westbrook Educator Presidential Awardee for Science and Math Education Milken Family National Educator The referring webpage:"

438 I would just like to say that I feel data that effects my day to day life is such a way that weather does should remain free. I rely on the NWS for my daily forecast and even more so when severe weather is present in my area.

439 "Dear Sir, For as long as I've had a political consciousness, I've favored open information exchange, not simply as a matter of open democratic exchange, but as a prerequisite for a free society. I appreciate what private-sector firms and meteorologists, all the way down to our local news forecasters, have done for the public. However, in this millennium it is silly to restrict information

distribution to proprietary channels. Open access should be our goal in all governmental affairs. Tyson Burghardt The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

440 I support a policy of putting information on the Internet for public use in an unencrypted and clear format. Thank you. John Plevyak The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

441 "I think it is important that the NOAA keeps providing weather forecasts for free and would like to see more computer parsable weather data available (eg. for stock-ticker like weather applets on people's desktops). Through my taxes I have already paid for the NOAA weather forecasts and I think it is an outrage that certain commercial weather services want to limit the free availability of data my tax money has already paid for. I'm fine with them repackaging and reselling the data, but there should be free (as in freedom, taxes pay for the actual forecasts) access to weather forecasts. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

442 Internet weather is great - but my taxes help pay for part of it. I shouldn't have to pay twice to get my local weather ... please ALLOW it to remain free! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

443 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99&threshold=4>"

444 why should we have to pay twice to get weather forecasts?

445 "Please provide weather feeds as many as possible in common format for public access. Or, provide them in MY format so I can then sell the data streams to others. Yes, I like that idea better. I don't think many other people will since their tax dollars are paying for data already. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

446 "I support the proposed policy to the extent that it makes publically funded information freely available to the public. The CWSA has expressed a desire to be the middleman between the NWS and the public preventing the public from freely accessing information it has already paid for. To wit: (From <http://www.weatherindustry.org/CWSA%20ppt.pdf>) NRC Recommendation #7
----- The NWS should make its data and products available in

internetaccessible digital form. Information held in digital databases should be based on widely recognized standards, formats, and metadata descriptions to ensure that data from different observing platforms, databases, and models can be integrated and used by all interested parties in the weather and climate enterprise. CWSA Position Statement: ----- CWSA endorses the dissemination of all NWS data and information (including experimental) in real time without delay in Internet accessible digital form to the private sector for distribution to the public in formats that are appropriate to carry out a properly defined NWS mission. The digital database should not be used to allow the NWS to expand beyond its core mission, jeopardize the existing infrastructure, or enter areas creating publicly-funded competition with the Commercial Weather Industry. Climate information that has been collected and processed using public funds should be made available to the public for free or at as low a cost as possible. The most efficient means for large scale information dissemination today is the internet. Open standards such as those developed by the world wide web Consortium and the Internet Engineering Task Force should be used for public data dissemination in preference to proprietary or closed standards. The commercial weather industry has plenty of opportunities to add value to the data produced by the NWS. Simply redistributing taxpayer funded information for a fee should not be one of them. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

447 "I've just heard about a possible shutting down of the current XML feed in place. I will certainly be sending letter to my congressman, and other official concerning this as I and my family feel that adding fees to something that our taxes (in part or as whole) provide for shouldn't have additional fees being charged for services already provided. I sincerely hope that your organization will reevaluate this plan of action as would tarnish what many consider to be a useful resource of public benefit to many communities. Again, I'll be writing to my congressman for comment and more information, but I hope that this is merely a rumor without merit."

448 "I do not see how unnessary fees will reduce inter department ""Frictions"". The only thing it will do is restrain the advancement of the science of metorology itself. Amatures will no longer be able to acess the information that is needed."

449 "I think the National weather Service is a great example of my tax dollars being put to a good use. Especially by providing the internet with quality xml feeds so that anyone on the internet can easily keep updated on the weather here in the USA. XML is such a great format, it provides us with the freedom to choose what system we use to view the data contained in those xml feeds. Please continue to provide this public service, and don't ever charge extra for access."

450 KEEP WEATHER INFORMATION FREE. DO NOT BOW TO GREEDY CORPORATE PRESSURE. TAX DOLLARS PAY FOR WEATHER FORECASTING AND DUE TO ITS LIFE SAVING NATURE IT SHOULD BE MADE FREE TO ALL IN ALL POSSIBLE FORMATS WITHIN FINANCIAL REASON.

451 Excellent. This should help to create new business in weather related support areas. Any individual or group which has problems with this proposal obviously does not have the business sense to see the advantages in modernization. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

452 "Thanks for providing free access to the NDFD XML feeds! These have been very useful to us and I would like to see this service continue to be freely available. I would also like to voice my support for expanding unrestricted access to publicly funded weather observations rather than restricting access to private companies from whom the public would have to pay again for access. I support NOAA's proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

453 Why should Amateur Radio operators freely contribute information to you if you are only going to resell it for your own profit? I thought this was a service not a business.

454 "The new policy sounds very good. In sharp contrast to what Barry Myers and the PWS are proposing, it's great that information that is already bought and paid for (through taxes) is be made available to those that are paying for it, without any extra charge, and even better that this might become official policy. If they want to charge an additional fee for that information, they need to come up with some clear value adds, so they have something that they can legitimately charge for. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

455 "Please keep weather data free. I am already paying for the creation of this data via my taxes (and I pay a LOT of taxes). respectfully, Jeff Fanelli Macomb, MI The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

456 "If I'm not mistaken, I, as a tax payer, am a direct sponsor of NOAA."

457 "Good morning. I just read an article on slashdot.org about Barry Myers, President of Accuweather, trying to force citizens to pay for the privelage of obtaining the weather on the Internet. I don't know if this is true, but if so, as a TAX PAYER, I want to share my view with NOAA. NOAA is tax payer funded. Therefore, the information that NOAA acquires and analyzes and the results of those analysis, are public property. If Barry Myers wants me to pay again for what I've already paid for, than I would suggest that he, solely, start funding NOAA and it's programs so I only have to pay once. Please, deliver this message to whomever is appropraite so my little voice might join others who support NOAA and utilize it's services and information. Sincerely, Robert Petty Arvada, CO The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

458 "Having free and open weather data is essential for the benefit and safty of the American Public. Free information means a greater distribution of accurate information and the ability to cross check potential mistakes and misinformation. I oppose any type of limit to the data you collect using my tax dollars. Brian McBride Plattsburgh, NY The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

459 "I think people that are trying to profit from the services of NOAA and the NWS are nothing but profit mongerers. The taxpayers of the US pay for NOAA and NWS to exist, therefore; we should have free and 100% access to the information that it provides. Just because someone went to school to become a meteorologist doesn't mean that they're the only ones that can read a sattellite map or a forecast. These are

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the same people that feed the public the dew point and talk about barometric pressure like it means something to my grandmother and now they want to charge us for this information? These profiteers want to charge us for information that we already have a right to. The layman needs this info to plan for their next day, their crops, for parties, etc. To allow a ""middleman"" to come between you and the people who pay your bills is an atrocity. Please deny the exploitation to the best of your abilities. Thanks. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

460 "I understand that private weather services are opposing the XML data feeds being provided by NWS. I urge NOAA policy to continue to allow this free data to be posted to the Internet. It would be shameful to allow this data, gathered using taxpayer funding, to be turned into a proprietary resource to be resold by Accuweather and its ilk. Accuweather is more than welcome to find ways to add value and make itself relevant, but government data should be available to the public free of charge in a standard format such as XML. Kudos for moving forward with this progressive policy."

461 "Hello, Though I'm not a lawyer, Items 3, 4 and 5 seem to address my concerns: I think removing the restrictions on the information available to disseminate by NOAA makes sense. I also think the type of information made available by NOAA should not be subject to limitation by the private sector. If an entity in the private sector wishes, they may ""add value"" in some way to the same data available to the taxpaying public. Thanks Chris Tucci Dover, PA The referring webpage:"

462 "As a tax paying member of the general public, I would like to see the NWS make as much of it's raw data as possible available for use by the general public. I believe that private firms can offer value and create viable business models through enrichment, presentation and agregation of the NWS data. There are also a number of non commercial and not for profit activities that would benefit from this model."

463 If tax dollars are going to pay for gov't satellites

464 "In response to the people who think that we should have to pay for this information: we already do. Our money as taxpayers goes into this so that we can reap the benefits of it. It should not be up to a private commercial entity whether or not we have to pay for this information, because we already do!"

465 NWS is a government organization providing information for the public good and at public expense. To collaborate with private weather services who would force consumers to pay for said information is wrong in the extreme. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

466 "Taxpayers are already paying for this service, so it is unfair to privatize the data. This trend is becoming all too familiar in our government today, and it needs to stop. All NWS information already belongs to the public, and it is essential it stays there."

467 "I welcome the opportunity to comment on the future of services that are taxpayer funded. All information, data, processes, intellectual property rights, etc. that were developed or acquired via taxpayer funding should be available to those taxpayers. Private industry should not be allowed to ""hi-jack"" and profit from publicly funded programs. That said, the more readily available the data provided by government entities the better. Technology, particularly that of the communicates of government controlled data to the general public has been lacking. Move forward with informing everyone. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

468 "I fully support you making as much information available to the general public as possible. The free and open exchange of critical weather data would a really nice feature of the National Weather Service. Thank you. Jake Covert 16701 Bettmar Street Roseville, MI 48066 The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

469 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public."

470 "I support the policy of publishing free weather data for consumption by the public domain. This data is of scientific as well as municipal value. Citizens should not have to pay private companies simply to know if it will rain tomorrow. NOAA is funded by taxpayer dollars - hence pandering to private enterprise is not only a conflict of interest, but a misuse of public funds. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

471 "Information collected by a tax-funded organization that is not classified should be available free to the public by definition. If an corporate entity wishes to take that information and provide some sort of value-added service for a fee, that is acceptable. However, if a corporation wishes that public data be somehow obfuscated or made less available to the public so that the corporate entity may make a profit, I object. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

472 "I'm not sure what changes you are proposing, but I do not under any circumstances want to lose free internet access to NOAA radar, local Doppler radar, and other information available at www.weather.com The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

473 "The NWS should put their data on the Internet for free. There is no reason I as a taxpayer should pay twice for the data, once to you and then to intermediary."

474 "Data obtained with public funding belongs to the public. Obfuscating these data would create create an artificial scarcity of information that would only benefit a small minority of private interests. Anyone wishing to profit from these data may do so by adding value, not by hoarding public property."

475 "I commend the NWS on its commitment to open and accessible information formats. By continuing to support and strengthen open and publicly-available data

feeds like NDFD XML, the NWS is setting a gold standard for how a public organization can give back to its community and its nation. I encourage the NWS to make NDFD XML, and other projects like it, a central aspect of its operations; supplying accurate and accessible weather data to both commercial and non-commercial private entities, as well as academic institutions, can only advance the field of meteorology and enrich the lives of millions. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

476 "The NOAA is funded by taxpayers, like myself. The internet makes it possible and inexpensive for weather information to be provided in a widely-accessable format, XML. Doing so is opposed by private corporations that would like to collect rent on information collected at public expense. Under the proposed changes, the private sector will continue to have a role in providing value added services. Since it is practical for the National weather Service to provide public access to collected weather information, it should. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

477 I strongly object to the commercial weather industry's attempts to block citizens from readily accessing government weather data in a format comprehensible to the layman.

478 "I feel that the NOAA is doing the right thing in tweaking it's policy. Over the past several years, I have madeb the NWS website in Dever/Boulder the first website I go to for any weather changes. I even do my searching for travel weather starting at this website. It appears the new policy will strengthen the product and its uses. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

479 "If the weather data is gathered with taxpayer funds, then it should probably be provided free of charge to those same taxpayers."

480 "we must urge you NOT to make your weather data only available for the Accuweather types of the world. Sir we have paid for this information and it must remain available to all. We will not have the weather follow down the path of copyrite and the recording industry. Data wants to be free and must remain so to all. The gov. has given control of our airwaves to the telecom criminals and we will not tolerate the weather being taken over by the ""Stockholders"" we are already the owners of the data. Thank you Bill Rickords Wichita, KS bricko@cox.net The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

481 I love the idea for making free XML data feeds and other weather information official. Keep up the good work! ~J The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

482 "I am in favor of keeping weather data as gathered and published by the NOAA/NWS, ""free"" and published in open and easily accessed formats (XML, SOAP, etc.) The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

483 "Previously, there was a local weather channel that displayed NWS radar 24x7. The audio was the feed from the local NOAA weather radio station. Any time

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there was inclement weather, we could just check that channel and get all the info needed. Today, that channel has been replaced by weather info from a local TV station. Any time I need instant weather info lately, I've had to watch 5 minutes of commercials to get it. I'm tired of weather information that should be instantly available to the public being delayed by a commercial. NOAA is paid for by my income taxes. The public needs this information to be available without having to produce their credit card number. We've already paid for this service. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

484 "I would like to strenuously object to any move which would restrict free public access to National weather service weather observations and forecasts. Considering that my taxes help to fund the NWS, I would find it very alarming that the fruits of tax-funded labor would be solely redirected to the benefit of private companies. Why should a taxpayer have to pay twice -- once in taxes for the NWS, then again to a private for-profit company, to get the information gathered by the use of the original tax revenues? The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

485 "I fully support a policy which mandates complete and total free access to digital data and digital data products produced by the NOAA and the NWS, so long as the data is the product of taxpayer funded programs. The people pay for the production of the information; they should not have to pay a second time to see it. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

486 "I support NOAA's proposed ""Fair weather"" policy wholeheartedly. NOAA's online presence does an excellent job of providing the most current weather information, right along with the Weather Radio system. Using both of these services, I have been able to get advance warning of approaching severe weather for the past several years, including the current storm season. Any rigid limits on the information that can be provided would be ridiculous and even dangerous. Several times, the local radio and television media in my area failed to issue any kind of weather hazard notification. Were it not for NOAA Weather Radio or the website for my local NWS (Wilmington, NC), I would have never known about the threats. I do have respect for the private sector weather information services and the work that they do, but I don't think that this is any justification for restricting NOAA's information availability. Private sector weather services complement the work of the NWS, but they are not a replacement for it. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

487 I would like to see the tax sponsored weather information freely available to the general public.

488 "It has come to my attention that certain commercial interests are pushing for the destruction of free weather information to the public. They wish to charge for any and all weather information released by you. This is wrong. You perform a valuable public service, and since you are a government function, your first priority must remain to the public and not to commercial interests. Thank you for your attention. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

489 "I'm in favor of your Fairweather policy. I have looked at the private weather industry arguments and, while they have to make a living, the data you provide are already paid for through taxpayer funds. I may be willing to, in effect,

pay 'twice' to get added value that private industry may provide, but it is not defensible to exclude access to private citizens who are picking up the tab for its generation. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

490 "Please don't cut the XML feeds. I depend on them to inform me of the latest warnings and the future weather in my area without having to pay. I don't think I'd be able to pay for such a service from the private sector, and thusly I'd have to depend on crappy local stations to inform me of warnings (many of which put up warnings 15 minutes after it is issued. I think that a tornado warning, say, is critical information and a 15 minute gap is unacceptable)."

491 "As a public entity, funded inevitably by the Tax Payers of America, any policy that is established should provide free public access to all information that is available, including, but not limited to, all underlying information that has been used to create and provide weather forecasts. By providing this information, free to all, the private sector and academia now carry the onus to provide added value to the information. There services will rise and fall based on their own ability to provide an effective and desirable service. While based on the free and publicly available information from the NOAA, the additional value that they create in presenting that data, adding industry specific information and formula, etc, will dictate the success of their services. This methodology will also encourage additional private sector competition and investment. As the raw product has already been paid for by the Tax Payers of America, the academic and private enterprise will be able to focus their product development dollars on technologies and services that will enhance that data and provide additional value to their customers. This type of policy also enables smaller private industries to compete with a level playing field to the larger ones, while also allowing the private Tax Paying individual to use the same data to come to their own conclusions. I personally have used data from the NOAA site on many occasions over data provided in my local market. I would like that data to continue to be made available for personal consumption by those who have made the greatest investment into its availability, the Tax Payers of America. Best Regards, Matthew Pickens 904-777-8549 Jacksonville, FL 32210 The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

492 "I just read over the proposed 'fairweather' policy. Speaking as a private citizen, with no connections to public or private weather enterprises, I support the proposed policy. Free, open, and timely access to weather data, using open data standards, is the right thing to do. thanks, Galen Seitz The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

493 NOAA's weather information must remain free and accessible to the public at large as long as it has tax payer support. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/index.pl>

494 "In the last two decades, I've used various forms of computer software clients to obtain forecasts, directly from the NOAA or from various ".mil" services. But, most of the time, I "get" my local forecast from radio or television. The only computer-based value that I normally realize is "current conditions" as I work long hours in an air conditioned space with no windows. I fail to see what Dr. Myers and the CWI is concerned about, other than a miniscule amount of lost revenue. Dr. Myers's logic that the NWS should not compete with the Commercial Weather Industry is slightly skewed. By seeking to prohibit products like Kweather, it is not competition from the government that is being limited.

Rather, it is competition with the individual citizen that is being limited. (It is not the NWS that is being "pushed out of the picture".) Logically, if Dr. Myers wants avoid competition between the NWS and CWI, CWI should be gathering their own data and performing their own analysis. If any member of the CWI depends solely on the NWS for their data, then that CWI member is nothing more than a Value Added Provider. The added value becomes nothing more than a visually appealing person explaining what NWS's data "means" along with some additional animation (aka "pretty colors") for the recipient to enjoy. If that CWI member profits from it's relationship with the NWS (i.e., "makes money"), some of that profit should be shared with the people who paid for the data collection in the first place (i.e., a portion of the profit should be returned to the public fund by paying percentage to the NWS). I am assuming that this is currently not happening. The use of computer programs such as KWeather are not very threatening to the continued "life" of the CWI. In the security field, there is a rule of thumb: "People will most often take the path of least resistance." In this case, it's much easier to watch television or listen to the radio to "get" the weather forecast. It takes intellectual effort to download and configure a client, something that the general population is not willing to expend. They are more concerned with cooking dinner, mowing the lawn, going to work, ensuring the kids' homework is done, etc. The partner that Dr. Myers is complaining about in his notes to the AMS Corporate Form (15 March 2004) is not a corporate entity. He is at least correct that no formal agreement was made between the NWS and CWI. The rest of his remarks appear to be self-serving justification for private use of public funds. The money for the NWS comes out of my pocket in the form of taxes. That I would not be able to profit directly (get raw data or forecasts directly from the NWS) should be considered criminal. That I (as an average citizen) can choose to (or not) profit directly from that tax expenditure is what Dr. Myers is trying to damage. Unfortunately, the NWS cannot consider letting the CWI fend for themselves for a week or so. I do not require a reply and do not require permission for these comments to be reused. Respectfully, Tim Kramer The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

495 "From what I have read, there are a number of interests (in the commercial weather business) pushing to extend the 1991 policy limiting the free release of NWS data on the internet. As an American tax payer and an Internet users, I felt I should express my annoyance and dismay at this idea. We, the taxpayers, have already paid for this data. There is absolutely no reason to expect or require us to pay for public data. Sincerely, Steven Sokol The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org>"

496 I wish to express my support for this policy proposal. I believe strongly that non-private information collected by the government should be freely available to the public. I hope that the NWS and NOAA will use this policy to continue to expand the information available on the internet. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

497 "I pay taxes, taxes pay for NWS, NWS should continue to provide XML data feeds so that I don't have to pay someone else to get the data that I already pay for."

498 "I strongly applaud the weather Service intention to formalize its policy of making weather information available at no charge via the internet. My company has business interests in the Caribbean, and we rely completely on information from the NHC for our planning during the active hurricane season. In addition, the kinds of research into weather related issues that NOAA has undertaken is certainly a constructive and leadership stance in this area, and making available that work to the broadest possible audience is completely consistent with the mandate of NOAA.

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Private interests who want to find ways to create ""value added"" services should strive to find ways to add value -- and not charge for what the Federal Government already provides as part of its service to businesses and individuals through the department of commerce. Robert C. Alexander President, Alexander & Associates, Inc. 38 East 29th Street, 10th Floor New York, NY 10016 cc: Senator Charles Shumer, NY
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

499 "I would like to say that I am pleased with the delivery of NWS information over the internet and other sources, and value the NWS as an example of excellent public service. I believe that improvements in NWS's delivery of free quality weather information to US taxpayers in recent years has been wonderful. I look to the NWS as the first source for important weather information everyday, and consider it one of the best investments of my tax dollars available. I am concerned about the possibility of lobbying by private corporations who hope to gain at taxpayer's expense by pressuring the NWS to close access to weather information. I encourage the NWS to increase the availability of free, quality weather information to citizens and the public, and thank you for your ongoing efforts and accomplishments.
The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

500 "i have jsut read that the updated policy will make a ""free"" feed available. It was not free...it has been paid for by taxpayer dollars and therefore belongs to the taxpayers without, I repeat, without having tow pay twice for the same service. thank you The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

501 "I believe that weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information, whose collection was supported by our taxes, should be freely available to the general public via the internet free of charge. I have no objection to providing that information to fee based services who wish to charge for it along with some form of value add, but they should *not* have the ability to shield that data from the public to lock in their profit. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

502 "I just wanted to comment on the new XML weather feed (<http://weather.gov/xml/>). I believe this is a wonderful service that will help advance the public's knowledge and safety, and I do hope you will continue to offer and enhance it. I intend to write extensions to my software to access it, to provide feedback on current weather conditions where appropriate. I know some special interests wish you to lock it down. I hope that, as a government body, the NOAA chooses to do what's right for the people who fund it, not for a small group of businesses. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

503 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. If

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the government wishes to deal with other problems like the budget they could opt to add a surcharge to those that resell NWS data (tax payer funded) that way the tax payers' government would benefit. In this day of heightened terror being able to get to weather information helps us go about our normal day to day activities. Thank you for your time, -Brad Epps The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

504 "Living in a remote area of the Texas panhandle, I rely on Internet weather; forecasts and radar. I have paid the fee for WeatherBug and plan to continue to do so. We pay fees for our television weather forecasts and see nothing wrong with paying for Internet weather. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

505 "It has come to my attention that the ""payware"" weather industry (Accuweather, The weather Channel, and similar) are campaigning against proposed revisions to the Policy on Partnerships. Consequently, I ask myself why private companies might be campaigning against a public service run by a federally-financed division of the US government (in other words, by tax dollars paid by myself, by you, and by every other law-abiding inhabitant of this country.) And the answer naturally comes to mind that these companies want to inhibit access to these feeds, something that seems to be counter-productive to the goal of anyone who wants to produce weather forecasts for use of government, educational, corporate or private interests. Why? Because, presumably, they feel their ""business models"" are threatened -- in other words, because if free weather data is available to anyone who wishes to use it, there will be no incentive for anyone to pay for their services. Yet, why should taxpayers be forced (as these private interests would like) to pay twice for the data? Currently, I use weather.gov to access the local forecasts for my area as well as satellite and radar imagery for the Midwestern US. I feel I have perfectly valid access rights to this data because I have paid for it through faithful filing of tax returns through the years, and that my money does not only fund the hardware and software that creates the data and the work that translates it into finished forecasts but also the web servers and bandwidth that get it onto my computer screen or my television. We already see incessant rebranding of NWS data in the form of television weather forecasts that are almost entirely based on federally-collected data rather than on local efforts; every station has its own trade name for its weather forecasting, yet little to no notice is given of its origins. It thus seems that a fair amount of commercial exploitation is going on as it is, and this has been tolerated thus far by the public (largely, I feel, because the public is not prevented from accessing the same data for themselves should they wish to do the same, or just to refer to it for personal use, as I do) but that tolerance will not last long if requirements are imposed that would essentially force us all to pay twice -- once to produce the data and once again for a corporate interest to re-brand it with their own logo and sell it to us without telling us the true origins of their forecasts. And then there are the small software companies that produce weather-forecast utilities for computer users that draw, in part, on NWS data (afterten.com and glu.com, for example.) Forcing them to pay, or even possibly blocking them from accessing forecasts (corporate interests are unlikely to allow potential competitors to use their data, after all) will deprive small companies of revenue, users of lovely little utilities, and the programmers of jobs. That doesn't sound fair, does it? Government exists to serve the people. Not corporations. The people are not served by forcing them to pay twice for the same data. Don't stop publishing free data. Encourage public access with your policies. That's what bests serves the public, and that's what the NWS exists to do. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

506 "Weather data is paid for by our tax dollars, therefore, it should be publically accessible at no charge to the public. The only reason commercial entities want this information kept from the public is to maintain their monopoly on

weather data."

507 "We should NOT, I repeat, NOT have to pay twice to receive weather data! Any and all data and information collected or created by the federal government and paid for with TAX PAYER dollars should be available to the public in a way that is free and open, supporting industry/government standards that do not encumber private users or the public. Don't make me pay to receive weather data in my GPL'ed software! The referring webpage:"

508 I support your proposed policy for weather information. The information you collect should be freely available to everyone. We should NOT have to pay commercial providers to have access to information collected by the NWS. I commend you for the proposal. The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

509 Please keep NOAA weather data free to the public.

510 "NOAA should be providing all of their information in a clear and documented format for all to consume without charge. Using an open format (such as XML) will allow innovation and spur both the commercial and amateur market to develop new ways of delivering this information - all at no cost to NOAA, and as a benefit to all. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

511 "I support the proposed changes. Detailed and accurate weather information should be in the public domain, not subject to the profit motives of some select companies. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

512 "Currently the weather service is paid for by all taxpayers, corporations and citizens alike. This information should be available to those taxpayers without additional fees, in an easily readable format, for their use as they see fit. There might be a temptation to use this explanation as a justification for turning the weather service into a sort of private entity like the post office. However I think this would be a bad idea. Weather data isn't just a simple "'do i have a picnic tomorrow or not'" information service, it is vital data that a large number of private and public entities need access to, and it is data that can save lives. Private companies such as airlines, road, rail and sea shipping industries, public entities such as levy maintainers, stormwater systems and airports need this data. Turning the weather service into a private entity would harm those other businesses, just to help a handful of other businesses. Additionally private entities these days are very reluctant to invest in research, but if we want better tornado, hurricane, storm prediction we need more research into weather -- something I just don't see a private entity wanting to pay for this type of basic research. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

513 "Please continue to provide weather data to the public freely via universal, non-proprietary formats such as XML. Thank you. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

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514 "My tax money pays for the National Weather Service. I should not have to further pay a private company such as Accu-weather in order to get any type of access to that data that I need or want. The NWS exists to serve the citizens of the United States -- not to serve the private weather industry. Jean McGuire 653 Silver St. #1 Manchester, NH 03103 The referring webpage:"

515 "I am against the proposal by the National weather Service to repeal the 1991 Public Private Partnership policy. This proposal is fueled by companies that want to charge for access to the weather Services through programs on the Internet. weather information provided by our Government is very important to its citizens and in many cases provides information that saves lives. The taxpayers are already paying for this services. How can private business then charge for access to this Government service? It is a dis-service to the citizens of the United States to allow this to happen. Sperry Russ Sebring, FL The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/feedback.php>"

516 Please don't make weather data a propetary format.

517 we should NOT have to pay to access the temperature/humidity/windspeed etc... that is ridiculous. thank you. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

518 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public."

519 "I am absolutely in favor of the most possible openness in the release of weather data I have paid for with my tax money. If Accuweather wants to make money off of these data they have the same rights as I, or any other, citizen or corporation does: they can provide useful alert services, a better user interface, or whatever else. If they can't differentiate themselves in the market, too bad. I have no interest in paying to subsidize an industry that up to now has survived by people being unaware of <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>, and in the future wants to survive by locking up this publicly-funded information. The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/feedback.php>"

520 "Please ensure that our taxpayer-supported weather data, crucial for everything from our food production down to our decisions on what to wear each day, does not become bogged down, unreachable, behind for-pay gateways such as those operated by accuweather or weather.com. Don't let commercial interests with proprietary needs to restrict access get in the way of this crucial resource. Please do provide those XML data feeds to -all- citizens and residents without charge. Let the commercial concerns add value and charge for it, but above all keep the forecasts and data coming for all the rest of us too, without extra charges. Thanks! The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

521 I greatly enjoy the free use of weather data from NOAA that is provided on the internet. It has come to my attention that some groups seek to limit public

access to this information and wish to provide this information on a pay per use format. Insofar as I understand NOAA has been charged by the US Congress to provide weather data to all. I would not like to see a fee based structure come into fruition. The weather data that I get is timely and free and I find it highly accurate. I do not see how including a fee into the structure will in any way enhance the ability to gain accurate information about the meteorological conditions. Thank You The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

522 "A few comments: Powerful computers and free/inexpensive software capable of manipulating and displaying complex data sets, are easily available to private citizens. Thanks, in part, to the Internet. Having Internet access to the extensive data collected by NOAA and the NWS provides opportunities for private citizens to use the data in many positive ways. Education is one area where ready access to weather data can provide long term positive return to our society. Volunteers and teachers can use software visualization tools for data analysis in the classroom. Providing thought provoking, inspiring views of the climate and our planet. Without the data sets to feed these tools, or if the data is only available through private sector intermediaries, we will lose opportunities to engage bright young minds. The activities of citizen-scientists are another area where access to data can result in great benefits. Once again access to the tools for manipulating weather/climate data are readily available to citizen scientists. Lack of, or restricted access to, data sets, limits opportunities. We, as a country have enjoyed, historically, great advances in science. With many contributions coming from the unknown citizen-scientist. I am supportive of public policy that makes, expands and continues to preserve access to this data, by the citizens who fund its collection. Thank you for your time and consideration. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

523 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public."

524 "weather forecasts are something every traveller always looks at before leaving to a destination. weather forecasts are always checked over twice by those who live in areas of dangerous weather patterns. People need to have complete free access to this kind of information, not ""Heres today weather - for the 7 day forecast please pay \$100/month for a subscription. All weather information should be available to everyone. Hiding any part of it from one group of people can become extremely serious for another group."

525 The idea that I would have to pay again for information collected using my tax dollars outrages me. When corporations like Accuweather try to exploit taxpayers by lobbying to shoo-out free sources of information they are sacrificing public interests for their corporate bottom line. The fact that this is even under consideration by NOAA upsets me. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

526 "I would like to express my support of the proposed policy. In particular I would like to encourage item 7 ("open and unrestricted exchange of weather..."). It is certainly in the public interest to have as much information as possible available in open and readable formats. I applaud the NOAA for taking this stance and hope that other agencies which gather information useful to the public will follow in the NOAA's lead in the future. Thank you for continuing to keep our (the public's) interest in mind and not just the interest of current corporate entities.

The referring webpage:"

527 I think the XML based weather feeds are a great idea! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

528 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

529 "Keep weather data, forecasts, radar images, and XML feeds free and open on the Internet. Don't allow the ""private"" weather companies to push you into specialized data formats, serve the people who depend on accurate weather forecasts, not the private weather companies. If a consumer wants to pay a premium for a private weather company's fancy software or web service, that's fine, but the raw data should always be available to the tax-paying citizen free of charge and easily accessible. Thank You, Hayden The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

530 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already paid for through tax dollars. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

531 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. Regards, Ralph Jones The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

532 "I hear that certain commercial interests would like to limit the amount of
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free weather data published online, so that they can make a buck off their own...
As far as I'm concerned, they can eat [word deleted] and die. Please keep the free
weather data online. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

533 "Keep weather data free and open on the Internet! Serve the tax-paying citizen, not the commercial weather industry. Say NO to specialized data formats! Maintain and expand your XML feeds! Do not give in, the services you provide are vital to so many industries, why give a group of private companies a monopoly on the information you so painstakingly gather? I am not against specialized weather services provided by the commercial weather industry, but please, keep the raw data open and free. Sincerely, Thomas The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

534 "I agree that weather data should be provided for free over the internet. I believe that weather data should be provided in an open format, because this will be the most versatile and effective method for people to make use of it. If it is provided in a closed format, those with access to this format will benefit, at the expense of the public, by limiting access to the information. I have no objection to making a profit by providing a service, but since the information can be provided as well to easily as to a few, I strongly support providing it to all. Since the intended aim is to increase the weather-related services for all, it makes sense to allow as many entities as possible to take part in providing those services. The move towards public information, allowing people to take advantage of the information, is a great one with tremendous progress, and I support your moving forward on it. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

535 "The Policy, as proposed, best serves the public interest by providing weather information to the American people in a timely and detailed fashion. As is obvious, this data is essential to protecting American life and property, and furthering academic research which will enhance our knowledge of atmospheric behavior. The information disseminated by the National Weather Service via the Internet, NOAA weather radio, and other channels is used extensively by the general public, trained amateur weather spotters, and academic researchers. Restricting access to this information, or allowing it to only be readily accessed through third-party commercial middlemen (such as Accuweather) is contrary to the mission of an organization which seeks to protect the safety of Americans and further understanding of the atmosphere. In essence, restricting access to these information and products endangers American lives and American property. Furthermore, it seems inappropriate that the NWS would allow third-party organizations to charge Americans fees for data and products produced with dollars collected as taxes by the American federal government. It would be equally, if not more, unseemly if the NWS would consider restricting the number and types of products it provides at the request of the third party brokers to simply enhance the profitability of their services. This information has been paid for by the American taxpayers. It belongs to us, not the third-party brokers who seek to exploit it. If they are concerned that their profitability may be affected because they can not sell information which already is, and always has been, public property, perhaps they should consider ways to provide value-added products. As it stands, they are taking the uningenious and unindustrious route to increasing profitability by asking the government to take information out of the public domain so that they can sell it. While I agree that the government should assist the public sector and foster the growth of the economy, it should do so by encouraging innovation, and thus enhancing the richness and diversity of products available to the consumer. Simply restricting access to weather information made freely available by the NWS so that it can be sold for a profit by third-party brokers does not benefit the consumer whatsoever. Not only that, but in this case, due to the nature of the products in question, in bowing to the pressure of these companies, the NWS would be putting the profitability of private enterprise above the health, economic welfare, and safety

of all Americans. To do so would be morally reprehensible and perhaps even legally actionable. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

536 ""Taxes are what we pay for a civilized society"" stated Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. The tax revenue generated by the Federal government of the United States should be used to promote public service for the advancement of the American society, or in the words of Abraham Lincoln (Gettysburg Address), this should be a government ""of the people, by the people, for the people."" while corporations have their place in modern U.S. society, their concerns SHOULD NOT be placed above that of the general public. Corporations primarily benefit only a select subset of the population, while the mandate on the government is to promote and provide necessary information and services for the entire American population. Therefore I would strongly advise against allowing private interest trump the public's interest, as it is not the purpose of NOAA or NWS. If private corporations wish to promote their agenda, they should do so out of their own coffers and not the public's. NOAA and the NWS provide necessary and often life-saving information directly to the public, whether the mode of communication is by radio or by internet; I would applaud any effort made promoting the public's internet over that of the corporation's. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

537 "I most definitely support the proposed new NWS policy on partnerships, and I hope that it is approved and enacted. The referring webpage:"

538 I wholeheartedly support the new policy which supports free exchange of data gathered by NOAA to tax-payers. There is no reason why a citizen of this country should pay taxes to fund the weather forecasting infrastructure and then pay another private entity to view it. Weather services are funded by the public and should thus be open to the public without corporate oversight. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

539 "It would give only those who can afford it, access to weather forecasts on the web. It will probably end free weather forecasts on the web. It is an attempt by software companies to once again line their pockets at the expense of the public."

540 I support the NWS proposal to make this data freely available. We should not have to pay for this data - we already did that with our taxes!

541 "Since the NWS is already funded by taxpayer dollars to do a job and come up with data, why should the taxpayers have to pay a second time to view that data? Just because some private firms want us to pay for their gone-with-the-times service doesn't mean we have to stay in the 1980s and do so. The NWS has the ability to make serious weather information available to almost everyone, so they shouldn't restrict it to just those with the ability to pay. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

542 "I think this policy is an excellent idea. I've found that the NWS web sites tend to have much more up to date and accurate information than the third-party web sites. Furthermore, as a taxpayer whose money is used in part for the NWS, I see no reason why I should be required to pay again for private weather forecasts as certain people in private industry are demanding. If the private

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weather industry wants the NWS to be restricted from making its data available to the public via the internet or other means, then I suggest they should reimburse the government for the costs to put all those weather satellites in orbit and build all those doppler radar towers. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=nested&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

543 "The national weather service is a publicly funded entity. As such, it is unconscionable that the public should not have free, easy access to the data that their taxpayer dollars pays to create. This data should not be metered and filtered though private corporations that provide no real service, like weather.com and accuweather, and should instead be available directly to the public."

544 "I personally like to view the weather frequently. It's difficult to do so in a web browser, and quite frankly I'd only really like to get updates every hour or so. When I found a plug-in for Trillian Pro (www.trillian.cc) that reads the NOAA XML feed I was instantly hooked. It's even saved me a trip to the beach, notifying me that the waves were way out of my league before I left... If the XML feed were to go away I would have to pay for an already free service or have to go back to viewing the reports within a web browser at weather.com. In my eyes, the XML feeds are right on line with the NOAA broadcasts that I have been listening to since I was a child. I'm quite sure that NOAA will make the decision to keep the XML feeds, and possibly cite the long running broadcasts as reasons to do so. On a side note, I feel that if the companies that wish for NOAA to stop using the XML feeds because they would prefer people to pay for an already free service, should possible re-evaluate their business plan or offerings to be more competitive. They should also offer things that the NOAA XML feed does not. Thanks, Pete Brubaker
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

545 "As the NWS is a government agency, I already pay for weather report services via my taxes. I should not have to pay for that service again, thru a private company like Accuweather, which is only concerned with profit. Free, standards based weather reports make this critical service available to all. Please keep the XML feeds available and don't sell out. Thanks /eric
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

546 "As a government-funded agency, the NWS already receives public funding and should produce a free, public product. After all, we, the taxpayers, have already paid for it. The NWS has done an excellent job of providing forecast data to the public through various methods (internet, weather radio, etc) and in conjunction with private industry, helped save thousands of lives. This honourable duty should not change to suit private parties. Please continue to maintain and expand your free, public offerings. Protecting the public is more important than protecting private interests. As a resident of Oklahoma, I greatly appreciate the work the NWS Norman, Okla. team does to keep us aware of nature's latest moods. Sincerely,
Victor Hill
The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

547 "I think that NOAA is a vital public resource - which provides critical data in a timely efficient manner. The economic provision of weather data by value-added resellers is valuable, but does not trump the public's right to access to information for which they have already paid (through taxes). No policy should be implemented simply to preserve the current business models of weather information service providers. If these companies wish continued access to public property,

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they should be made to pay the true value of the data that they use. That, of course, would probably lead to price increases for them. They would oppose this, as I oppose their attempt to deny access to public property *to* the public through an unwarranted narrowing of information disseminated in open formats. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

548 "weather feeds to the internet should stay free for access by all. My tax dollars pay for it to start with, why in the [word deleted] should I pay some other private party yet again to see the data? This is just another internet land grab by private industry. Thanks, Richard Kullberg The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

549 Please continue to encourage the free distribution of weather data through the Internet. Accurate weather information saves lives and jobs. As the son of a lobstering family I have seen NOAA's services keep our family business afloat over the years. Please continue to distribute in open (XML) formats over the Internet. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

550 "I stongly disagree with the Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information . As a tax payer I am already paying for NOAA to produce weather information. Under your plan I would have to pay twice to receive raw climate data. (Once via taxes and once to a data provider). This will stifle research and put money into the pockets of a few individuals. I see no alternative but for NOAA to provide the services it currently does in a permanent, free fashion as well as to develop other offerings that benefit the taxpayers as it sees fit. I will also be sending a similar letter to my congressmen. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

551 "RE: In regard to the proposal to discontinue the XML data feeds. The National weather Service is a tax supported entity, and as such, has already been paid for by the public. For someone such as myself, who uses one set of local data only infrequently, to charge for this information would be onerous. In addition, the government has made available this type of information to facilitate business enterprises. It would be a great violation of public trust to start charging for this data. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

552 "I just heard about your new policies about providing open, free access to forecasts. I think this is a fantastic policy. I know some private weather companies are displeased about this, but it's not your job to provide them with a revenue stream. Please don't give in to them, and keep your current policy. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

553 I support the proposed policy. I am pleasantly surprized that the Bush Administration has not forced NOAA to turn its data over to commercial interests. NOAA and the data it accumulates and disseminates is paid for by the people and should always be available to the people. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the policy. The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

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554 "Regarding this posting on slashdot,
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99> I do not want to have to pay twice for weather service on the internet. Everything NOAA produces with the tax dollars I pay should be freely available to the entire world on the internet. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

555 I am very excited to not be forced to pay for weather information. I think it is in the best interests of the general population for planning and safely purposes. I hope corporate american doesn't get too greedy and force the government to cut off it's population from information allready collected by the gvn't.

556 "Sirs, The proposed policy details a competent manner to dispense information gathered by NWS. It is reasonable that information gathered by government sponsored entities is available at any time in as many mediums as possible to the public at large. The open source communities in the US and indeed the world have created and continue to create softwares that citizens can use to correlate data maintained by NWS for the general welfare, which should be the intent for all government agencies. Recently it has appeared that groups or individuals are urging specialized formats for the dissmenination of data from the NWS. This may very well be good for business of the private sector seeking to make a business model based on the data compiled by a publically sponsored government agency, yet it would appear to undermine the efforts of those who seek to provide as much information, in publically accessible formats as possible. I urge you to continue the policy of providing as much information, in as many formats as possible and let the communities or individuals who collect the data use innovation and enterprise to support their efforts at using the information for a business. Please do not restrict access to information by forcing citizens to pay twice for the available information. Respectfully, Joel Southwick The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

557 "Please allow for free data feeds. Please allow open access to the XML feeds. Please do not allow for proprietary feeds only. weather info should be free and open. Thank you, Shawn Hanna The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

558 "I am fully in favor of complete and free access to data provided by the US Government (NOAA) to the public via any and all electronic means. The data should be provided in easy-to-use, common data frameworks and protocols including non-proprietary standards such as XML. Thank You. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

559 I have read the proposed policy and the logic behind it and I just wanted to comment that I that think it's an excellent proposal which will ultimately improve the quality of weather information available to the public. The referring webpage:

<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=nested&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

560 "My taxes are paying for the weather service under the understanding that it will be available to all. I do not wish to see it become another form of US government welfare for commercial companies. I do not support any form of restrictions on the availability of weather service data, especially because of commercial considerations. The referring webpage:"

561 "Since we taxpayers pay for the National weather Service, we should get the data it provides for free, direct from the NWS."

562 "Hi, I just heard about the proposed changes to the policy on partnerships. I feel that your policy of provided essential weather data directly to the public is a very good change. It seems like common sense that as technolgy improves, it can yield new strategies in delivering content. Proving the data directly will free up your organization from managing external sources which will save the taxpayers money. As a added benefitt the whole community grows with the use of this valuable life saving data. Thanks for the proposal and I am all for it. Alan Gonzalez The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

563 "I would like to take a brief moment to express my support for the NWS' proposed update to the 1991 policy of placing weather-related information on the internet for free, using open and documented standards such as XML. Private industry groups and coporations (such as Accuweather) are attempting to lobby against this, instead demanding that information funded by taxpayers be placed into proprietary formats, which must then be recovered by paying another fee to those same companies. As a taxpayer in a tornado-prone area, I expect my money to be used for my well-being, and a double-fee such as this borders on corporate subsidy at best, extortion at worst. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

564 I think this is an excellent policy. It seems to me it will:

565 Any policy that will make more weather infomation available to the public is good policy. Please keep up the good work.

566 "Over the past 15 years I have worked as a modeler for a number of ecologists and natural resource managers. One of the most consistant difficulties I have encountered is the lack of data accessibility and interchange (including propriatary non-published data exchange formats). I strongly encourage the use of open data standards and when possible distributing the data publicly. If the data and interchange formats are publically accessable, then you will likely find a large number of programmers developing tools to access and use this data in ways you never expected (such as adding it to MUD's and other games). While this may seem trivial, there are two important implications for NOAA, NCAR, and similar organizations -- that being 1) developing a knowledge base of basic weather formats and modeling within the programming community, and 2) some of the tools thus developed may be directly useful in NOAA's modeling endeavors. Best regards, John David The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

567 "weather data should be free. If I pay tax dollars to provide funding for NOAA then I should not have to pay for it again through other services that do little other than repackage the same data. Regards, Ken Purcell The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

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568 "I like getting the xml feeds without additional fee, and I especially appreciate item 7 ""NWS will promote the open and unrestricted exchange of weather, water, climate, and related environmental information worldwide, and seek to improve global opportunities for development of the partnership."" The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

569 "Greetings NOAA's data Policy of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information must allow citizens to use, parse, publish and use this data/information without going through a corporation or pay service. After all the citizens own our government and pay far far more taxes then most corporations including Accuweather. Please leave our weather data free for our citizens. Thanks The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

570 "Please keep the weather information free and in non-proprietary formats for the good and safety of the public. Accurate and up-to-date forecasts should not become a luxury item. As a general aviation pilot, having the best weather information is vital to making a well-informed ""go- no-go"" decision. As well, keeping NWS information in widely accepted formats with allow greater innovation to occur instead of having to rely upon the private sector û and at much lower cost to the public. Thank you for considering these comments, Blue skies, Chris Willis Salt Lake City, UT The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

571 This public service should be free to the general public. without the service people will opt to ignore weather and may be caught in unexpected weather patterns. The result may cost lives and money. Don't cave to the commercial interests and keep it free. The referring webpage: http://us.f147.mail.yahoo.com/ym/ShowLetter?MsgId=7346_2195775_50558_1978_612_0_8253_1124_4257914826&Idx=1&YY=74806&inc=25&order=down&sort=date&pos=0&view=&head=&box=In box

572 "If the public, as a taxpayers, have already paid for the NWS to generate weather data, then I feel that such data should be made freely available to the public. The Internet is the obvious choice as the primary medium for distributing such data, so I believe that NWS policy should be to provide weather data on it's website, at no additional charge, for use by anyone. Phillip Rhodes Chapel Hill, NC The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

573 "I approve of the proposed policy. Specifically I approve of: Point 2: ""the premise that government information is a valuable national resource, and the economic benefits to society are maximized when government information is available in a timely and equitable manner to all."" weather data should be freely available. Possibly NOAA should charge a nominal fee for user who download large amounts of data, to cover bandwidth and data storage costs. But free weather data benefits the public greatly. (No reply is expected) Thank you for your attention, Matthew Bostorm Eureka, CA 95501 The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

574 Please continue your XML feeds and

575 "The NWS provides a valuable service on behalf of all Americans and it shouldn't be hidden behind fees and artificial barriers. The weather is such an
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integral part of our existence and it affects everyone, so everyone should have access to as much information as possible. Given that the NWS is funded by tax dollars, it is even more important that taxpayers have access to such beneficial information. In addition, there is plenty of room for value-add services using such data. And XML feed isn't going to displace the 11 o'clock news. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/index.pl>"

576 I think anyone wanting the NWS to shut down XML feeds can go to s[word deleted]. why should anyone have to pay for the weather forecast.

577 I support free xml feeds. xml is an open and easily processed standard for data exchange. Governments should tend toward open standards for public data. Free I support because I have already paid once for this general welfare service. I see no need for commercial outfits to get a slice of a general welfare infrastructure operation except in special cases. Charging for information that should be free reduces the general welfare effect. This should be a no-brainer under the general welfare clause of the Constitution. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

578 "The current policies you have serve the needs of the public. As I understand it, the proposal on the table is that you limit the availability of forecast information, such that the ""weather industry"" can make a profit by repackaging and reselling the information you currently provide. Since my taxes have already paid for your ability to collect climate data and analyze weather patterns, it seems only logical that you should continue to publish this information as you do now, for the benefits of myself and all other taxpayers. If corporations want to make money from weather, they need to figure out a way to add additional value above and beyond what NOAA already provides. People's lives literally depend on the timeliness and accuracy of this information. I know this because when he was alive, my father used to risk his life as part of the Civil Defense to help people during tornadoes and floods. Artificially restricting the availability of this information is a disservice to the public, puts people's lives in danger, and is morally and ethically wrong. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

579 "I would like to *strongly* express my view that the National Digital Forecast (NDFD) XML format remain open to the public. ...apparently the Accuweather company feels differently. However, as a taxpayer **I** paid for NOAA, so I should NOT have to pay twice for the data you generate. If Accuweather wants to pay for your data, that's their perogative. However, since I ALREADY paid for the data through taxes, I shouldn't have to pay again. I would support a fee-based system if you voluntarily cut your funding in half. Go ahead, I dare you. Keep it free. Making sure people can't access the weather data they want/need IS NOT YOUR JOB! Please tell Accuweather buzz off. Thanks for your time! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org>"

580 Charging people for weather information is a bad idea. This service should be enjoyed by all for free.

581 "Dear sirs, I am in favor of your proposed changes to update your policies in regards to the changes in technology. The counter proposal of certain private industry representatives serves only to en-richen certain individuals at the expense of their fellow citizens who provide the funding for the fine work you do every day. Furthermore, as a pilot in the United States, the greater access to weather data

would, in my opinion, encourage a broader offering of weather depiction and forecasting, providing for safer and more thorough flight planning and more options for in-flight weather in the near future. I appreciate your efforts and look forward to accessing a wider range of weather products in the near future. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

582 "Yes, this data should all be free. Or is it, I see the taxes I pay. The format for these feed should be in a published format so that anyone can make use of them. Allow any software engineer to write an application for any form of device without have to pay for the format or the right to use the data. The referring webpage:"

583 "Keep weather feeds free! I pay taxes to keep the NWS running. I should be able to get weather data, in a format I can use, for ""free"" -- after paying all those taxes, anyway. It's a horrible thought to think that the government-funded and government-operated weather services may be restricted to commercial, for-profit companies. Please keep weather data free, especially the new XML data feeds! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

584 "As a taxpayer and United States citizen, I applaud the decision to formalize your information-sharing policy. As the information is collected and processed using public funds, I strongly feel that it is only fair that it be publically available. I also feel that this is by far the most effective way to allow the information to be used, and will almost certainly result in new and innovative uses. I strongly oppose the attempt by Barry Myers of Accuweather to make your data only useful and easily available to private corporations and not to the general public. I believe that this effort is not at all in the best interest of those who paid for the data in the first place, the American taxpayer. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

585 "I applaud the proposed policy, and fully encourage the NOAA to continue providing high-quality weather data directly to the public in open formats with the NDFD."

586 "No, do not limit change anything. Do not change what has worked for so long. I cannot afford the next tax for information that should be provided by the NWS. I live in SE Louisiana and NEED as much information as I can lay hands upon - especially during the 6 month long Hurricaine season. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

587 Our taxes are already paying for the service.

588 I think the information collected with should be released to the public in both data intensive and human readable forms.

589 "Government weather data should remain free to the public and the idea of the 1991 policy to allow more data to be public is a good one. If you need to track use or abuse, you can use user accounts, but it should remain a free service. There is still plenty of opportunity for commercial companies to make a buck with software

that takes advantage of the free data and offers further services to the customer.
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

590 I believe that all weather data available to NOAA should be provided free of charge and free of encumbrances via the internet. Commercial entities who exist by charging for redistribution of free data should not restrict the ability of individuals to access the same data simply because they have failed to develop a viable business model. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

591 Gee! If I'm correct we would get to pay for something we're already paying for? The referring webpage:

592 "I strongly support having weather information freely available, in a standard format such as XML via the internet and other electronic transmission mediums. I urge the NOAA / NWS to ensure their proposed rule ensures their weather information will be available freely and on a non-discriminatory basis to the general public. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

593 "I strongly support the proposed policy, as a means of freely distributing information that was gathered using taxpayers' money. I have used the NOAA website and associated weather feeds for weather information, and have been impressed with their quality. I look forward to continued access to them (and improved data feeds) in the future."

594 "I support your new proposal. As reported on slashdot.org - <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99> I understand that Barry Myersk, president of Accuweather, would like people to come out in opposition to your proposal for the sake of profit for companies like his at the expense of the interest of the general public. Please ignore the protest of Barry Myersk and people like him. You have done the right thing with this new proposal and I urge you to move forward with it. Thanks for listening. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

595 "I am against changing the current policies of the NWS providing weather through the Internet leaving the public to rely on pay for services and add sponsored commercial sites to get a good forecast and current radar image. I am a HAM radio operator and participate in the SKYWARN program providing real time spotting for NWS. I rely on getting good current weather information that the NWS provides free of charge to the public. I can now access current weather anytime of the day and see if and when my spotting services maybe needed. I already pay for my equipment to provide my public service to the NWS and don't need to spend any more to participate in the Skywarn program to get current weather. Weather direct from the NWS is needed free of charges so all persons have good access to current weather and not just those who can pay for it. When there is no more direct service to the public from the NWS we will be at the mercy of the commercial sites and if they can sell enough commercials to provide the quality and current conditions, both text and radar. Business for profit is great but when it comes to public safety we need to keep the public's best interest in mind and that not making money for some corporation hoping that the necessary current information gets through. Every time another layer is put between the NWS and the public means delays in getting critical weather information to them. The weather affects public safety, we pay for it through our taxes and should have total and direct access to it with out the

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intervention of a third party selling some product or purchase a pay for weather product. What is next, FAA selling off air control to commercial businesses and we get an advertisement as our plane taxis down the runway, your take off today is sponsored by ACME Products... and if your plane does not get a sponsor you have to pay extra....?? Gene Krolak The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

596 I really appreciate your freely available weather information! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

597 I can't see any justification for making me pay to get access to weather information that I already pay taxes for. All NOAA information feeds should remain free. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

598 "If the NWS provides any free services to corporate entities which are not also available to the public, that is blatant corruption and should be referred to the GAO. Will we have to file FOIA requests to get weather forecasts? If such a restriction should go into effect, I will immediately contact my representatives and demand that the NOAA be completely defunded. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

599 Don't double charge. Keep us in the

600 "While the policy statement at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/> does not clearly indicate what one is being asked to comment on. I believe that the NWS should be required to present/provide the data they collect to anyone and that this must occur in formats accessible to the average citizen. Furthermore, I do not feel the NWS should be restricted in any manner in the extent of web services they provide. It is one of government's basic roles to disseminate knowledge to the public. Efficient and free access to current and historical climate data will allow the public to better understand weather patterns and better participate in water/resource conservation related to these patterns. The referring webpage:"

601 "Thank you for considering updating your Fair weather policy to better allow public access to weather data. I think this is a good thing, and as a taxpayer I'm very glad to see this. Please don't listen to Accu-Weather, this is very good for the American public. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=nested&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

602 "To whom it may concern, weather data is important to the lives of every American. It's not right to sequester the free distribution of this data, and restrict it's use from private individuals. Every American tax payer has already paid for this service. Don't unjustly restrict it's use. Tax Payer and Voter, Douglas Dike The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

603 "Widespread dissemination of weather data is in the public interest. Making it so that NWS weather data were only available commercial through third parties would reduce the number of outlets providing weather information by making it cost

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prohibitive for many small web sites to include this information on their sites. Since 1996, I have been grabbing the text data from iwin and displaying it on client web sites. It's not real time data in that generally iwin only updates hourly and the forecast updates less than that, but it's a very useful service. The only problems I've had are when the codes change or the formats change, such as when a city's name is changed. Also, there hasn't been a simple 7-day forecast (including predictable high and low temperatures) for Oklahoma in a number of years so we dropped that feature some time ago, though we still provide the long textual forecasts. Moving to a freely available predictable xml format should improve the reliability of the services you provide so that web developers such as myself can make better use of the data. Forcing web visitors to go to a third party site for this information would basically mean that my clients would drop providing any weather data, meaning it would be less widely disseminated. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

604 "It would seem to me, since NOAA is publicly- funded, that it would only be correct for NOAA to make any weather-related data free use. Only allowing commercial entities access to this data would, to me, look like another instance of 'corporate welfare'. The referring webpage:"

605 "The NOAA is funded by public tax dollars. As with any such publically funded institution, the fruits of it's labors thus belong to the people. The NOAAs duty is to keep the public informed. By releasing this information in a easier to use format, wider dissemination will be possible. Individuals and companies will be able to offer a large variety of customized weather feeds and services, that Accuweather may be unwilling or unable to do. Niche markets that accuweather considers to small to cater to, would be profitable for smaller groups or operators. Back in the old days of obscure formats, it made sense for a middleman to reinterpret the weather data in a format useful for the general public. And they were of course paid a fee for this. But, their (Accuweather) business model relies on a artificial scarcity of data. If the NOAA wants to publish it's data in a clearer XML format, do it! Accuweather may fail, or it may change, and respond to the market. with an easy to use XML model, many hobbyists and other companies around the US will give out usable weather data in an incredible variety of formats. Is this a bad thing? Accuweather is a private company, and it is not the NOAA's duty to ensure it's survival. The data the NOAA gathers is PUBLIC property, since it was paid for with our taxes. If you were to adopt the Accuweather reccomendations, then you would be making us pay twice for it. Once for the taxes that support the NOAA, and once to get it from Accuweather. A similair argument was used against the USGS several years ago by map makers. Luckily, the USGS recognized their public duty was to public data, and released their mapping files to the public. It hasn't killed off Rand McNalley, or other map makers. I heartily reccomend talking to them. Also, I don't see why Accuweather is worried. Sure, some geeks might write their own weather programs, but mom and pop will still watch it on TV. Or maybe they are just afraid of competition. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

606 "Regarding pressure from the private sector to charge/phase out free weather information. There is no reason the private sector cannot compete with value-added perks and customized service. There are no laws that specify government offerings will not appear in any market where private sector services or products exist. Their cries of unfair competition are unfounded and seek only to eliminate competition and fascilitate price increases of their own wares. It is my sincere hope that the NOAA will not bow to the the same pressure that has already negatively impacted other sources of publicly available reference material such as medical and law databases. Regards, T. R. Crawford The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

607 "As NOAA and the NWS are a public funded government organization its collected data should have as its primary target the individuals that pay for its good and valuable work. Any person or corporation that wishes to use this weather data after the fact and add value to it can this do so of their own free will and compete in the marketplace with their added content. However putting an artificial gag on the weather data is contrary not only to free market principles, but also to the duty government agencies have to the individuals that fund it. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

608 "As a private boater and long range cruiser, I support NOAA's proposed policy for open and publicly available weather data."

609 "I support your new policy keeping climate information on the web free and open, accessible to the tax-payers that financed it. You should not be handing the private weather industry a monopoly on weather data and that specialized formats would stifle private weather service competition."

610 "As a US citizen and taxpayer, I think that some of the recent proposals about restricting NOAA's distribution of data are simply horrible. As a government agency, NOAA's purpose is to serve the public by providing timely weather information to protect lives and property interests. To this end, NOAA has done an outstanding job and I think should be commended. However, some of the proposals from the private sector of weather forecasting are chilling. As usual, these groups are waving the ""competition"" banner and complaining that NOAA is competing with them unfairly. To remedy this, they propose restricting data and forcing taxpayers to pay commercial providers for this information. In effect, they want the taxpayers to pay TWICE for data in yet another attempt at promoting corporate welfare over the public good. NOAA should be exempt from these competition clauses. Timely, accurate, and FREE forecasting and warnings are important as weather can cause extreme loss of lives and property. We do not argue that the US military should be replaced by private organizations, so why should NOAA be any different? Just as the military protects the country from attack, NOAA protects the country from the weather by alerting citizens when they need to take shelter from the storm. Time and time again we have seen a need for certain inherently governmental activities as the private sector has shown time and time again that they will only do things in the best interest of earning money, not in the best interest of the public good. What comes next, tornado warnings by subscription only? Hurricane warnings for a fee? There is ample room for the private sector to profit by value-added services. However, NOAA's mission is an important one and should remain free and clear of any interference. If the private sector wishes to profit from weather forecasting, let them concentrate on their businesses and not force the taxpayers to pay once for the gathering of the data and then again for the viewing of the data. The safety of the citizens of the United States is far more important than a company that feels it has an inherent right to corporate welfare. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

611 "As a private citizen with no connection to any company offering weather forecasts on the web or elsewhere, I strongly urge the NOAA to go forward with offering more weather information on the web for free. After all, as a taxpayer, I have already paid to have this information collected and should not have to pay a private company, as well."

612 "Ignore those [word deleted] trying to limit NOAA's ability to publish weather information on the Internet, because the public (y'know... folks like me) has already paid for it. Not everyone knows how to run Vis5d+, but if they paid for the acquisition of the information, the information should be given to them in a format they can readily understand, like this web site does. It's all part of the service. What good is a service we pay for if we never see the information? Pretty [word deleted] ludicrous, but I'm increasingly amazed at what the private sector [word deleted] and moans about when it comes to "competition" with the government. They want to sit on their [word deleted] with a lazy business model, but information freely available on the Internet will force 'em to actually come up with something unique and innovative, as well as allowing the smaller business guys to step up and play with the big boys. Keep this fantastic web site going, guys. It would be disastrous if all this wonderful information were nerfed down to inconsequential [word deleted] that's not even worth the few kilobytes to download it. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>"

613 "As an I educator, I have seen many examples of the benefits of freely available scientific information that has been made publicly available. In nearly all circumstances, these data have lead to new insights as well as increased general awareness of the Nature. NOAA has done a wonderful job to date making weather data available through electronic means, both in technical and digested forms. I frequently mention the availability of these data to my introductory science students. In short, scientific data provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely used. Thus far the NOAA has had a "non-compete" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

614 "This is a stupid, immoral, greed driven idea."

615 "The proposed new policy looks good. It would appear to best serve the public interest and the mission of the NWS. Apparently there are some private industry interests who would prefer that the NWS only provide unrestricted data to them... not surprisingly. But this would be unhelpful to everybody as the purpose of partnership with private industry has to be to enable /added value/ products, not to give private industry a source of easy income selling to the public what has been produced with tax-payer funds. Thank you for your enlightened policy and your excellent work! - A happy taxpayer The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

616 "Weather information as collected by government agencies has already been paid for by tax payer dollars, and should be freely available to any American who wants it. Furthermore, the National weather Service should make a point of reaching out with it's products to citizens who might not oterhwise be able to get it. Any idea that the NWS should somehow make obtaining its weather products either more technically difficult to obtain, more difficult to use, or only funnel its information through private vendors, e.g. Accuweather is a rip-off of the taxpayer and must be avoided. Imagine giving 3rd party vendors the power to decide to only make weather available that "sells commercials" and ignores others who need this

information. Profit motivations do not fit the requirements to provide complete, accurate and broadly available weather products to every taxpayer in America. A much better idea is to foster companies interested in providing services for the public good and recruiting them to aid in the distribution of NWS weather products, instead of doing it just to make money. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

617 I strongly support the new policy. I believe that NOAA should modify policies and provide data in a much more flexible manner. The new experimental digital forecasts are a particularly good example of forward thinking. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

618 "Greetings; The internet has provided GREAT new ways for our governments agencies to serve the taxpayers. I have always been interested in meteorology. I never would have thought when I was young that so much data would be so easily accessible. Please do not bow to commercial interests and keep providing all current data for free. I am pleased to pay my taxes when I see them being used for worthwhile endeavors. Regards, Tim Hodges The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

619 The generation of weather forecasts is paid for by the citizens of this country. I see no reason to make us pay again to be able to access it. Put the information on the internet for all to use. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/index.pl>

620 "I value weather.gov very much. I am very pleased to see the offerings from weather.gov get better all the time. I want, very much, for the weather information (that my taxes pay for) to be available free, in useful forms. I am very against having to pay someone else (in the form of ads or subscription or restrictions) for the information. weather.gov (and the various NOAA sites) are helpful. I used to go to weather.com but their site became ad-ridden and the quality and presentation of information was inferior. Any specific comment would flow from these general comments. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

621 "No charge access to weather reporting by the NWS should remain no charge. Thanks, Gene Imes The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

622 "I believe that the weather data NOAA currently provides should continue to be provided in an open data format to the general public at no additional cost. Please don't bend to the pressures of the corporate weather companies. Thank you, Jason Chase Senior Software Developer Inovant: A Visa Solutions Company jchase@visa.com The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

623 "This should not even be an issue. I pay for the accumulation and compilation of this data every time I pay Federal taxes. If a private firm wants to make money from weather data, let them build their own accumulation and reporting networks."

624 "I completely agree with the NRC's proposals in their entirety. I disagree
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with the Commercial weather industry suggesting that the NWS promote commercial interests at the expense of the public. As a governmental agency, it is not the mission of the NWS to ensure that private industry has exclusive access to weather data to ensure the growth of the industry. In my opinion, *all* NWS data should be freely available via the Internet to any interested party. If a private individual wants to develop software to decode NWS formats, they should be free to do so. Charging people fees for so-called ""cost recovery"" purposes is both unfair, and in my opinion unlawful - NWS is funded by the public, why should the public pay again for data that they have already paid for via their tax dollars? NWS data is paid for by the public, and so the ownership of that data remains with the public. In my opinion NWS is not legally entitled to either resell that data or charge for access to any third party. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

625 "Government should not be in the business of hiding public information from the people. Therefore, providing digital forecasts in an open XML-based format is very welcome. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

626 "My hard earned tax dollars help pay for this site. I should be able to access all weather data available at no additional costs to the taxpayer. Any site improvements or data displayed from new technology should be provided at no cost. The American tax payer has already paid for all this information. The Commercial weather Industry should not lobby to limit the amount of information provided by the NWS. NDFD, new radar formats, and their associated data should all remain in the public domain. The taxpayers already paid for these systems and the information they provide. We should not have to pay third party services for information the NWS can provide. If the Commercial weather Industry has issues with itself, they should setup their own private systems for collecting weather data and providing it to their subscribers. Do not limit information that the American tax payer has already paid for. I appreciate the advances in technology that the NWS has rolled out. I'm sure you will be able to save even more lives as weather technology advances. Keep up the great job everyone! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

627 Please don't make the public pay for the weather twice. Keep the information available to the public via the internet for no charge

628 "Taxpayers are already paying for this work and the information it generates, they should not have to pay for it again nor be required to provide a subsidy to the ""weather corporations"" so they can profit from it directly. Widely disseminating weather information protects the life and property of the public which should be a goal of the NWS. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/index.pl>"

629 "Thank you for providing me, a member of the general public, things like the NDFD available for free to the public."

630 "NOAA is a government organization paid for by our tax dollars. As such, it should provide the information that it generates for the public interest to the general public, free of charge."

631 "I believe that most people, and especially others in the weather business, WILL be very happy and excited to see the 'experimental' weather data dissemination techniques implemented in an official capacity. Upgrading the tools available from NOAA would not only make it easier to interpret weather data, it would also make that interpretation much more accurate. As someone who works in a business relating specifically to marine weather, accuracy equals safety, not just convenience. I look forward to a time when the data supplied by the NOAA is standard, easily parsed, and easily accessed. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

632 "Dear Sirs and Madams, I write to you as a citizen, taxpayer, entrepreneur, programmer, and amateur scientist; I would like to thank the noaa and nws for proposing to make full data sets available. As a citizen and taxpayer, I pay for this data every day in a very real sense; while I make use of some subsets of this data that are publicly available, I and others are eager to create and contribute new applications for this data. Please hold firm against vested commercial interests that would prefer that you restrict access to this information. They want to continue to use your hard work and my tax dollars to hand them a defensible barrier to entry. This forces citizens to pay twice for weather data and prevents the emergence of new free software that uses that data and discourages entrepreneurs such as myself from introducing applications that add value. Commercial weather services that add real value to the data will continue to flourish and have nothing to fear. Those that serve as mere gatekeepers to publicly produced data will be forced to innovate or die. This is as it should be. Thanks for listening, Matt Grosso mgrosso@acm.org The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

633 Making weather information available in vendor-neutral format (XML) over the Internet is an excellent idea. I'd very much like to see this happen. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

634 "The availability of free weather info on the internet should be considered as a public service to be commended rather than another opportunity for revenue. I don't begrudge any organization the right to earn a profit but I also realize that the information sector is changing rapidly and companies must add value to their basic services if they intend to increase revenues, as well the continuation of allowing the basic use of some data for no charge as a service public service to the wider audience. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

635 "I strongly support the proposed policy to provide weather information to the public in easy-to-use formats and without charge. From a systems point of view, this policy will provide the maximum benefit to society, will lower the overall costs and improve availability and speed of delivery of NWS data to the user. It is likely that this policy will result in the creation of entirely new, unpredicted means of data delivery that are of great benefit to the people of the United States. To those who argue that NWS should pay for itself with fees, I counter that the reduction in overall systems cost to society is greater than any fees that might have been received. Also, NWS must produce the data for government use anyway. The marginal cost of providing the data for free may well be less because there is no longer a need to support commercial transactions. Commercial weather services have a place in society. They can continue to succeed by providing added value services, such as aggregation of data from NWS and other sources. The fact that they have made an industry using the present system does not give them a continued right to that system. Government agencies have a responsibility, as taxpayer funded

services, to do whatever is feasible to provide the maximum benefit to the taxpayer and to reduce the cost of living for the taxpayer. Making information ""free"" (in both financial and availability terms) is the best way to accomplish this. I thank NWS for making the right decision. The referring webpage:"

636 "Provision of weather and resource data for free is an excellent and bold step. I applaud the potential that this policy would have, not only for the NWS' reputation as The Gold Standard for weather data, but for all its potential data customers who will now have a standard source of reliable data."

637 "Its quite simple: weather data is something that can save lives. Many computer-savvy individuals such as myself rely almost exclusively on the internet for news, including weather data, so further restricting this information and making it inaccessible without payment puts us at risk."

638 "I strongly applaud NWS efforts to provide weather data feeds in any easy to use format on the Internet. I object to efforts to make these data feeds available only through commercial entities. Taxpayers pay for the generation and collection of this data. We should be able to get at it in an easy manner. XML-based Internet feeds like SOAP are an ideal way to do that. If commercial entities want to provide value-added annotation or analysis of the data and charge for it, that's fine. But, the base data feed should be made freely available to the public that already paid for it once. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

639 "Please keep open and free weather records. The more you release, the easier it is on our research programs and students to get their work done. Thanks, -kurt The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

640 "Clearly, the publicly funded NOAA should provide information for the asking by that paying public. Additionally, the information itself is often related to the maintenance of safety in that public body. My understanding is that there is a movement to limit this information so that access to it will be controlled and charged for by commercial operations. While this is undoubtedly advantageous for these operations, the information has already been paid for. If they want to integrate that with gardening recommendations, for example, then that would represent an added value which some might be willing to pay for. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

641 "Seems to me that NWS providing data over the internet accessible to the general public is in line with the ""general welfare"" and interstate commerce clauses of the preamble to the constitution. I have found the NWS websites to be very useful and would oppose any reduction in the information presented by the websites. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

642 "I'm writing to express my concern about the thoughts expressed by Barry Myers. As NOAA is funded by public money, it would be irresponsible and unethical to limit the public's access to the data and information it produces. Additionally, the

adoption of new information technologies (such as RSS and XML) has enabled the production of many new, interesting tools. It is not the job of NOAA to prop up the business plans of people who are interested in selling data to the public that the public has already paid for. I would urge you to confirm and make official your 1991 policy of making data and forecasts available to the public at no additional cost. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>"

643 "So far, I've seen reports that the private sector would like the US government to lock out citizens from receiving the data that their tax dollars are purchasing. Exactly how would such a situation help those same citizens? I've tried to come at this from different angles, but the only beneficiary I can find are the private sector companies themselves. Perhaps the private sector could pay a fee to NOAA to access the data? Those fees could start as a small percentage of the overall NOAA budget devoted to data collection and forecasting. Over the next 10 years, those fees could be ramped up so that the private sector was completely funding the department. However, I just don't see that happening. There are too many different organizations that rely on weather data to put it completely in the hands of private companies. Everyone from the person driving home through rush-hour traffic to the US Intelligence community has an interest in the data. Please keep the data, which has already been paid for by taxpayers, free and freely accessible to those same taxpayers. If a company wants to provide some kind of value-add and charge for that service, let them do so, but don't curtail availability of the data itself. Thanks for taking the time to read this! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

644 "Please go ahead and make all of the NWS forecast and weather data available for free, the way I see it we are all paying taxes to develop and gather this information so why not make it free... otherwise you have to pay twice for good weather data, now if the other commercial services want to add value added information to this data and resale it, that is good and is the American way The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

645 As a generous public service I believe that the data you disseminate should be publicly available to citizens as well as corporations. If the barriers to entry are lowered the public can be better served. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

646 "As I understand it, a recent proposal indicates that such things as XML weather feeds will be removed in favor of increasing revenue for the private sector. I strongly disagree with this proposal. The taxpayers fund the National Weather Service by tax dollars and it is unacceptable to keep this information private. If these changes take place, I will be writing my representatives to decrease NWS funds significantly since funding can take place from private businesses. I am sure that the weather community will have no problem uniting a group of thousands of taxpayers to attempt to stop and/or reverse this change. Furthermore, you can expect daily, or more often, Freedom of Information Act requests from myself and probably hundreds if not thousands of other people. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=flat&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

647 "I applaud the proposed new policy of widely disseminating National Weather Service and believe it will do the best job to serve the public interest. While there could be some impact to the commercial weather industry, in the long run that sector will become stronger with those organizations that provide the most value added to NWS data thriving. Regards, Richard Kline The referring webpage:

FairweatherComments2.txt
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

648 "It seems like a simple equation to me. NOAA and the National Weather Service are part of the federal government and are paid for by the tax dollars of the citizens of the United States, therefore we have an intrinsic right to the data that is collected and produced by these departments. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

649 "After having read Barry Myers report and having read comments from other peers I don't believe that the National weather service should have to bend to the private sector. weather being so critical as to be life or death for some people. I'm also reminded that it is my tax dollars that help support the National weather Service, I most certainly don't want to be paying for weather twice! Privitizing the weather industry could put lives in danger and it's a waste of money. the NWS is doing a fantastic job. At any moment I can get complete weather information for my area in the blink of an eye. Thank you NWS, no thanks Accuweather. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

650 I think putting all weather information in a format (like XML) for free use by all people is a VERY GOOD IDEA.

651 "I am a private citizen, and I regularly use the NWS' website. I support the new policy, and I hope the NWS and NOAA continue to make their forecasts and data available to the general public. It would be a huge loss to the American public if the special interests succeed in having the government weather data limited to a proprietary format. I encourage the adoption of the new policy and the continued production of publicly available information. The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

652 "I think it is essential that weather information remain freely available on the Internet, and not be converted into a format for which the public would have to pay to access. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

653 "Please keep weather data available to the public in a widely-usable form (such as XML), as opposed to binary and/or proprietary formats. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

654 "I really like the proposed new changes. I think that it demonstrates a forward-looking, public-friendly, technologically-aware vision on the part of NOAA and it's administrators. These are the kind of decisions which other governmental agencies should be making. Thank you, NOAA. Please proceed and implement this policy. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

655 "It is very important that the NWS provide their data in open, widely used formats such as XML. First, this information was paid for by us all, and I think it is simply responsible use of public funds to make it available to the public as

openly as possible. I'm glad to pay taxes for the great work the NWS does--but only because it serves the public good, not the good of private companies. Even more important, weather data is not merely a convenience. As a sailor, I am painfully aware that sometimes it means life or death. Free and easy access can, in just the wrong unfortunate circumstances, be a matter of public safety, and money should be no barrier to access. Besides, how much does it cost all of us for the Coast Guard to rescue even one sailor who screws up? I encourage the NWS to support universal, widely-available, and non-proprietary formats like XML to every extent possible.
Dustin Laurence The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

656 "As a Government service, weather information should be available to the general public for free. If a private service wishes to access that data and manipulate it for re-sale, all well and good, however, these private services should have to pay for the information to help defray the costs. The referring webpage:"

657 "Please continue to release weather data in an open, publicly-accessible format. I applaud your proposed policy and the freedom of information that it endorses. The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

658 "Your policy sounds like a good update, provided the products and services you provide in the future will be similar to those you provide today, with respect to advancing technology. Your forecasting and imaging information is top notch, downloads quickly, and the services are usually readily available, even in the worst weather conditions. Although it seems when the weather is the worst, downloads take longer, which I am certain is related to EVERYONE trying to access your products. The NWS and NOAA have done a great job so far, and as long as the new policy can maintain access to the already great products, at only the cost of an internet connection, I am all for it. I access the NWS and NOAA sites almost exclusively, and, because of high overhead due to online ads, adware and spyware downloads, have completely quit utilizing the private sector. Keep up the good work, NWS!!
Regards, Gene Beaird Pearland, Texas The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

659 Please continue to offer weather data in standard formats without charge to citizens.

660 "As a private pilot, hiker, camper, business traveler, and tax payer, I beleive that the NWS should make its data freely available to the public, without restriction. Private sector businesses that have financial motivation to limit this should be ignored. These businesses can take the raw data (like any other citizen) and provide additional value for that data. If a company provided additional tools and value, I'd be inclined to purchase those tools or the add on value. It is not the role of government to restrict that which we pay for out of our tax dollars to a few private companies. I urge the NWS to continue to make all weather data freely available on the Internet. I use this information for flight planning (public safety issues here), planning hiking and camping trips and for business travel decisions. Respectfully, John Brown Albuquerque, NM Republican The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

661 "I'm a US tax payer. why should I have to pay again to access publicly funded services. while standardizing on data is a great thing, but it should be

done in a open standard that encourages the maximum use of its intended users - the US tax payer. By adding a cost to such data, inovation on how one can present this useful data is reduced to a handful of companies and the private citizen can't create specific niches that target small under-represented audiences."

662 "NOAA weather reports are funded with public monies and therefor should be available in the most liberal way possible... without resorting to proprietary formats. Respectfully, Donald Magee The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

663 "First off, thank you for providing all the services you have, and also this open comment period. As a software author and small business owner, I have benefitted from the data you have put online, even in its slightly obscure format. Second, I was overjoyed to discover the new XML-based data delivery. Having a normalized form is only a better thing, in that it places a firmer foundation for entrepreneurs and hobbieists to use for innovative projects. Thank you for working in this direction. Third, and my primary point, I'd like to register my concerns over a possible shift in the availability of data. Businesses such as Accuweather have been able to spring up precisely because of the availability of data, not its artificial scarcity. I understand that they may feel worried over the possible simplification of data sets, but all successful business models must weather competetion, and must grow to provide value-added services to their client bases. Standardizing on open and free access to uniform data sets (such as the XML style) will only be a good thing for all of us. Finally, as a tax payer I'd be quite upset if the work my tax dollars have funded were used to (effectively) subsidize a private organization's business model, and not be publically available to all. If they want to profit, they can do it the old fashioned way, by working harder to provide extra information, analysis, or services on top of the data you provide to all. There will always be a market in this. If the issue is one of funding for the NWS/NOAA, I'd be pleased to write a letter to my Congress representatives in support of the work you all do. I consider it a compliment to say that, frankly, you are a government agency I rarely think about, because the work you do is done so well. Again, thank you. The referring webpage:"

664 "PLEASE keep the data free. Let the third party developers add features to earn money with the data from customers. Too many companies have other interest other than keeping the public well informed. I do not need or want popup adds, scrolling adds, or any more adds when I want to view the weather numbers. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

665 I support the adoption of the new policy based primarily on the fact the US taxpayer is funding the collection and distribution of the information and should not have to pay some profit making third party to obtain any of the information for personal use. If the third party adds value to the information from NOAA then they certainly are justified in charging for that added value and people will pay them for it if it is useful and provided at a reasonable cost. No reply is required. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

666 "As a registered voter and a taxpayer, I feel that EVERYONE should be able to benefit from the ability to have FREE and OPEN acces to weather information. I see no reason why a corporation like accuweather should be able to take free information that I paid for, and charge me a fee to view it! Preposterous! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

667 "I think that since NOAA is a government entity, and funded by tax dollars, it should provide open, unrestricted access to weather information in convenient form to individual citizens. I think NOAA should provide forecasts, etc., directly to the public via the Internet. Citizens, who pay the NOAA bills, should not have to endure advertisements or any other commercial activity arising from commercial entities, to enjoy the benefit of work their tax dollars pay for. NOAA's primary responsibility is to our country's citizens. If commercial interests wish to have exclusive access to weather data, let them set up their own data-collection efforts, and not try to restrict publicly-funded work. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

668 "The XML web service providing weather information is a very useful service. It should be publically available to whoever wants to use it, without cost."

669 "For reasons of commerce, national security, and personal safety, NOAA must gather significant amounts of weather data. Furthermore, to ensure that products like severe weather statements can be issued accurately, the organization must provide data such as current conditions and forecasts."

670 "while I have nothing against the Government providing the data to private companies, academic institutions and other organizations, the availability of such data to the citizens directly from the Government should not be constrained. After all, the Government spends the citizen's money to collect and process the data (yes, I believe it is that simple) so the citizens should continue to have access to such data (raw/processed/...) that is made available to any other entity, in a usable format. This includes presently available information as well as any future information that will be released to these parties. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/feedback.php>"

671 "Hi There, just wanted to express my opinion that weather data SHOULD be available for free online. If tax money is used to gather this data, it should be provided to the public free of charge."

672 "I support the ""Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information."" I live in a rural part of the island of Hawaii (Honolulu) and find that standard weather forecasts for the large cities in Hawaii often are too vague or don't apply to this area due to the great differences in topography across the island. Access to experimental model data (provided through links on the University of Hawaii Department of Meteorology web site) and satellite data provided by the NASA Global Hydrology and Climate Center allows me to determine how weather will affect the area I'm in and plan for it, including take safety precautions when necessary. Weather.Gov provides radar plots and detailed rainfall data that I also find useful. While I subscribe to Accuweather and often use their hour by hour forecasts when planning business trips, detailed observation and forecast information as well as high resolution satellite images of my area are not available from them, or any other private weather service's individual subscriptions. Custom services, are out of my price range. I would also like to strongly recommend you extend the public policy to include the products of NESDIS. I used to subscribe to a service (VAS-DAS), that provided ""all-pixel"" 1 km resolution images of Hawaii. Since that company dropped their service for individuals, my only sources of 1 km visual and IR satellite images for

Hawaii is NASA GHCC or the Naval Research Laboratory in Monterey (which has had frequent outages). While these images are of much higher resolution and quality than those available to individuals through private weather services, they do not have the resolution of the VAS-DAS "all pixel" images. Weather data made available to the public through NWS has been especially valuable to me, and I'm sure others as well, in rural areas. We use this data to plan personal activities, including home repairs, gardening and hiking. Private weather companies are not likely to offer the customized data weather for these rural areas that weather buffs like myself can put together using the NWS public data. Please implement the "Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information" so we will be able to be sure this data will continue to be available and, ideally, expanded. Respectfully submitted, H. Douglas Lung PO Box 33 Honoumuli, HI 96728-0033 The referring webpage:"

673 I believe that weather information should be free. This belief comes mainly from the acknowledgement that non-sensitive government data is a product of taxpayers' money. The more information the government can generate and disseminate the better. Making people pay for weather information or having us rely on private weather services undermines a key social service. -Ian The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

674 "Hello, I am appalled to learn that the NWS is kowtowing to corporate interests and attempting to make taxpayers pay twice for weather information. If this proposal is enacted, I will be forced to join legal efforts to change said policy. Thank you for your time, Christian Trosclair The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

675 "I strongly support making free weather data in an easily intelligible format available to the public directly from NOAA. Please remember two things. 1. The public pays your salary and the running costs of your agency, and expects a return on its investment. Is it fair for the public to pay you to provide information to private parties that the public must then pay to get the information the public paid you to get? That's being double-charged. 2. The immense cost of the weather satellites is borne by the public. NOT ONE CENT is paid directly by parasitic businessmen that want to get their pound of flesh from NOAA services that their "customers" have already paid for. Open access please! We've paid for it and expect it. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback. The referring webpage:"

676 "Please take this opportunity to foster the image of a free/open/transparent federal government by expanding the distribution of the taxpayer's weather info in as many parallel "standard-based" formats as possible."

677 "Taxpayers pay for government operations. It's wrong, greedy, and the product of a criminal mindset to allow us data we have paid for to be made available only on some slimeball's commercial site. Government services should not be allowed to be hijacked by private for-profit interests. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>"

678 "I think the new policy is a great idea. Weather data should be open to all, and the Internet is an ideal medium for distributing it. The NWS is a public service, funded by our tax dollars, and so the service shouldn't be restricted. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

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679 "I am in favor of the proposed policy, and frankly appalled at the attempts by commercial interests to dam the flow of taxpayer-funded information for their own benefit. I certainly hope the proposed policy is enacted. The referring webpage:

<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

680 Please continue freely publishing weather data in xml format. Don't knuckle under to pressure from commercial interests who want to own and resell public information. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

681 "Dear Sirs, This proposed policy would be a horrible blow to citizens who are interested in the weather and volunteer weather spotters (skywarn) who utilize the free radar to assist in placing spotters and aiding in severe weather reports. Most of us spotters would be placed in greater danger if access to radar limited the ability for control operators to give us a heads up on what was coming our way. We all appreciate the quality and promptness of the current service. Thank You The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

682 Please implement the proposal to keep weather information free

683 "I am pleasantly surprised at the technology initiatives put forth by the NWS, especially xml driven data feeds. I am amazed and appalled at the recent initiative started by nominally private sector weather services to block public access to public data collected, analysed and published by a public agency, particularly one which has saved so many lives in its history. The justification for the existence of private partners is their ability to "value add" to the data collected by NWS. It is not to block public access to public resources. Please continue your good works in the interest of public good. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

684 "I would like to see the NWS put all its weather data on line in an open standard for all to use - consumers, other countries, and companies. I feel that restricting the data to only paying customers or paying companies creates an unfair advantage to those who would rather receive the raw data themselves or wish to see a weather forecast without having to pay a middleman. NWS is funded via the taxes I pay. Its product should be offered to me for free. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

685 "I want to current free weather data policy to continue. My tax dollars already pay for forecasts and historical information. Why should I pay again for the same information filtered through a third party? Continued open access to weather data will encourage new, creative and potentially beneficial uses of the weather data. Those who advocate for a pay system simply are asking for mandated profit handouts. They should be able to show value from their offerings that stands on its own merit. Please insure the NWS continues to provide the service to the public to all of our mutual benefit as it always has by continuing to provide data to the public as it does today. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

686 "As a SERVICE, subsidized by government tax revenue, the NWS should provide

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all raw and processed data that it generates, to the public for no additional charge above and beyond the original tax revenue that was collected. Paying for my weather twice, in the form of having to pay commercial services in order to obtain data that was originally collected using MY tax dollars, is a type of double taxation at best and outright theft at worst. The interests of public safety are best served by the widest dissemination of that data on which decisions can be made. Anyone who is unable to interpret the raw and/or processed data generated by the NWS is free to purchase additionally processed forms of that data from commercial enterprises, either directly, via subscription-based specialty services such as are available at Accuweather and other specialty outlets, or indirectly, via advertiser-sponsored services on the internet, television, radio, etc . No one should be COMPELLED to purchase additionally processed data if they choose not to do so. Commercial enterprises that advocate any other position can only be doing so in their OWN self interest as opposed to a genuine interest in PUBLIC safety. I find this to be an unacceptable position regarding a SERVICE that is, at its root, founded upon my tax dollar. If you have any questions or comments regarding the above, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience at either my email address of ""youngnat@hotmail.com"" or my personal address at POB 321641 Cocoa Beach Florida 32932. Regards, James MacLaren cc: DL.Johnson@noaa.gov Conrad.C.Lautenbacher@noaa.gov devans@doc.gov myersb@accuweather.com The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

687 we bought and paid for all noaa.gov therefore everything should be open and available.

688 "Weather data should continue to be freely available to the public, in a standardized format. Anyone should be able to make use of this information without having to pay a private company for the privilege."

689 "If I recall, this is a tax-funded organization, and charging money for dissemination of weather information is outrageous. Arrange to have your weather data mirrored and continue to disseminate under the budget you are given. If you can't handle the task, perhaps another organization can. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

690 It seems to me that by providing the end user with the data DIRECTLY we can make the most of the TAXPAYERS money. Rich morpurgo The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

691 "Dear Sir or Madame, I recently read an article about proposed changes that would limit the availability of weather and climate data over the internet by restricting it to being delivered in specialized, non-open data formats instead of its current XML based format. I would like to *strongly* voice my opposition to these proposed changes and would like to encourage you to keep weather and climate data available in an open, freely, and easily accessible format for the public to use. Access to good weather data is an important part of the lives of millions of people. Some of these people rely on independent software programs that interact with the NWS in order to customize their view of the weather. Most of these software programs are developed by small scale developers with little or no access to funds. Changing the delivery of such content to a proprietary format would open these developers to fees that they ordinarily couldn't afford and they would be forced to stop development of some excellent programs. This would be a great loss to the community and would damage the NWS reputation and image in the public's eyes. Again, I urge you not to implement these proposed changes and keep weather and climate data free and open. Sincerely, Anthony Saffer Founder/CEO Open Source

Strategies www.opensource-strategies.com (918) 542-8251 The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

692 "I have just read over your proposed policy regarding the free and open dissemination of weather data. I think it is a great idea and is bound to benefit the general public in ways we can't even imagine currently. As a programmer and instructor of computer science, I look forward to seeing applications developed that utilize this data and eagerly await showing my students how to process such real world data. I fully support your proposed policy. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

693 "I strongly believe the weather and climate information should be made available to the public easily, and without cost (or for a minor cost). I have been trying to use similar data to automatically order Air Conditioning for our small business (\$35/hr from our landlord, so good weather data is a must, to save real costs). My position distills to two points: 1. Public funds were used to collect and process the data, so it should be economically distributed publically, in the most useful formats possible. 2. Firms like accuweather -- which want to charge for access to the detailed data (see their ""premium"" weather feature) are nearly impossible to use in an automated fashion -- which makes them totally inappropriate for my needs. I can't login (easily) to their protected information, and their financial interests in selling this data are the blockade. In short, you're doing the right thing. Let me know if I can be of more assistance and support. ----
Brian The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

694 "I enjoy your free weather data. It is the 1st place I go to. I feel that any weather data the NWS collects and analize should be made available free to the public. If someone wants to make money off the data, they should pay the NWS for that data, but if they are just re-organizing it in a different format and not making money off of ads or other information/services they should be able to use data feeds from the NWS. Again thanks for the ""free"" weather data you provide. US taxpayers already pay for the data. Jon The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

695 "I am all for the fairweather proposal. Government data that is not classified for whatever reason should be freely available. Or, perhaps, we should do a FOIA filing to find out what the temperature is?"

696 "Offer weather information freely on the internet! As a taxpayer, my money is already going to fund you, and I appreciate the valuable service you provide. Who doesn't want to know what the weather forecast is? But apparently there are plans by the commercial weather industry to stop this. I urge you to resist their efforts, and usher in an era of free, widely available weather forecasts. I am going to send a copy to my senators and congressmen, as well. Thank you, Matthew Davidson The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

697 "The way I understand it, the proposed policy is to make even more weather data free to the general public over what is already free now. I absolutely support something like this 100%. After all, the tax payers are already paying for it. If companies like accu-weather need to add value-added services to make their business model work, fine, but that's their problem and not yours or mine. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

698 "The idea of giving free weather information to the public is fantastic! Imagine the set of innovative applications that might be created. Many of these will be free projects offered by people who enjoy weather-related hobbies. Free weather information might even spawn a set of life-saving applications that inform people when threatening weather is coming, or perhaps even prevent people from travelling into areas where the weather is deteriorating. I'm all for it! Jeff Stripling Austin, Texas The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

699 "I think this is a great idea, since the NWS is funded with tax dollars, as much data as possible should be given back to the public in easily accessible form."

700 "I am writing this comment to support the new proposed policy on weather and related information. As a government agency, information provided to the citizens of the United States should be open -- it is their right as taxpaying constituents to have access to this information. Furthermore, open information allows boundless progress. The uses and applications of such information, when freely available to the public, are limitless. I am personally very appreciative of the new ""National Digital Forecast Database XML Web Service"" and find that this is a step in the right direction. I would also urge you not to consider or implement closed alternatives, that require proprietary software or payed subscriptions to decipher, as proposed by some in the private weather sector. This is a disservice to citizens of the United States, and urged by the private sector simply to maintain their current business model. The duty of the National Weather Service is to all citizens of the United States, and not simply to the small percentage that offer weather services. Thank you again for the valuable services you offer. I hope that you will consider my feedback and continue offering open information on the Internet. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

701 "You'll probably be receiving a lot of comments today as this was a feature topic on slashdot today and I would like to add to the pile <grin> I am in total support of any efforts that NOAA/NWS (or any other government agency actually)undertakes to provide free and open access, to any and all users, of the data collected in the furtherance of their mission that are supported by tax dollars. If private sector entities wish to use NOAA/NWS data to generate products for sale in the commercial marketplace then they should certainly have the opportunity to do so. However, the use of and interest in NOAA/NWS data by private sector entities should not preclude the availability of NOAA/NWS data in non-proprietary formats usable by and accessible to the public at large. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

702 "This is weather information. We live in the 21st century, this information should be provided free to the public in all different mediums. We should not have to pay for it. Maybe for specialized personal features but not for weather information."

703 "I am in support of the changes proposed in ""Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information"". I think that weather information gathered by the NWS should be freely available to all U.S. citizens. I oppose restricting its availability to

only private weather companies. If it is only available to them then they will have very little incentive to do any value added work. Also, the U.S. taxpayers have already paid for this information. If they wish to pay for it again it should be optional. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

704 "Simply put: NOAA should provide to the public, via any methods of communications available, any and all raw data and processed information it has at its disposal. Setting a policy to make weather data and information -- paid for by the public -- only available to for-profit corporations whom the public would then have to pay again to receive forecasts and other weather information would be both another instance of corporations usurping the power and functions of the US Government, and a black mark on the record of one of the few governmental agencies not generally viewed with suspicion by the American people. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

705 "I support NOAA's proposed policy on providing weather information. Our tax dollars pay for the weather information gathered by NOAA, so the information should be free to us. The referring webpage:"

706 "I wholeheartedly support the NOAA's intention to make the useful information it gathers available in the fashion it outlines in its Fairweather Policy (<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>), particularly the provision ""To advance the weather, water, and climate enterprise, NWS will provide information in forms accessible to the public as well as underlying data in forms convenient to additional processing by others. NWS will make its data and products available in Internet-accessible form to the extent practicable and within resource constraints"" The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

707 "As a private citizen who visits NOAA web sites every day, I'm pleased and impressed with what looks like a thoughtful policy. The principle that the data you collect belongs to the public and should be distributed to us as completely as is practical seems to be both common sense and good stewardship of the resources we have allocated to NOAA. Wide availability of your data helps academic study of the atmosphere, and encourages competition in the development of specialized, value-added commercial weather products. I regard with concern the efforts of people at Accuweather and elsewhere to limit the access of the public to data collected at public expense. While this might make life easier for Accuweather by limiting competition, it is hard to see that it benefits the public in any way. Open availability of the public's data to all users in a fair competitive environment has worked so often in the past. Surely it's time to mandate this for wx data as well. Hang in there with a good policy; I am certain you have the people behind you. Timothy J. McLarnan Tremewan Professor of Mathematics Earlham College The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

708 "I'm writing to express my approval and support for NOAA's releasing weather data free of charge, especially its new XML-based format."

709 "It doesn't seem right to have to pay for weather twice: once via taxes, and again through providers that access data from NWS. This is a Bad Thing. Gary Dusbabek Springville, Utah The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

710 "I believe this new policy is long overdue. The 1991 policy is out-of-date and should be scrapped in light of the current environment in which NWS operates. Although I'm sure the private weather forecasting industry will oppose this, the public deserves access to the information for which their tax dollars are used. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

711 "Please expand the offerings that are available to the public at no charge. I feel this is appropriate given the source of the funding: US tax payers. Thank you, Bill The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

712 "All NOAA weather information should be available to the general public. This a matter of public safety,saving lives,protection of property and etc. Those of us who work and pay taxes are funding NOAA. why should we pay a private organization for something we already fund in the first place? Thomas M. Mooney Pensacola Florida The referring webpage: <http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/noframes/read/341713>"

713 "Excellent policy - don't let negative comments from those in the ""weather industry"" sway your opinion. This information should be readily available to the public. Keep up the great work - I visit the site for Tucson, AZ constantly during Monsoon season - it is invaluable. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

714 "NOAA and NWS are federally funded. The data they produce is, by definition, the property of the citizens of the US. This data is not classified, hence it should be freely available to citizens. Businesses have no inherent right to monopolize or restrict this data, nor should they be asking/ coercing the government for special considerations to resell federal property. Businesses are free to compete with the government, they can launch their own satellite wheather system and provide their own weather reports. weather data should be available for free. The only delivery venue feasible for the federal government is the Internet. I've been using raw NWS weather feeds for years, courtesy of the University of Washington. When I compare what the NWS predicts to what Seattle's local TV meteorologists predict, the NWS is substantially and more accurate and predictably more reliable. I want my weather from top-notch scientists/meteorologists, not someone picked for their physical appearance and screen presence. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

715 This is an excellent policy. You (US citizens) are going to have to pay tax for a national meteorological service anyhow. Free internet access to the results of that expenditure is no less than you should expect. why pay again for weather information that you have already paid for in your taxes? The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org>

716 I think the proposed policy is excellent. Please keep the access to weather observations and forecasts available to the boating public. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

717 "I have read the prosposed policy
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(<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>), and some arguments opposing it from commercial weather interests. I am an independent consultant (computers), with a significant portion of my business coming from local government. I also spent two years as the USGS budget examiner at OMB, at a time when there was considerable debate about the publication of digital geophysical data. As a result, I have a deep interest in the appropriate roles of government and the private sector pertaining to the use and dissemination of government-collected data. In my view, weather data and forecasts are of immediate interest and benefit to every member of the public and should continue to be distributed free and freely over the Internet. Climatic data has a smaller, more specialized audience. The data itself is substantially, I think, accumulated in the course of normal weather observations, and thus has a low cost of accession. I advocate making it available free of cost wherever possible, but in no case at higher than the cost of distribution. Regarding the relative places of government and commercial interests, I am opposed to government rules that reserve or restrict the the type of information and analyses either party produces or disseminates. I do, however, believe that a distinction of roles can and should be made. Specifically, government products should meet general needs and be accessible to all. I don't believe that government should provide specialized services to specific customers, i.e., act as a consultant (except, perhaps, to other government agencies). Publicly-funded activities should benefit the society at large, not small segments. I presume that the intention of the bulleted subparagraph headed ""Equity"" under paragraph 8 is to define the general role for NWS and to preclude the provision of narrow, specialized services. To the degree that it does that, I support the proposed policy. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this question. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

718 "To whom it may concern, I have looked over the experimental XML feeds of NOAA weather data at <http://weather.gov/xml/>. I am impressed with the use of this technology to distribute data to the widest possible audience. It can only benefit society when important weather related parameters are available through the most efficient, automated distribution networks, in a completely open format. It is an excellent example of returning value to the customer, in this case the taxpayer. Keep up the good work. Thomas Immel Space Sciences Laboratory University of California Berkeley The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

719 "The private weather companies sit at the end of a large pipeline of government weather data collection and processing. The government launches and operates the satellites, processes the imagery, cranks out the forecasts, transmits them in various formats, etc. The taxpayers pay for this. Unless the private weather companies are paying the government Serious Money for their weather data (offsetting the taxpayers' costs), the idea that having this data be available to the public over the Internet being an encroachment of government over private industry, when the government is already doing 99% of the weather data process, is ludicrous. Private weather companies need to react and respond to changing times and the changing of the way information is disseminated, just like everyone else. It is completely appropriate for NOAA to leverage the Internet to make its products available to the public. There is still a place for private companies -- they will have to continue to find a way to add value. In the end, I think, most people will still use weather.com and intellicast and the like, for a long time to come. Making this data available to the public in a simple way in a public format (i.e. via the internet) is the best of what good government is about. Please do not cave in to the pressure of a narrow group of people who profit by interceding themselves between this now artificial barrier and the people, who profit from all of this work that the government has done, then frame making the data public as a free-enterprise-versus-government issue. I request that you move forward with plans to make all of your weather data products available over the Internet, using standard interfaces, as quickly as possible. Regards, Karl Lehenbauer Chief Technical Officer Superconnect, Ltd. (sc.com) PS - when people don't pay money to

buy weather products from third parties, they get to use that money on something else, an efficiency that makes the entire society wealthier. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

720 ">From my understanding of the proposed ""Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information"", I support the revised policy in regards to keeping the distribution of weather data open to the public and all interested parties. I am against any restriction or fees imposed on the distribution of weather data to the public. In my opinion, the public has already paid for the data, commercial services have no special rights over the data, and (more importantly) this data is an important and potentially life-saving service provided by our government and should not be controlled by commercial interests. - Rob Vincent Portland, Oregon The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

721 The proposal that the NWS make the data it produces generally accessible in dependable standard XML-based formats is an excellent one. Any modifications that require citizens to pay a gatekeeper in order to access the information would be a betrayal of public trust. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

722 "To whom It May Concern: I read on Slashdot that certain members of the private-sector weather industry are wishing the NOAA to stop providing weather data in open, easily accessible formats like XML to the public. As a member of the public with no interest in the ""weather industry"" I feel this is *wrong*. I appreciate the open access to weather information, especially in a format like XML. It is a valuable service to the public, and it is one that the NOAA *should* perform. The ability to add current weather information to a web page about the area, say, or a personal site without having to pay increases the visibility of weather information and makes it more likely it will get to the right people when they need it. Please continue to expand your XML offerings! Sincerely, Kevin Riggle The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

723 "If companies like weather.com want exclusive access to weather data, then they need to pay a significant share of the costs of gathering that data directly: exclusive contracts for access to data in the private sector are typically based on the total cost of gathering that data. If they're getting free data, or paying only a token amount for the data, they're in no position to complain... they're getting a free ride from NOAA and will continue to get a free ride from NOAA as time goes on. In any case, this is unlikely to hurt weather.com: there are hundreds of utility programs that treat weather.com as an ""HTML feed"" of the NWS data and download and display it without providing weather.com with any advertising revenue. Anyone likely to go ""straight to the source"" is already leeching off weather.com as it is, they don't see the advertising and don't want the added value weather.com provides. Being able to go straight to NOAA will just cut down on the load weather.com is currently paying for. And weather.com has the top three things a company needs to succeed: location, location, and location! They're ""weather.com"", for heavens sake! Their competition isn't a raw XML feed from nws.noaa.gov, it's other companies that use that feed to provide added value... other *private* companies. What they're asking for is protection not from the government, but from the market itself... and protecting market leaders from private competition shouldn't be in the charter of any agency. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

724 "I find it difficult to believe that there is any controversy (pardon my spelling) at all here. The NOAA is a government agency funded at public expense. All data and forecasts that do not, for some reason, fall under national security guidelines should be made available to the public in a usable format at no cost. Any other policy is both foolish and possibly illegal."

725 "NOAA/NWS: The proposed new policy, as it appears on your website on 27 June 2004, is a good one. It is appropriate and most beneficial for everyone in the long run that data from publicly funded government activity is freely available to the public. Commercial entities must not be granted privileges of "privatizing" such data in preference over non-profit, academic or private-citizen uses. We should not have to pay twice for it. For these reasons I support the proposed new policy and encourage you to adopt it as soon as reasonably possible. Thank you for consulting the public on this. Stephen W. Hurst Austin, TX The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

726 "For reasons of commerce, national security, and personal safety, NOAA must gather significant amounts of weather data. Furthermore, to ensure that products like severe weather statements can be issued accurately, the organization must provide data such as current conditions and forecasts."

727 "My first observation on the proposed policy is that the entire process has ignored a fourth (and to my mind most important) community: the citizens of the United States, who are paying for weather data (through their taxes) and who depend upon the dissemination of that data for their lives and livelihood. Taxpayers paid for the collection and analysis of the raw data; currently that data is handed over to commercial entities who then charge substantial fees (either directly or indirectly) to share that information with the public. NOAA should make the best possible effort to disseminate ALL of the data it collects, along with ALL of the results of analysis with anyone who requests it, in the most useful format possible. For forecasts and analysis, an open data format such as XML would seem the most logical choice; for raw data, a more compressed format might be more logical, as long as the data format itself is open and available as well. Current data should be distributed via the Internet; historical data should be available via the Internet, or via CD or DVD for a reasonable fee. I realize that the incumbent commercial entities are lobbying to have access to raw and analyzed weather data restricted; they are attempting to preserve and outdated business model (one which presumes much higher costs of data distribution than are currently prevalent). If NOAA yields to these pressures, it will be the same as mandating the sale of buggy whips to accompany each new automobile. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

728 "I am strongly in favor of keeping the NWS weather feeds free. The weather service is a valuable part of my information sources as a citizen and as a general aviation pilot. Please, please, do not commercialize the weather! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

729 "I applaud NOAA's move toward greater direct public access to weather data. The heretofore near-monopoly on useful weather data enjoyed by companies like Accuweather has done little to serve the daily needs of the average citizen, but has instead permitted a small group of companies to make huge profits by disseminating weather data products to broadcast and print media outlets. In my personal experience, said dissemination is often not reliably executed, resulting in the broadcast of outdated or incorrect information, which actually can be worse than no

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information at all. In many cases, graphical ""enhancement"" of NOAA products by these companies serves only to visually differentiate the core data from the same information presented by competing companies, and often to the detriment of clarity and useful interpretation. I am distressed by the so-called ""free"" desktop weather applications offered by some companies, which in reality involve the installation of adware and / or spyware on the client computer. The availability of XML feeds and other data presentations allows the average citizen to have reliable and accurate access to the weather information they need. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

730 "I'd prefer, as a citizen and taxpayer of the USA, not to have to pay more than once for the US government to collect and disseminate weather-related data. There are no good reasons, in my opinion, for NOAA not to offer any weather-related data via existing OPEN and STANDARD methods/protocols. Offering data in very difficult-to-read OR difficult-to-interpret OR offering data in expensive-to-use formats would be wrong. Please give us, the citizens and taxpayers of the USA, the most data in the clearest and easiest to use format(s) that is reasonable to give for ""free"" - we have already paid for it with our tax dollars. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

731 weather info should be available FREE for non-commercial use. Bottom line.

732 "Dear Sirs; I write to urge the National weather Service to continue to provide weather data and other weather related informaton in an open and free fromat. It is my opinion and the opinion of the Lee News Service that the widest distribution possible of weather data will do the most to inusure public safety. I strongly oppose any effort to privatize this critical information. As a news servcie we rely on the NWS to provide timely accurate information free to our readers and subscribers. Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. Greg Kearney, General Manager Lee News Service 307 266-0577 The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

733 It is absolutely LUDICROUS to think that you want to CHARGE for weather forecasts on the net... Jeez... you sound like ex military people trying to double-dip as civil service employees.... The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

734 I think providing more access to tax-payer funded weather information is a great idea! Don't let companies keep this data private! thanks The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

735 I think it's an excellent idea to have more weather data freely available on the Internet. This will allow many more people to examine meterological conditions and trends than is currently possible.

736 Seeing as how these weather forecasts are being paid for with my tax dollars. I see NO ligitmate reason for me not to have easy web access. And included NOT having to pay a 3rd party service for it. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

737 "Your 'fairweather' policy contains so much verbiage that it is difficult for the casual reader to discern its intent. Consequently, I will simply convey to you my feelings on the mission of the National weather Service and let you be the judge of how your policy addresses that mission. As a taxpayer, the NWS is funded directly by my hard earned dollars. I have been making personal use of NWS data (via FTP) for many years now, and I think the NWS is one of the best returns on my tax investment. The NWS provides excellent information in a timely fashion, and I salute you. The mission of the NWS should be to provide the most relevant possible information to the greatest possible number of users in the most useful formats. Directly and without any intermediate entities. It is certainly within the rights of any commercial organization to resell whatever value-added services they wish based on NWS data, but the data itself should be directly available in a range of formats to the people who paid for it with their tax dollars. Sincerely, a long-time satisfied customer, - Dan Potter The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

738 Yey for free public XML streams! Keep it up!

739 "As a governeemt function, the data provided by NOAA (in particular weather forecast data) is of immense value to the public at large. As a tax-payer funding these activities, I expect to be provided timely accesss to this data."

740 "I approve of this policy to make weather data freely accessible for everyone. I feel that it is important that our tax-funded weather data be shared back with the tax payers who paid for it. Also, I think this will improve research interests in weather because it will be more accessible to the hobbyist. (My personal experience with downloading data from NOAA over the Internet had been that the information I wanted required paying a prohibitively high fee. I look forward to seeing that fee removed.) Thank you, Greg Briggs 124 Crossroads Lane Rochester, NY 14612 The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

741 "Thank you so much for making your XML weather feeds available to the public. I am a teacher and I fully intend to use these weather feeds in my class room next year. My students will write programs to access, display and analyze the data on their screens."

742 "Hello, Summary Keep the data free. Narrative We personally overtly pay 38% of our income in taxes to fund government organizations (NOAA, for example). I do not understand why the NOAA would associate with private industry to make us taxpayers pay, again, for the same product. I think that unclassified data should be free to the taxpayers who paid for it. Thank you, Jim The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

743 we should not have to pay for data (your forecasts)

744 "I believe that your proposed policy of making all weather and climatic data available to the general public is one that is beneficial to the American public. Since the NOAA and the NWS is taxpayer funded, it is only right that the public receive full benefit of your work. Making this data available on the internet may have some financial impact on the commercial weather services, but I would think that this would be minimal since the majority of the public would be mainly

interested in summaries prepared by the commercial services. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

745 "Please say no to Accuweather and the other commercial interests that are lobbying to force to public to feed from them. The NWS provides the public with extremely valueable information, and should provide it directly to the public in world-readable formats when they request it. Please make sure that the format of the NDFD information is accessible by those in the public who want to view. Thank you. The referring webpage:"

746 "It's difficult to pull the real meaning out of the recommendation posted on the your site, but if the recommendation leads to reducing or eliminating the web-based weather service currently provided, then I strongly oppose it. we taxpayers are already paying for the creation of this information - the small additional cost of making it freely available is negligible. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

747 Should we have to pay twice to get weather forecasts? I pay US taxes and the information produced by NOAA should be open and free to the public. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

748 "As a SERVICE, subsidized by government tax revenue, the NWS should provide all raw and processed data that it generates, to the public for no additional charge above and beyond the original tax revenue that was collected. Paying for my weather twice, in the form of having to pay commercial services in order to obtain data that was originally collected using MY tax dollars, is a type of double taxation at best and outright theft at worst. The interests of public safety are best served by the widest dissemination of that data on which decisions can be made. Anyone who is unable to interpret the raw and/or processed data generated by the NWS is free to purchase additionally processed forms of that data from commercial enterprises, either directly, via subscription-based specialty services such as are available at Accuweather and other specialty outlets, or indirectly, via advertiser-sponsored services on the internet, television, radio, etc . No one should be COMPELLED to purchase additionally processed data if they choose not to do so. Commercial enterprises that advocate any other position can only be doing so in their OWN self interest as opposed to a genuine interest in PUBLIC safety. I find this to be an unacceptable position regarding a SERVICE that is, at its root, founded upon my tax dollar. If you have any questions or comments regarding the above, please feel free to contact me at your earliest convenience at either my email address of ""youngnat@hotmail.com"" or my personal address at POB 321641 Cocoa Beach Florida 32932. Regards, James MacLaren cc: DL.Johnson@noaa.gov Conrad.C.Lautenbacher@noaa.gov devans@doc.gov myersb@accuweather.com The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

749 Please keep weather data free on the Internet. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

750 "As a Government agency, the National weather Service exists to serve the public. While the proposed change may benefit certain private companies, it does a great disservice to the vast majority of taxpayers. If a company like Accuweather wishes to provide weather reporting to the public for a fee, let *them* bear the cost of producing the data, rather than having the public pay twice. Once through

taxes and once through fees. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

751 I am a taxpayer and a public broadcaster. I can see NO reason to adopt this policy.

752 "Gentlemen, Given that your organization is a publicly funded government entity; it seems reasonable that you should make all relevant raw, & processed, data available free to the public. This data should be in XML form, possibly among others data formats, and should not require the use of any proprietary application to utilize the data. Then, if people wish to sign up for a value-added services from commercial firms, thats great! But we should at least have the option to interact with the data ourselves, and/or use an open source desktop weather tool. There is no real reason for the National weather Service to create a public/open-source weather tool; as that might lend credence to the ""government competing with private industry"" arguements. But it should not preclude the open-source community from doing so. The government has an obligation to require that public resources be available to the citizenry without forced payments to a commercial entity. I do not believe that there is any public interest served by forcing the public to pay any amount in excess of the actual costs of providing access. Sincerely, Luther Shannon The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

753 "Since I already pay the federal government to collect weather data and generate forecasts, I do not have any interest in paying for that data a second time. Please do not allow your agency to be pushed around by self-interested internet entrepreneurs. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

754 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

755 "Taxpayers should not be forced to pay twice for information. By maintaining a positive public policy of providing information that benefits the general public, NOAA is fulfilling its role as a public service. Private companies should not be permitted to restrict access to the new XML data feeds nor digital forecasts. Non-government corporations should find other ways of justifying their existence instead of attempting to create a market niche that does not need to exist. By requiring payment for information, we restrict access to it. No one wins when we restrict access to information. The focus should be on moving forward with technology instead of limiting it."

756 I support the move to return to the policy that information developed at
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public expense belongs to the public. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

757 "Because the NOAA data is produced with tax dollars, I believe that it is already owned by the public, and therefor should be made freely available to the public online and in print. There is no public good to be done by making the weather data available only to commercial interests. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/>"

758 How dare it be suggested that we pay for access to data we paid to collect. The suggestion is as abhorant as nasa giving a monopoly on items it's research created to a private company. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

759 "As I understand it, the ""weather industry"" is actively lobbying for the assessment of additional fees, or the outright closure of, open and publically accessible data formats dealing with weather forecasts from the NWS. As a concerned citizen and voter I must say that any such move on the part of the NWS would be tantamount to an unsanctioned levy upon the American public. Our taxes pay for the salaries of the agency, the technology it uses and the data created. The American people do not need to pay a ""corporate tax"" in order to access something we have already paid for. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

760 "Hey folks! I find this disturbing! Whats up? I work for a local EMA as well as with you folks as a spotter. I don't see how I can provide that service as a volunteer if I have to pay to see the data I'm volunteering to provide from a company who gets it from you and makes me pay. I would like to see some comments on this. Sounds very contrary to what the NWS was designed to do. See below: ""The National weather Service wants to update a 1991 policy that limits what data it can put on the Internet. The proposed new policy makes putting free data on the Internet official. The Private Weather Sector wants NWS to provide its new digital forecasts only in specialized data formats and would like NWS to shut down new XML data feeds. Barry Myers (MS word doc), president of Accuweather wants you to have pay before using Kweather and other similar tools. Myers is asking friends to comment against the new NWS policy by June 30. Should we have to pay twice to get weather forecasts?"" The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

761 "I support this proposed policy change. As a taxpayer, I feel I deserve to have access to the most expidient, efficient, weather information that is generated by the NWS. And I should not have to pay for any of it outside of what I pay in my federal taxes. If technology in the form of the Net and its associated code allows this access then it should be pursued and implemented at the earliest possible date. Commercial, private companies that provide weather information should have access to this information as well. They just shouldn't try to restrict my access to it because they want to make some money. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

762 "Please continue to make your weather products free and avaiable to the general public on the Internet. Things like your new XML feed are inceribly useful to students, amateur weather enthusiasts, etc. -Aaron Hackney The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

763 "Greetings, I believe that free access to weather data is important in much the same way that free access to other geospatial data is important. I have reviewed the policy at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>, and I can lend my full support. As an academic researcher in geospatial analysis, I am intimately familiar with the value of data to researchers and the public. Many successful companies have been built in the geospatial data processing field despite the increasingly free availability of raw data; in fact, the free availability of raw data has strongly promoted academic and commercial development. Private companies are also certainly permitted to launch their own satellites to gather data, such as has been done in the geospatial field by the Space Imaging group with their Ikonos satellite. Private companies may also develop products for data analysis and display, as has been done in the geospatial analysis field by a variety of companies such as Clarke Labs with Idrisi and ESRI with the Arc series. The data, collected at the expense of the U.S. public, should be available free of charge except for reasonable transfer/media fees. Commercial entities should be encouraged to look at the variety of ways they can provide value added services for customers based on the freely available data. I would be happy to discuss my views in more detail should you wish to contact me. Jim Deane, Emporia Kansas. Address and phone number available by email request. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

764 "If the data is compiled by our government, it should be for use by the people of the country, without fee. Simple as that, really. -brianZjones The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

765 "Dear Sirs: Information of this nature should remain free. If for no other reason, NOAA is a government agency using taxpayer funds, and as such, the data should be freely available for the people who paid for it - the taxpayers. Sincerely Cecil Lee The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

766 "I strongly support free, open, and unrestricted access to weather information in standard, non-proprietary data formats."

767 "I hope that the NWS continues to provide the valuable information provided through the internet and NOAA weather radio. I believe the NWS provides taxpayers with an invaluable service, and I would welcome the use of my tax dollars to improve and increase the methods of dissemination used in providing the public with timely, useful weather information."

768 "I feel that the free flow of weather information gathered by a government agency with taxpayer money should be just that-- free. It seems to me that private weather services such as 'accuweather' provide their value by interpreting the data provided by the NWS in clever and relevant ways. It is counterintuitive to limit public access to data whose timely release has significant public safety implications. I support the proposed rules change. All weather data provided by the NWS should be provided in publically accessible ways, in whatever format makes the most sense. I strongly oppose any restrictions on access of NWS data. The referring webpage:"

769 "I am pleased to see that NOAA and NWS are working to further the public's access to accurate, timely weather information. There are certainly those out there who would rather restrict this information to companies who would then force the public to pay for services already paid for with their tax dollars, and I'm gratified that NOAA and NWS are working to disseminate information equally and freely to every interested party. Thank you. Ken McGlothlen mcglk@artlogix.com Seattle WA The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

770 "Since there is debate on the prospect of closing public access to weather data and maps and only releasing them to the private weather services, I must take issue with the private services that wish to take information that my tax money is paying for and keep it from me. Keep weather data, maps and information free to the public. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

771 Donot want to pay for kweather.

772 "I am strongly in favor of the new policy. I don't see why private sector companies that specialize in weather should have exclusive rights to this information, especially since much of it is gathered by NOAA. If a private organization wishes to improve on this data in some way to profit, then that is fine, but not if they are primarily relaying information already gathered by a public organization. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

773 I believe there should be no change in your current policy. Limiting access to meteorological data to private businesses and academia will severely limit the public access to data. People will have to pay for forecasts that can now be had from the NWS website. You shouldn't let companies like Accu-weather push you around just so they can monopolize the industry. If anything data should remain open for all. We the people pay for the NWS and there is no reason we should have to pay more than once for information that is legally ours and for us to use. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

774 "The national weather service is funded by me. If the differential cost of providing my data to me is near zero, then the data should be available to me for free. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

775 Keep XML Open and Free! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

776 "For reasons of commerce, national security, and personal safety, NOAA must gather significant amounts of weather data. Furthermore, to ensure that products like severe weather statements can be issued accurately, the organization must provide data such as current conditions and forecasts. An artificial scarcity of data does nothing to help the people paying for it via their taxes. It only serves to help the bottom lines of a few large corporations whose only responsibilities are to themselves, not the citizens of the United States. The services that are currently ""experimental"" or whose ultimate availability is unknown due to pressure

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from certain members of the Commercial weather Industry should become permanently and freely available to anyone wishing access to it. Back when data dissemination costs were high, it made sense to limit the NWS role in giving data to the public. By allowing only a few organizations to have access to the data and allowing them to sell it, those organization would pay the rather high costs to ensure the data was, in fact, available. However, now that communication costs are so low, such a method makes no sense. A recent letter from Barry Myers to members of the Commercial weather Industry pleading for them to come out against the NWS Partnership Policy, he stated: ""Industries grow where risk is controllable or predictable. The present path of the NWS- controlled federal policy introduces greater risk to the private sector. Not less."" In this case, he is partially right. However, the risk he is actually talking about is the ability for large commercial weather organizations to maintain a stranglehold on the sector. You see, the products that NOAA currently offer, themselves, pose no threat to Accuweather or other large organizations. It is just data, and most people don't want to look at coded data. They want an end product. By allowing data to flow freely to the public, the NWS ENCOURAGES competition to the incumbents. Barriers that prevented bright entrepreneurs from pushing new services are greatly reduced and a new era of value-added products will be born. To this end, I see no alternative but for NOAA to provide the services it currently does in a permanent, free fashion as well as to develop other offerings that benefit the taxpayers as it sees fit. Scott C. Kennedy The referring webpage:

<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

777 Keep the free data feeds coming!! This is a government funded agency and it should be giving back to the citizens with free feeds. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

778 I think this weather data should be free for writers of software to be able to distribute as they see fit. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

779 "NWS information should be freely available to the public. It should not be formatted in any way that makes it unavailable, or difficult for the public to access and understand. Anyone who thinks that government information should coded or encapsulated for the exclusive financial benefit of any particular group over the general public's, should simply greeted with laughter and derision for having no understanding of the basic values of our nation, and the way our government is supposed to be organized. Shame on you people for not having this engraved in your consciousness already! I honestly cannot believe that I have to be writing this. You people are wasting EVERYONE'S time by giving this stupid idea serious consideration. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

780 I am always pleased to see a government agency improve individuals' access to the data our taxes pay for. I am happy that you plan more access to data in open standards. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

781 "National weather information which is funded by taxpayers should be provided in an open format available to all taxpayers, and not in a private or proprietary format suited to the demands of private commerce. Thanks for your time. David wilhelm The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

782 "Hi, I am disabled with AMN it is like MS and I use a walker at this time. I use a old Pro Star with a AMD K6 2 350Mz with 96meg of memory. My internet service is Onlinetx for \$9.99 a month. I have to save money because SS disabilitiy does not pay much for a 54 year old. Please do not add more expece! I am sure there are others out there in my position where the internet becomes a good friend! I like to check the weather for dad in Fallbrock, CA, little brother in San Diego, CA, Little sister in Orofino, ID and myself in Priest River, ID. I also check Kamiak, ID where I want to move to . Got to get out of all this snow. Please do not add any cost to the weather checks that I do, Thank you, Bill The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

783 "I think that free sharing of offiial data is a wonderful idea. As a taxpayer, I am already paying for the collection of this data. Private companies that want to restrict this information do so purely out of a profit motive. I feel that this data belongs to the American people, and should be shared with them without cost or restriction."

784 I think that any data provided by the government that isn't classified should be avaiable in free open formats like xml

785 "Please provide as much information that is gathered through taxpayer sponsorship, e.g. NOAA weather forecasts, as possible. And publish it in the most accessible manner possible, e.g., in XML freely available on the internet. I commend your efforts thus far along these lines especially in the face of the recent muckraking by narrow-minded self-interests."

786 "I use the NOAA site for forecasts very regularly. As a taxpayer, I believe strongly that NOAA should continue to recieve the funds it needs to perform it's mission, and the data it collects should be easily, openly and freely available to the public it serves. It is not the duty of the NOAA to keep private companies competitive. If they can not provide extra services beyond that which NOAA provides to entice customers, then they need not be in business. I strongly encourage the NOAA to create a set of open standards for the interchange of weather data based on web Service technologies (XML), allowing data to be processed by numerous entities easily and quickly, from end users to businesses. Thank you for your consideration Thank you for your The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

787 I pay taxes! you work for me.

788 "I just wanted to take the time to thank you for being on the right side of this policy. The internet and policy surrounding it is often murky and easily distorted by whoever wishes, but thank you for attempting to do what I'm sure most ethos would label as 'good'. I appreciate and support your adherence to open data formats in order to maximize ease of use for the public. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

789 I think the NWS should continue to provide XML data and web weather to the public free of charge. It would be unethical to rig the data so that only certain

businesses (accuweather) could charge the public for it. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

790 "I am writing to express my support for the Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. I am the President of Skyacht Aircraft, Inc. We are a small aircraft research and development company. Access to NWS has been critical to our market research activities. As we move from research to deployment, access to observations and forecasts will also be critically important. Our aircraft target niche markets and have specific operational limitations. It is not economically feasible for a commercial weather distribution company to create a tailored product that meets our unique needs. However, if we can use the internet to access NWS weather information directly, we can create our own processed reports. Please consider that "the private sector" includes many companies other than the commercial weather distribution companies. We see great value to ourselves as well as many other traditional partners of NWS in the Proposed Policy. Regards, Daniel Nachbar
nachbar@skyachtaircraft.com 413-549-1321 The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

791 "I have recently read of efforts by organizations such as Accuweather (<http://www.accuweather.com/>) and the Commercial Weather Services Association (<http://www.weatherindustry.org>) seeking to eliminate the free publication by NWS of weather data in XML format (<http://weather.gov/xml/>) so that digital forecasts (<http://weather.gov/ndfd/>) would be available only in proprietary data formats, with the end result that anyone who wants those data feeds will wind up paying someone like Accuweather for it. That they should even suggest such a thing is an outrage. Taxpayer dollars pay for the NWS to collect and provide that data; each and every private citizen has already paid for that access, and I strongly encourage you to continue the XML feeds. Like many other people, I use open-source software (<http://kweather.sourceforge.net/>) to view online weather data, and it is very important that this resource remain free (as in speech) for individuals to use. If companies such as Accuweather want to create value-added services that they can make money on, that's great. I'm all for free enterprise and entrepreneurship. However, that does not justify their seeking to shut off the public availability of XML data that the public has paid for. There is a line between free enterprise and extortion, and they are crossing it in encouraging the shutdown of the XML feed. I strongly encourage you to decline all such requests and do the right and ethical thing by keeping the XML feed available. Thank you for your consideration,
Jonathan Byrne Torrance, California The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

792 "I have read both the NWS 1991 policy and the proposed 2004 Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. I applaud your proposal to make the information you collect as freely available as technology permits and support its adoption. I live on Cape Cod, Massachusetts which frequently experiences weather quite different from that of adjacent commercial centers such as Boston, MA or Providence RI. As a result the available commercial information, which is geared toward those markets, is frequently too general, unsatisfactory or just plain wrong for my locale. For outdoor activities, particularly marine activities, up to the minute information can be critical. As such it is more useful that commercially available information which may be many hours old and too general. In some cases current, accurate weather information can be critical to safety. Since I as a taxpayer support the NWS and I find the information you provide valuable, I urge you to continue efforts to continue to make it available to the public; I see nothing to be gained by inserting a revenue generating enterprise between me and the information I need. Your responsibility is to the citizens and taxpayers of this country, not to create additional jobs in the private weather sector. Harry Terkanian The referring webpage:"

793 "The proposed policy is welcome. As part of my company's research activities, we are working on technologies to manage the torrent of information applied to various operations. As we are not well endowed with funds, having more information available to us in a variety of formats for which we have already purchased, as taxpayers, at no additional cost will help us considerably in developing these information management technologies and later products. I am also very interested in the new opportunities being proposed as earth sciences hobbyist. Thank you for putting forth this proposed revision to the 1991 Statement on the Weather Service/Private Sector Roles. I am looking forward to its passage as is. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

794 "I can't see a reason to pay for something I can get for free off TV, or even just looking outside. Keep the weather free! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

795 This is a ridiculous idea that I'm strongly against. Keep the information FREE!

796 Please keep weather XML FREE! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

797 "Dear Sir or Madam, I am very concerned that there are private sector interests attempting to limit what the tax payers are paying for - accurate and timely weather forecasts. As a rancher, I depend on the Government weather forecasts, not only for ranching, but in avoiding flood areas. In closing, I would like to remind you that the job of the NWS is NOT to reduce friction from private enterprise. The NWS's sole reason for being is to provide accurate and up to date information on the nation's weather. If this is a bone in the craw of the private sector, well, that is NOT the problem of the NWS. As a Texan I was taught that if something ain't broke, then don't fix it. I was also taught that you don't get something for nothing. Seems like the private sector wants something that is payed for by my taxes. And wants me to pay AGAIN for it! That is not right. Sincerely, Lloyd Sargent POB 805 Elgin, Texas 78621 The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>"

798 "The National weather Service data has already been paid for by the tax payers, locking the tax payers out of the data, so that a few companies can benefit from this data -- which we the taxpayers have already paid for -- is a scam, and anyone who wishes to perpetrate such a scam should be beaten with a stick."

799 "Please keep the weather data free, timely, and available in a format that we all can use. Don't let private interests put a stranglehold on public data for which we have already paid via tax dollars. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

800 "While I feel that this proposed policy can be used to great benefit, I feel that information should be made available to the public for free. Any use for profit needs to be done so at a price. I currently offer a weather alert system that uses XML feeds offered by the NWS. Regardless of the fact that it is not functioning properly on the NWS end of things, I offer it to the public for free. I do not accept donations, and I pay for the bandwidth used by my server to offer this

service. Situations such as this should be allowed to continue, but if these services are offered at a price to the public, the data required to run such systems should be offered at a price as well, rather than free. Thank you for considering my comments on this proposed policy. The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

801 "I voice my support for the Proposed Policy. I would like to stress that any argument in which private organizations necessarily are arbiters of information between the research community and the public at-large is dangerous and misguided. It has been shown time and time again that free access to information neither diminishes the value and purpose of that information, nor reduces the opportunity for value-add by private enterprise. Indeed, free, unhindered and equitable access consistently proves to be a net gain for all aspects of public and economic endeavours. On a technical note, any bifurcated dissemination process, whereby some entities gain access to information in forms easier to process must necessarily restrict and *reduce* the information accessible to the public at large. Practical and timely access to raw, unadulterated records is a prerequisite for ""equitable"" dissemination. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

802 "I an FOR the new policy. NWS should make available XML data to the general public. I do not wish to see corporations having the only (or a controlling) access to the data streams. Thomas O'Bannon Camano Island, wa The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

803 Its simple... MY tax dollars paid for the NWS to produce weather forecasts and produce weather related data and research. At NO point should the NWS restrict the US tax payer unlimited access to this data via the internet. Keep the weather available. We paid for it. Its ours.... not private forecasting businesses. They can have it for free as long as we can too. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

804 "I would not like to see the NWS provide its WX data feeds only to commercial operations like Accuweather. Accordingly, I support your current efforts to update the 1991 policy and continue to make this taxpayer-funded information available to all. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

805 I believe it is good policy to make (easily) available to the public what the public funded. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/>

806 "I for one support the free availability of weather information. I believe that if you make the information available in a well defined format, via a feed, or so sort of source that is updated frequently it would be an excellent addition to the internet community. To also allow for the businesses that have come to exist in this arena, you could make the data available in generic form, ie datapoints or pictures that are available to be used by companies, and other weather enthusiasts, for their various purposes, without destroying a business sector. To recap, information availability is good, and providing the information for free is good as well, and not destroying a business model is also good. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

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807 I believe the National weather Service should continue to make all weather data available at no cost over the internet. This should also include the XML data feeds of digital data. This data has been paid for by the US taxpayers and should continue to be available to them at no additional cost. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

808 "I am a consumer of NOAA information. It is something I use daily for the weather. <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/data/forecasts/MAZ005.php?warncounty=MAC019&city=Sudbury> In the summer, this is my absolute favorite link: http://polar.wwb.noaa.gov/waves/latest_run/wna_ecg.anim.gif Helping me in pusuit of happiness (thru waves) is what government is all about. My major comment is that I would like to see those continue. If Fairweather will imporve them, that's great. I am a little surprises the Fairweather spec does not say ""standards based"", perhaps that is old language. It looks good to me! YON - Jan C. Hardenbergh The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

809 "Hello, Please note that all products and data created by the NWS have been and undoubtedly will continue to be funded by the citizens and taxpayers of the United States. Any attempt by private parties or corporations to circumvent or block free and open public access to this data is tantamount to theft from the public good. Any attempt to change this by rule making or lobbying must be absolutely prevented. I have already raised this issue with my congressional representatives and will continue to make my views known to them and at the ballot box. I also continue to make this potential theft known to all those I am in contact with in the maritime, agriculture, and recreational communities. Thank your for your attention, Robert Sorrels, PhD The referring webpage:"

810 "This regards the policy on internet publication of weather data that is currently being revised. The NWS is a taxpayer-funded organization and should seek to provide maximum freedom of information to the public on collected and analyzed weather data. The technology to publish this information is available free via RSS feeds or metadata publishing systems and using free data formats such as XML. Private companies object to the NWS releasing free information because they would like taxpayers to pay for weather information twice - once to fund the NWS and again to actually get the information through a private company. This is wrong - the NWS should release information freely since the code to do so is essentially zero after some initial setup. Private companies can still develop software to better present this information, but the information should be free for all. Taxpayers should not have to pay for access to information that they have paid to be collected. Thank you for forwarding these comments to the appropriate group. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

811 Please keep the XML feeds and other weather data freely available on the Internet.

812 "By requiring payment for people to have access to raw weather information on the internet would be a HUGE step backward. Since when was weather about making money? Will I soon be charged for looking out the window to see if it's sunny out? It's unclear to me, but it seems like charging for this kind of information is self-serving to those who want to stifle(?) any kind of competition. I understand if this information was coming from the private sector, but a government agency such as the NOAA serves the general public. My tax dollars indirectly funds all

government agencies, so it seems that we are ALREADY paying for the service you provide."

813 "I believe it is important to allow a method of free access to weather data. As the NOAA is a governmental/government-subsidized body, thus its 'customers' are all taxpayers. As I am a taxpayer, I am therefore also a customer, but why should I be charged twice for data that is already made available to me? Allow the private weather ""forecasting"" entities to add ""value"" to their representation of the weather data, rather than by removing free access to an exceptionally useful entity. If the NOAA were, in fact, to restrict access to this data, I would find it very difficult to understand why the government, and my tax dollars, should have anything to do with this data any longer. In fact, I would find it very inappropriate that said tax dollars were being leveraged by private companies. Please remember that in America, we're taught to believe that government exists BY the people, but also FOR the people. Not by the Corporations, for the Corporations. Sincerely, Kevin Vargo The referring webpage:"

814 "I am concerned at the proposal and how much service would be available only through private companies if implemented. I have no issue with the NWS proposing to charge a fee for data which is for commercial use but for non-commercial use it should all be available free. If not, the the NWS should be on the Postal Service model where their money comes from users not taxpayers. I don't want to have to go through a third party to get my weather. If I want to file my Federal Taxes on line I must pay a third party with few exceptions and that's not right. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

815 "I would like to express my support for the National weather Service's proposal for making official the policy of posting more free weather data on the internet and making it available in a variety of industry-standard formats which can be accessed by a wide variety of devices and operating systems. With the increasing significance being placed on the weather, it is more important for the public to have ready information to not only forecasts, but also satellite and radar data. As a SKYWARN member, it is even more important for us to have access to the information so we know what is coming and what we will be looking for. Having this information available without advertisements, subscriptions, fees and other distractions is of critical importance to us. Matthew Sadler The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

816 "I am opposed to you changing your weather information access policy to benefit commercial concerns and lock out citizens. I am a taxpayer, and I help fund your operations and the collection of this data. Taxpayers like me pay dearly for the collection of this data, and you should not restrict us from accessing it. If businesses want their own private weather data streams, then let them fund an operation to gather it. The government does not exist to enhance corporate income; it exists to serve the citizens. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/>"

817 "I saw a mention (with a link to this page) about the National weather Service possibly making it an official policy to distribute weather information on the internet. I think that's a great idea and request that weather be distributed in an open format which would allow all citizens to have access, such as your current XML feeds. Please don't let yourselves be swayed by corporate interests; if public taxes already pay for the weather Service, please keep it available to the public so citizens don't have to pay twice. -Tony Notto The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

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818 "Please keep this service in XML and free. My tax dollars fund it, and I want to remain as it is. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

819 "I have read the Proposed Policy and consider it to be well thought-out and fair. I am particularly pleased to see that open information dissemination is included in the founding principles of participation. All interested parties (academic, private, and the public at large) should have equal access to data products to the fullest extent practicable. It is natural that entrenched commercial interests will want to gain an advantage over current or future competitors by preventing the open dissemination of data products. I urge you to resist such pressures and maintain a "level playing field" that encourages healthy competition between private sector companies. There is a separate question as to where to draw the line between what the government provides and what is left for the private sector to provide as "added value", but whatever products are produced by the government should be made openly available on a non-discriminatory basis to anybody interested in getting them (public or academic as well as private sector). No reply to this comment is necessary. Thank you for your time. -- Kevin C. Moore, Ph.D. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/comments.pl?sid=112544&threshold=1&commentsort=0&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99&mode=thread&pid=9541675>"

820 "Hello, As a matter of policy, any non-confidential/classified data generated by an open, democratic government should be freely and easily available to all it's citizens. This, obviously, applies to any climatological and weather forecasting data data generated by NOAA, including the NWS. Sincerely, Ron The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

821 "Data should be freely provided to all parties, especially when that data is collected at the taxpayers' expense. Private companies should not expect to freeload off government-collected data, and then turn around and resell that same data. I strongly support NOAA's proposed policy to openly and equitably disseminate information. Ken Chiang The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

822 "I support he National weather Service in its proposed new policy which makes its free data on the Internet official. Please continue to provide this data in general data formats readable by all. As someone who lives next to Tampa, the lighting capital of the US and is subjected to all sorts of violent storms during the summer months, I applaud the National weather Service in letting data, generated using public funds, flow freely. Recently, I have seen a decline in the availability of up-to-date weather radar information for my vicinity. I hope that the efforts of the NWS help out in improving this situation. Please continue to provide the new NWS digital forecasts in non-specialized data formats. Please do not shut down the new XML data feeds. Thank you very much for your attention. Felix Llevada Orlando, Florida The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

823 "I support the proposed NOAA policy. In particular, I support the policy of disseminating weather information using the Internet. Internet dissemination is very cost- effective, and would allow access by the public that should be a small fraction of NOAA's budget. I agree that public access should be limited by the resources available. However, I believe that any amount of money that is prudently

spent in support of public weather information is in the taxpayer's interest. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

824 "I am in favor of the NWS accepting the Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. The results of the policy will help to encourage growth of private sector business. New opportunities will exist where there were none before. With public access to accurate weather data, new tools and applications can be developed. For academia, providing this data using modern data standards will offer new research opportunities. Cooperation, adherence to open standards, and the unrestricted exchange of weather data will benefit the public, the private sector, academia, and the NWS. Thank you for considering the proposal, and I hope that it is implemented.
-- Tim Scott Skywarn Spotter Amateur Radio Operator Brazos County Disaster Volunteer Academy Graduate The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

825 "We already pay to run NOAA. It is a government service and charging for the data is, in my view, criminal. If you provide data only through commercial companies, why should we have NOAA? Better to save the money and just pay the services."

826 "I applaud your efforts to make available as much information as possible in as many formats as practical to any who is interested in it. I understand the concerns of the CWSA. That said, NOAA weather collects and disseminates information using federal funds. If members of the CWSA and other similar entities can make a profit using public domain information, more power to them just don't block my access to the same information. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

827 "Hello, I just wanted to express my strong approval of the proposed policy changes regarding the publishing of NOAA weather data. The work of NOAA agencies is invaluable to both the private and public sector, and one of the best examples of our tax dollars at work. NOAA should serve as an example to the rest of the government about what government should do...serve the public, not special interests. I applaud your work and hope that these policy changes will be quickly approved. Brian H. Jonesboro, AR The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

828 "I think the changes to open up more of this data to the public and academia are excellent. I have been working with weather data provided by the NOAA for over a year now and find it very valuable. Though the private sector has created many good products from the data offered solely to them, it is time to open things up. The former policy encouraged the private sector to grow and innovate for a time, giving them a corner on the market. This may have been the best thing at the time, but surely not any longer. There is much innovation and collaboration occurring outside of the private sector and the more data that becomes available, the more innovation can occur. Opening this data up will only increase collaboration and the quality and availability of weather-related tools and services. Thank you for taking this step to open up this data. - David The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

829 "As a weather enthusiast/hobbyist in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania (I have my own weather station and post my data to multiple sources and have my own web site) I use the information provided by the NOAA/NWS to augment my own daily observations and

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retrieve information on local weather events. I'm also a taxpayer. Since the NOAA/NWS is a taxpayer-funded organization, the data it collects needs to and should be made freely available to the public in as useful a form as possible. In the past, this was in the form of FTP- and HTTP-accessible flat text files. As technology has evolved and time has passed, this has evolved to XML-based web services (very cool might I add!) and a very useful and organized set of web sites that present information from around the U.S. in a uniform fashion. The web site redesign was done well and is a highly useful resource, as is the raw data. Private companies object to the NWS releasing free information because they would like taxpayers to pay for weather information twice - once to fund the NWS and again to actually get the information through a private company. This is wrong - the NWS should release information freely since the code to do so is essentially zero after some initial setup. Private companies can still develop software to better process, analyze and present this information. The information itself, however, should be free for all. Taxpayers should not have to pay for access to information that they have paid to be collected. Please keep the data available for free to the general public and keep up the great work! Bob Rudis 4580 Steuben Road Bethlehem, PA 18020-9639 bob@rudis.net 610-614-1878 The referring webpage:"

830 "I have been using NWS radio and internet forecasts for years, to plan both personal and business travel. As a taxpayer, I appreciate the easy availability of data and analysis I have funded through my taxes. While I understand that private companies may supply enhanced products, the basic NWS forecasts and reports meet my needs. I have found the basic NWS data and forecasts to be of high quality and very useful to me. Please accept my comments in support of full availability of NWS products, and your proposed new policy on partnerships. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

831 Sir: As a licensed us coast guard captain I am on the water much of the time. I always support the dissemination of as much weather info to the public and via the internet as possible. I hope NWS sees fit to share as much info on the internet as it can. thanks The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

832 "As a U. S. citizen and computer user, I appreciate and support all efforts by the NOAA to provide equitable, direct, efficient, low-cost weather data access to all parties public, commercial and academic. I am somewhat alarmed by apparent lobbying by the CWSA to restrict public access to the presentation of this data. For many end-users, the commercial sector truly "adds value" to weather data by repackaging that data in a relevant manner. But I resent commercial interests monopolizing data presentation that could naturally and efficiently be provided by the NOAA directly to all parties, especially in view of the NOAA's primary mission to protect life and property. I hope the NOAA will be act on behalf of U. S. taxpayers and not industries bent on acquiring an unearned revenue stream. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

833 EXPAND NOAA SERVICE AND STOP PRIVATE ENTERPRISE FROM COST TAX PAYER MORE MONEY FOR AN OUTSTANDING GOVERNMENT SERVICE. KEEP NOAA FREE AND EXPAND NOAA SERVICE CURRENTLY BEING PROVIDED. DO NOT ALLOW CIVILIAN ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE NOAA TO TAKE AWAY THIS EXCELLENT SERVICE. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

834 EXPAND NOAA SERVICE AND STOP PRIVATE ENTERPRISE FROM COST TAX PAYER MORE
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MONEY FOR AN OUTSTANDING GOVERNMENT SERVICE. KEEP NOAA FREE AND EXPAND NOAA SERVICE CURRENTLY BEING PROVIDED. DO NOT ALLOW PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE NOAA TO TAKE AWAY THIS EXCELLENT SERVICE. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

835 "I think it is a great idea to extend ways of accessing *our* public weather information, as proposed in new policy. I strongly urge you to resist the efforts of certain private sector entities to thwart this policy in the interest of their own profit. Thank you for being *public* servants. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

836 "The NWS should make as much information as possible available to the US Taxpayer at no additional cost to the US Taxpayer. Any expansion of data made available for free is a good thing. Let the market decide if the value added services provided by other is worth additional costs. Encourage the market by making as much data as possible freely available to the public so that innovation can occur within the weather marketplace. Those companies and groups that develop useful tools to work the NWS data will be rewarded by the free market system. True innovation can only occur if and when data is widely available to the public free of charge. The US Taxpayer is already paying for this data to be produced. Let the US Taxpayer take advantage of it. Thank You Henry A. Treftz 2174 Pointe Blvd. Aurora, IL 60504 The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

837 I would like to register my support for the new policy making the putting of free data on the Internet official. NOAA is tax payer supported and should be freely accessible

838 The idea of turning the NOAA weather reports into a commercial product is absurd at best. NOAA was established by and continues its funding from tax dollars. As such any and all data derived belongs in the public domain.

839 "This is ridiculous. why NOT have free weather feeds? Does it make any sense to begin charging for a service that, since the spread of radio, has been free."

840 "Keep the weather information free. XML feeds allow the general public to do nifty things with weather data: Personal archives, fun and interesting tools to display current weather."

841 I would like to register my support for the new policy making the putting of free data on the Internet official. NOAA is tax payer supported and should be freely accessible The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

842 This sounds fantastic. All government agencies should display the level of competence and civic-mindedness that the NOAA has exemplified in drafting this policy.

843 "I make use of free weather data daily, both for personal use and for experimental projects. I'd hate to see this resource go away. Rick Stewart The Internet Company The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

844 "The weather information you provide can, AND DOES, save lives!! Not the lives of businesses, but the lives of citizens! So why should the full breadth of this information be restricted to only those that make us, U.S. citizens, pay a second time for this information? PLEASE, make the information free so that it will benefit those who need it the most!"

845 "> NWS will provide information in forms > accessible to the public as well as > underlying data in forms convenient to > additional processing by others. NWS > will make its data and products > available in Internet-accessible form > to the extent practicable and within > resource constraints... If this means what it sounds like -- that the public can get things like raw hourly observations and forecasts in an easily-used format, like the NDFD XML interface -- it's a great policy. The old policy, that NWS shouldn't compete with the private sector, implied that the public should have to pay some private weather forecasting company for raw data collected using taxpayer money. Hope the new policy is approved! The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

846 "I know there is a push by some in the ""weather industry"" to extend NWS's 1991 policy on data publishing. I believe this is folly, and the NWS's proposed policy to remove some of its restrictions is the right way to go. No reply necessary. Matthew Keller Enterprise Systems Analyst State University of New York at Potsdam The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

847 "I would like to let you know that I am all for your policy of providing ""free"" weather information. I put free in quotes since you are funded by my tax dollars so I am already paying a small amount for your service. You are probably already swamped by people from the weather industry who want you to only provide information to them so they can sell it to us. Please don't be swayed by their arguments. Keep up the good work! Chris The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

848 "The private weather sector and Barry Meyers in particular would like NOAA to provide data to their business for their profit. NOAA should NOT follow this course but continue to provide weather information free of charge through this site and others. After all the masthead of your web page does read ""Working Together to Save Lives"" The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

849 "Good Evening, I've briefly read the pages linked to the NWS proposal and admit that I am somewhat confused. Let me say this, I rely on the Internet for all of my news and weather alerts. I do not have any access to TV or cable TV (by personal choice). Please, do not restrict or limit current services available to the public from the NWS via the Internet. Sincerely, John W. Smith Provo, Utah The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

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850 "It is my belief that since the NWS, NOAA and its many branches are publicly funded with revenue from public tax dollars that the organizations should dedicate their resources to improving predictions and disseminating of information to the public. As a part of the public, any private entity can utilize that information and package it in a marketable way. That is their privilege. Your organizational goals should be directed toward improvement of services without regard to private organizations. It should be those organizations concern as to how they would package the information you provide. But I believe that should not be included in your mission responsibilities. Those are my personal feelings. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

851 "Why must we pay twice? Our tax dollars fund NOAA, so why should private industry be allowed any form of monopoly on NOAA information? weather information from NOAA should be equally available to EVERYONE at all levels. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

852 "I think if the American government is using American tax dollars for weather research and information that it is their duty to give any information back to the American public for free. I think the ""private weather industry"" can do what it pleases. Like everything else, if they want people to use their services then they'd better offer something more than what people deserve to get from their government for free. Let me give an example... If tax dollars are used to build a road, then that road should be travelled for free, and so they are. If someone decides to build a road with their own money and then charge to drive on them, then they may also do so and create a toll road. what our ""friends"" at these private weather outfits really want is for the public paid for roads to be shut down so that the only choice people have is their tolls roads. No thanks!"

853 "GREAT IDEA...THE U.S. TAXPAYER DON'T OFTEN GET EASY ACCESS TO THE SERVICES THEY PAY FOR. ALSO, THINK OF ALL THE LIVES THIS FREELY FLOWING INFORMATION WILL SAVE. THIS IS A GOOD THING. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

854 "I encourage the proposed changes and anything that encourages the easy and free dissemination of research and information gathered by the NOAA and NWS. As a taxpayer I feel that the NWS provides an invaluable service, providing easily the best and most accurate weather forecasts of the major weather predictors (online, anyway). I feel any changes that require additional payments to receive this information, or restricts in any way the free flow of information from NWS/NOAA to the public is inappropriate and unacceptable. Thank You! Josh Chessman The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

855 "I support having unrestricted and free access to public weather information. A portion of my tax dollars goes directly to support the systems from which the weather forecast data is produced. Therefore, the argument may be made that I have already paid a fee for this service. If a third party weather provider would like to charge a fee for weather data, then it is simple. Provide me with a value added benefit that motivates me to pay for the service. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

856 "As a United States citizen, taxpayer, and consumer of NOAA products, I applaud and support the proposed NOAA policy of open access to NOAA products. I use
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these products, including local forecasts, warnings, local and national real-time radar imagery, and satellite IR imagery, often on a daily basis. They help me to avoid inclement weather and to otherwise plan and prepare for my day. I'd like to add that I would find it unfair and contrary to my interests to have to get my weather products from private companies; I have already paid my fair share for them through my tax dollars, and I am very much opposed to the idea that I would have to get them through the services of private corporations. Whether I have to pay them a subscription fee or just put up with advertising, it's revenue that is unearned, and derived from data that we citizens already own. I extend my compliments to NOAA and their staff for their dedication to excellence and public service. I would also like to thank NOAA for the opportunity to comment on their proposed policy changes.
LVC III The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

857 "I would strongly encourage NOAA to continue to make as much weather information as possible available in standardized well-documented forms for use both directly and by external software programs. I routinely choose to use the NOAA/NWS forecast information for my area through the website rather than the available commercial sites, for several reasons: 1. Most of the commercial sites provide no ""value added"" to the NOAA forecast, and in general they appear to be *less* useful 2. Because the NOAA website does not include annoying advertisements, I am able to get the information for which I came without having to put up with a lot of extraneous garbage. My father worked for the Naval Oceanographic Office for many years and I am very familiar with the Navy METOC community. I would gladly write to my congressmen if I thought that NOAA needed more support on this--but from what I can see all NOAA/NWS need to do is to tell the commercial entities, ""If you folks are so useful, then prove it in the open marketplace"". Thanks very much for all that you do. --Rip Loomis The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>

858 "Should we have to pay twice to get weather forecasts? No!!! I already pay NOAA (via taxes) for weather forecast & I should not have to pay a private company for that same information. If they want me to pay them, they need create value, not leaching off the government. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

859 "Since NOAA is funded by taxpayer dollars, I sincerely hope you will not consider restrictions on access to NOAA data. The open access to NOAA data feeds in generally accepted formats (e.g. XML) and not formats intended for a few private companies is the only way of ""Working Together To Save Lives"". The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

860 "No need for a reply ... I think this policy shift is a wonderful idea. As a newspaper person who has had the pleasure of dealing with a half dozen private sector weather services, I can honestly say that if NOAA were to completely open up it's services that it would have little or no effect on whether the paper I worked for bought weather information from Accuweather or anyone else. That paper, like most others, is perfectly comfortable outsourcing what they see as a customized weather package. As a taxpayer, I find it abhorrent when government agencies try to sell information that could be publicly available. There is no reason to believe that corporations should have more access to data than citizens. It's like saying that police departments should only allow newspapers access to their crime blotters -- if citizens had access to it they might not read the paper. It's just dumb, backward thinking by fearful specialists afraid that people will be able to see behind the curtain. And if they aren't adding any value to the data before they resell it, then there is a serious con going on. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>

861 "I feel that the internet services provided by NWS are very valuable. The forecasts, selectable-source radar images, and other information is often more useful, in fact, than most commercial offerings. Further, I believe I should have complete and free access to sometimes vital information paid for by my taxes. Therefore, I think that the proposed expansion of internet resources is a good idea. The referring webpage:"

862 I applaud this updating of the policy which will protect the free release of weather information for all citizens. Anything less would be an unacceptable abridgement of freedom and an affront to public health and safety. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

863 "I support the proposed policy. The only change I would consider an improvement would be an explicit declaration that the information produced by the NWS (and related agencies) is a publicly owned resource and should be made directly available to the taxpayer, except as dictated by matters of public safety or security. Thank you for this clarification (and de facto extension) of public policy in this matter. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

864 "I appreciate the time and effort you are making to craft this policy to the benefit of all. As a private citizen I have often been frustrated by the difficulty and cost associated with certain NOAA weather data and am very excited by the possibility that this policy will make more data available. I can understand, however, that some of the products are not completely owned by and paid for with my tax money, and certainly agree that an equitable price could be set for these products provided or produced by third parties. I hope to see this new policy enacted. Hopefully some of the more useful third party products (lightning data, for instance) may be made freely available through funding, and many existing products will be more readily available. Thank you for your time and consideration!
-Adam The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

865 Sirs; I think that all data collected by the national weather service should be available in standard non-proprietary formats. Preferably html. All html internet pages should be produced w3c compliant. The use of quick-time or microsoft avi formats should be forbidden. I think you are doing a fine job. I look at your site often and use it as a teacher in school as a fine example of secondary source data. Thanks Michael Reavey NE PA. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

866 "I support the proposed policy changes for the following reasons: 1) Open formats allows open research, better sharing and prevents errors from data corruption in conversion. (Ex. See word 95 to word XP.) 2) Open formats work better for long term data retention. (Don't need to worry if a company goes out of business.) 3) Private individuals may find uses of the data that would never be considered by large companies. 4) Tax payers show have direct access to data created to support and serve them without paying a third party for it. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

867 I do not think it is right for a private company to get exclusive rights to data paid for by public funds. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

868 I do not think it is right for a private company to get exclusive rights to data paid for by public funds. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

869 "It is critical that weather collected by the government and funded by taxpayers remain available to the public in a timely manner. Limiting distribution of such data to commercial providers and asking the public to pay for it (yet again!) is fraud. It also endangers those who depend on the data, as well as prohibiting its use in the development of creative new applications. -John Ross
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

870 I think this service is great. Hope you continue to make it available and are not swayed by the commercial weather forecasting community. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

871 "As technology increases our understanding of weather, and hopefully the accuracy of our forecasting, this information needs to be disseminated as broadly and as freely as possible. I strongly support making as much weather information as possible available via your excellent websites. As a taxpayer, I feel this is a fair return on our investment! Keep up the good work! The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

872 I support the proposed changes to the NOAA's policy regarding improving and expanding the dissemination of NOAA weather data and forecasts to ensure the widest possible access for the public. I hope that NOAA will resist pressures from private sector sources to limit the dissemination of its data in forums readily usable and useful to the public. The referring webpage:

873 "As a high school student who is interested in pursuing a career in meteorology, I hope that that data collected by the National Weather Service is kept free and open to the public. The data found on the NWS site I find very important to increasing my interest. Many times I have tried to predict the way a storm will form and the ETA to my location. I will use data only from the National Weather Service, such as NEXRAD, the local forecast discussion, and the mesoscale discussion, to aid me. These services I highly value. There are many other weather enthusiasts in our country that also use this data. Since the NWS doesn't have personnel on every street corner, enthusiasts are highly needed to report any significant weather. If cost is attached to any of the services that are currently free, the number of enthusiasts will surely drop. Without the information storm chasers will not be accurately able to find a cell that may be quite severe and possibly tornadic, but undetected by NEXRAD. Sincerely, Tim Jarzombek (Local office: LOT) The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

874 I would like to see the free weather data to be continued to be offered. It gives me a chance to keep track of the weather from my desktop on my computer.

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875 "Thank you for making weather data available free of charge, and free of annoying advertising. I love the always up to date radar maps, and the ability to retrieve data by RSS feeds! When I am at work I have no windows to see what the weather is doing outside, with the RSS feed I get popups through the day to let me know of any warnings. Thanks again! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

876 "I want to continue to have free access to NWS data in all formats (XML + otherwise). Tax payers should not have to "pay twice". I don't care about Accuweather and other "pay" weather services, they need to pay their own way for their meteorology equipment and data and stop leveraging infrastructure that tax payers have paid for their own private interest gain. Similar to the way that coin resellers use "marketing" to sell the public a \$10 roll of uncirculated quarters for \$15 or \$20, even though the same roll of quarters can be bought at a bank for \$10, Accuweather can pull data from "public" sources but NOT restrict the public from pulling it directly themselves from the NWS. They can "sell" their weather services using clever marketing and hopefully provide some "value" that consumers will be willing to pay for. I for one am a weather hobbyist and I enjoy working with NWS data and using the NWS websites and radar data, all paid for with my tax dollars. Keep NWS data free and "open" to all!! Thank you for listening. Ron Bassett, Austin Texas. Feel free to call on me to offer testimony :) -Ron 512-289-4533 The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

877 "I am writing to express my thoughts on the "Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information" at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php> I found that at the link provided at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/> My understanding of the proposed policy is that the NOAA is suggesting making the information created at taxpayer expense more widely available to anyone who wants to access it. However, I am not certain exactly whether this policy proposes to begin charging for information which is currently available for free. For example, this phrase from the proposed policy: "and providing unrestricted access to publicly funded observations, analyses, model results, forecasts, and related information products in a timely manner and at the lowest possible cost to users." uses the term "lowest possible cost to users." I am not clear whether that means that NOAA would begin charging for information which is currently available for free. If it does, then I am opposed to it. If however, it means keeping the existing free material free while the easing of restrictions or the lowering of costs on information that the NOAA currently does not widely disseminate, then I am very much in favor of this plan. While I suspect that the restriction of currently free information may make some slight money for the NOAA, I strongly suspect that it will have a net negative impact on the economy as a whole. I live in Dyer, IN in an area that will occasionally experience violent thunderstorms and tornadoes. They are nowhere near as frequent as other parts of the country, but they do happen. I currently pay a monthly subscription for the Accuweather website to get additional historical information on the weather in my area and to get access to more frequently updated radar data than is available at the public Accuweather site. Dyer is also very near the Illinois border and is served by major media primarily in the Chicago area. When there is severe weather that affects primarily my area, the Chicago media centers do not have information that is as timely as I would like. In addition, on numerous occasions of severe weather in my area, even the Accuweather site is so heavily loaded that often it times out before providing radar images. This is only the case when there is severe weather in my area, so I suspect it is having problems under the excessive load. In June of 2004, I was home with my son when the tornado sirens sounded. I looked outside and the weather did not look terribly bad. I turned on the TV to find that we were under a tornado warning. I tried to get information off of the Accuweather site, but was unable to due to timeout errors. However, upon turning to www.noaa.gov, I was able to see that not only had there been a tornado sited but it

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was due to go through Dyer in 5 minutes and by looking at radar at noaa.gov, I could see that we were about to receive some truly nasty weather. My son and I went to the basement. No tornado hit our area, but we could hear some strong winds, lightning and some other very strange noise. After things had died down, we came up to see an incredible amount of hail had fallen. In fact, my insurance company ended up paying to replace my roof and two sides of vinyl siding due to hail damage to the tune of over \$12,000 dollars. I made the decision to go to my basement based upon timely information I was only able to get from the NOAA website. Of course, had I not gone to the basement, nothing would have happened to me. However, if the new policy would mean that I were unable to get that timely information from the NOAA online, then I will be very active in asking my congressional representatives why this change were made. Again, if however, this new policy means a wider dissemination of information and free or reduced cost to what is available now, then I wholeheartedly support that as a good use of government resources, and as a technology worker, I can easily envisage the value add that others could create by post-processing raw data will likely provide a wider plus to the economy than the current situation provides--both in terms of the resulting academic research and findings as well as in terms of services that can be provided to consumers. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

878 "As long as the weather service is funded by public \$\$, any and all enhancements should be made available to the public without additional charge. Commercial use of the data should be charged at commercial rates. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/>"

879 Publishing the data in an open format would allow many uses today by the casual person. I check my local weather forecast using my TV that is connected to a Linux Server. Leaving this data open will promote innovation and create new products and markets we have not thought of yet. Who would have guessed five or ten years ago that a server could be cheap enough to dedicate to watching TV and checking the weather?

880 "I volunteer for several organizations that involve being outdoors. As a volunteer, I don't get paid for any of my time that I provide as a service to the community. I always appreciate having access to accurate weather forecasting both online and by radio so as to provide for my safety and the safety of those I am volunteering to help. Having to pay for weather services only adds to the expense that I as well as many others volunteers accrue in our efforts to provide free safety services to others. Thank you. The referring webpage:"

881 My federal income taxes contribute to the NWS's budget. I refuse to pay a third party leech for weather forecasts I've already paid for.

882 "Dear Sir/Madam I would like to add my voice to those in favour of retaining free weather information on the internet. The weather that occurs over the USA is not confined to that part of the world, but influences many other countries too. These countries, where they are able, contribute to gathering information on ""the weather"" as a global alliance. To charge for this information will serve to alienate the USA from this positive international alliance. Think Globally!..you are part of it! The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

883 "I support the changes recommended by the NRC report ""Fair weather: Effective Partnerships in Weather and Climate Services. The NWS is supported through taxes. The data collected by this excellent public service should be freely accessible to all government, academic and private entities. Examination of the data by all sectors will provide the maximum benefit to society. The NRC recommended review of data processes and formatting will also aid in understanding. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

884 "To whom it may concern, Barry Myers has urged readers to call for restrictions on the proposed policy of providing NOAA weather data online free for a variety of uses. I am in full agreement with the proposed policy, and believe that Mr. Myers' opportunistic claims must be met with rebuttal. The information provided by the NOAA is a public service that can and should be open to any citizen and entrepreneur for their personal use. It is in the public interest to create space for as much innovation and dissemination of information as important as that provided by the NOAA. The proposed policy is a sound and heartening move. It would be a shame if a few large companies which don't want competition derailed the process. Thanks for you time, David Eads The Invisible Institute Chicago, IL The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

885 "All weather data collected by our government, and by NOAA/NWS in particular, should be made freely available. As the people who make up the NWS know, this information - current and past - is extremely important and making it available allows myriad people with myriad reasons to access data that they have already funded with their taxes. Researchers, businesspeople, teachers, farmers, weather buffs and people who simply want to know the weather of their area have genuine need for the data collected by the National weather Service. The web site of the NWS is a perfect venue for this, since internet access is available to most of the people of this country. Efforts like those of Accuweather's Barry Myers to keep access limited are not only hard-hearted and short-sighted, but they are shrewd and self-serving. As a citizen, he should have access to this information, but he should have no more than anyone else. His energies to restrict information are intended for one thing: to keep his company from having to do the work that it should. His efforts are intended to limit the ways in which people can get weather information. More to the point, he wants people to have to pay for their information. Seeing that they have already done so with their tax dollars, this effort is malicious. Though it may be obscured by the rhetoric of the ""free market"" or of ""unfair practices"" or whatever by the NWS, his intentions are to keep from the people of the U.S. information that they have already paid for so that he and other people in his line of business may gain as those people are pushed to his outlet. I support the effort to make all NWS weather information freely available and I applaud those who work to make this happen. Thank you, Michael J. King The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

886 "I've only recently learned about the proposed policy. After reading the policy I'm concerned that this weather information may no longer be freely available. How can you put a price on accurate weather forecasting? I'm an internet and software developer.. I'm currently writing a web application that uses NWS data to provide a small snapshot of current conditions and forecasts for the user. This application is currently being released for free.. I make no money by writing this software. But does that mean that I shouldn't be allowed to incorporate accurate data in my application without paying massive fees? The private sector just wants the data for themselves. So - if I, ""Joe Consumer,"" want to know the weather I have to do one of the following: * what I did back in the 80's (and prior) and turn on the TV at 6 o'clock and watch commercial after commercial * visit the private sector websites and dig through annoying popup ads * pay for an application to provide this information So tell me - how can you put a

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price on the weather? Millions of dollars are spent every year trying to inform the people of weather alerts, tornados, hurricanes, etc. What better way than to provide this information freely on your website (which you do, and looks great if I might add), and to support web services to allow non-profit web and application developers to show this invaluable and accurate information. Just provide the data - free. Please. If I interpreted your proposed policy incorrectly and this comment makes no sense. Just ignore me :) The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

887 "I believe it is very important that weather, climate, and related environmental information be made freely available to the public. This information should be made available in standard open formats that can be accessed using free software. Regards, Maurice Piller Knoxville, TN The referring webpage:

<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

888 NOAA is one of the Federal Agencies that provide a useful service for my tax dollars. NOAA must continue to provide free standard XML data feeds for digital information. I have already paid for that information with my taxes. I should be able to get it without paying special interest groups an additional fee. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

889 "I applaud the NWS for doing ""The right thing"" in adopting open, standards-based dissemination of meteorological information for ALL people, public, private, and academic. As the NWS is funded through taxpayer dollars, I believe it is my right as a public citizen, to be able to retrieve by whatever means the information gathered by the Service. I see no point (other than greed) in specializing ""feeds"" for private uses, or crippling information available to individuals, forcing them to pay for the information from a private company. My tax dollars pay for the NWS, and I should be able to get the fruit of this Service without further payment. Thank you for your great Service! J. Frazer Chantilly, VA The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

890 "Dear NOAA, I live on an island in the Puget Sound and rely on NOAA forecasts to determine travel and severe weather preparations. Recently I read that private interests, such as AcuWeather want exclusive, private access to NOAA weather info. I urge NOAA to keep all of its weather data in the current, real-time (or as close as is feasible), public domain. We have already paid for this service. I don't want to be pressured to rely on a pay-for-view service when I have already paid a govt. agency for a valuable service. The private sector may repackage the data as they see fit, but keep the NOAA weather data entirely public. It is what we have paid for and it is what NOAA has done an excellent job of so far. Sincerely, Will Lockwood The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

891 ""Open information dissemination: NWS recognizes that open and unrestricted dissemination of high quality publicly funded information, as appropriate and within resource constraints, is good policy and is the law."" (If I understand it correctly, I like this part, especially) :] I'm an American taxpayer who both enjoys and appreciates the various weather services that are driven and/or directly provided by the extensive work done by NOAA. I also have been impressed to see that NOAA has continued to find ingenuitive ways to use modern technology such as the Internet to deliver that information to me in a number of forms (such as the experimental NDFD XML access!) that are useful to myself and/or others. Thank you for this value which I expect is funded, at least in part, by my tax money. I hope

that NOAA is able to continue to make this information available to me at no extra expense (plug, plug). Thanks for this and all your work. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

892 Offering NDFD as XML feeds is an excellent way to provide timely weather information to the public and should be continued. For-profit weather forecasting companies have a vested interest in raising the barrier to public access of this data in order to sell their products. The NWS is under no obligation to support their needs over that of the public. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

893 "Please keep weather information free, and keep the XML format available!"

894 "It isn't clear to me what has changed in the policy. My only real concern here is that all data collected using government money is provided freely to the public in documented standards which allow anonymous access to data. I recognize the need for the commercial sector to provide products using this information and that is fine and should be encouraged; however, no provisions should be made which would require an individual to purchase commercial services to be able to access the data. I would expect Open Source projects to support utilization of the data and commercial products to support utilization of the data in some form which supports their enterprise (e.g., subscription based, ad-based, etc.). The key is that while NOAA should enable support by commercial parties, this should not be funded by government and should not be a focus of the government but no effort should be made to prevent it, and to the extent possible, open standards should be designed to easily support commercial (and academic) applications. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

895 "I'll be honest, I don't fully understand the proposed policy. But as I understand it, the net result could be a decrease in the information available at no additional charge to the public via the internet if this proposed policy change is not handled correctly. Without the proper understanding, I can only urge that whatever changes are made, if any, do nothing to limit, or cause additional charges for, the information currently available to the public from the National Weather Service. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

896 "I applaud the decision of the NOAA to provide climatological data to the public in data formats suitable for easy processing using current network technologies, such as XML and SOAP. Facilitating the easy utilization of weather data without intervening barriers is consistent with tax-payer funded research and allows the benefits to flow to all citizens with any sort of communications access. I encourage further exploration of public information dissemination systems to promote timely and wise response to changing weather. Keeping the public fully and freely informed with easy to use data services helps reduce personal and property risks as well as FEMA expense, resulting in savings on insurance claims and tax payer expense. Lives can be saved by keeping this information free. I oppose any attempt by commercial and private interests to get between tax payers and the NOAA data to try and 'monetize' and 'privatize' this data. The risk of property damage and people injured or even dying because they can't afford 'good' weather data is ridiculous when the data is developed on taxpayer funded systems. Based on the new policy intended for June 30, I would urge the NOAA be held up and defended vigorously as a model of how information developed by the government should be made

available to the funding public. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

897 I support your proposed policy. The data collected via taxpayer funded activities should be freely available to the taxpayers. Thank you. --Greg Ballinger The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

898 "Dear Sirs, ""For reasons of commerce, national security, and personal safety, NOAA must gather significant amounts of weather data. Furthermore, to ensure that products like severe weather statements can be issued accurately, the organization must provide data such as current conditions and forecasts."" ""An artificial scarcity of data does nothing to help the people paying for it via their taxes. It only serves to help the bottom lines of a few large corporations whose only responsibilities are to themselves, not the citizens of the United States."" ""The services that are currently ""experimental"" or whose ultimate availability is unknown due to pressure from certain members of the Commercial weather Industry should become permanently and freely available to anyone wishing access to it."" ""Back when data dissemination costs were high, it made sense to limit the NWS role in giving data to the public. By allowing only a few organizations to have access to the data and allowing them to sell it, those organization would pay the rather high costs to ensure the data was, in fact, available."" ""However, now that communication costs are so low, such a method makes no sense."" ""A recent letter from Barry Myers to members of the Commercial weather Industry pleading for them to come out against the NWS Partnership Policy, he stated: "" """"Industries grow where risk is controllable or predictable. The present path of the NWS- controlled federal policy introduces greater risk to the private sector. Not less."" "" ""In this case, he is partially right."" ""However, the risk he is actually talking about is the ability for large commercial weather organizations to maintain a stranglehold on the sector."" ""You see, the products that NOAA currently offer, themselves, pose no threat to Accuweather or other large organizations. It is just data, and most people don't want to look at coded data. They want an end product."" ""By allowing data to flow freely to the public, the NWS ENCOURAGES competition to the incumbents. Barriers that prevented bright entrepreneurs from pushing new services are greatly reduced and a new era of value-added products will be born."" ""To this end, I see no alternative but for NOAA to provide the services it currently does in a permanent, free fashion as well as to develop other offerings that benefit the taxpayers as it sees fit."" The above statement (in it's entirety) was quoted from a website called Slashdot, but it expresses my view entirely. The US taxpayers pay for this data. There is absolutely no reason for us to have to pay for it a second time other than to support the bottom line of a commercial interest. This would be inexcusable. Sincerely, Charles G. Hopkins 30 Verona Lane Foothill Ranch, CA 92610-1913 The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

899 "NOAA's proposed policy makes a lot of sense to me. It isn't clear to me why I should have to pay for teh weather data twice which is what I would be doing if the data wasn't available in newer formats. It would no more make sense to have religious services done in Latin so that there could be some locals employed interpreting. Thanks, Nitin The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

900 My tax money pays for the NWS... why should I have to pay twice for the information to be delivered to me? I am Against having private firms being the gatekeeper between the NWS and myself and charging me for something I already paid for. WHAT KIND OF SCAM IS THIS ANYWAY? The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>

901 "When Accu-weather establishes their own network of thousands of automated and manned data collection stations, when they launch their own weather satellites, when they buy some of the world's fastest supercomputers and write global weather modelling software for them, when they set up hundreds of radar stations, and when they get a time machine to gather weather records from a hundred years before the company was founded, then they might have the right to deny information critical to life, safety, and livelihood to anyone other than their paying customers."

902 "As a tax payer, I've already payed for this data to be collected. It would be double dipping if I had to pay for it again. I wholeheartedly support a move toward more open access to tax-payer funded data collection. Just give me raw data. Let the private sector make money from advertising and up-selling the data. --DH
The referring webpage:"

903 "I urge the ccomission to distribute data collected by the NOAA in as open a manner as possible .. after all, the taxpayers paid for it and the results/rewards should be freely available to them. The referring webpage:"

904 "Dear NOAA folks. Thank you for the service you provide. Like I have said a thousand times, there is only one source of weather data for people like myself that do not live in a highly populated (or populated in general) area of the country. That would be NOAA. Our local TV stations could certainly care less. Living to the east of the nearest TV station, we find that we are all but ignored once a storm has passed the town in which that TV station is located. The only source of information at that point is NOAA. We know who we can count on. That said I'd also like to say that I'd rather not have to pay for weather data twice, since NOAA is funded by our taxes. The UML data gathered by NOAA has already been paid for by the tax payers. We shouldn't have to pay a private company for access to the same data we've already paid for. Again, thank you for the service you provide. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

905 "Dear Sirs, In response to the proposed changes to the existing Partnership Policy, I am in favor of all proposed changes. The proposed changes would allow the public more access to what our tax dollars are already paying for. It would allow improved access to metrological data used by amateur weather enthusiast (such as myself) and by educators to further the advancement of weather sciences. And, would further improve the accuracy of weather prediction to ensure the protection of people's lives and property. In response to the commercial weather entities, I would suggest that they use the same data to refine their own weather forecast products that they present to the public. The use of their own data collection instruments in combination with any data acquired via the open format data from NOAA/NWS should only make their products more valuable and accurate. Any other response to the open availability of the same data would indicate that they are not capable of making accurate predictions in the first place, of which any arguments should be summarily dismissed. I look forward to the every increasing availability to tools, data, and resources that NOAA/NWS provide. Again I reiterate that it is only normal that this data be made publicly available as it is produced with public funding. Any less would be unacceptable. Thank you for the quality services that NOAA/NWS continue to provide. I am grateful for the availability of the data and look forward to passing my knowledge of the use of that data to my children and encouraging the next generation of weather enthusiast. Best Regards, Jay Campbell
12085 Cheroy Woods Ct. Ashland, VA 23005 (804) 752-6688 Jay.Campbell@Jade-Ent.com
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

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906 I don't beleive it's not fair to the american taxpayer to have to pay for the weather twice.

907 Please supply weather information digitally to all that want it. Do not limit the information to corporations that will end up charging for the service. Please keep and extend the National Digital Forecast Database XML web Service. Free weather information on the Internet benefits millions of people every day. Thank you The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

908 "My taxes pay for the development of this information and I see no reason at all that the government should not make the distribution of this infromation as free and easy as possible. While private organinations may produce similar information, they entered into this business with open eyes and full knowledge that the government produced and released similar information as their business. This is also a public safety issue, which is why the government got into producing this information in the first place. The government has an obligation to provide this as widely as possible with few if any limitiations."

909 "As an academic and an ordinary citizen, I fully support and encourage a policy of openness with regards to weather data. I would certainly be interested in seeing more data available, especially in a simple, standardized format like xml. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

910 i would like you to continue XML data feeds for free. nobody would pay for it otherwise. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=nested&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

911 "I think that the proposed policy should be approved. It is important that publicly-funded data be shared with the public. While the private sector is an important part of the dissemination of weather information and forecasts, it should not have priority access to NWS information. The private sector can continue to provide value-add services. The data direct from NWS is not useful to all individuals directly, but it should be available to those who can."

912 "#1 Thanks for doing such a great job. As Mark Twain once said, ""Everyone talks about the weather, but no one does anything about it."" Your agency is doing something about it, from preventing sunburn to giving information that potentially saves lives. #2 If the Commercial weather Industry wants to add value to information from the NWS and make money from it, fine. However, since my tax dollars pay for the NOAA and the National Weather Service, I feel perfectly entitled to having raw data in XML format from NWS. If I'm too lazy to make it useful, I'll pay a weather information provider to do the work to make it readable information. I should have the choice, however. Thank you for listening. Sincerely, Kevin Meagher meagher@charter.net The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org>"

913 "The new policy sounds excellent. As a basic principal, information produced with tax money should be provided at the cost of distribution to the public. On the internet, that cost is very small. Another basic principal is that information should always be distributed in an open format. Use of closed formats

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reduces the utility of information. There should be no government-supported filter of government-developed information. If enterprise is to make money from such information, they should do so by adding value (interpretation, presentation) to the information, rather than being paid for just passing it on. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/>"

914 "Gentlebeings: This is very simple. We've already paid you fine folks once to forecast the weather for us, and you do a fine job. We don't to be paying some other company again to digest your perfectly good data in to iconic pablum for the masses to digest. Frankly, as a weather buff for the last thirty years, the part of your data I find most enlightening is the discussion, which will likely be eliminated from any data feed made publicly available by corporate gatekeepers. NOAA data is taxpayer data. The taxpayers should have unrestricted free access to the data, in an open standards-based format. End of story. Keep up the good work. The referring webpage:"

915 "It's really pretty simple. My tax dollars pay for the service, I should not have to pay a subscription to get the information. The only thing that would be worth paying extra for would be if it improved the synthetic voice on NOAA radio. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

916 I strongly support the NWS making information collected at tax payer expense freely available in a variety of usefull formats. Thank you. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

917 "If the collection of weather data is funded by tax money, it should be freely available in a non-proprietary format to anyone who wants it. If the cost of providing real-time feeds is too high, then users could be asked to pay a nominal fee. Any other position is easily reducible to a corrupt corporate handout."

918 I personally think that we (taxpayers) pay the NWS bill. I think any and all data that is gained should be public information and we shouldn't have to rely on any third party to feed us weather. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

919 "Dear Sir, Please do not stop allowing weather data to be distributed in modern, easily accessible XML format. Thank you, -Jeff Connelly The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/comments.pl?sid=112544&threshold=5&mode=nested&commentsort=3&op=Change>"

920 I believe that weather data paid for by taxpayer dollars should be made available at no additional charge to all taxpayers.

921 "NOAA/NWS should continue to provide data and graphical products for free. As taxpayers, the public should not have to pay twice for data that is readily available for free from weather.gov and other NOAA/NWS sites. The referring

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webpage: <http://slashdot.org/index.pl>"

922 "Dear Sirs, I would like to express my desire, as a taxpayer, to receive open standards based weather reports and data from the NWS via the Internet. It concerns me greatly that there is a potential for the NWS to restrict public access to vital weather information, yet NWS would provide it to commercial entities to sell to the public. As a taxpayer I would find it unacceptable for my tax dollars to pay for NOAA and NWS data collection and to have that data given to 3rd party companies only, with no provisions for public access to the data. I concern my tax dollars to have paid for this data, so the data needs to be put into the public domain. Weather data is vital to many people's lives. Restricting this data and potentially forcing the public to purchase access through a commercial web site sounds too much like paying twice (once via taxes, once via subscription) for the same data. I would expect the NOAA & NWS to be working on behalf of consumers and the general public. If the vote is made in favor of privatization of this data, I, and many citizens, will have no choice but to work to defeat this ruling and if necessary reduce the public funds allocated to the NOAA & NWS, and have funds re-allocated to open data projects. Sincerely, Andrew Gillham The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

923 "I am writing today, as a private citizen, to voice my support for NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. I agree most strongly with the sentiment expressed in the Policy that ""the economic benefits to society are maximized when government information is available in a timely and equitable manner to all."" I currently rely on services such as weather Radio and the meteorological data available via the National Weather Service in order to protect myself and my property from weather dangers, such as tornadoes. I also recognize the importance of NOAA's data in conducting research which allows weather to be more fully understood and predicted. With the growth of the internet as an important tool for private citizens as well as researchers, the continued and official availability of weather and climate data via the internet is welcome news for the public as a whole. In short, I feel that the proposed Policy takes the above into proper consideration and should be both accepted for the NWS and expanded as a general information policy for NOAA programs in which public or research interest in data may be present. This Policy will act in the public interest. Sincerely, Dan Bryant dbryant@purdue.edu The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

924 "Based upon information received via a news story on a prominent website today, I was led to believe that certain private sector companies in the business of SELLING weather data to the general public received from the NWS are lobbying to shut down the public data feeds of weather data. Given the fact that we (those of us that pay taxes at least) are already paying for this work and the information it generates, we should not have to pay for it again nor be required to provide a subsidy to the ""weather corporations"" so they can profit from it directly. Failure to release the data collected by the NWS to the general public free of charge is tantamount to taxation without representation. In closing, As a taxpayer it is my STRONG feeling that NOAA/NWS should continue to provide its information (such as XML feeds and NDFD) to the general public free of charge. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org>"

925 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public."

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926 "I thank you for soliciting feedback before making a decision. My preference is to continue making current and historical weather data available to everyone in published and accessible data formats. Private industry may provide value-added services based on this data, but the public is entitled to the same access at the same time if they want to use raw data. Regards, Cliff Bennett Napa, CA The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

927 "I fully support NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. I pay for correct weather information through the use of my tax dollars. Wealthy business owners such as Barry Myers would have you believe otherwise."

928 "It is my belief that the proposed policy is basically the right thing to do, and putting this information on the web in easy to use formats is the smart way to go. Further, I believe commercial weather providers should be required to state who provided forecasts, so that users are in a position to evaluate whether the provider is actually providing any real service, or simply re-packaging government work product. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

929 "Do not cave in to the demands of the PWS. We should not have to pay for our weather data twice, nor should innovation be stopped because of closed formats. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

930 "Resend of email: Hello. I want to add my enthusiastic support for NOAA's new Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. I am pleased to see the effort being made to disseminate the fruits of American's tax dollar investments. I fear the commercial pressures will attempt to stifle what they perceive as competition. NOAA (and the NWS) have been working long and hard, decades before other popular services, to 'get the word out' on the weather using the then best means possible. It is only natural that the Internet (another fruit of tax dollars!) (and XML) be exploited on behalf of the citizens. I look forward to future positive developments. Armando P Stettner Woodinville, Washington. The referring webpage:"

931 "I applaud the use of newer technologies, such as RSS/XML (and am going to find out how I can use this effectively). I'm also going to help to alert others of these data products - while they last. As a private citizen, I hope that NOAA continues to make geophysical data - observations, statistics, and forecasts - freely accessible. Forcing us to purchase government collected weather data through partner organizations who intend to profit on what is otherwise free is institutional piracy. If I were to ask what the weather is outside and the forecast for the next day, I'd look it up on my computer. I can do this at will, at my convenience, simply by looking at or interacting with my menu bar. If companies are allowed to choke the flow of data so that they can enforce a data toll and profit by the stranglehold, I'll be limited to television station reports, broadcast websites, newspapers and personal observations, since there's no way I'm going to pay for it any more than I already have through taxes. Companies who would benefit from remarketing weather data can do so now by offering value added service to the existing data. I'm all for letting them make a profit from information services. But selling me the previously free information about the air I breathe is only one step removed from trying to sell me the air that I now breathe for free. Please don't

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let them strip us of currently available information sources from NOAA, and let their shortsighted lack of technological innovation become an ersatz source of revenue. Sincerely, Joy Richards Walnut Creek, California The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

932 Please keep the information for the national weather service moving in a progressive and open manner. Do not let the greed of othe companies repress our informational growth. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

933 "Please implement the proposed policy as stated. It is fair, in the national interest and why we have a National weather Service. Go with it. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

934 "I do not believe that internet users, or any other users should have to pay for weather information. I believe that if information can be supplied freely then it should be free of charge. Enough money is already made out of the supply of weather data to the broadcast media. Leave us a few crumbs of free information, please! Chris The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

935 "I have recently heard and read of discussion to alter the publicly available information which you currently make available on your web site. Specifically, in reference to a proposal to repeal the 1991 Public Private Partnership policy. This information is very valuable to the public, such as myself. I personally visit your website for information regarding upcoming storms, travel conditions, and satelite images. From what I have heard and read, repealing the policy would reduce or remove the availability of that information from your website, yet still provide it to corporations. Private companies and wealthy organizations should not be the sole benefactor of your (very valuable) government-generated information; the National weather Service is not funded by those wealthy organizations, but by every taxpayer and the general public, like myself. Documents generated by federal government offices fall under specific publishing rules, such as the lack of copyright on published information, because they are generated by public funds for public benefit. Everything the NWS produces, and the paychecks of staff members, are funded by the taxes of every citizen of the nation. As such, the information generated belongs to the public. If corporations wish to provide additional services, that is their privelage; presently, they offer many valuable services and are a thriving industry. However, the proposal would essentially convert the NWS from a public benefit into a publicly-funded research house and revenue generator for private business, and additionally reduce or eliminate any usable public interface. Forcing the public to pay a second time for the information, either through external sources or through your site, is not appropriate. Please continue to make available at no cost on your web site the obvervation images, forcasts, safety and weather alerts, and other information. As my tax money helped to generate the data and pay for the services and work, I should be allowed access to it in a readily usable form, such as your web site. If your public office produces information in a format that is not readily usable to interested parties, then it is of no use to the public. I am an interested party, and I currently make use of your data. Repealing your policy would do financial harm to me if I become required to pay (a second time) for usable access to the data. Additionally, I am writing my congressional representatives asking them to consider making the earlier policy into a minimum required standard of public availability. Sincerly, Bryan wagstaff. bryanw@xmission.com The referring webpage:"

936 "My tax dollars already pay for the services provided by NOAA. I don't want to pay twice to get this information. If services like Acuweather get their way, that's what I would have to do. Firms like Acuweather should be adding real value to their services. They shouldn't just re-sell the information provided by a government agency. The referring webpage:"

937 "I strongly oppose your cutting out web casts of weather data. this is a function supported by my tax dollars. I resent your suggestion of caving in to avaricious business interests to exploit your services at citizen expense. That this would be occurring smells strongly of politics of big business taking over government function at whatever added cost to the consumer. Please stand up to these selfish entities and do not be spineless in your activities. yours, bw The referring webpage:"

938 "This regards the policy on internet publication of weather data that is currently being revised. The NWS is a taxpayer-funded organization and should seek to provide maximum freedom of information to the public on collected and analyzed weather data. The technology to publish this information is available free via RSS feeds or metadata publishing systems and using free and open data formats such as XML. Private companies object to the NWS releasing free information because they would like taxpayers to pay for weather information twice - once to fund the NWS and again to actually get the information through a private company. This is wrong - the NWS should release information freely since the code to do so is essentially zero after some initial setup. Private companies can still develop software to better present this information, but the information should be free for all. Taxpayers should not have to pay for access to information that they have paid to be collected. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

939 Excellent. Reads like it should make a great service even better. Thanks. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

940 ""National Weather Service, working together to save lives"" ... but you must pay in order to get that (life saving) information? sounds a bit harsh to say the least."

941 "That is a great idea. Open and clearly defined standards should bring great benefits to everybody. I'm personally using free, open source weather forecast app (wmWeather), and in my opinion formalizing open formats of data exchange will help making them better tools."

942 "come one ppl, think about free software is the future, not commercial mind locking approach !"

943 It would seem that your data is funded by public funds so your data is required to be accessible by the public. Push the policy forward. The referring webpage:

944 I fully support the new Proposed Policy regarding posting of information to the internet. The same should be done with charts. The referring webpage:

<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

945 "I do hope we are able to continue an open XML format of the weather data and to avoid locking up weather information behind pay schemes and less accessible formats. Seeing as my tax dollars help finance the initial gathering of this information, I see no reason why I should have to pay for this information to arrive at my desktop. I personally spend several years working on projects for the NOAA and fully support their efforts. I also believe that the public visibility of what NOAA is able to provide, through their website, is invaluable PR to provide evidence to the public of what they are paying for (your tax dollars at work). I have been nothing but impressed for years at the quality of service of the NOAA websites and personally find them entirely superior to their commercial counterparts. I do hope you are able to continue your excellent work! The referring webpage:
[http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627&mode="](http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627&mode=)

946 "Pay for weather forecasts? That sounds illegal and unethical! Should I start to pay for televised forecasts as well? I can tell you this, you won't stop the weather from being out on the net no matter what. You can stop the feeds, forecasts, and everything else...but someone somewhere will throw up an open source news site or perhaps even start their own weather service. It's pathetic how people try to make a buck everywhere... The referring webpage:"

947 "I agree with the recommendations of the NRC and with the concept that NOAA and the National Weather Service is a government agency. Its primary responsibility is to the American taxpayer, not to private sector weather organizations. NOAA should provide all of its data to the Internet in standard, accessible formats without regard to the interests of private companies."

948 Please continue to make weather data available to the general public without fee.

949 "This is an idea whos time has come! Government services and products paid for by tax dollars being given to the taxpayers without additional ""charges""
Thanks The referring webpage:"

950 "I would like to say that I hope the weather data and any xml feeds stay free and in an open format and continue to open up more information. I like to be able to check weather data straight from the source. Being a ham radio operator, it comes in very handy to know if major weather disruptions are on the way so that I can get ready in case of emergencies. Especially in my area of Ohio, right next to Xenia. Also, seeing as Federal tax dollars pay for a healthy chunk of the infrastructure, I would think that the NOAA would put the needs and wants of the people over the needs and wants of commercial entities and groups. But that's just my thoughts. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

951 "I strongly support the proposed policy, especially the provision for unrestricted public access to data collected at public expense. If private-sector weather forecasting companies can't survive by adding value to government data, then they don't deserve to survive. The NOAA and NWS should serve the public interest,

not the interest of private companies at the expense of the public interest.
Thanks, Peter Suber peters@earlham.edu The referring webpage:"

952 "Access to weather information should remain free to the general public and should not be handed over to a private agency for them to charge us for access. why is this even being considered? I am completely against it and as a tax paying, registered voter I say no. Don't do it. The referring webpage:
<http://solonor.com/blogger.html>"

953 I think the new policy looks pretty

954 "I am in total agreement with implementing the more open policy regarding weather data. More specifically, the I agree with: ""The NWS should replace its 1991 public-private partnership policy with a policy that defines processes for making decisions on products, technologies, and services, rather than rigidly defining the roles of the NWS and the private sector."" This information has already been paid for with Tax Dollars, why should I (or anyone for that matter) have to pay for it again? -jim ryan The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627>"

955 "The NOAA serves a vital role in gathering and disseminating weather information, and is a superb resource for many organizations and the public at large. There are rumors that commercial organizations are pressuring the NOAA to limit the data distributed directly to the public; I strongly encourage you to resist such pressure. Limiting the distribution of NOAA weather data to that which commercial services choose to distribute, and limiting access to that data to those interfaces these services choose to support, would significantly limit the availability of weather information. Hobbyists, students, and others with more technical interests than the average member of the public would be particularly inconvenienced, because the commercial incentive to support these users is not there."

956 Please keep weather data free and open to the public. Do not allow special interests such as the CWSA to restrict this data.

957 is this true????
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99> i think your new idea is terrible. i would never support you new plan to start charging for weather information. i will just look out side if every weather group start charging for their service online. or i will just turn on the tv to the weather channel and get the weather. everyone already pays to get weather on their cable or dish tv ... no one will support 'pay-for-weather' online. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627>

958 "I would like to express my support for the adoption of the new policy. As a private pilot, sailor, and weather buff access to good data is of great interest to me. I also feel that open access to data will better facilitate education and research purposes. Thank you for your time and concern. Sincerely, Don Read The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&ti>"

959 "I have just read over your proposed policy change, as well as Barry Meyer's response, available at this address: http://www.weatherindustry.org/BARRYMYERS-AMS-0318_04.doc . I must say that I cannot possibly disagree with Mr. Meyer more. The NOAA is a publicly funded institution providing data that could never possibly contain anything that would be classified. Accordingly, I am of the firm belief that any data collected by the NOAA should be made available for public (i.e. the general population, not merely other agencies) as soon as is practicable, in whatever format is easiest for the public to consume. Mr. Meyer, and for that matter, the rest of the private weather sector, need to realize that they should never be the sole beneficiaries of the collective tax dollars spent each year by the U.S. in providing such a vitally important service. I am tempted to make the comparison of the difficulties that the RIAA and MPAA are currently having with the digital revolution. Mr. Meyer and the PWS need to update their business models, not attempt to change the law. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

960 "I fully support the move to make weather data readily available to the public in an open format that is available free over the internet. Even though I tend to be quite capitalistic in my economic views, it seems to me (a) that geographic and meteorological data tend to be public goods that no private company can justify the price to collect in large-scale, and in any case, the political decision to do this federally already has been made, (b) that the collection of this data is one of the expenditures of public money that really does provide significant bang for the buck, and (c) that once we have paid for this data through our tax money, there is little justification for restricting its dissemination to the benefit of special interests. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

961 Pilots like myself are more likely to access free weather data when planning or executing a trip. Any charge will discourage some from contacting NWS with adverse safety consequences. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/>

962 Pilots like myself are more likely to access free weather data when planning or executing a trip. Any charge will discourage some from contacting NWS with adverse safety consequences. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/>

963 "I think more information made available online is great. I was especially pleased to see you state: ""3. In furtherance of these policies, NWS will carry out activities which contribute to its mission, including collecting and archiving data; ensuring their quality; issuing forecasts, warnings, and advisories; and providing unrestricted access to publicly funded observations, analyses, model results, forecasts, and related information products in a timely manner and at the lowest possible cost to users."" This goes along with the role federal depository libraries play in providing government information. Storing and providing access to archived data is very important to libraries and their users. Your site is very useful and I hope this new policy makes it even more so. Laura Sare Canyon, TX The referring webpage:"

964 "As a taxpayer, I fail to understand how I would benefit from this change. In paying my taxes I have funded the NWS. The data that you collect and publish belongs to all taxpaying Americans. This proposal only serves to reduce the free and

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open government that is already diminishing and force the American people to pay for weather data twice. Once for NWS collection and once for interpretation/filtering by the private sector. This is not acceptable. I will also be mailing my representatives. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

965 "Above all, it is of utmost importance that NWS not be bullied out of doing its job, specifically with regard to forecasts, by private companies focused on profit rather than service."

966 "I will be sending a more complete letter concerning this action today or tomorrow, but I thought I would voice my opinion that if the NWS starts providing this weather data for free on the internet in a customizable and tailored format, then the private weather sector will become extinct in this country. Similar to wal-Mart taking small businesses out of business, the small business in the private weather sector would be significantly harmed and most would go out of business as a result. of course, the difference between wal-Mart and the NWS is that wal-Mart is a private business competing in the world of business, which is the American way and the NWS is a government entity, competing with private American businesses and removing them from developing new technology, providing jobs and thus bringing in more taxes to the government. More to come."

967 "I believe that weather data should be made available in as many, and as open of formats as possible for free (without placing undo burden on the noaa for supporting the formats) This definitely means xml feeds should stay. I Think this is superior because: 1) our tax dollars already pay for the information 2) The nature of the internet is, generally, about the breaking down of false economies based on information restriction. 3) Any economic gain to a few companies from restricted weather data is vastly outweighed by the economic gain to the country as a whole from everyone being better able to plan their business based on weather. This is true even discounting non-economic effects. Ben The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

968 "Making weather data available on the internet in open formats is critical to fostering academic research. Additionally, as a US citizen and taxpayer, I feel that I have paid for this information and it should be made available to me. Please continue to provide the new XML data feeds, and don't restrict public information to a few corporations (like Accuweather). Thank you The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/>"

969 "The various weather products currently supplied by NOAA and NWS, including radio, FAX and Internet services play a vital role in ensuring the safety of U.S. citizens, and especially mariners. These are totally appropriate services for government agencies to supply, funded by tax revenue. You are doing an outstanding job! Please continue to supply and enhance these services. Walter Scrivens Delray Beach, FL The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

970 "I feel that this proposal is excellent and will benefit many people and organizations. The NWS should disregard opposition to this proposal by commercial entities. These companies fear that this will cost them profits. However the fact

is, the average private citizen does not have the technical ability to make use of the data and will be more willing to pay Accuweather, etc for ""dumbed down"" and ""pretty graphics"". I say go ahead with this proposal, and make the data easily available, it's going to benefit Meteorology schools (like FSU!), amateur and pro meteorologists, skywarn spotters, aviators, mariners, and anyone who is technically inclined and has a need for high quality weather data. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

971 "Dear Mr. Administrator, The proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information is an excellent example of our government maximizing the value of taxpayers' investment in the National weather Service by enhancing opportunities to use and add subsequent value to the data collected and managed by the NWS. The present policy formalizes non-technical impediments to access of weather data, creating scarcity above and beyond the cost of data transmission incurred by modern information systems. This artificial scarcity is an unreasonable barrier to weather data access that inflates weather data cost. This inflated cost can only be acceptable to well-capitalized government, corporate and individual entities that capture the value of the unreasonably scarce data in the process of providing weather data solutions. We've all heard and been comforted by the phrase ""America, the Land of Opportunity"". The proposed policy embodies that sentiment. The present policy, in this age of the Internet, is an embodiment of the phrase ""America, the Land of Solutions"". I prefer the former. Thank you, Robert Newgard 7195 Brooktree Court San Jose, CA 95120 The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

972 "Keep the information available for free. I do not use this data directly, but perhaps one of the websites which I depend upon for information does. Restricting the flow of data for the sake of corporate greed is ridiculous (Accuweather, etc...). If the data distribution were to be restricted then I would suggest that the NOAA change the catchphrase to be: ""Working together to save lives...for a nominal fee."" Have a GREAT day! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

973 "I feel that if tax dollars pay for a particular data source, then making that data source available to the public for no charge in a reasonable, open data format is just and proper. Keeping such data exchange in proprietary formats and charging fees as a way to support the existence of private commercial entities is not appropriate. If private commercial entities wish to take the data source and add some additional value, and sell that, such a course of action would be perfectly reasonable and is what capitalism is about. Please do not cut off the free, open data source to the public. Thank you."

974 "I support the NWS proposed policy change. Weather data should be freely available in open formats. Private weather services control what kinds of data I have access to, because of this, I do not utilize them. I rely on the NWS and the NOAA website to get the information I need to make better predictions about weather patterns than I find available from private sources. As an outdoorsman, this translates in to better preparation, thus better safety, for myself and those participating in activities with me. If the private sector wanted to provide such information, it would already be making it available. They do not provide access to fundamental weather information. They (private industry) would establish themselves as an holy priesthood to which homage (and commissions) must be paid in an attempt to ensure individual safety. This is wrong! Morally and ethically private weather industry, based on available evidence, is unable to meet an obligation that would make the information provided by the NWS and NOAA unnecessary for public

consumption. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

975 "I am opposed to the distribution of weather data in proprietary formats or otherwise limiting the ability of the public to access weather information. Taxpayers have already paid for the information, and it should not be used solely for profit taking by companies. weather information should be available to all, without having to pay for it twice. The referring webpage:"

976 "For the last several years, I've been using a computer application that parses METAR data, and I recently patched the application to use NOAA's XML data. From a programmer's standpoint, XML is a lot easier to work with. From a US citizen's standpoint, having weather data publicly and freely available is a great benefit. Thanks for providing the service. I appreciate anything I get back from the government in exchange for my tax dollars. The referring webpage:

<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

977 I use your services daily and pay my taxes for the use of your service. Please don't forget who you work for and who pays your check. ME THE TAX PAYER! why should I have to pay for data on the weather when I have already paid you once for it. Too bad that other companies are trying to make money off of a free service and will go broke. The referring webpage:

978 "I am opposed to any actions taken to limit the ability of the public to access weather information. Instant access to weather information is often a matter of safety - not convenience. In addition, my tax dollars have already secured my right to view this information! The referring webpage:"

979 I strongly urge NOAA to oppose any attempt to privatize the distribution of data gathered with taxpayer dollars. The referring webpage:

980 "Please do not force us to pay further for this public information. As a ham radio operator (n8gcp) and provider of volunteer services to the National Weather Service, the information you currently provide for free in the course of your business is vital. Please do not submit to the whining of commercial interests that seek to profit at the expense of the public which is entitled to the information you collect given your function is already paid by us with our tax dollars. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

981 "I would like to voice my support for the NWS, and for its public data policies."

982 "Hello, This comment is in reference to the 1991 policy limiting what NWS data can be accessible through the internet. Please make all NWS data and products available on the internet without reservation or limitation. My tax dollars support the NWS. It is a public service. I do not believe the NWS should restrict

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public access to NWS data in support of commercial weather entities. Restricting access for this purpose amounts to a subsidy without public benefit. Unrestricted public access to NWS data is not be a threat to commercial entities as long as those commercial entities add value. If they don't add value, they shouldn't be in business. Thank you. -Carl Day The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=nested&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

983 "NOAA is a government organization. The data it collects is collected for the use of *all* citizens, not so that a private company can then charge those citizens for access to the data which we as taxpayers have already funded the collection of. Please keep the information which is being collected free and available to anyone who would like to make use of it. Thank you. The referring webpage:"

984 I support the proposed policy. I want to continue to receive free weather information and data from the National Weather Service over the internet. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

985 Many thanks! It would be greatly appreciated to see this data in a more timely manner!

986 Please keep the information provided by the National weather service available free for all uses in formats which are useful to all.

987 NO

988 "Good morning. I'd like to comment on the idea of charging for weather information. If the NOAA was a 100% privately funded company, it would be perfectly acceptable to charge a fee for the information. However, since the NOAA is funded, at least in part, by my tax money, the data should be free at least to all US residents. I believe the NOAA should continue to allow free access to the data that is currently available, and should even be made easier for people to access using scripts. If the partner companies wish to add value to the public data by whatever means they desire, that is fine, let them charge for their added services. It would not be right to let my money contribute to their monopoly on the data. With the technology available today, I can set up my own weather station and have accurate data, and tune my amateur radio receiver to the satellites to get the WEFAX satellite images. Many of the people who are interested in the weather to that level, myself included, would probably do that rather than pay a fee. Even at a \$5 per month rate, it wouldn't take very long to make a weather station pay for itself. Weather data is similar to states and cities offering road condition and construction reports. The raw data is there for those who want to use it, but companies, such as Metro Broadcasting and IdaWest Broadcast Services take that data and present it in a watered-down, more user friendly format. Now if there were charges for the raw data, it would force more people to rely on that watered down version, even if they would rather have the raw data. In short, since the NOAA receives money from my taxes, I should not be charged to take advantage of its services. If you wish to change it to a registered service to prevent non-US Citizens from accessing the free data, that is fine with me. If you wish to charge the foreigners to access the system, great. They are not paying for it already, and are not necessarily entitled to the data. I am paying for it, and have a right to view it. Thanks for your consideration, Jeremy Hall The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org>"

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989 "Thank you for writing a sane policy on releasing NOAA gathered weather information to the public. It has always irked me to no end that Nautical Charts which were paid to be developed by U.S. Citizens were essentially given to Maptech, who then turn around and charge us an arm and a leg for electronic scans of those charts. My understanding is that was illegal as resources developed by the people for the people should be free to the people. Please Do not succumb to special interest groups who are trying to do the same with the information you are gathering. Thank you. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

990 "This comment is in support of the proposed policy. As long as NOAA continues to receive public funding for its data collection activities, citizens should not have to pay for this data. Please continue to provide publicly accessible XML feeds and radar images. To address the CWSA's concerns, if private companies want data provided in a specialized format, NOAA should be encouraged to provide this at a premium for them, as an added source of funding. Consumers can then choose either the data provided by NOAA to all people, or else pay the premium for whatever value added analysis a CWSA member company can provide. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

991 "I just discovered your experimental XML forecast server. I think this is a great public service and is exemplary of good government in action. This will allow small businesses, such as the one that I work for, to directly access the critical information we need to do business. I am already thinking of ways to apply your XML feed to our particular business. To get an idea of the interest in your service, check out the following discussion thread regarding the XML forecast on the popular web forum, slashdot.org. There are almost 300 comments, many of which are relevant and informative. <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251> Thank you for providing this information in a modern, easily accessible format. Stan Larson I/S Director, Freedom Sales & Marketing (813) 855-2671 The referring webpage:

<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=nested&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

992 "Weather.gov is one of the first bookmarks I always add to any browser I'm on. I use the site constantly to check my local weather conditions, and it is the only site I will trust (compared to private sites with a commercial interest). I whole-heartedly support the proposed ""Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information"" and hope to see ""unrestricted access to publicly funded observations, analyses, model results, forecasts, and related information products in a timely manner and at the lowest possible cost to users"" available indefinitely. Barry Myers and other private weather-industry figures are flat-out wrong when they ask you to restrict your publically funded information to proprietary formats and distribution channels. I hope that you will continue to fight these efforts against the public good, and continue to expand your weather services. I want to see the National Weather Service as the dominant place for all weather information, and to drive all current private-sector weather reporting companies out of business, as they do not serve the public good in any way, and are only trying to make money off of distributing this potentially life-saving information. Thank you! The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

993 "I believe that the weather information gathered by government agencies should be available without cost to citizens of the U.S. Please implement the proposed policy on partnerships in the provision of weather, water, climate and related environmental information. The referring webpage:

<http://us.f529.mail.yahoo.com/ym/ShowLetter?Search=&Idx=38&YY=45316&order=up&sort=date&pos=0&view=a&head=b>"

994 "I love the idea that the NOAA will be making weather data available free on the internet. For too long, it has been necessary to pay a 3rd party for weather data that is fed in their format. Now I will be able to pull it when I need it and display it as I need it, not as they want me to see it. Thank You! The referring webpage:"

995 I support the proposed policy. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

996 "This new policy will not create an environment where the private and public sectors can work together, rather this new policy will create an environment where the NWS will compete directly with the private sector with taxpayer's monies. The United State Government should not be competing with the private sector for business in our economy. I oppose this new proposed policy."

997 "As one of many people who pay taxes that support NOAA, I am sure that what I am about to say will ring true for all of us. We should not have to pay for access to data that is collected by the administration. Keep the standard in XML format so we can openly and freely access the data. My home address is 207 Margaret Ave. Petal, MS 39465."

998 "Please continue to make and keep all information possible free to the US public. As a taxpayer, I feel this service has already been paid for by the people, and now we are blessed with an efficient way to broadcast that data to the masses without huge overhead. Thanks for doing a great job of it, and keep up the good work. Again, please keep as much information available as possible. The referring webpage:
<http://www.talkweather.com/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=17513&sid=dcb09a3a1b030f08aefe6fd18478da54>"

999 It seems to me that American tax dollars go to pay for this service which is heavily used by the news media for their own predictions. It is these interests that would take away our access to this information directly from the NWS website so that they can charge America to get it from them. Isn't that a form of double taxation? What gives them the right to charge America for the information that Americans already paid for? If the news media want to charge for weather information they are free to provide some value added service that is worth the extra money. It seems very elitist to me that they should want to be the only ones with access to the information that everyone pays for. The referring webpage:

1000 "The service you provide is not only useful, but I find that it is often a more accurate forecast than the big cable outlets and is always much more reliable than the local forecasters. Also, since we do not have cable, your site is the quickest and most useful weather information that I have access to. Continuing to provide this service is of great importance. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627&mode=>"

1001 "I heartily encourage the unfettered release of weather data to the public.

The public is paying for the NWS, and should be able to reap its benefits directly. If the policy allows the public to obtain weather data without having to work through a third party, I am all for it. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1002 "There are a lot of words in this document. It should be clear and simple. All data collected and archived by NOAA should be freely available to the general public using a combination of the latest technology and formats, and legacy formats, as is most cost effective. Please drop all the words and cut to the chase. Your trust and your charge is supported with public money. Data that is paid for with tax dollars must be publically available to all. Thanks for your attention. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

1003 "I believe that it is the responsibility of an government funded agency to make the results from the funding available to the public in the most direct and useful manner possible. Those who do not should not be funded by the government. Businesses may be built using the output from government funded activites, but this can never serve as a basis for decreasing the work done under by funded organizations nor decrease access to the results by the public. The referring webpage:"

1004 I find the proposed policy agreeable.

1005 I agree with the proposed changes. Publicly produced weather data should be free (and convenient) for the public to use. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627&mode=>

1006 NOAA weather forecasts have been available for free via human-listenable weather-band stations and over marine radio. I see no reason why they should not be free via human-readable format over the internet. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627>

1007 "I have an interest in this issue as a public librarian, municipal official and a sailor. I am strongly in favor of this policy. I would oppose any policy which restricts the use of information gathered at taxpayer expense. I believe that more information is good, more available information is better and more accessible information is best. I particularly like the sentence in the policy that states ""These policies are based on the premise that government information is a valuable national resource, and the economic benefits to society are maximized when government information is available in a timely and equitable manner to all."" I also like the principles stated in section 8 of the policy. They seem to be well thought out extensions of the original premise. I know there are private entities who have opposed this policy but I believe that actions based on such a policy are good uses of the taxpayer dollar and will actively promote public safety and well-being. Making this information widely available also benefits small weather dependent businesses as well as large ones. Congratulations on a well-written easily understandable policy! The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

1008 "I think that all of NOAA's data should be available free via the internet,
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to any user, and I STRONGLY support any move to expand access to this data. IF private companies wish to profit from taxpayer developed programs, then they should pay the full cost of running NOAA every year, or develop their own staff of scientists, their own fleet of aircraft and satellites, etc. Until they're paying for it, restricting access to Wx data only forces innocent Americans to suffer and die in storms they could have avoided. As a sailor, NOAA is one of a few federal agencies that I contact my elected officials about whenever there are funding questions. Taxpayers PAY for all of NOAA's operations, we should get full access to NOAA's work products without having to pay extortion to a 3rd party in order to avoid a hurricane, blizzard, etc. Thanks, ericr The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1009 "I am sure that you get thousands of these, but here is my voice, chimed in to the chorus: As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. This is the basic, concrete, foundation upon which all Government actions MUST be based. We the people are paying for this, we the people demand access to the fruits of our collective labor & tax dollars. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

1010 "Please continue to make all realtime weather data freely available in an XML format. I would like the freedom to choose what software or service to use to monitor the weather based only on features, not on who's paid which license fee. Also, making forecast and historical data available via a similar XML system would allow even more flexibility and freedom to consumers for all their weather-related needs. Thank you for your time. Scott Venier The referring webpage:"

1011 I'm a pilot and would like to have our government feeds to be free for all our citizens.

1012 "I enjoy and use daily the free XML weather feeds your agency provides. I have integrated it into a free non-commercial online community I run for friends spread across the country to see localized weather within the environment. The consistent and reliable data provided by METAR is key to this ability and to the weather abilities of other free software distributed on the net. I hope you will consider keeping this (to my knowledge) tax payer subsidized data available for public use in a convenient and timely manner. Thank you for your time, Randy Beiter North Olmsted, Oh The referring webpage:"

1013 "Please continue to provide forecasts as you do now for the public. It is economically feasible to use the internet as a means of providing all of your information at a very low cost to your department and ultimately US taxpayers. The private sector will always have customers willing to pay for premium services, but as a weather enthusiast I would prefer to get my information from the source. That is what part of my tax dollars go to! Please keep up the GREAT work!! I don't know

what I would do if you prevented access to your forecasting tools. The referring webpage: <http://www.talkweather.com/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=17513>"

1014 "I would urge you to continue distributing NWS information via XML for all to use. It seems that technology allows you to use taxpayer dollars to provide this service at low cost. If vendors wish to <add value> to this information and make a living selling that added value, more power to them. I don't think that it is in the interests of the taxpayer to be forced to purchase the federally funded information from middle men. Provide a standards based least common denominator as a public service and let the market decide if there is innovation to be made subsequently. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1015 "Just a quick note to voice my support for the Fair weather in keeping free, open access to weather data that I, as a tax payer, have paid for. Kind Regards Richard Sawey The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

1016 I think the proposed policy is terrible. You should let the private weather sector provide the products and services - the government should just collect the data. Elaine Root The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

1017 This Proposed Policy seems to be the right thing to do. I like the idea. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

1018 I encourage unrestricted access to wheather information so that any that have interest can access it to better their lives and the lives of those around them. I hope that section 5 of the proposed policy does not mean that private entities will be able to force restricted access to wheather information by the public in general. I encourage writing a clearer definition of what will be restricted and not made openly accessible to the public and only be granted to private entities thereby forcing the public to pay for the services of such entities. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

1019 "Anything the NWS can do to disseminate valuable weather information over the internet is a good thing. I applaud the recent XML service as a magnificent step in the right direction. Limiting public access in favor of private partnerships would be madness, as the service is already bought and paid for by taxpayers. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/>"

1020 "As an agency of the ederal Government all of the information that NOAA has gathered is not copyrightable and belongs in the Public Domain. Except in instances where the data generated is clearly sensitive on National Security grounds it ought be offered to the public on the terms most fair and favorable to all interested parties, current and future. You cannot guess what applications any citizen might design and market. You also ought not favor a particular commercial interest, and as the Charles River Bridge case showed as long ago as the 1830's a vested economic interest has no prior right or claim to public resources. In short, to set specifications for data exchange that are proprietary when open data exchange

formats exist is unwise, and possibly not legal, certainly they would be open to legal challenge. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1021 I think that sounds like a great policy.

1022 ""NWS recognizes that open and unrestricted dissemination of high quality publicly funded information, as appropriate and within resource constraints, is good policy and is the law.""

1023 I support the National Weather Service making weather data more available in more open formats. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

1024 "I am writing to support (and applaud) NOAA's new proposed policy. As a taxpayer who funds the NOAA's laudable mission of collecting weather, water, climate, and related environmental information, I am pleased to know that the data generated will be freely available to those who wish to analyze or present it, rather than restricted in any fashion (and particularly to for-profit weather services). well done."

1025 "This policy makes sense. The policy correctly identifies that the information generated by the NWS is a public service and must therefore be disseminated in an equitable manner and a standard format. Since the administration is publicly funded, and the information gathered does not need to be withheld (for purposes of national security), the general public has a right to this information. Disclaimer: I am a Canadian citizen and do not hold U.S. citizenship. However, good public policy deserves to be praised regardless of where the praise comes from. Dr. Alex Brodsky, Department of Computer Science, University of Toronto, Canada
The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

1026 "I understand commercial interests are against NWS providing free weather data to the public. This is nonsense. I, as a taxpayer, already pay for the services and data through my tax money. Allowing a private interest to control my tax dollars, and public information is a slander on the principles of this country. We are a country that is not founded on the interests of individual corporations, but rather of a country founded on the interests of the citizens. Please ignore Accuweather and other corporate weather groups who's intent is to stick it to the public twice. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627>"

1027 "Have read over the proposed policy to expand information that the NWS puts out. This is greatly needed. As a spotter I come across people all the time who don't understand some of what the weather does. Also I am working on a project to try to get a program together that will allow people on fixed incomes to buy a weather radio reduced or perhaps get one free. For those people living in rural areas with limited access to media reports, having a program to get free weather info is a great need. Some of these more local news organizations or radio or TV stations are small business with limited funds to expand on their own. This will prevent the watered down versions of weather forecasting we see from some of the private weather companies also I feel. The referring webpage:

<http://www.talkweather.com/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?t=17513>"

1028 We appreciate the the informative weather and weather-related information you make available and the valuable public service you provide. That you intend to provide still additional information in the future is a welcome bonus. Efforts seemingly underfoot to stifle your dissemination of the information you provide is undoubtedly being done for selfish reasons that likely only serve the needs of a few. Free access to your weather information to the public should not be denied under any circumstances. The referring webpage:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/com-pac/message/28092>

1029 I would like compliment NOAA for this action. As the National weather service you are doing nothing but good getting the needed information to individuals. The more information we can freely get the better off we will be. I support this move to open up the weather information for public consumption. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

1030 Please keep access to weather data as open and free as possible. It's all about safety. Thanks.

1031 I believe the new policy forms an excellent basis for public access to information from the NWS and look forward to its adoption. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=nested&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>

1032 "I can't speak for the rest of the world, but I for one would like to keep the access to weather information at NOAA free of charge. Thank you for listening. Marvin Elliott The referring webpage:"

1033 "Overall the new policy is good, but the omission of the general public as a ""user class"" in the policy is perplexing. The American people have already paid for the collection / creation of this data with their tax dollars. It should be freely disseminated as widely as possible to the American public. The dissemination of this data in forms more accessible to the general public cannot be construed as competing with commercial enterprise. Commercial enterprise is free to repackage and reinterpret the data as the see fit, just as they do now. As is correctly stated in the new policy, commercial entities alone should not be able to dictate the formats in which the data is communicated, but the most universally useful formats should be determined by all interested parties. I was somewhat disappointed that the study considered corporate, academic, and government users, but did not consider the general public as a ""user"" of this information. This omission should be corrected and someone representing the concerns of the general public should be as involved in the evolution of this policy and determination of yet to be decided aspects (eg. data formats). The referring webpage:
[http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627&mode="](http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627&mode=)

1034 "I have been using data sources from NOAA since the days of using ""finger"" to retrieve forecasts. I find the idea of charging for the information insidious. Perhaps my greatest fear is that the data will somehow be kept from people who really need it, such as those in danger of a flood for example. This is data generated by the government for the public good. Let's not charge for it. The

referring webpage:

<http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627>"

1035 I think the proposed policy is terrible. You should let the private weather sector provide the products and services - the government should just collect the data. Elaine Root The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

1036 "This is a great idea, on the same track as Georgia Navigator (<http://www.georgianavigator.com>). There are some times when the private sector can bring something important to a service, but lets see if there's a need first. Information wants to be free! Plus, we've already paid for it. ;-)"

1037 "Dear Sir or Madam, IÆve just leaned of the discussions around the possibility of replacing the current format of weather information with a more open, XML-based format, as well as the opposition to this plan from such entities as Accuweather. I would like to add my voice to the full support of providing data in easy to use formats like XML. The data gathered by the National weather Service is rightly ðownedö by the tax paying Americans whose support allowed the creation of the Service in the first place, and providing the data in a format that allows direct access, without need of an paid intermediary, is the right thing to do. I would hope that your good example would be considered by our legal and, ironically, tax institutions, where the public which pays for institutions are generally forced to pay again to get full access through private specialists (not that itÆs too likely). Thank you for your continued excellent and professional service. Jacques Speas The referring webpage:"

1038 "As a fellow government agency member (I am an active-duty member of the United States Air Force working for the Defense Information Systems Agency, so one might suppose that this entry should count double), the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the Public Good. Data which has been generated in the past or is being collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be made freely available to the public. This information (indeed any source of information) provides the greatest possible benefit when it is freely available and as widely disseminated as possible. Until now, the NOAA have had a ""non-compete"" policy in place. Given the interest generated at various places on the Internet such as Slashdot (<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>), I have no doubt that the NOAA is currently receiving a great deal of pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and also to withhold data from the public. This is unacceptable to me, both as a fellow government employee and as a taxpayer -- one who eventually and ostensibly subsidizes the NOAA. Business is a worthy and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services. However, the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and to the eventual detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information strictly to benefit certain corporate entities. The public should NOT have to pay a SECOND time for information it has already bought and paid for through through their tax dollars. A fellow DISA employee, who is due to retire in a month, sent a well-written ""fair winds"" message to those of us remaining behind. Among other things, he reminded us to ""Produce a good design, and buy the absolute best services you can with the money you have. Remember folks, we are here to support the WARFIGHTER!"" I would ask that you do the same -- support and provide for the public good, and maintain and use open and published standards to disseminate the information that NOAA collects. Regards, Keith W. Fogle The referring webpage:"

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1039 "I am opposed to any requirement to disseminate data which has been collected using public funds only by way of commercial third party organizations. The policy, as stated, seems to follow this but, I would not like to see commercial entities claiming rights to publicly funded data. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

1040 "I fully support the NOAA in providing to the public, free of charge, all data in a standard and open format. This policy complies with the open nature of our society and the free transfer of information that the internet makes possible (and is founded upon). Please do not allow a small group of commercial agents and profiteers to hijack data that is created as a result of tax dollars at work! Thanks for all your hard work and expertise. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1041 "Hello, As a former meteorologist and long-time sailor I would like to support the repeal of the 1991 Public Private Partnership policy. Access to weather data, records, and forecasts via the internet is an invaluable service to the citizens of this and other countries. Please keep this public funded information accessible to all. thank you. The referring webpage: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/com-pac/message/28092>"

1042 "Please support free, XML, distribution of your weather data for novel uses and encouraging development of weather software for use by everyone in the country. We pay for the NOAA and other services with our ax dollars and I wouldn't appreciate having to pay for it again. The referring webpage:"

1043 "The proposed policy sounds fine, but I would like to reinforce the notion that taxpayers should have free access to NWS ""products"". I'm both an aviator and a boater and would object greatly to having to pay for NWS/NOAA generated data and analyses in order to safely fly and sail. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/>"

1044 "I am in full agreement with the proposed policy enhancements. As a sailor, I rely on every morsel of weather data NOAA makes available, and I look forward to further improvements beyond this proposal. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

1045 "Weather research & forecast has been a free government service for decades. This is an important function of NOAA and all of the National Weather Services. It is a service that the public pays for with its taxes dollars and deserves for the benefit of our country as a whole. To require the distribution of that information in certain selected, and probably proprietary, formats would be a terrible disservice to all of us. Many people depend on the free weather services provided over the radio and internet as their primary source of weather information. If you change your policy to only allow for certain formats, it could negatively effect these free services and hurt those people who need it the most. I applaud your decision to send out the whether information in XML format and I think it's the best thing for all. The referring webpage:"

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1046 I was just recently shown your website and just think it's great. I think I will switch over from weather.com (the cable channel site) because there is so much annoying pop up advertisements and not much information. Please continue to let the public have access to this free information on your site--there's just so much more of it and I really enjoy reading up/seeing weather related stuff from the source and not the 'trickled-down versions' others supply. A lot of websites are resorting to pop-up advertising; eye-candy they think they need to get the public to see. Ugh! Please keep your site pristine and enjoyable and free! Thank you :) The referring webpage:

1047 "I have heard rumor that private sector firms offering weather data would like you to shut down your XML weather feeds. I think that since this is a tax supported sector of our government and I have paid for this information, why should I have to pay to access it again?"

1048 weather data should be freely available on the web and other sources. This is a service we already pay for with our taxes and should remain free. NOAA's new policy will maintain this and potentially expand these information sources. I would ask the for the new policy to be placed into effect. Thank you The referring webpage:

1049 "I am in favor of policies which allow all information and software to be accessible to the public over the Internet. Special services should have suitable fees. The obvious example is physical copies. Less obvious might be a private data link or a subscriber-only server or data link. The same data would be available, but fees could be charged for items such as faster speed or reserved bandwidth. The public services should be expected to behave reasonably. Requests for small amounts of data should tend to be fast. Requests for large data sets can be expected to be slower. Priorities should be available to your staff, for example so short data bursts with storm warnings and tornado locations can be given a high priority. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/>"

1050 "I feel that the policy effectively addresses the issue of public access to scientific data. While some may feel that such data should only be made available to the public through private channels (many of which are not free), it is of key importance that public institutions such as the NOAA continue to provide access to collected scientific data through free and open channels to the interested public as well as private institutions. It only makes sense, for the sake of cost and simplicity on all sides, that the use of open standards for such distribution be implemented. Those that debate such public and open availability should be reminded that it is not the place of the NOAA to create or affirm their business models or affect policies to improve their profits. It is my belief that the policy being considered is a timely and important clarification of the NOAA position on data availability and I for one agree with it wholeheartedly. The referring webpage: [http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627&mode="](http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627&mode=)

1051 "The public is already deceived by scammers about having to pay for what is often free, useful, basic information from the government."

1052 I've heard of concern of the private sector getting a monopoly on your information. Your policy statement seems to deny this monopoly. I agree with your policy as stated. Please do not be swayed otherwise. Please keep up the excellent

work you now do. Thank You. John Healy Citizen of the United States of America
The referring webpage:

1053 "I am a farmer in Central Iowa and depend upon the NWS digital weather information to assist me in management decisions on my operation. I am a tax payer of the United States and feel that the service should continue, regardless of what the private sector says. Dr. Jim Smith The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

1054 "Dear NWS, I operate RIMOFTHEWORLD.net which relies upon National weather Service data to provide residents in my area with highly localized forecasts and warning information. Freely available weather information, forecasts, and warnings is the best tool for ensuring public safety. RIMOFTHEWORLD.net serves the mountain communities of Southern California which were ravaged by the wildfires last fall. Following the fires were the tragic Christmas day mudslides and several lightning sparked brush fires in the past two weeks. My ability to provide website visitors with up-to-the-minute weather warnings. Further commercialization of the weather products, such as those proposed by Accuweather.com, would jeopardize public safety. Sincerely, Scott Straley The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

1055 "Concerning your ""Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information"" and NDFD XML: It sounds great! Do not let certain companies dictate your distribution of data. I am excited about better publicly accessible weather data and encourage you move forward with your XML efforts. Thank you. The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

1056 NOAA should provide weather DATA in standard and free to use and without cost forms for the good of country. The private sector must not be allowed to feed from the government trough and then sell back to the consumer. The referring webpage:

1057 It would be unthinkable to stop free data feeds of weather information. True or not we have come to expect this data provided free by US taxpayers (didn't they pay for the data already ?)

1058 "YES, GOOD POLICY Comment on NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information If I understand the new policy correctly, ""NWS will make its data and products available in Internet-accessible form to the extent practicable and within resource constraints, and will use other dissemination technologies, e.g. satellite broadcast and NOAA Weather Radio, as appropriate."" As a tax paying citizen who relies on weather information I say ""YES"" this is a good policy. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

1059 "I would welcome the improvement in services offered by the proposed policy changes. While I consider your current offerings to be a valued service, your efforts to expand the amount of information available to the public will allow users like myself to adapt it to our individual needs. I currently use NOAA information extensively, both in my hooby as a sailor, and proffessionally, for planning in the

turf products industry. Enhanced information will only allow me to make better decisions. I strongly endorse your proposed policy changes. The referring webpage:"

1060 "The National weather Service is run by tax dollars. The data it collects has already been paid for by US tax payers. They should not have to pay again to use the data. That would amount to double taxation. Ted Johnston 355 Martell St. Somerset, WI 54025 The referring webpage:"

1061 "To the NOAA and NWS: I full support the proposed ""fairweather"" concept, and strongly encourage the adoption of the proposed policy. Data acquired at taxpayer expense should be available to taxpayers without having to pay a commercial entity rents. The ability to access NWS weather data easily and efficiently over the Internet is a boon to the growing number of people who make use of the (often freely-available open source) applications available to download and display the data on our desktops. The National weather Service is a valuable information resource for *all* of us. I encourage you to keep it this way, and commend your efforts. Thank you, Jamais Cascio Concord, California The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1062 "Add any information about the weather would aid the public about the weather area(s) they may be interested in is better. I myself prefer your web page(it loads faster) over the ones using your service , as the are about as comercial as a web site can be. The ironic part is they all use use your data to sell to the public a ""no advertisement"" version. Earle The referring webpage:

<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

1063 "I am very happy to see that you have undertaken a fair and reasonable polisy to: To advance the weather, water, and climate enterprise, NWS will provide information in forms accessible to the public as well as underlying data in forms convenient to additional processing by others. NWS will make its data and products available in Internet-accessible form to the extent practicable and within resource constraints, and will use other dissemination technologies, e.g. satellite broadcast and NOAA Weather Radio, as appropriate. Information contained in databases will be based on recognized standards, formats, and metadata descriptions to ensure data from different observing platforms, databases, and models can be integrated and used by all interested parties in the weather, water, and climate enterprise. It is great to see a government entity making it easy for citizens, companies, and organizations to access data products produced by an agency with citizen's tax dollars. Please keep up the good work and extend thanks to the team that drafted the new policy. Please, please continue to expand the types and amount of timely and real-time weather data provided in useful, easily usable formats. Thanks. -John The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627>"

1064 "Seems to me that the weather data collection is paid for by my tax dollars, and therefore, access to it in a reasonable format for interpretation should be free too. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

1065 "If taxpayer money is funding weather information, then it would be wrong for the private sector to have exclusive access to it. we shouldn't have to pay for

the service twice. I am definitely in favor of keeping vital weather data available to the public in XML form. No reply necessary, thank you for your time. The referring webpage:"

1066 "what we are talking about is public data about a public planet, gathered using public data systems designed, built and launched using public funds, and correlated in a public agency operated on public tax dollars. Can there be any possible question that the resulting data should be available to the public without having to pay for it again? We've already paid for it several times. To Accuweather, who'd like us to have to pay them for the privilege of accessing our weather data, a resounding HELL NO. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1067 "I would simply like to applaud your efforts to make government sponsored information/material available to the people in a timely/inexpensive manner. The XML distribution of NOAA data could be instrumental in the further incorporation of weather into the Information Infrastructure that is available to the people of the world (in particular, the people of the United States). Thank you, and please do everything that you can to keep this service available and free. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627>"

1068 "Dear NOAA, Please continue to provide weather and related data free to the public, in a variety of formats, including Internet accesible outlets and feeds. This is vital information for the public, scientists and academia, gathered with taxpayer dollars for the benefit of all. Thanks you. The referring webpage:
<http://www.worldchanging.com/>"

1069 "I'm also forwarding this to both my Congressmen, Rep Wicker, and Sen. Lott. As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a SECOND TIME for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1070 "How much more public property are we going to give the private sector to sell back to the public with lucre as their ultimate goal? We have already given the private sector our health care, public lands, frequency spectrums and now information that could mean life or death to the public, the farmer's livelihood, the researcher's success. Get the avaricious hands of the private sector out of public services and properties that contribute to the wellbeing of all. Give them no role for which the public has to pay. Have them derive their profits from advertisement from other greedy entities just like them and forbid them to charge for the public information NWS produces."

1071 Please keep NOAA weather data free to the listening and reading public.
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1072 "Please open up your services to be free to all. I watch it everyday and it is very important to my livelihood, a small business to know this information...keep up the great work!! The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1073 "Please keep NOAA information broadcast as is now, Free to the public.This very important to marine and agriculture interest in my area of S.W. Louisiana. Michael Lee Foreman USCG License#1003349"

1074 I fully support changes to allow direct public access to NOAA weather information. This should allow public internet access as well as through other media. The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/feedback.php>

1075 "Please keep our access to weather information free. As taxpayers, we are already paying for this information... we shouldn't have to pay a second time to receive information that helps keep us safe. Sincerely, James Bathurst The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

1076 "I have heard there are efforts afoot in the private sector to stop the implementation of this policy ... PLEASE, KEEP WEATHER INFORMATION FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!! Implement this policy. The referring webpage:
<http://gwmail.augie.edu/servlet/webacc/px7nqeQo3ltegh5Jma/GWAP/HREF/?action=Attachme nt.View&Item.Attachment.id=1&User.context=px7nqeQo3ltegh5Jma&Item.drn=52409z5z2554>"

1077 "The information provided by NWS should remain free to the public since they already paid for it! All government jobs are paid for by the public! If private companies think they can make money by adding ""flash and glamore"" to the information then they should be allowed too. The public should be able to get the information easily. The easiest way is by radio and the internet. The referring webpage:"

1078 "Firstly, thank you for your efforts. Secondly, I believe the free and open dissemination of weather information is essential and beneficial to the United States of America. I personally use the NOAA weather forecasts and current conditions, not only for pleasure boating, but for work as well. Please continue and expand the providing of these services. Thank you. The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1079 "I understand that the national weather service is considering providing graphical weather data only to commercial suppliers. I am a pilot who regularly uses the ADDS web site for flight planning. I am wholeheartedly in favor of the National weather service continuing its current excellent online services. I already pay, through my taxes, for the weather reporting and do not want to pay again for a commercial provider to repackage it for me. I do use a private provider to supply weather in the aircraft through the XM satellite system. I feel that this is entirely justified because satellite access goes well beyond what I would expect

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my taxes to support. Let's keep our hard-earned tax money working for us and keep on-line graphical access to aviation weather available through the ADDS website! Thanks, Dan The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/>"

1080 "Tyler Johnson 331 willow Ave Corte Madera, CA 94925 tylerj@greenmuseum.org re: Fair Weather Partnership Policy Dear friends, I write to support efforts to make all data paid for by the public available to the public. As a current hobbyist user, and former commercial user, of several products (sea surface temperature and buoy data), I feel that efforts to openly distribute all weather data products in a common well documented format provides an equitable balance between all parties involved. The thriving community of weather hobbyists and entrepreneurs have many interests and opportunities in meteorological data that the commercial weather industry does not serve. For instance as a surfer and long-range fisherman, I am extremely interested in the change of dominant wave height intervals on a variety of buoys on the pacific coast. Although several services package this information, they typically report data in a general manner that often obfuscates interesting patterns in the underlying data. Although the commercial weather industry seems to fear erosion of their illogical monopoly the opening and standardization of weather data is, in fact, likely to help the industry through an infusion of entrepreneurial ideas. Please stick to your existing plan and distribute all data equally. Thank you for your efforts, Tyler Johnson The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

1081 "I like, respect and rely on NOAA reports. I pay for them, too...as a taxpayer. I don't see why a private entity can absorb tax-paid information, sell it, then work to curb access to the same information by taxpayers. Is Accuweather going to fund NOAA? Brian Sheehan EMC, USN (ret) Puget Sound The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

1082 Because tax dollars pay for the services NOAA provides it should be free to the public.

1083 "I would like to issue a vote of support for the proposed policy change concerning access to information. I feel that it is important to provide the information you have to the broadest audience possible for a couple reasons. First as a government agency, I feel that your responsibility is to the public as opposed to the private sector. Second that it is only thru easy access to the information that innovative uses for the information will be enabled. Thank you for considering my opinion. John Schroder jgs715@earthlink.net The referring webpage:"

1084 Keep aviation WX dissemination free. There definitely should not be a surcharge to access aviation WX as it is a SAFETY OF FLIGHT issue. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/>

1085 "I believe that adoption of the new policy is in the best interest of the taxpayers. I have been very pleased to see what weather information is already offered free by NOAA to the public and I believe the new policy will add to this information. Only last Saturday, 26 June 2004, I attended an Amateur Radio Field Day Event where I watched a receiver tuned to 9982.5kHz receive the NOAA weather FAX (rebroadcast from Hawaii) of the current satellite image of the entire Eastern Pacific. This image was made available to the public free for all those that have a

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20ft antenna, a HF receiver, and a computer with a sound card running software that is downloadable for free over the internet. I find this service to be incredibly valuable considering that, because this was an Amateur Radio Field Day Event effort, this information was obtained using only emergency backup power, just as would need to be the case in the event of a real emergency. I am pleased that new policy is being proposed that will continue the dissemination of this information, and perhaps even more, to the public for free. Thank you. The referring webpage:"

1086 "I would like to see more free data from the NWS available to the public and folks that are meteorologists. Also, I would like to see Level 2 NEXRAD data become available for free and it would be nice to see more products from AWIPS available. Worst example of what private industry did with weather data, is lightning data, it is very expensive and most people cannot afford it. Be nice if the NWS had their own lightning data. Mike The referring webpage:
<http://stormtrack.org/forum/viewtopic.php?t=2634>"

1087 "Please make taxpayer-funded weather data freely available on the internet. Doing so will help inspire people to use this data in new and interesting ways. For example, I would like to build a software tool that can be used by general aviation pilots to statistically measure weather patterns along certain flight paths. Without freely available weather data, how could hobbyists such as me build this tool?"

1088 weather data should be free to everyone.

1089 "I believe the free and unfettered access to NWS products is not only essential but desirable also. As a taxpayer and having already bought the satellites and measuring instruments, I feel that being charged by a third party for access to this data is totally unfair. As an example, wunderground.com charges each user to access their animated loops online. This data is clearly inferior to that of the NWS AND they charge for it. Heading farther down this path is not desirable. I want access to a smaller subset with higher definition than I can get elsewhere. Please continue to supply these products to the public which has already paid for the equipment. Thanks, Wayne Howard The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1090 "Please do not charge for NOAA wx data. Safety on the water is an issue and also the fact that tax money funds the data so it is already paid for. Thank you, Paul Miller 1118 S. Cari Place, Deland, FL 32720 The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1091 "This proposal is appallingly bad public policy, favoring limited commercial interests over the interests of the public -at-large to have readily accessible information that could be critical in some situations. Placing commercial services as a "filter" in front of information collected by a government agency is short-sighted at best and potentially life-threatening at worst. This policy SHOULD NOT be adopted under any circumstances. The referring webpage:
<http://solonor.com/archives/002587.html>"

1092 "I am a sailor and a CPA. I use much NOAA weather information personally
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and many clients use NOAA in their businesses. My Ex-wife's engineering firm used one of my weather web page dozens of times a day to access weather information needed for their business. The reduction of weather information provided NOAA gratis to the general public would reduce the President's goal of stimulating the economy. I am also a pilot. The additional weather information available today has greatly increase aviation safety since I first got my license in 1970. There is absolutely no comparison between the great information available today to make flying safer as compared to 30 years ago. It is obvious commercial interests are trying to harm the general public welfare for their own profits. This is proposal to allow their profits to win out over the public's safety and the country's economy is shameful. Sincerely, Bob Keim 613 Vivian Drive Nashville, TN 37211 The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1093 "I strongly support the proposed changes for making taxpayer-funded weather data free and open for all individuals, not just corporations."

1094 "I strongly support NOAA's policy for providing data freely on the Internet in standard formats, not requiring payment or limiting access to proprietary programs. NOAA is taxpayer supported, among many other reasons."

1095 "Please implement your current proposal. I favor it for both practical and ethical reasons. Practical - I travel in many regions of the country where there is little or no current (to the minute) commercial weather coverage available. In times of severe weather, current NOAA weather info can be invaluable, and sometimes lifesaving. Practical - I sail, quite a bit, and I can tailor the NOAA weather info to my needs. The local (OKC) commercial weather products (radio, TV, etc) are much more general, and don't have the (for me) critical weather details that I care about i.e. hourly wind measurements and forecasts. Ethical - As a taxpayer, I have already paid for this data to be collected and processed. Should I be charged again for it to be disseminated? where is the value-added that the companies are providing? I will gladly pay if the weather data is reconfigured into a more usable format that is not available through the NOAA. I am increasingly suspicious of whole industries that look to regulatory relief rather than improving customer satisfaction to assure continued operation and profits. I will spare you the rest of that rant, but it could go on for pages. Thank you. The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1096 This is a great service to the american people.

1097 Please keep all NOAA information free to the public. The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>

1098 I support any effort to continue my ability to receive free NOAA weather radio forecasts and data. I support the NRC recommendation 1. The referring webpage:

1099 "Weather information is a matter of public safety. The public should fund a service to acquire information about the weather. Information acquired by such a service must then be freely accessible by the public. I currently enjoy access

access to the National weather Service through its Web Site, NOAA weather radio, and the Kweather applet. I do not obtain weather information from any other source."

1100 I think it is ridiculous to pay twice for a service that is meant to be for the public good. We already pay for a portion of NOAA's budget with our tax dollars and I think that if we are to be charged a second time by private companies would be unjustified. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

1101 "I am writing to you today to heartily endorse the proposed policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. I am a regular water traveler and spend a great deal of time in the outdoors. I depend upon the information that NOAA provides particularly the weather radio broadcasts and the marine weather forecasts. I also support the open data provisions of the policy. I believe that publicly funded data should be available to the entire public with no unreasonable restrictions of any kind imposed. NOAA weather data should be disseminated as widely as possible and I agree with your assertions that new technologies such as XML and RSS data feeds should be used to make the data available to the public via the internet. Such a move can only help the public economically and socially. As an avid user of NOAA's Weather Radio I endorse your commitment to combine new internet-based technologies with the existing infrastructure. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

1102 I would like to continue to receive FREE NOAA reports and feel this information is very helpful. There is something wrong with taxpayers funding the service and then letting corporations charge us to access the information. This is also a safety question and boaters are safer because they have access to the reports. The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>

1103 I strongly support the NWS policy. Internet access to the information provided is a big safety issue in my mind and a few greedy people are just trying to capitalize on it.

1104 All data and information should be provided in a free manner to the citizens that paid for it originally. Any commercial entities should construct parallel systems if they want to charge for their data. There is no reason for the citizen to pay twice for the data and information. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

1105 It is in the public interest to make weather information available to the public free of charge. Accurate and readily available weather information is vital for the SAFETY of recreational boaters. I cannot obtain enough information from my local tv or radio land-based forecast about the expected sea state in the lower Chesapeake Bay. I rely on NOAA weather radio & web site for vital marine forecasts. I double many small boaters have the budget to pay for private weather service information. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

1106 "I support the effort to make more free weather information available to the
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public. As a taxpayer, my tax dollars support the efforts of NOAA and I feel this is a good use of tax revenue. However, I also feel that because it is a government (and therefore taxpayer supported) effort the results of that effort should be available to the taxpayers, as opposed to allowing corporations to charge the citizens for access to the information that was collected with the citizen's tax dollars. The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1107 "I heartily applaud and support the language and intent of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Weather Service Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information as published at <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>. The referring webpage:
<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

1108 "I support keeping weather and environmental information freely available to all. Public access is key to maintaining a competitive and healthy society, and NOAA's weather information is a perfect example of information that benefits the public. Thank you for your experimental public access, please keep innovation alive in perpetuity. The referring webpage:
http://www.bloglines.com/myblogs_display?sub=1604787&site=69019"

1109 "I agree with the proposed fair weather policy. As a taxpayer, I feel that weather data should be made available to the general public. In no case should data be made unavailable to some public/private users and distributed to others. Regarding basic weather data: I do think that the weather service should make efforts to prevent general release of data that is unreliable or questionable. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

1110 "The proposed policy sounds reasonable: since NOAA & NWS data are publically financed, the data should be made easily available through websites (using xml, RSS and other suitable technologies) and other free services. Of course, private weather services and meteorologists should also be able to interpret and redistribute that content to provided added value. My concern is only that the public should be given access to governmental data without having to pay for it through private redistributors. Most people will continue to access weather digested through TV and news but that should not prevent other, more direct free access. By the way, I teach Science writing at the undergraduate level, so keeping NOAA climate data available is a big help in those classes. The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

1111 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public. Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a "non-compete" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars. A change in format to an easily understood and malleable form is a good thing, allowing private citizens and private firms an equal starting point for developing

solutions according to their needs. Obscurement through esoteric data formats serves few interests. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1112 "I am writing in support of keeping all weather data free (as in cost), and freely available (as in easily acquired by end users). The NOAA is already supported by our tax dollars, so we already have paid for this service. I find great value in small applications that sit on my computer desktop and update me as to the current weather and forecast. Please keep weather data free! Thanks! - Joshua Kugler Fairbanks, Alaska The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627>"

1113 let's keep it free. The referring webpage: <http://www.public-domain.org/>

1114 Please do not use my tax dollars for the benefit of just a few people. We all depend on the weather service as it currently is. The referring webpage:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/com-pac/message/28110>

1115 "Please continue and strengthen the policy of providing NOAA weather information to the general public free of charge. Also please consider revising the policy that has given exclusive distribution rights for digital marine charts to a commercial concern. There are many chart users that cannot justify the high prices being charged for digital chart data now. (For example, small boat operators operating in good weather). The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1116 "I have just read over your proposed policy change, as well as Barry Meyer's response, available at this address:
http://www.weatherindustry.org/BARRYMYERS-AMS-0318_04.doc. I must say that I cannot possibly disagree with Mr. Meyer more. The NOAA is a publicly funded institution providing data that could never possibly contain anything that would be classified. Accordingly, I am of the firm belief that any data collected by the NOAA should be made available for public (i.e. the general population, not merely other agencies) as soon as is practicable, in whatever format is easiest for the public to consume. Mr. Meyer, and for that matter, the rest of the private weather sector, need to realize that they should never be the sole beneficiaries of the collective tax dollars spent each year by the U.S. in providing such a vitally important service. I am tempted to make the comparison of the difficulties that the RIAA and MPAA are currently having with the digital revolution. Mr. Meyer and the PWS need to update their business models, not attempt to change the law. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/comments.pl?sid=112544&threshold=1&mode=nested&commentsort=0&op=Change>"

1117 I am in full support of allowing free public access to all NOAA weather data and information. The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>

1118 "Please don't bow down to big business pressure. We have paid for this information via our tax dollars... we shouldn't have to pay again just because a big

business doesn't like all us ""high tech"" people to get the information ourselves. There are enough ""low tech"" people in the world for them to continue making a fortune. Let information be free!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Steve Bailey U.S. Citizen (and registered voter) 26792 Kaye Road Laurel, DE 19956 The referring webpage: <http://cocoontech.com/>

1119 "The data that you gather and display is important public information, and taxpayer money funds its collection and publishing. Therefore the published data should be freely available to all taxpayers, as they have effectively already purchased it. Do not allow private companies to prevent taxpayers from accessing the data they have already paid for."

1120 "The relationship between the U.S. weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists has been a concern of interested parties for more than 60 years. The ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service,"" was adopted in 1991, and is still in effect today. That policy clearly spelled out the National weather Service role in providing weather related services. The 1991 policy recognizes the important contributions of the Commercial weather Industry and private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. The policy described National weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry. In addition, the policy stated: ""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."" The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."" It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels. Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National weather Service in the private sector. I believe that the 1991 policy should be strengthened and not replaced with a process. Indeed the policy should be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise. Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation. Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are: (1) The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended. (2) The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) (3) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted. (4) The mission of the National weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped. (5) The complaint and appeal process is eradicated. In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public. An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology. I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy. Very truly yours, Vincent Scheetz, CCM The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

1121 Please allow free access for taxpayers

1122 I would urge you to adopt a policy to continue making NOAA weather Radio information available to the public as a free public service. There is no way to tell how many lives have been saved by this program. The referring webpage: <http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>

1123 I would like weather data freely available on the internet by XML and other means. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

1124 "Please ensure that all weather data gathered by NOAA remains freely available to the public through the internet. Thank you, Scott Peterson The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1125 Taxpayer funded data collection and dissemination should not be locked off for private interests.

1126 "NOAA and the NWS should be permitted to provide their data and results in whatever formats and forums that they desire. The tradition of providing weather data and results free of charge by NOAA and NWS should continue and be expanded. I have tried products from commercial services and generally have found them unacceptable. If the commercial services are successful in their demands that NOAA and the NWS must distribute weather data through the commercial services, then I dislike thinking about the chilling effect that would have on the cost and availability of effective weather data and forecasts. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

1127 I'm sure any change in the current relationship between the NWS and the commercial weather industry will have a very negative affect on the cooperation the now exists. The relationship will become adversarial and unnecessarily competitive. This would wrongly impact the public interest and safety. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

1128 I am completely opposed to restricting public access to NOAA weather data. The public funds noaa and should be availed the services of this agency The referring webpage:

1129 "Dear NOAA/NWS: I feel that it is absolutely critical that, as a government agency, you should provide your data for free over the Internet. This would include, but not be limited to, making weather data available through XML or RSS feeds. I am opposed to the attempts by the private sectors to sway NOAA/NWS towards not providing free data through the Internet. I have no interest in paying accuweather, intellicast, or others for data that I am already paying for by way of Federal tax dollars. Again, I urge you to provide free weather data to the Internet. Let's start living like we're in the 21st Century, ok? Sincerely, Colin Meginnis The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

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1130 "I fully support NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information and I want to make this service freely available to all. The referring webpage: <http://solonor.com/archives/002587.html>"

1131 I believe that this is a good policy. Data that public money is spent obtaining should be available to the public at no additional cost. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

1132 "i view noaa data regularly for no charge and hope it will remain that way. keep up the exellent work and keep it free! thanks, mark slamon The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>"

1133 "As a citizen of the United States, I whole-heartedly support your proposed policy. This policy would place everyone, public, private and commercial, on equal footing when it comes to obtaining weather data. I have used all sorts of sources in obtaining weather data, both public and commercial. I see room for everyone at this information table. I am especially happy with the proposal to provide data in open formats. As an arm chair meterologist and technologist, I could create my own weather tools if I wished. To me ensuring open access to data, both through availability and format, is of the utmost importance. I have read opposing remarks by Barry Myers, President of Accuweather, and find his arguments against the proposed policy wanting. The best thing for the weather industry is the implemenation of the proposed policy. It will open doors to new, varied and competitive offerings. Continuing the 1991 path or allowing the 1991 document to be strengthened would likely allow the weather industry to monopolize access to weather data. The computer industry has shown that the quickest and best path to innovation and progress in a field is open access to information and open standards. I applaude the agency for recognizing this, and making this proposed policy change. The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627>"

1134 "As a student and geographer, having access to this data is extremely important. And, seeing as the government uses tax money to generate this data, it seems only fair that we get what we have already paid for. Thanks so much for being educational first and profiteering second (or third, or fourth, etc) - M Antos The referring webpage:"

1135 "I support NOAA's policy to keep all weather data products free to users, without restrictions. Please do not restrict this taxpayer-supported data for the purposes of commercial interests. A particularly good reason for keeping this data freely available, such as in the form of HF or VHF WEFAX, is that it can support emergency operations that will not have the infrastructure to obtain the data via commercial channels when it is most needed. Thank you! The referring webpage:"

1136 "Hi, I'd like to make a few comments on the proposed Fair weather Policy. Statement 4 is confusingly worded: ""To advance the weather, water and climate enterprise, NWS will provide information in forms accessible to the public as well as underlying data in forms convenient to others."" Does this mean that only finished products will be available to the public, while the 'underlying data' will be somehow restricted to 'others'? Please clarify this statement to indicate that the data in all forms will always be made available to the public in a timely

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fashion, (to the best of your abilities, of course.) The most disturbing proposal is statement 6 in which you propose a procedure to listen to outside interests who request you ""discontinue products and services."" The NOAA and NWS must be the sole decision maker as to whether a specific product needs to be discontinued, and then only because the NWS has internally determined that it is being unused or underutilized, is too expensive to maintain, or has been replaced by a better product. You need to change this statement to indicate only that you will request public comment in the event that the NWS announces they wish to discontinue a specific service due to disuse. The NDFD and XML feeds are brilliant examples of the quality data you can provide to all Americans. Shutting them down at the request of commercial enterprises who might feel threatened by your fine work effectively steals this work from those of us who paid you for it in the first place. Thank you for your consideration. John Deters The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/feedback.php>"

1137 "As a taxpayer and a user of NWS products in many forms (digital, radio, and text), I completely support your proposal to make weather data to all users without restriction. Since your weather data is paid for with my dollars, it would be completely inappropriate to restrict its use. Mr. Barry Myers of the weather Industry Organization would have us believe that releasing NWS data freely would disadvantage American business and industry and the 90% of American citizens who get their weather information everyday from the Commercial weather Industry. I fail to see how American citizens would be disadvantaged by having free access to information paid for with their taxpayer dollars. As a small business owner, I fail to see how I would be disadvantaged by being allowed to access what my taxes paid for. Even the weather industry itself would not be harmed by free access. I use commercial weather services regularly, because they aggregate data in ways that go far beyond what the NWS can afford to do. Making your raw data available freely will not harm their ability to add value. What Mr. Myers really fears is good old American competition. He would rather have the NWS use my taxpayer dollars to feed data to his services, then turn around and charge me again for the information I already bought. He claims he wants ""stability"" for his industry, but what he really wants is a law that allows him to keep his fingers in the American consumer's pocket without worrying about the quality of what he provides. The proposed NWS policy is the correct one. Please do not be intimidated by entrenched special interests who seek only to enrich themselves at taxpayer expense. The referring webpage:"

1138 "Please don't pay much attention to Barry Myers and the rest of his cronies at weatherindustry.org. He is obviously only interested in restricting free access to the same information he and his members charge for. Restricting or otherwise impeding public access to your products will place more importance on the private weather sector, which may or may not provide the same amount of data in the same timeframe that the NWS does. For example, I live in a sparsely populated area outside of Raleigh, NC. I rely on your website and my SAME-compliant radio for weather information because the local news stations only cover events which affect (or are affecting) the more populated areas. As soon as a weather system leaves the North Raleigh area, they consider the event over. For my family and me, it's just beginning. I can only imagine how people on the outskirts Tornado Alley feel about this. Please continue free, standards-based publishing! Stephen Misel The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1139 "As a taxpayer, I feel that the weather data collected and generated by NOAA & NWS should be freely available via the internet. I support this proposal. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

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1140 "I think it is great what you are doing. The first program I ever wrote was a weather forecasting program. These days, if I had written that program it would have been nice to include data from NWS/NOAA for forecasting. Making this data available over the Internet is just the kind of thing our government should be doing for its people. I wish you all the success possible. --Brett Thorson Annandale, VA
The referring webpage: <http://slashdot.org/index.pl?issue=20040627>"

1141 "I am completely in favor of making publicly-funded weather data available free on the internet. This would be in line with existing policy by other agencies, e.g. the Geological Survey's hydrological data. Certainly we should not have to pay a commercial company for access to data collected using our own taxes. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1142 "If it aint broke, don't fix it. The proposed fair-weather policy as it is written now seems to leave the door open (although it might only be a slight crack) to the National Weather Service delving into the private sector side of the weather business. I attended the AMS Broadcast Conference recently in New Orleans and heard the response from the NWS, which was essentially that the agency had no intention of crossing the line. If you don't intend to, then why change the policy statement? It seems like the NWS has riled a good portion of the private sector and probably rightly so. I have been a broadcaster for nearly 20 years and have enjoyed my relationship with the NWS and my relationship with the vendors I work with in the private sector. If the door was pushed opened and the NWS did get take on more private sector type characteristics, it seems this would be at the very least very awkward. We (meaning taxpayers) fund the NWS so any future profit would have to be returned to us, the investor. My recommendation is you work more closely with your private sector partners to come up with a statement that would reassure them that you would not step on their toes. It is in all our interest to continue a relationship that is mutually beneficial. There is a lot at stake here when dealing with weather information. Disrupting the balance we now enjoy between the NWS, private sector and academia could ultimately result in the loss of lives.
Sincerely, Tim McGill WGN-TV/CLTV 2501 W. Bradley Place Chicago, IL 60618
The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

1143 "Greetings, I am a tax paying American, and an avid weather enthusiast. I also am a software engineer. I have come to enjoy the weather data that you provide, and realize that my hard earned tax dollars pay for it. I would like to voice my pleasure in the development of your latest SOAP services, and would like to ensure these stay publicly available. The NOAA data services have been the core of two of my research projects, and one of my hobby applications Kweather for the K Desktop Environment. I value and respect the amount of effort the scientists at the NOAA have put into these services. In my opinion Accuweather's proposal to block this access is on parallel to the Bar association blocking access to the US Constitution. I enjoy your services, and do not want to pay twice for them just because some company feels they cannot make enough money off of what they have now. Thank you for your time. -ian reinhart geiser Author of Kweather for KDE
The referring webpage:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

1144 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public."

1145 "I completely disagree with this,"

1146 "On behalf of the weather Risk Management Association (WRMA), we would like to provide public comment to the NWS on your proposal to replace the 1991 Public Private Partnership Policy. As background, WRMA represents 60 member companies, many of whom are multinationals. One of our main objectives is to facilitate the seamless usage of weather financial products for businesses that are affected by the weather. The quality weather data provided by the NWS and other departments at NOAA are critical to sustaining our industry. As you are aware, it is estimated that one-third of the US GDP is affected by the weather, forcing businesses to address their need to mitigate risks associated with the weather, and rapidly expanding the seven year-old weather risk management market, into a \$4.6 billion/year industry. The Weather Risk Management Association is in support of all eight points outlined in your new Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. With that said we would like to comment specifically on points 2, and 7. In point 2, our industry concurs wholeheartedly that based on the premise that government information is a valuable national resource, the economic benefits to society are maximized when government information is available in a timely and equitable manner to all. With regard to point 7, we welcome your efforts to promote the open and unrestricted exchange of weather, water, climate, and related environmental information worldwide. As I mentioned, data issues are critical to sustain our industry, not only in the U.S., but globally as well. We look forward to our continued collaboration, and applaud the agency on taking action on the first recommendation from the National Research Council's Fair Weather Report. Sincerely, Valerie Cooper, CAE Executive Director Weather Risk Management Association 1156 15th Street, NW Suite 900 Washington, DC 20005 www.wrma.org The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

1147 "Please allow the National weather Service (<http://weather.gov/>) to continue providing free weather data on the Internet. In fact, please allow the National weather Service to provide access to historical weather data as well. It would be a great service to the public, and especially to faculty and students in the nation's schools and colleges. Jon Harrison Michigan State University Libraries The referring webpage:"

1148 "If taxpayers fund the weather service, taxpayers should freely have access to the data and the forecasts. If corporations want to charge money for weather information, they should gather the data with instruments that they built or purchased. Wean them from corporate welfare. The referring webpage: <http://www.worldchanging.com/>"

1149 Please continue to keep NOAA weather information freely available to the public.

1150 "It is very important to be able to obtain weather data for library patrons: current, local, and historical. The National weather Service is funded by tax dollars so why should people have to pay twice for information"

1151 please keep free weather data on the internet

1152 "I applaud the proposed policy. NOAA performs incredibly important work for the United States and the data it collects should be freely available to all. I also agree with the NRC suggestion that NOAA should extend ""such a policy to include similar information activities of NOAA's National Environmental Satellite Data and Information Service (NESDIS) and the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR). Nate Moore The referring webpage:"

1153 "The NOAA should not partner with the private weather sector to restrict weather data from the public. Accurate weather information is crucial to the health, safety, and property of pilots, boaters, farmers, and the general public. The funding for the NOAA to generate and collect its weather data comes from taxpayers; forcing taxpayers to pay the private weather sector to access this data would in essence cause taxpayers pay twice for this vital information. As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public rather than to serve the interests of the private sector. The referring webpage: <http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

1154 I use degree day data to guide me in pre-buying heating oil. I would object to being required to pay some company for access to this data. I am already paying for it through taxation. I feel that any data collected on the taxpayer's nickel should belong to the taxpayer without paying some intermediary for access to it. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/feedback.php>

1155 "Sonalysts is a diversified, employee-owned company with a group dedicated to delivering weather software and services. Sonalysts is a corporate member of the AMS and employs 5 degreed meteorologists. We are not opposed to enhanced distribution of basic meteorological, oceanographic, and other environmental data where this data is meant to support the NWS mission of protecting life and property and the broader public sector, private sector, and academic users. These services should be provided on a nationwide basis. We do believe that the NWS would negatively impact the private sector weather industry by providing tailored historical, analysis, or forecast products to any users other than government agencies. This is particularly true for tailored products targeted at commercial sectors such as agriculture, airline and corporate aviation, construction, energy production and distribution, and transportation. Similarly, we do not believe that the NWS should provide software applications to the user communities unless the source code for the applications is available on the same basis and with licenses that permit its use and integration with commercial products. The NWS should not be expanding its role at the expense of the private weather sector, and this needs to be reflected in the new policy. The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

1156 As a private pilot and soon to be sailor I would like you to go ahead with these changes. Any thing that makes getting the right data to the people who need it quickly and efficiently is a step in the right direction. Hopefully you will not be overly influenced by the people and corporations trying to make a buck off of this info. The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>

1157 "Dear NOAA, I think your proposal to write into your policies the free and fair distribution of all your weather information is the best way to use your resources. After all, the American public pays you to gather this information; you should distribute it to us. If private companies want to keep weather information

to themselves, or only distribute it to paying customers, then THEY should gather it themselves. Keeping information for which the public has paid for only private use would be wrong. Thank you for thinking ahead and using our resources wisely and fairly. Yours, Noemi Ybarra The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1158 "As a reference librarian at a public institution of higher education, I'm against any alliance/partnership that's going to result in my university having to buy weather information from the National Weather Service. Daily, we field requests for weather forecast and conditions in different parts of the country and world and students are constantly checking weather service information for travel home. Keep it free, updated, and advanced. Thanks The referring webpage:"

1159 "One more comment to add to my previous ones: while the NRC proposes ""The NWS should make its data and products available in internet- accessible digital form. Information held in digital databases should be based on widely recognized standards,...to ensure that data ... can be integrated and used by ALL (my emphasis) interested parties in the weather and climate enterprise."" while the commercial industry supports ""CWSA endorses the dissemination of all NWS data and information ... to the PRIVATE SECTOR (my emphasis) for distribution to the public..."" NO. There is no need for the commercial industry to filter our information. The National Weather Service is paid for by ME. *I* deserve to be able to use its information without paying anyone in the CWSA for it. I have already paid. We do not need taxpayer-subsidized for-profit companies making money off the NWS' work. If those companies think they can offer me something beyond what the NWS does, and that I'll pay them for the extra services, that's fine. They deserve to offer such additional services. But they should not restrict my access to the work of the NWS. More from the CWSA: ""The digital database should not be used to allow the NWS to expand beyond its core mission, jeopardize the existing infrastructure, or enter areas creating publicly-funded competition with the Commercial Weather Industry."" Errrr...the *CWSA* is getting publicly-funded help, if it's using information from the NWS. So which one is getting an unfair advantage? Please, give us unrestricted access to the work of the NWS. We've paid for it. Noemi Ybarra The referring webpage: <http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1160 "weather, water, climate and related environmental information collected by the federal government should be distributed by the federal government as a public good. It should remain freely available on the web in non proprietary formats. Distribution should not be privatized or partnered in any way. There is no reason why consumers should have to pay a second time for information that they have subsidized as tax payers. Commercial weather forecasters should earn their revenue on the basis of added value content rather than on the data that NOAA provides."

1161 "Whatever y'all decide to do, I think it's important to keep free public access to the weather data. I am a sailor and weather matters to me. I'm also really tired of the whole Privatization of Everything trend in general. The referring webpage:
<http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/tsbbcomp/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1162 "Publically funded data, such as weather information critical to the safety of flight, should made available to the public with no added costs such as through a third party provider. Arthur N. Flior Captain, NOAA (Ret.) Former Check Pilot, NWS Headquarters The referring webpage:

<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>"

1163 "I just read the recommendations from the proposed policy on partnerships, and wanted to write in to say it is a great idea. I am a live aboard sailor, in Portland Oregon. I depend on NOAA weather information every day. It would be great to have more weather information available to us through NOAA. On our boat, we have both VHF radio, and wireless internet at the marina, so both sources are wonderful. I was just reading the Commercial weather Service's reply (rebuttal?) to your proposed policy change, and it looks to me like they are trying to convince y'all to restrict weather information access so that we all have to pay them for it, in a blatantly selfish move, with no benefit to the public. As long as we (taxpayers) are paying for NOAA, the NOAA weather data should be disseminated to the public free of charge (or as your recommendation says, for the smallest possible amount), not given to a middleman to repackage and charge for it, they have no more right to this information than I or my neighbor or the folks down the street, and they have no right to demand favoritism and what would amount to government subsidies through allowing only the private sector access to information that is funded by the public. I applaud the proposed policy change, and encourage you to implement it immediately. Good Job! Thanks for your time. The referring webpage: <http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/tsbbcomp/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1164 "PLEASE keep weather information open (FREE) to the public. I use ""him"" daily, both on my VHF and my TV. I sail a large Texas lake, where your information is seriously needed, and the Texas Gulf (of Mexico) where your information is CRITICALLY (life and death) needed. I am a retired Federal civil servant, and I cannot afford to PAY for this information. Thanks for asking for comments. The referring webpage:"

1165 Keep weather infomration open to the public who funds it.

1166 "I support the proposed policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Enviornmental Information in-so-far as it maintains and strengthens free public access to weather data. The referring webpage: <http://bbs.trailersailor.com/forums/trailersailor/index.cgi/read/341713>"

1167 "I think it would be great if you made your weather service available to the public. Even if you require the users/customers to register for the data and have some sort of validation to track the usage. Then follow the XML/SAML guidelines. I understand the concerns for those who want to resell or have businesses that charge for your data. But I also know the true innovations come from open source and standards. Having NOAA publishing content using XML/SAML will do a lot for promoting the technology standards. Thanks, John The referring webpage:

<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>"

1168 Please preserve access to the National weather Service free weather data that is available on the internet. Only through the weather Service are we able to receive uncluttered information which is also more comprehensive than the weather provided by private sector providers.

1169 weather data collected by the weather service should be made available to the people of the united states free of charge as it has been since the creation of the service. This service is for the safety and protection of the citizens and should not be limited. The referring webpage:
<http://slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251>

1170 I feel very strongly that the Proposed Policy should be implimented. I depend on free and unfettered access to the most complete and accessible weather information available for the safety of my family. I feel that NOAA should remain the best source for weather information and should remain available to everyone at no cost. Thank you very much for your excellent and essential service to the citizens of of our country. Miles Grandfield The referring webpage:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/NorSea27/message/2918>

1171 "Dear Sir or Madame, I would like to express my grave concerns about the Proposed Policy on Partnerships. Any partnership can only be successful as long as the roles of the partners are respected. It appears to many in the private meteorology community, including the broadcast community, that this proposed policy eliminates the boundaries which have successfully described and governed the partnerships between government and private meteorologists in this country. There is no question the government CAN do any task in question--especially in this age of increasing technology and information sharing. The real qusion is whether the government SHOULD do a given task. May I suggest that in these days of tight budgets that the role of the government weather services should be concentrated on those areas that the private sector cannot serve. Maintaining the national weather infrastructure--hardware, software, and research laboratories--along with providing critical warning services should be the focus. Government resources should not be directed to duplicating the services that are provided by the private sector, such as specialized forecasting for various commercial applications, broadcasting over the air or by Internet, and delivery of enhanced forecast products for the general public such as web based graphical interfaces that directly compete with commercial services. Again, it is not because the many creative and talented people in government service can not do these things--of course they can. But, in so doing, they are competing against the very same hard working people who pay the taxes that fund those government agencies. Clearly this is not an environment that will be encouraging for private meteorology, nor is it an environment that will maintain the highly successful private-public partnerships that have distinguished the meteorological community for many decades. Sincerely, Dave Freeman Chief Meteorologist KSNW TV Wichita, KS The referring webpage:
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

1172 The 1991 policy predates the Internet and if created today would not be written as is. PRA and OMB A-130 also did not exist in 1991. It is important for NOAA/NWS to bring it's dissemination policies in line with the rest of the Federal government.

1173 "I think free, easily readable weather information on the Internet is very important. Please use standard formats to give a large audience the ability to use their choice of tools to access the data."

1174 "Greetings, Personally, as a broadcast meteorologist, I have allways considered the National weather Service as a critical partner, sharing the same mission statement of protecting life and property. As far as the new policy being considered, I think it reads pretty good. However, I feel the NWS should focus its

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limited budget on its mission statement, the protection of life and property. Secondly, make sure the NWS provides data and forecasts efficiently with the best computers possible. Thirdly, educate and inform the public on weather safety education. In fact, I think the NWS could even do a better job of getting its weather safety messages out to the public. Broadcast meteorologists promote the safety messages as much as they can. These are basics. I am sure everyone agrees with this. There is an essential need for these services provided by the NWS, especially during severe weather and weather disasters. I do not see the NWS as a threat to my job or career. This opinion may in fact exist because I might not totally understand the ramifications of the new policy. I probably need a private sector meteorologist to give me some concrete examples which illustrate their concerns. I believe nurturing the partnership between NWS, private sector and academia is very, very important. This means all 3 parties should meet face to face every year in a room to discuss issues, problems, concerns, common goals, etc. Everyone should enter the room as a trusted, friendly partner and exit the room the same way. This really is possible. I cannot believe it isn't. Thank you. Erik Salna Chief Meteorologist AMS Broadcast Board Member 409-833-7512 The referring webpage: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>"

1175 "If one industry's particular business model stands in the way of public information paid for with public tax dollars going to the public, then I fear the US will move from rule of the people to rule by elites who influence and even write public policy."

1176 "Ed,

I have a comment on paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Policy. In these two paragraphs archiving and quality control are discussed. While the NWS performs these two activities NESDIS has the responsibility for them and is the main provider of archived data. I think some readers who don't know about the different parts of NOAA may get confused over NCDC's relationship for us, or perhaps this just highlights the need for NESDIS and OAR to have similar policy.

I think the document is well written, and only have this one concern.

--

Tim Ross
Program Coordination Office
National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
14th & Constitution Ave., NW
HCHB Room 5811
Washington, DC 20230
Tel: 202-482-1162
Fax: 202-482-4116
NOAA impacts 30-40% of the economy. Go to
<http://www.pco.noaa.gov/documents/economicstatisticsv4.pdf>"

1177 "Ed,

I've taken a quick look at the draft policy statement. It's quite an improvement over the 1991 policy, taking into account the many changes since then influencing how we do business. I've two thoughts regarding the draft I would ask you to consider. First, the draft doesn't explicitly point to the fact that part of the NWS mission is driven by international responsibilities, many at the treaty level. These obligations are a major difference between our mission and that of the private and academic sectors, and something that is often overlooked by those who would argue against the need for an NWS.

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Secondly, might it be important to touch on the issue of NWS support to other U.S. government agencies? Section 8, bullet 5, mentions ""specially tailored services"" and might give the impression to some that the NWS is not allowed to provide such tailored services. My understanding and experience indicate one of our roles is actually to provide such tailored services to other government agencies, although they are free to contract with the private or academic sectors for them instead.

Thanks to you and your staff for your contributions toward making the new policy a reality.

Regards,
Jim Hoke

<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>"

1178 "As a previous NWS industrial meteorologist, I offer the following comments on the draft Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Climate and related Environmental Information:

1. The Policy offers a concise and implementable update to the 1990 Public-Private partnership.
2. I suggest moving #8 under Policy to #3 to highlight the NOAA/NWS Mission.
3. Since the weather, water and climate enterprise extends into other NOAA line offices- namely NESDIS and OAR, I cannot understand how this policy would NOT apply to all of NOAA. In addition, the constituents, stakeholders, and partners of NWS are also constituent, stakeholders, and partners of the other NOAA line offices. NOAA needs to demonstrate why this policy should not apply to the other line offices because the draft appears to apply to the entire weather, water and climate enterprise: ipso facto all of NOAA.
4. Under implementation, re-word #9 to read: NWS will establish and publish appropriate procedures to implement policy.

I commend the writers of this draft. Much thought has gone into assuring maximum benefit of the partnership to all partners and ultimately the public.

well done !

Allan C. Eustis
Project Leader- NIST Voting Systems Standards
Technology Building 225 Room B257
100 Bureau Drive, Stop 8901
Gaithersburg , Md. 20899-8901
301-975-5099
allan.eustis@nist.gov
<http://vote.nist.gov>"

1179 "Hello,

This link and information was passed along to me
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/> and I want to take a minute to applaud this type of direction for the National weather Service.

Our company, Surfline, specializes in very detailed surf reporting and long range forecasting for surfers and other marine interests around the United

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States and in many International destinations. We launched our services in 1984 and currently reach more than one million people per month through various mediums including the Internet, telephone, fax, wireless, etc.

In the interests of public safety, we have consistently provided special warnings over the years to the National Weather Service, Coast Guard, lifeguard agencies, and other public entities concerned with public safety. There are many times when sudden large waves will create extreme safety hazards to the beach going public, swimmers, boating, and other marine interests. We realize that the NWS must focus its attention toward products benefitting the general public, and not in special interests like detailed surf forecasts for surfers, which can require an enormous amount of time to accurately produce. However, we also realize that it is our responsibility to share our information with the public in the interests of public safety whenever it may become an issue.

The new proposed policy in the links above would be a great first step toward formalizing relationships with companies such as ours, and is a more practical approach toward gaining access to special information which will save lives, but without the enormous dedication of resources by the NWS to produce similar information. We've actually had many discussions with various people in the NWS over the years about this type of relationship.

If you deem necessary we will be happy to provide further information upon request, and would also appreciate any information that you could provide regarding the procedure required for our company to explore this policy further with the NWS.

Thank you and best of luck!

Regards,

Sean...

Sean Collins
President, Surfline
300 Pacific Coast Hwy, Suite 310
Huntington Beach, CA 92648
714.374.0556 Ext. 15
www.surfline.com
""Know Before You Go""

1180 "Quantifying and assuring quality is one thing Government might be better suited to accomplish than other sectors. I suggest NWS be tasked with developing weather information quality standards and providing a service for all sectors' products to be ranked for quality on various scales. The standards would be voluntary, for example, a logo program that identifies the products conform to specified quality benchmarks. The NWS would not be a regulatory agency like the FDA, but rather provide appropriate information so users in a free market could identify the level of quality of the product they are considering for use. The users would be free to make their own quality vs. cost decisions based on information provided by NWS through analysis of the products. The system would work similar to the ABC ratings the Los Angeles health department uses for restaurants and is being considered for use now in San Francisco. Public funding of this process might ensure more unbiased quality benchmarks. There appears to be little incentive for organizations to publish their own quality metrics unless a coordinated effort is begun involving all sectors.

It is also worth considering whether software source code developed with public funds should be readily available to all sectors just as you are proposing for the computer interfaces, data, and metadata.

Please reply if there is anything you believe I can do to further your efforts. At the very least, I would be happy to write my representatives in Congress to promote your efforts.

Sincerely,

David A. Guerrieri
V.P., Business Development
GaryAir
Flight Instruction-Air Taxi-Aviation Technology
P.O. Box 116
Moffett Field, CA 94035
(408) 729-IFLY (4359)
GaryAir@sbcglobal.net
www.GaryAir.us"

1181 "February 20, 2004

Fair weather
Strategic Planning and Policy Office
NOAA National Weather Service
1325 East-West Highway, Room 11404
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3283
Two(2) Pages Sent via Email

Dear Sirs,

Re: Comments on Proposed Policy on Partnerships

Our company has worked with the National Weather Service for twenty-five years in the context of weather and airline operations. During the first twenty years more or less, our relationship with the NWS was always expressed in terms of a partnership with one U.S. airline or another. Often our engineers would draft letters, make phone calls, and attend NWS meetings in Washington on behalf of, or together with, our airline clients. The objective was always to assist our airline clients to solve a weather related problem or to understand and utilize an NWS product or initiative. Because of their prominence in the industry and with the traveling public, our airline clients were able to access NWS personnel, services and products that would have been difficult for our small company to achieve independently. This was a slow process but nevertheless effective in applying NWS weather products within the airlines. U.S. airlines benefitted significantly because of access to information.

The recent years have been significantly different. Our company productivity has increased several times as a result of our ability to acquire information from the NWS over the Internet. We are typical of thousands of other companies of a similar size. The Internet provides us with access to NWS production and research products that heretofore would be available only to large

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corporations. Because of the freedom of access to information we can apply our innovation and creativity on an equal basis. For example, we recently acquired data from the NCEP/NCAR Reanalysis Project which we enhanced and adapted for our industry that allows airlines to answer questions such as, "what payload can be carried between New York and Hong Kong

assuming that the headwinds are the worst in 50 years?" A commercial service is now available to airlines worldwide from a large U.S. Information Technology company based on this work. This is very important tool in determining if an airline route can be operated profitably. We have similar projects underway to utilize the NWS rapid update cycle model in support of airline operations. All this is possible because of freedom of access to information. A casual listener to the coffee-table conversations in our office would be surprised to hear our engineers discuss the NWS. Often when debating the problems of the world, we can be heard discussing the differences between the openness of the U.S. system and the closed nature of the national weather services in Europe with whom we have also worked towards a similar purpose. We attribute much of the success and wealth of the U.S. economic engine with the freedom of access to information. These are opinions that our working experience supports. We are not familiar with the specific details of the proposed policy on partnerships. However, we are hopeful that access to both production quality products and state of the art information will not be curtailed or reduced. Thank you for providing us with the opportunity to comment on your policy changes. Yours truly,
ATI Aero Technology Inc.
Neil E. Thompson
Principal Engineer
NET:grt"

1182 "Hello,

I have read the proposed policy on the local NWS web page. In principle I agree with the provisions contained therein. Cooperation and information flow between the NWS and the private sectors can only result in better service to all users.

However, I must admit that I do have a selfish reason for writing this comment. I have seen cases in the past where local broadcast meteorologists have issued their own weather ""watches"" and ""warnings"", independently of the local NWS office. I do not believe broadcast meteorologists should be allowed to do this. I believe this creates conflicting and confusing information for the general public. I have no doubt that their intentions are unquestionable, that their intent is to provide a public service, as their station license requires them to do. I still wonder if perhaps audience ratings could unintentionally and/or subconsciously influence their decisions. I would prefer that this responsibility remain with the local NWS office.

If I read the policy correctly, it provides that the NWS retains responsibility for issuing watches and warnings. If that is the case, then I would support the policy 100%.

Thank you,
Mike Lackey
107 Cline Dr
Madison, AL 35757
256-837-1545"

1183 "
Dear Sirs:

I would like to comment on the proposed policy, in particular the differences and departures from the recommendations in the National Research Council's (NRC) study, "Fair Weather: Effective Partnerships in weather and Climate Services," (National Academy Press, 2003).

I am commenting in two capacities. First, as an individual user, who has utilized both NWS and also private company provided forecasts. I have utilized these forecasts comparatively, in order to gain better accuracy through consensus. I have used forecasts primarily for travel planning, both automotive and air (where I have also utilized the Aviation weather sites, though not intended for that purpose).

Second, as a business owner and entrepreneur. My company is developing email services that will inform users of current weather and forecast information along with other real-time rapidly changing data such as sports scores and stock quotes. Our business model relies on packaging publicly available data together in a manner targeted at individual users. We rely heavily on NWS data since weather data is only one small part of the data we provide and we cannot afford to pay large per-user fees for the minimal amount of information we use. Indeed, if the information were not available from the NWS, we would simply not provide weather information.

I am troubled by certain modifications to the recommendations of the NRC study, particularly in two areas.

First, the NRC states as a recommended guiding principle:
The taxpayers own the data. Open and unrestricted dissemination of publicly funded information is good policy and the law.
Somehow, in the NWS policy statement this has morphed into:

Open information dissemination: NWS recognizes that open and unrestricted dissemination of high quality publicly funded information, as appropriate and within resource constraints, is good policy and is the law.
This statement is toothless, as it gives the NWS the power to decide that any service or product is either "not appropriate" or "not within resource constraints". This is policy gives too much discretion to the administration of the NWS, allowing, in the worst case, favoritism towards or discrimination against classes of users. This distinction is particularly critical, since, as the NRC study notes (*italics mine*):

Most private companies agree that the government should continue to collect and disseminate weather and climate data on a full and open basis, but not all companies agree that the NWS should disseminate forecasts. However, the committee notes that forecasts have to be made to generate watches, warnings, and advisories, and it makes economic sense to disseminate these useful intermediate products to the public, which has already paid for them.
Furthermore, this policy statement is significantly in conflict with another recommendation of the NRC study:

Recommendation 4. The NWS should continue to carry out activities that are essential to its mission of protecting life and property and enhancing the national economy, including collecting data; ensuring their quality; issuing forecasts, warnings, and advisories; and providing unrestricted access to publicly funded observations, analyses, model results, forecasts, and related information products in a timely manner and at the lowest possible cost to all users.

Nowhere in the Fair Weather Policy does the enumeration of critical services or the promise of delivery at the lowest possible cost appear.

Perhaps most disturbing is the alterations in this NRC recommendation:

Recommendation 5. The NWS should make its data and products available in Internet-accessible digital form. Information held in digital databases should be based on widely recognized standards, formats, and metadata descriptions to ensure that data from different observing platforms, databases, and models can be integrated and used by all interested parties in the weather and climate enterprise.

In the actual Fair weather Policy statement, this has morphed into:

NWS will make its data and products available in Internet-accessible form to the extent practicable and within resource constraints, and will use other dissemination technologies, e.g. satellite broadcast and NOAA Weather Radio, as appropriate.

Again, the inclusion of qualifiers ""to the extent practicable"" and ""within resource constraints"" completely alter the meaning of this policy. In fact, a paranoid reading of the policy could be read to promise that user based weather.gov services (such as radar maps and forecast maps provided on the basis of zip code) will be removed. The NRC study specifically noted this danger:

Some private companies would like the NWS (and academia) to discontinue hourly and long-range forecasts or any product that is targeted to a specific user group (e.g., aviation) or local area (e.g., weather forecasts by zip code). However, there may be public-benefit reasons (e.g., open data access) for the NWS to continue to create specialized products, even if the private sector is already producing them.

This cuts to the core of my comments on the policy. Like the NRC, I believe that all data generated by the NWS, at taxpayer expense, should be made available to the public through the Internet. Products like the National Digital Forecast Database (commented on approvingly by the NRC) should be the future of the NWS. It allows individuals and small businesses (like mine) to harness the wonderful forecasting work being done by the legions of meteorologists, scientists, programmers and other government workers. Private companies already have many ways to differentiate their services, making them the sole source of quality universal basic weather information on the Internet would be an unconcionably dereliction of duty to the taxpayer.

Thank you for considering my comments,

--Mark A. Gollin

President / CTO

Gecko ID
71 Hidden Ln
Guilford, CT 06437

(267) 295-7875 Voice
(267) 295-8093 Fax"

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1184 "In regards to ""fair-weather"", I am having real trouble with anything or anyone interrupting my flow of information from the national weather service. Unlike many government programs or offices, the weather service or NOAA provides good solid and accurate data, which is delivered to the tax payers in a timely fashion for their use.

There are a host of public and private weather services and broadcaster's that receive the NOAA data and present it in a format in which they believe is most palatable with their client or audience. I see where some organizations like the Commercial weather Services Association (CWSA) has apparently adopted a position that is totally twisted in their favor of being the only ones to receive this public information so they can turnkey this data back to their clients and the public at a handsome product. Well not with my taxpayers' dollars you don't!

I have been a broadcaster for nearly 40 years I also run a rather large radio network that delivers agricultural news weather information to a rural audience in Texas. After reading the National Research Councils (NRC) report and the CWSA's response this would keep me from getting this vital information unless I paid a private company for a public product. This is not going to happen!

I am also a Private Pilot and I need the information that NOAA furnishes to make a go or no-go decision when I am planning a flight. Granted I call and get a standard weather briefing from Flight Service, but I also view the aviation weather data on line to get a better feel for the overall situation. Again there is no way as a taxpayer that I should have to pay yet another private service to tell me where I can go fly.

Curt Lancaster

Director of Radio Services

Texas Farm Bureau Network

Waco, TX"

1185 "I am a frequent user of the nexrad radar system website provided by the National weather Service, and saw today that the NOAA was requesting public comment on the draft of the Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information.

I have read the proposed policy carefully, and supplemented

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my understanding with portions of ""Fair Weather: Effective Partnerships in Weather and Climate Services"", especially Chapter 4 and Appendix E.

Overall, if the spirit and substance of ""Fair Weather:..."" is taken as guide in implementation of the proposed policy, I would be satisfied that the best thing was being done with the valuable services provided by the NOAA.

If, however, this policy change is simply preparation for coercive privatization, brought on by cynical underfunding, I will only be disappointed, and not surprised. I'll be watching to see how it goes.

Thanks very much for the opportunity to comment.
Dan Liddell"

1186 "In the proposed partnership policy (<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/policy.php>) at the third bullet of item 1:

The private sector (weather companies, meteorologists working for private companies or as private consultants, and broadcast meteorologists) creates products and services tailored to the needs of their company or clients and works with the NWS to communicate forecasts and warnings that may affect public safety. Can we change this so it doesn't refer to meteorologists exclusively. I would support something more generic than just adding hydrologists because there are many disciplines that could be considered in the ""private sector"". Climatologists, statisticians, actuaries, economists, media folk, software folk, etc come to mind. I would change the item by simply removing the text in parentheses. Also, while the policy seems general on the surface, it seems specific to the public safety role in the details. Is this intentional? Or should we acknowledge the myriad other products as being open to partnership. Certainly NWS Instruction 10-102 is not limited to public safety products so either we need to change the partnership policy or change our the NWS Policy directive.

Geoff Bonnin
Chief, Hydrologic Data Systems Branch
Office of Hydrologic Development
NOAA's National Weather Service"

1187 "Concerning number 6. An interpretation can be made that the NWS is inviting all interested parties to become part of our real-time forecast/warning decision making process. Issuing of warnings, forecasts, etc., have a large ""affect"" on weather, water and climate enterprises. However, I don't think it's in the best interest of the NWS or the public to get everybody ""affected"" on the line before we issue a warning. So, the question - what was your intent with number 6? If it is to include ""affected"" parties in the real-time decision making process, I'd submit that would be an interesting problem. If it wasn't, I would suggest number 6 be re-written to be more specific as to your intent. Thanks"

1188 "Paul Derezotes
Sargent & Lundy - Chicago
CCM 395

=====
In its 2003 "Fair weather" report, NRC makes the following Recommendation No. 1:

"...define processes for making decisions on products, technologies..."

The draft NOAA policy that we have now seen in fact does not define processes at all. Instead, it sets out a list of "principles for participation" (Section No. 8 in the policy). Those principles include:

- NWS priorities
- Advance notice requirements
- Open information requirements
- No favoritism
- How NWS will respond to fringe requests

A process should consist of something that can, for example, be flowcharted. It may contain such principles as NOAA has laid out, but should have much more substance. The dictionary defines a "process" as: "a series of actions or operations conducting to an end: a continuous operation or treatment esp. in manufacture".

Apparently, NOAA is setting a goal for itself of using those principles as a "foundation" when it eventually does get around to define processes for making decisions.

What are the panelists' reactions to the fact that NOAA has not responded explicitly to NOAA's first recommendation? Can NOAA be expected to later finish the job of responding to NRC recommendation No. 1?

=====
Under Section 8 of the NOAA draft policy, the last bullet item addresses how NWS will respond to fringe requests. It reads, in part:

"...When faced with requests for specifically tailored services, NWS will make sure the customer fully understands products NWS "routinely" provides (e.g. forecasts, watches, warnings and data sets) and the ability of private sector providers to meet needs outside those routine services..."

What is bothersome in this section of policy text, is what it doesn't say. For example, it doesn't say that NWS will "Always seek to divert" these fringe customers (including other government agencies such as the DOT, the FAA, the US NRC, the Forest Service, etc.) to private sector suppliers.

My guess is that, if we leave the decision to the customer (government, academic, or private sector), that she/he will always prefer to take the "FREE" (taxpayer-supported) version of the service from NWS!!!

My question is: does the panel agree with my analysis?

=====
Under Section 8 of the NOAA draft policy, the first bullet item describes NWS priorities. It reads, in part:

"...NWS will describe the connection of information services to the NOAA mission and, as applicable, put life and property first in the allocation of resources and the development and dissemination of products and services..."

My reaction here is:

Property is defined as: "something owned or possessed", and can presumably mean
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just about anything under the new policy. So, for example, NWS could conceivably (under the new policy) provide a service to protect a certain kind of property that meets all of the other NWS criteria (advance notice, open information, no favoritism, response to fringe requests), and still be focused on a very local, non-emergency need of US citizens, government, and academia.

(1) My first question here is:

Shouldn't NWS, in its new policy, further (in greater detail) define what kinds of property deserve allocation of the national ""bucket"" of tax dollars? This is especially critical, regarding delineation of ""emergency"" needs from ""non-emergency"" needs. The analogy might be a local police ""emergency"" number, versus a ""non-emergency"" phone number.

(2) My second question here is:

If life and property are first priorities, then what are the second, third, and fourth priorities? And, and what point will NWS draw the line? That is, how will they decide what priority level no longer deserves NWS budget dollars and attention? If budget dollars were twice what they are today (not likely, I know), how many additional ""service priority levels"" would NWS take care of?

=====

Under section 1 of the NOAA draft policy, the bullet items describe the roles in the WWCE of NWS, Academia, and the Private Sector. Those role descriptions are condensed below.

- NWS Provide information to support protecting life and property
- Academia Advance the science and educate future generations of participants in the WWCE
- Private Sector Create products and services tailored to the needs of their company or clients

My question is:

In fact, don't ALL THREE sectors already perform ALL THREE of the roles defined above? For example, NWS advances the science. The private sector educates new participants via on-the-job training. Academia provides services-for-fees to clients other than their students. NWS educates and provides some tailored products and services. Therefore, why do we continue to attempt to pigeon-hole each sector's role, if the definitions are clearly bogus (not matched with reality)?

=====

I know that the NRC report specifically focused on NOAA/NWS. However, note that the services and policies of the WWCE in fact are heavily influenced and contributed to by a number of additional government entities, including the following examples:

- US Department of Agriculture - Forest Service
- Department of Defense
- Department of Energy
- Department of Homeland Security (FEMA)

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Department of Interior (Bureau of Land Management, Fish and
Wildlife Service, National Park Service)
Department of Transportation (Federal Aviation Administration)
US EPA
National Science Foundation
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
National Transportation Safety Board
Congressional committees and staff analysts
Executive Branch advisory boards and commissions (e.g. on climate
Change)

Does the panel as a whole agree that equal (if not, in some cases, more) attention should be given in the USA to the meteorology policies and operations of all of the above government entities?"

1189 "To the best that I can tell, this is a sound policy.

In particular, I strongly support clauses #4, ""NWS will provide information in forms accessible to the public"", and #7, ""NWS will promote the open and unrestricted exchange of weather, water, climate, and related environmental information worldwide"", as well as the principle of open information dissemination stated in #8.

Thanks for your consideration.

AL

Allen Linkenhoker
Salem, VA"

1190 "I'm not sure exactly what your new policy is intended to accomplish.

I will state my opinion much more clearly and succinctly than the explanation of your proposed policy.

I am NOT in favor of any policy that would reduce the availability of currently offered free information, or any current or future information collected using tax dollars. Taxpayers have already paid and continue to pay for the collection, processing, and dissemination capabilities involved. Any reduction in the availability of this information and restricting it to commercial ventures so they can sell it for a profit is out of the question. If commercial ventures want to sell ""value added"" services they certainly have a right to charge for whatever value they add. As for information collected using tax funds, it should remain public domain and be widely available on the Internet for free public use.

Lt. Michael Nie
Green Township Fire Department
Cincinnati, OH"

1191 "This email responds to your request for comment on the NOAA/NWS proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information.

I work for the Virginia DOT and represent them on the Board of the Aurora Program. The Aurora Program is a consortium of agencies focused on collaborative research, evaluation, and deployment of advanced technologies for detailed road weather

monitoring and forecasting. I also represent AASHTO Region II on the steering committee of AASHTO's Snow and Ice Pooled Fund Cooperative Program (SICOP), SICOP seeks to test, evaluate and promote deployment of advanced winter maintenance technology. My comments are my own and do not represent the official position of Virginia DOT, Aurora or SICOP.

My comments focus on the need for more emphasis on "road weather" services. Historically, the NWS has confined its interest in weather over landmasses to the atmosphere two meters above the ground and up. Those of us involved in surface transportation recognize that weather attributes (e.g., temperature, wind speed, humidity) vary considerably in the atmospheric boundary layer near the ground. Significantly, the vast majority of travel and commerce take place in this two-meter high boundary area. The policy should acknowledge that weather and its effects extend to and into the ground. Further, it should indicate that weather services in this boundary layer are of equal importance to that above the two-meter mark.

The proposed policy properly indicates that The nation's weather, water, and climate enterprise is composed of unique partnerships among government, private sector entities, and the academic and research community. The three bullets outlining their contributions, however, seem to limit the government's contribution to that supplied by the NWS. The policy should acknowledge the contribution of other government agencies. Numerous government agencies contribute services that complement the NWS contribution and which are not covered by academia or the private sector. Let me list a few. Since my knowledge and experience are in the state DOT arena, I will focus my comments there:

- State DOT's have installed over 1000 environmental sensor stations (ESS) nationwide. Most of the ESS collect atmospheric data based upon NWS data collection standards. In addition, these ESS sense surface and sub-surface temperatures at locations where people travel, on the road.

- State DOT's share both its collected surface and atmospheric data 1) with the public, through websites and 2) with the NWS (and other agencies) through FTP and Internet connections.

- State DOT's archive their collected data for use by others for forecasting and research.

While NOAA/NWS has been slow to officially accept this contribution and data source, individual units have found these to be valuable.

NOAA/NWS should expand the policy on partnerships to include working with other government agencies and interests. Again, I will focus on the resources and need represented by state DOT's:

- Most DOT's recognize the need to develop and maintain an infrastructure of road weather observing, telecommunications, and prediction systems on which the public (federal, state, and local government agencies), private, and academic sectors can rely and they are funding this need.

- Most state DOT's are collecting and archiving data and recognize the need to ensure its quality, but lack the expertise and single entity to standardize this process.

- Most state DOT's support the need for more investment in road weather research. The proposed Federal transportation bill to cover the next six years includes increased funding for this purpose. Effective spending of this money will require cooperation between those with transportation related expertise and those with weather related expertise.

Taken together these recommendations represent a modification of focus and emphasis in weather research and services from atmospheric to one that includes the boundary layer. As with any hydraulic analysis, this involves different analytical tools and

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skills. Some may not be resident within the current NOAA/NWS staff. Please do not let this difficulty keep you from considering these modifications at this time. The surface transportation community that uses roads is at a point where dramatically improved road weather information and forecasting is needed to bring our services up to the level expected by the public. We can perhaps do it without you, but the more efficient and effective method is to do it in partnership with you.

These comments address whether the policy is suitable for the activities of the National weather Service in the area of weather, water, climate and related environmental information services. Since my comments are narrowly focused on the relationship of NOAA/NWS and the road transportation community, whether the scope of the proposed policy should be expanded to include similar activities of NESDIS, OAR, and the National Ocean Service; and whether adoption of the same or similar principles for other NOAA programs would be appropriate is dependent on if they have an influence on road weather. If they have an influence, then they should be included in the policy and/or expanded to cover other NOAA programs.

Daniel S. Roosevelt
Research Scientist
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Ph: (434) 293-1924
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Dan.Roosevelt@VirginiaDOT.org"

1192 "I recently reviewed your proposed policy and I have to say I'm excited about the changes. As an aviation meteorologist for Jeppesen, I think a good working relationship with the NWS is critical. The only suggestions I can offer are:

1) I'd really like to be able to use awhips... none of the commercial software packages I've seen come close to what this program can do. It would be highly beneficial if a public version of this software was available to the public

2) An interactive chat room similar to what the CCFP does would be highly useful to get an idea of what forecasters are thinking. It would also provide a medium to share ideas and exchange thoughts.

Keep up the good work! Feel free to contact me if necessary

Ben Neufeld
Jeppesen Meteorologist"

1193 "Dear NOAA Fair Weather representative,

Our small company has reviewed the overall Fair weather Policy being developed and we would like to provide you with our comments from a space weather vendor perspective. Our comments are also based, in part, upon our experience of working amiably and closely with NOAA Space

Environment Center (SEC) over the past several years through a Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA). NOAA SEC has provided very helpful support to the vendor community through its annual Space weather week, for example, and, as SEC goes into the National Weather Service starting in FY05, we believe that the lessons learned over the past few years should be incorporated into the evolving policy statements.

Our comments on the Fair weather policy are as follows:

1) The line in the sand approach is no longer productive, in our view. It comes from an earlier period where there were few companies and few products to be divided up between the public and private sectors. As there become increasingly more products and areas of interest, this policy becomes a recipe for disaster in that few or no concerns are resolved as there become thousands of small ""lines."" A severe problem we see is that there is no one group to manage that negotiation effort and we certainly can't spend alot of our company time monitoring whether the line has been crossed or not. We believe there is confusion as to what the line in the sand policy actually is. The old NWS policy, from what we can tell, was based in part on this line in the sand philosophy.

2) The new policy does have merits but has some real problems. The merits are that it takes a process view towards resolving public-private-academic conflicts in order to bring weather products to the public and customers. The process approach is the only way we can see that the multitude of new products, new areas and new customers can be addressed in breadth and depth. For example, we see space weather in the immediate future as an activity area but will there be an underwater ""weather"" in the next century or even Mars and Moon weather?. The problems in the new policy are a severe lack of ways in which to implement the public-private partnership. Here are our suggestions for changes to the policy:

a) Contributions (Policy item 1): the private sector additionally, and more broadly, communicates the conditions or state of weather (including space weather) beyond just communicating forecasts and warnings.

b) Premise (Policy item 2): must also include the premise of recognizing that private and academic information adds value, breadth, and depth beyond government information.

c) Activities (Policy item 3): besides NWS collecting, archiving, ensuring, issuing, and providing, there MUST be an additional clause for NWS utilization of private sector and academic existing or new models, forecasts, data, and analyses as a cost-effective way to reduce the NWS R&D burden and to responsibly provide the public and customers with the lowest cost information not otherwise available.

d) Information provision (Policy item 4): An additional clause MUST address encouraging the utilization of private sector and academic information sources that are linked through the dissemination technologies.

e) Recognition (Policy item 5): no comment.

f) Mechanisms (Policy item 6): The open advisory body and establishing internal NWS procedures is a start but does not have enough ""teeth"". As it stands, these are not implementation mechanisms and this is a major problem which will plague us for decades if not changed. A strong statement for implementation and the commitment to work with private

and academic sectors MUST be made. We suggest ""NWS will actively collaborate with the private sector and academic communities by establishing a public-private-academic policy review board which will set national implementation strategies for responsible information dissemination.""

f) Policy items 7, 8: no comment.

We recommend the use of the new policy as a way to enable space weather vendor input into a broad realm of new areas but strongly recommend that modifications are made in response to the problems mentioned above.

Sincerely,

W. Kent Tobiska

*
ADVANCED SPACE WEATHER PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

*

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1194 "Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Space weather, neither the NOAA (soon to be performed by NWS), nor the commercial sector, nor the academic efforts is not captured in the draft policy. This should be changed, and changing the draft to include space weather services may prove helpful in broadening the policy to all of NOAA and to its other data and forecast activities beyond ""weather, water, and climate"". Doesn't NMFS count and predict fish stocks? Isn't there a similar partnership with academia and private sector for this information and its uses?

General Comments

- Is this a NOAA policy or an NWS policy? It seems to be written as an NWS policy, but shouldn't it be NOAA policy?
- The draft policy is not only NWS-centric, it is very weather-centric. Note that NWS will be providing space weather products as of October 1, and there is no mention in the draft that space weather products will be covered by this policy. NOAA (and even NWS, e.g., marine info) now provides many products beyond weather, water, and climate products that might be, or already are being, purchased by customers after having value added by commercial suppliers.
- It is surprising to me that there is no articulation of the general policy that it is NOAA's role to provide data about, and model output regarding, the environment, while it is more appropriately the private sector's role to provide products tailored to specific users and to model the consequences of environmental change upon mans systems and enterprises.

Specific Comments, assuming this becomes NWS policy, not the NOAA-wide policy

- Foreword para - Add to the first sentence so it reads, "...applies to the weather, water, climate, related environmental, and space weather services of..."
- Add space weather in the manner given above to every use of the phrase "weather, water, and climate" in the entire policy statement. That is, in: Section 1., first sentence; Section 3., ultimate sentence; Section 6., first sentence and first bullet; Section 7., Section 8., first line.

- Section 1., third bullet. Revise to be inclusive and reflect the fact that there are space physicists working for private companies or as private consultants working with Space Environment Center, soon to be part of NWS.
- Section 3 is one of the most NWS-centric Sections. NWS doesn't collect (much of) or archive the weather, water, climate, related environmental, and space weather data; NESDIS does these things.
- Section 3 omits any mention of model outputs to show current conditions. It jumps right from data to forecasts, leaving out "nowcasts". Yet NWS (and SEC) currently provide this kind of information.
- Section 4., line 5 - add comma after "e.g."
- Section 4., Sentence 3 - It is silly and embarrassing to say, "Information ... will be based on..." Change it to "NOAA's (or NWS') data bases will comply with ..."
- Section 6., first bullet - Set off "as necessary" with commas.
- Section 8., last bullet, the parenthetical phrase - Add comma after "e.g."; add "current conditions," in front of "forecasts"

Ernest Hildner"

1195 "As a soon-to-be-member of NWS with the placement of Space Environment Center in NCEP, I would like to comment on the Draft Policy on Partnerships. I refer to ""vendors"" as a shortcut for space weather service providers or the commercial/private sector.

I have been serving as the Vendor Liaison for SEC for at least 7 years, and am familiar with vendor needs and desires in the space weather community. We have faced the same ""line in the sand"" dilemma, the same struggle with whether we are helping or hindering vendors, etc.

My comments about this report are really about one subject.

It appears that NWS is clear on what their mission is, what they want to do, what would help them do their job. There is extremely little about what vendors will be supported or allowed to do, how they can benefit from the NWS partnership, or how they can make meaningful changes, even though they will be allowed to ""suggest"".

It has been our experience that, while the line-in-the-sand has been problematic, a policy guideline has been very helpful. Without a fixed promise or absolute limit, we have been able to clearly state our intentions and vendors have been able to rely on it. The policy guideline is that SEC will describe and predict the state of the space environment and its phenomena but not the expected effects of that phenomena on specific systems. Further, it states that tailored products applying to localities or special vulnerabilities will be the purview of vendors.

It seems to me that the NWS policy includes a lot about what it can and will do, but does not commit to any substantive cooperation with the public sector. Especially egregious to me is the very last bullet under #8 when NWS merely says it will inform customers of what the private sector is able to do. Rather, without setting the fixed limits, I believe the NWS could be more forthcoming with their intentions to work in partnership with the vendors.

I suggest something like this (applies to weather and space weather): ""NOAA will describe and predict the state of the [space] environment and its phenomena but not the expected effects of that phenomena on specific systems. Further, tailored products applying to localities or special vulnerabilities will be the purview of the private sector unless there is no interest in responding to the request.""

Thank you for your attention,
Barbara Poppe, Space Environment Center"

1196 "Comment forwarded from webcast survey Taxpayers pay for the satellites which supply national and world wide weather images and loops. Taxpayers paid for the building and continued support of the nextrad radar sites around the country which supply EXTREMELY IMPORTANT storm/tornado warnings, in addition to the regular rain

loops, at NOAA websites like

<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/radar/loop/DS.p37cr/si.koax.shtml>

My fear is that the freely available NOAA nextrad sites will be either reduced (the loops disabled) or removed and the data given/sold to commercial websites like the weather Channel which will then charge monthly/annual subscription services for exactly what NOAA is supplying now plus annoying commercials. This would force Joe Q Taxpayer to PAY TWICE for the same service, which would be immoral and unethical. I've read the propaganda from the commercial weather industry front organization, which claims that NOAA nextrad sites are 'competing' against the 'public sector' businesses which do the same thing as NOAA. NONSENSE! As long as until the weatherChannel and its buddies launch their own satellites and build and support their own nextrad radar stations

Besides, if I had to depend on the weather Channel to warn me and my family of impending Tornadoes I doubt if I'd be alive to write this msg. I need to see the rain loop with as little delay as possible when the weather it is imaging contains the possibility of embedded tornadoes. NOAA's NextRad

loops are rarely more than 6 minutes old. The weather Channel weather images are rarely LESS than 30 minutes old. For emergency warnings the weather Channel is a joke. Further, because the weather Channel is commercial they support those areas that provide the greatest ad revenue. Areas with moderate or low populations (hence low ad revenues), like Lincoln, NE, are not served as well as major metropolitan centers. Ergo, when I investigated the weather Channels ""DeskTop weather"" applet, I

discovered that Lincoln isn't among the 75 available cities.

One also has to ask why, if the weather Channel and its buddies are so concerned about NOAA 'competing' with them, they aren't trying to hijack NOAA weather radio? Could it be that radio is not multi-media and ads can't be displayed simultaneously with the weather? The public would be incensed if they interrupted a weather warning with an ad. Obviously. These 'free market' folks see low hanging fruit in the form of NOAA nextrad services and want to steal them for a song and a dance. Their actions are

better described as 'Free Loading' rather than Free Market. Let them launch their own satellites and build their OWN nextrad sites in numbers big enough to cover the entire country uniformly AND ONLY THEN we can talk about how NOAA is 'competing' against them. Otherwise, they are just white collar thieves, using political connection\$/payoff\$ to grea\$ politician\$ to grease their theft of services. It's disgusting."

1197 "Taxpayers paid/pay for the satellites which supply national and world wide weather images and loops to NOAA, the US government, and others. Taxpayers paid for the building the Nextrad radar sites and continue to pay for the support of these sites around the country. The NOAA websites supply EXTREMELY IMPORTANT storm/tornado warnings, in addition to the regular rain loops, an example of which is at:

<http://www.crh.noaa.gov/radar/loop/DS.p37cr/si.koax.shtml>

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My fear is that the freely available NOAA Nextrad sites will be either reduced (the loops disabled) or removed and the data given/sold to commercial websites like the weather Channel, which will then charge monthly/annual subscription services for exactly what NOAA is NOW supplying, plus annoying commercials. This would force Joe Q Taxpayer to PAY TWICE for the same service, which would be immoral and unethical and UNFAIR. The use of the term ""Fairweather"" to describe the hijacking NOAA services is like using the word ""democracy"" to describe the Chinese political system.

I've read the propaganda from the commercial weather industry front organization. They claim that the NOAA Nextrad sites are 'competing' against the 'public sector' businesses which do the ""same thing"" as NOAA. UTTER NONSENSE! Only when the weatherChannel and its buddies produce their OWN raw materials at their OWN expense (launch their own satellites and build and support their own Nextrad radar stations) can the term 'competing' be used in any meaningful sense. Until then, it would be like the tenant charging the landlord rent.

Besides, if I had to depend on the weather Channel to warn me and my family of impending Tornadoes I doubt if I'd be alive to write this msg. (Over the years I've been within about a mile of seven tornadoes!) I NEED to see the rain loop with as LITTLE DELAY as possible when the weather it is imaging contains the possibility of embedded tornadoes. NOAA's NextRad loops are rarely more than 6 minutes old. The weather Channel weather images are rarely LESS than 30 minutes old. In cases of emergency the weather Channel's ""weather on the Eights"" is a joke. Further, because the weather Channel is commercial they support those areas that provide the greatest ad revenue. Areas with moderate or low populations (hence low ad revenues), like Lincoln, NE, are not served as well as major metropolitan centers. Ergo, when I investigated the weather Channel's ""DeskTop weather"" applet, I discovered that Lincoln isn't among the 75 available cities.

One also has to ask why, if the weather Channel and its buddies are so concerned about NOAA 'competing' with them, they aren't trying to hijack NOAA weather radio? Could it be that radio is not multi-media and ads can't be broadcast simultaneously with the weather? The public would be incensed if they interrupted a weather warning with an ad. Obviously, these 'free market' folks see low hanging fruit in the form of NOAA Nextrad services and want to steal them for a song and a dance. Their actions are better described as 'Free Loading' rather than Free Market. Let them launch their own satellites and build their OWN Nextrad sites in numbers big enough to cover the entire country uniformly. THEN AND ONLY THEN can we talk about how NOAA is 'competing' against them. Otherwise, they are just white collar thieves, using political connection\$/payoff\$ to grea\$ politician\$ to grea\$e their theft of \$ervice\$. It's disgusting.

Jerry L Kreps
521 West Garber Avenue
Lincoln, NE 68521
(402) 429-2571"

1198 "Comment on NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information

Greetings,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information.

My overriding concern is that historical meteorological data be made freely,

conveniently and openly available to the taxpayers who paid for its collection.

I make frequent use of satellite data in conducting a wide variety of scientific studies. My results are published in the scholarly literature (for a list of publications and descriptions of my science, see www.forrestmims.org).

Additionally, I advise students on conducting science projects that use satellite data. Some of these students, including my daughter, have made significant scientific discoveries with the help of such data.

Unfortunately, it has been very difficult to obtain historical weather and climate data from the NWS. I have sent e-mails to the National Climatic Data Center (NCDC) that were never answered. I have also placed telephone calls at my own expense to NCDC that were never returned, or I was placed on indefinite hold.

The current policy is worse than unacceptable, and I will be most appreciative if the data for which I and other taxpayers pay is made available to us.

Much of my data is collected on my own time. You can see some of it without cost on my web site.

Best regards,

Forrest

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Editor, The Citizen Scientist
www.sas.org

Vice-Chair, Environmental Science Section
Texas Academy of Science

Member representing Guadalupe County
Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG)
AIR Technical Committee
AIR Advisory Committee"

1199 "Dear NWS:

As the CEO of a private weather company, I am extremely concerned about the new proposed NOAA policy entitled "Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information." I do not feel that the new policy adequately represents the interests of the private weather industry. Rather than writing a new policy, the 1991 Public-Private Partnership Policy needs to be strengthened so that the National Weather Service does a better job of refraining from direct competition with the private sector.

The private weather industry is an important source of federal tax revenue and our voice needs to be heard. It is a waste of federal taxpayer money to have the National Weather Service engage in activities that are better served or presently served by the private sector. Recent activities by the National Weather Service such as a broadcast weather show on PBS in Alaska and wireless services in Florida are just two examples of where the National Weather Service has stepped on the toes of the private weather industry.

NOAA needs to have strict guidelines prohibiting it from entering areas such as

broadcast and wireless that can be adequately served by the private weather industry. NOAA's role needs to be better defined as one of research and development, public safety, and raw dissemination of data. The U.S. has the best weather forecasting services in the world thanks to the efforts of the private weather industry over the past 50 years. One only has to look as far as Europe to see what happens when government-run weather offices unfairly compete with the private sector. When the government tries to compete with the private weather industry, the quality of the weather services goes down and an important tax-base is destroyed.

Any new NOAA policy needs to explicitly prohibit NOAA from directly targeting specific user groups. In addition, a policy that restricts NOAA from engaging in "value-add" services should be put in place. The role of government in capitalistic societies is to provide public goods that private industry cannot adequately supply - the National Weather Service should be no different. Examples of public weather goods include the collection of raw data, the processing of data in weather models, the research and development of better forecasting tools, and the dissemination of timely weather alerts to the public.

Other activities including the creation of weather portals, the delivery of weather information over wireless devices, and the creation of web pages targeting specific industries are activities that should be off-limits to NOAA since they are already well-served by the private sector. Any new projects that NOAA undertakes should undergo a review that considers whether the project under consideration can be provided or is already provided by the private sector. A formal appeal process to project initiatives should be put in place. Pure and simple, U.S. taxpayers should not finance NOAA projects that drive private weather companies, an important source of tax revenue, out of business.

Any money spent by NOAA is best spent in research and development where everyone can benefit. The end weather product should be left up to the private sector. It is my sincere hope that you will give consideration to these concerns as you review and discuss the new "Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information." Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Geoff Flint
President & CEO
CustomWeather, Inc.
26 South Park
San Francisco, CA. 94107"

1200 "To whom it may concern at Fairweather:

The proposed policy as outlined below is one more important reason to establish a Joint Institute for Caribbean Climate Studies (JICCS) at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguez as soon as possible. Efforts are now underway to create JICCS with many partnerships as encouraged in the proposed policy. In essence, the creation of JICCS is a full endorsement of the proposed policy.

Regards,
PV

Pieter L. Van der Meer; Office: L-100A in Mechanical Engineering;
Tel. 787-832-4040 Ext. 2096 or 3659(O), 787-873-1067 (H),
Cel. 787-649-3307 Fax 787-265-3817 (O).

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Weather Service
Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water,
Climate and Related Environmental Information

NOAA's National Weather Service provides information to support protecting life and property and enhancing the national economy. To carry out its mission, it develops and maintains an infrastructure of observing, data processing, prediction and communication systems on which the public (federal, state, and local government agencies), private, and academic sectors rely

The NRC study found this three-sector system has led to an extensive and flourishing set of weather services that are of great benefit to the U.S. public and to major sections of the U.S. economy. It also found some level of tension is an inevitable but acceptable price to pay for the excellent array of weather and climate products and services our nation enjoys, but the frictions and inefficiencies of the existing system can probably be reduced, permitting the three sectors to live in greater harmony.

The study's primary conclusion:

""It is counterproductive and diversionary to establish detailed and rigid boundaries for each sector outlining who can do what and with which tools. Instead, efforts should focus on improving the processes by which the public and private providers of weather services interact. Improving these processes would also help alleviate the misunderstanding and suspicion that exists between some members of the sectors."" [Emphasis in original]"

1201 "I have read the proposed ""NOAA Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information"" online at <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php> and offer the following comments...

I am a private, taxpaying user of NWS weather info, typically via the internet at <http://www.crh.noaa.gov/forecasts/ILZ014.php?warncounty=ILC031&city=Chicago>

The proposed policy seems to support my main concerns, namely that:

1. As a taxpayer, I expect free, convenient access to NWS data regarding current weather conditions, forecasts and graphic data (e.g., radar and satellite images). The current arrangement via the internet meets my needs and is generally very usable. (Principle: I paid for it, I get free access to it.)
2. I expect academic users and commercial users of weather data (e.g., commercial weather services, commercial broadcast media) to have the same access that I have as a private taxpayer. I expect that they will be charged at rates which cover NOAA's costs for any additional data, modelling or data packaging that they request. (Principle: If they're going to derive commercial value from extra work by NOAA, they should pay for the extra work.)

Finally, I like the way that the proposal spells out guidelines and principles, rather than situational details.

Patrick Brown
800 Lyman Ave.
Oak Park, IL 60304"

1202 "Fair-weather:

The existing policy in effect is just fine.

Thank You

Greg S. Garner"

1203 "I generally agree with the policy. One item I find troublesome is at the end of paragraph 3. Specifically ""providing unrestricted access to publicly funded observations....at the lowest possible cost to users""

My concern is twofold. 1) As a taxpayer, I'm interested in achieving this goal at the lowest possible cost to the government, not the lowest cost to the user. 2) It would appear that by providing data and products at the lowest possible cost to the user, you are putting NWS into direct competition with potential commercial redistributors of these data.

I understand that under the current NOAAPort/SBN arrangement, there is no incremental cost to NWS to provide users with this data virtually for free (after the initial receiving station investment), but this may not always be the case.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Mike Mazzella
Operation Manager
Science Applications International Corporation"

1204 "Dear civil representative,

On behalf of the tax paying public, I would like to thank you for working for us. It is difficult to find government agencies with an outstanding reputation for public service. The National Weather Service (NWS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are among those reputable agencies. I would like to demonstrate how the NWS/NOAA - on the radio and internet - is essential to my wellbeing. Quite simply, no other weather service is capable of providing me with the capacity and detail I require to make educated decisions about how the weather will affect me. I use the NWS/NOAA in my daily routine. In fact, as a first-world citizen, I expect this service to continue to improve as it has for the past 21 years that I have used it. I find NWS/NOAA to be more understandable, more interpretable, more competent, and most importantly more accurate than any other source of weather information available to me. With the advent of NWS/NOAA on the internet, my ability to predict local weather has well increased. I cannot rely upon other sources of weather information with the same amount of confidence that the NWS/NOAA provides to me.

Please do not be coerced by commercial enterprises interested in my money. In fact, I am not interested in giving them my money and do not want their inferior services to replace the superior ones that I already pay for with my hard-earned tax dollar. The status quo of the NWS/NOAA is essential to the public, and I insist that the NWS/NOAA continue to provide the public with the most advanced technology indefinitely.

Sincerely,"

1205 "NCIM Members:

First I think that the NCIM Response written and dated 19 May 2004 is excellent.

I have been busy with many things lately and have not said much on this subject, but I feel compelled to say something.

It is easy for all of us to see ways in which some of the tasks currently undertaken by the NWS could go to the private sector and we could do them much better and at less cost to the taxpayer. However, it is tough to see the NWS trying to take things away from the private sector which we have felt are clearly in our domain. None of us likes competing with an entity which we subsidize with our tax dollars. We need the NWS with its charge as currently defined. In my opinion this means that we need the data they gather, the model output, the forecasts, the warnings and we need to be able to utilize the awesome infrastructure (sensors) we have funded with our tax dollars. I believe this to be the clear domain of the NWS. Therefore there is a boundary.

Our government chose to privatize some of what I feel should be their domain. The lightning network was privatized and serves as a good example of how such basic sensor privatization affects our industry. If they choose to privatize other basic sensor networks, I think that should be open to serious question since I don't think it was a good idea to privatize the lightning "data gathering system and the resultant data." In my opinion, it makes access to the data much more difficult and very expensive. Privatized mesonets are a data source currently undergoing question. How do we deal with private data gathering networks and the "ownership" of the resulting data? Not clear, but access to data should be open, whoever owns the system. My strong feeling is that the systems we pay for with tax dollars should be available to all. Systems which are privately funded are entitled to charge for the resulting data.

Where I start to have a real problem is if our government, in this case the NWS, starts to compete in an area where the private sector has invested considerable resources and has established a market for their products. The problem is that government can compete on a cost basis since we are already paying their salaries and overhead. If somebody pays my salary and overhead, I can work pretty cheap. Unfair competition? I have seen government agencies begin to compete in the private sector. Once a government agency has a business income, they can start doing their job by using the money earned to "hire" staff to do the jobs they are being paid to do with tax dollars. Will NWS begin to do this if they are free to provide specialized products? It is conceivable! What is to stop this?

At the moment, the NWS budget is very limited. They have been strapped for money for years. Rightly, I think the NWS has chosen to invest their limited resources in infrastructure and reduce staff. What if those staff, who are already considerably overcommitted, begin to do what should be private sector jobs? We as tax payers and entrepreneurs get burned in many ways. As tax paying citizens, we no longer get what we have paid for in terms of NWS services. As private sector meteorologists, we are paying for government workers to compete with us. Doesn't make much sense does it?

Thus, I think it is right that there be some lines of responsibility drawn. I agree, there should no be rigid boundaries, but there should be some strong guidelines, not just processes. In private enterprise, many of us do not have the time or wherewithal to get deeply involved in process, as does the government.

I agree with the NCIM response and just wanted to add some of my perspective.

Wayne R. Sand"

1206 "I recommend that federal government retain a minimum of responsibility for weather service, and that private industry form and fund cooperative groups to prepare forecasts, specialized for either TV, newspapers, aviation, auto travel, agriculture, etc.

People who do not use specialized forecasts should not have to pay for them through taxes.

P. W. Allen"

1207 "Dear Sir:

As a private meteorologist please know that I and my colleagues are concerned about any change in policy that would see the National weather Service developing forecast products for users of specific time and space dependant weather information.

Our clients at municipal departments of public works have come to depend on and trust the level of personal service and quality control that we design into our local snow and ice forecasting and storm warning system. Insurance companies, attorneys and contractors find our certified weather statements document local weather with rapid response at low cost.

This type of enterprise employs people outside of government and generates tax dollars. The small business adapts quickly to changes in the needs of weather sensitive operations. It seems a perfect compliment to the much larger structure within the Department of Commerce and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Thank you for your interest in this important issue.

Robert Gilman

New England Weather Science"

1208 "This sounds great. I hope it works out.

Michael Schwarzchild

New Milford, CT

"Decay is inherent in all compounded things.

Strive on with diligence."

-- The Buddha, on his deathbed"

1209 "To whom it May Concern,

I dearly would have preferred taking a considerable amount of time to draft a more thorough comment about the proposed revision in the 1991 Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service, but our recent record rainfall and flooding here in the Detroit area has taken away much of my free time, so these remarks will have to be brief.

I am writing you from the vantage point of a veteran television and private consulting meteorologist. During my twenty-two year career, I have worked on many projects with the National Weather Service, including serving on the NWS Severe Thunderstorm Warning Criteria Team in the late 1990s, and also in my past role as chairman of the AMS Board of Broadcast Meteorology. The NWS public-private partnership, as it currently exists, is a strong one, and the proposed changes threaten to severely and negatively impact the meteorology private sector.

It is very disturbing that the proposed policy ignores the role of the broadcast meteorologist in society. Many of us combine scientific training with superior broadcast experience to provide the perfect combination of expertise and communication skills necessary to convey potentially life or property saving information. Furthermore, the broadcast meteorologist is more than just a weather forecaster: we are the public's closest link with the scientific community. Broadcast meteorologists also provide information about climate change, pollution and environmental issues, space research and technology updates, etc. Just last week, a half-hour documentary I researched, wrote, and produced about volcanoes and their effects on our weather won an EMMY from the National Association of Television Arts and Sciences. Many local science teachers e-mailed my station requesting copies of the program to use in the classroom to teach their students about volcanoes, which we provided at no cost. Replacing broadcast meteorologists with NWS personnel broadcasting weather information at private sector television or radio stations (as could potentially occur under the proposed changes) eliminates most of this related science and environmental information from radio and television broadcasts. The negative impact is beyond description.

Private sector meteorologists also serve society in many other ways. My forensic work on behalf of both plaintiff and defense attorneys has prominently impacted many significant lawsuits. My substantial experience in the legal system has given me specific skills that allow me to excel in this area, and has shown my clients the importance and benefits of Certified Consulting Meteorologists. There are many other private consulting meteorologists who have developed specific skills pertinent to the specific industry they serve. It would be detrimental to the NWS to expect its personnel to "branch out" into these many areas, rather than concentrate on the one thing they currently do best.

There is much, much more that I would like to say but, as mentioned above, I have so little time. The bottom line is that the private sector has demonstrated that it is a very efficient and positive conduit of the information that the NWS provides. There is probably no better example of how the public-private partnership SHOULD work than my relationship with my local NWS office in White Lake, Michigan. I have promoted NOAA Weather Radio by conducting test tornado warnings LIVE FROM MY NWS OFFICE in our newscasts on three different occasions, have done countless interviews with NWS personnel (including at the National Climatic Data Center in Asheville, North Carolina) for weather or weather-related stories, share severe weather information with my NWS office for warning and verification purposes, and am currently in the initial planning stages of coordinating a series of live special reports on behalf of our local NWS office to recruit more people for its Cooperative Weather Observer Program.

The current policy states that "The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law." THIS LANGUAGE SHOULD NOT CHANGE.

Again, I wish I could say more. I hope that these comments are considered, and I remain available for any additional feedback or contributions you desire.

Sincerely,

Paul H. Gross, C.C.M.

Grossweather.com Certified Consulting Meteorologist

WDIV-TV Senior Meteorologist and Executive Producer of Weather"

1210 "Wayne and All,

I believe Wayne's comments need some clarification. The National weather Service did not "privatize" lightning data – it was never theirs to begin with. The National Lightning Detection Network® was created by a private sector company and has always been private sector.

Wayne's email further states: How do we deal with private data gathering networks and the "ownership" of the resulting data? Not clear, but access to data should be open, whoever owns the system. My question: What possible incentive would there be for companies like AWS to invest in improved networks unless they retained intellectual property rights to the network and could sell the data?

There are private sector companies that can sell dual-polarization weather radars right now, at least 5 years (and likely more) than that data will be available to the NWS. How could they afford to deploy them unless there is a return on their investment?

Let free enterprise build a better mousetrap – and each of us is free to decide whether it benefits our businesses and whether we wish to invest in it.

Mike

--

Michael R. Smith, C.C.M.
CEO/Founder
WeatherData
245 N. Waco St., Ste. 310
Wichita, Kansas 67202
(316) 265-9127
Fax (316) 265-1949"

1211 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Kyle Tupin
Director, Meteorological Services
Universal Weather and Aviation, Inc
PH: 713-944-1622
FX: 713-943-4651"

1212 "Dear Fellow Meteorologists

Thanks to Wayne, Mike and others for insightful comments.

If the private sector can provide ""better"" observational data than the NWS and that data has net monetary value to PSMs and their clients that exceeds the net value of the NWS data (revenue minus data fees), so be it. The marketplace will retain the most financially beneficial solutions and filter out the less competitive data. The same should apply to forecasts.

I agree with Mike that the private sector should be able to charge what every fees the market can bear. The private sector places its own capital at risk, which is very different from the government and academia. Private sector meteorology should not be bound in any way, except in terms of possible conflict in the issuance of official severe weather warnings and similar dire public safety announcements. Perhaps even severe weather and hurricane warnings should not be off-limits. Because if you as a PSM really screw up on something like that, you may be sued and/or quickly go out of business, providing marketplace corrections to poor or even dangerously incompetent services. But, it should be your market decision whether or not to take that risk and compete with the NWS. If the private sector can independently develop services that out-compete any aspect of the NWS and make it obsolete, congratulations.

We should oppose the all-too-frequent pigeon-holing descriptions of the role of private sector meteorology (PSM) by governmental and academic voices. PSM should not be viewed as being limited to a particular ""role"".

On the other hand, government and government-supported institutions (including universities) necessarily should be restricted in some ways from competing with the private sector in a free-market economy in which private capital is at risk. Govt institutions are supported by the private capital market thru taxation and therefore, have the potential for no-risk competition against some of the very providers of the capital.

Of course, the NWS could be said to be already competing with PSM via the existing data network and forecast system. However, in my view, the current arrangement is reasonably successful for nearly all concerned, including the PSMs and the public. The data and forecasts are openly available at fairly low or no cost, as they should be since the public is paying for them, and also fairly general in nature. This openness should include publicly funded research results as well. It is generally a good partnership. It is likely impractical to privatize the existing system in its entirety. However, if the NWS and other govt-supported entities create new services, particularly with special expertise, applications and customers in mind, then the existing system will begin to erode (possibly rapidly) as PSMs will not be able to compete against entities that have none of their own capital at risk. One area of future concern may also be in ""climate services"" (that parallel ""weather services"") which might be directed

by govt entities to specific parts and applications within the private economy.

Lee Branscome

Dr. Lee E. Branscome, CCM
Climatological Consulting Corporation
7338 155th Place North
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418
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Lbranscome@ccc-weather.com
www.ccc-weather.com

On wednesday, June 16, 2004, at 02:14 PM, Mike Smith wrote:

> Wayne and All,
>
> I believe Wayne's comments need some clarification. The National
> Weather Service did not "privatize" lightning data - it was never
> theirs to begin with. The National Lightning Detection Network® was
> created by a private sector company and has always been private
> sector.
>
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> intellectual property rights to the network and could sell the data?
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> weather radars right now, at least 5 years (and likely more) than that
> data will be available to the NWS. How could they afford to deploy
> them unless there is a return on their investment?
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> to decide whether it benefits our businesses and whether we wish to
> invest in it.
>
> Mike
>
>
> --
> Michael R. Smith, C.C.M.
> CEO/Founder
> WeatherData
> 245 N. Waco St., Ste. 310
> Wichita, Kansas 67202
> (316) 265-9127
> Fax (316) 265-1949
>
> Please visit:
> www.weatherdata.com
> www.stormhawk.com"

1213 "Dear Reader:

I have no doubt that the people and businesses of the United States receive the best, most cost effective and most beneficial weather information in the world.

I believe that the primary reason for this is the strength of the Commercial weather Industry, which serves to distribute National Weather Service warnings and data, creates forecasts and other services customized for specific user-groups and end-users, creates innovative new products and services, and spurs the National Weather Service to enhance the accuracy and value of its products.

The reason the Commercial weather Industry has been able to grow, I believe, is due to the structure and policies of the United States government, which favor uncensored distribution of data and information, competition within the private sector, and a government role of providing basic infrastructure and enhancing commerce and public safety.

The National weather Service plays an important and essential role in providing public benefit through a working partnership with the Commercial weather Industry and the research community.

However, the activities of the National weather Service do not necessarily benefit the public, and providing products and services that compete with those offered by the Commercial weather Industry do the public welfare great harm. Not only is this duplicative activity wasteful of public funds, but it also has the potential to impede or even destroy the Commercial weather Industry.

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (now the National Weather Service) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today. That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service (NWS) views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the National Research Counsel (NRC) made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the private

sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

- The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.
- The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)
- Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.
- The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.
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In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less.

It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Michael A. Steinberg

Senior Vice President
AccuWeather Inc

Member of AMS, NWA and CMOS"

1214 "In response to your request for comments on the NWS proposed policy revision.

My feelings on the controversy are these:

- The overriding goal of the revised policy should be to IMPROVE THE DISSEMINATION OF EMERGENCY WEATHER INFORMATION in the United States. That is (or should be) the most important mission of the NWS. That goal should be explicitly stated.
- This goal should be wholeheartedly supported by the AMS and commercial weather services including broadcasters.
- The policy should explicitly say that the NWS will not expend public monies to construct an infrastructure to compete directly with private enterprise in the area of on-demand distribution on personal, portable digital platforms. (However this is worded, the idea is that the NWS would not spend money to compete with companies distributing weather information on cellphones, PDAs, etc. This would not include the internet.)
- The policy should explicitly say that the NWS will not withhold or delay the dissemination of data to private users.
- The policy should explicitly say that the NWS urges the FCC to mandate that all broadcast stations transmit accurate and timely emergency weather bulletins as a condition of licensure. In addition, the NWS will actively pursue through all means possible the adoption of such a policy as the law in the United States.
- In exchange for the policy immediately above, the AMS should support the general philosophy that the NWS will provide a baseline set of weather data via whatever means they deem necessary for the safety and welfare of the American people. Commercial weather services including broadcasters will add value to that baseline data.

The best thing that could happen to the AMS and its members would be to get the FCC and/or the Congress to mandate a standard of timeliness and quality in the communication of EMERGENCY weather information on broadcasters. We all know that this cannot be accomplished without many more trained people in the system. The demand for AMS-certified broadcasters and commercial weather services could only increase significantly, and the public would be served.

The bottom line is, the most important mission of the NWS (as stated above) is NOT being fulfilled at the present time because of a dysfunctional system beginning with the NWS and extending through the broadcasting community as a whole. Without the new policy specifically stating a goal of solving this major public safety problem that is universally accepted as existent, the policy change seems petty and pointless.

Without this stated goal for all parties to rally around, the policy change will inevitably deteriorate into squabbling over turf and engender hurt feelings.

The AMS broadcasters and commercial weather services have legitimate concerns, and should expect that the NWS will provide only baseline information and timely data distribution. However, the NWS must be given wide latitude to fill any and all

voids left in communities underserved by timely and quality information. Americans cannot be penalized because a commercial enterprise opts to provide incomplete, unprofessional, or untimely forecasts and warnings.

The AMS and commercial enterprises should support this concept and urge that the professionalism of the entire distribution system be held to a high standard, thereby benefiting everyone concerned.

For what it's worth.

Bryan Norcross

Bryan Norcross, Inc.
1900 Sunset Harbour Drive #1108
Miami Beach, FL 33139
(305) 532-2929
(305) 574-7997 Fax

WFOR Office
8900 NW 18th Terrace
Miami, FL 33172
(305) 639-4610
(305) 574-7997"

1215 "To Whom It May Concern:

I write to voice my strong objection to the proposed policy change the NWS is seeking in it's relationship to the private weather sector. This policy will remove the non-competitive language with the private weather sector.

It is the private weather sector that has built the technologies and products to present very scientific data to the public in a very consumer friendly format. This has taken considerable investment of both time and resources on the part of the private weather industry.

It is not the place of government in a capitalist society to deliver products that are economically feasible for the private sector to deliver. This country has been built by the government providing an environment for private business to grow and provide employment.

The private weather sector today generates revenues, competition, employment, along with international sales. For the NWS to now enter this market offering consumer products will drive some weather companies out of business, remove revenues from the industry for development, and cost jobs in the industry. Government tax dollars should not be used to compete with private industry causing the loss of jobs. This simply is not the roll of government in US society.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

These proposed policy changes are fundamentally inconsistent with the roll of government in a capitalist society. I strongly object to the policy changes and see nothing but job losses and a shrinking of the private

weather industry if this is passed. It is not right.

Best regards,

Murray Armstrong
Sales & Business Development Director
CustomWeather, Inc.

(T) 415-777-2336
(F) 415-777-3003
marmstrong@customweather.com

<http://www.customweather.com>

26 South Park
San Francisco, CA 94107"

1216 "The Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed NOAA/NWS Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. The draft policy is well written and appears to adequately address concerns in general. Due to the nature of the general policy statement, specific issues of concern are not addressed. Our comments relate to specifics in regard to the need of improved transportation forecasting at the pavement surface. Increased use of technology and related techniques in snow and ice removal has caused the need for accurate surface forecasts.

A recent publication of the National Research Council, ""Where the weather Meets the Road"", provides an excellent overview of this need. Forecasts in the past have not concentrated on the microclimate near the road surface. Accurate pavement forecasts would provide an excellent tool for our winter operations. The result would be safer roads, economic savings, decreased delay, decreased accidents, and fewer injuries and deaths. We appreciate your consideration of our comments. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Dennis W. Belter
Program Support Manager
Indiana Department of Transportation
Room N925
100 N. Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2219
E-mail: dbelter@indot.state.in.us
Telephone: (317) 232-5424"

1217 "Dear Reader:
As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

The policy also states that "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new approach that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service with respect to the private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. It appears that this proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative aspects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggesting a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eliminated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predictions are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy seems to introduce greater risk for the private sector, not less. It could negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and I believe it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation, which has always characterized my relationship with the National Weather Service. In this case, though, the National Weather Service seems to be attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. This would represent a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to preserve and even strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

F.Calvin Sisto, Broadcast and Consulting Meteorologist/AMS Member"

The change in National Weather Service (NWS) mission and policy proposed in the wake of the National Research Council's "Fair Weather" report is fatally flawed for two reasons:

1. It creates an "all things to all people" mission for the National weather Service, that will inevitably lead to loss of focus on its core mission and waste of tax-payer funded resources.
2. It creates an unlevel playing field for private industry, specifically broadcasters and the commercial weather enterprises, by using taxpayer-funded resources to compete with us and duplicate services already provided to business and the public.

The new policy is a solution in search of a problem.

A far better approach would be to limit the mission of the National weather Service to data collection and processing and the creation of storm warnings for the public at large. All other functions would be performed by the private sector. The NWS/NOAA should be required to make its entire meteorological output available, in real time, to the taxpayers that fund it. By doing so, NOAA will seed innovation in the private sector which, after all, created tornado warnings, color radar, internet weather sites and most of the innovations in applied meteorology that now America takes for granted.

Published scientific studies show that only 2 to 5% of the population actually use NOAA Weather Radio with television and other private sector outlets the overwhelming choice for Americans when critical weather threatens. Given that taxpayers prefer getting their weather from the private sector, I recommend the National weather Service consider its primary customers to be emergency managers, broadcasters and commercial weather companies and build any new policy with those customers in mind.

The United States' system of government is based on free enterprise and limited government. Any new policy should be built around improving and leveraging government infrastructure and building free enterprise.

Thank you for considering my views.

Mike Smith

--

Michael R. Smith, C.C.M.
CEO/Founder
WeatherData
245 N. Waco St., Ste. 310
Wichita, Kansas 67202
(316) 265-9127
Fax (316) 265-1949

Please visit:
www.weatherdata.com
www.stormhawk.com
www.warning.tv

1219 "Dear Sir/Madam:

I would like to add my voice in support of the following statement that has been circulated among many of us in the independent space weather business. Similar views have recently been articulated in an article,

""Building Public-Private Sector Partnerships"", pages 11-13, by G. Fisher of NSF in the Summer 2004 issue of the American Geophysical Union's journal, Space Weather Quarterly.

""As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service,"" in 1991, which is still in effect today.

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Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

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Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.""

Thank you for your attention to these views.

Very truly yours,

Murray Dryer, PhD
Consultant, Space Physics
Guest Worker and Scientist Emeritus
NOAA Space Weather Center
Boulder, CO 80305
murray.dryer@noaa.gov
murraydryer@msn.com
Phone (home): 303-798-1440"

reflects my opinion of proposed policy changes regarding the role of the National Weather Service and the private weather industry. Please give this your careful consideration.

John Nodar

Meteorologist, WKRG Television, Mobile, AL

Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists. Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

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Very truly yours,

Barry Myers"

Strategic Planning and Policy Office
NOAA National Weather Service
1325 East-West Highway, Room 11404
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3283

To whom it may concern:

This letter is a comment on the NOAA National Weather Service (NWS) proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information.

Overall, we feel that the new policy should recognize (and clearly state) that the success of the NWS in fulfilling its mission of the protection of life and property is largely dependent on its partners, since more than 95% of all citizens receive their weather information through partners, and not directly from the NWS. Because of this, the NWS is able to leverage the private sector's investment in the public-private partnership to further its own mission. Therefore, it is in the long term interests of the NWS that its partners be successful. Since the health of the NWS partners, particularly those in the private sector, is dependent on a clear understanding of the policies and objectives of the NWS, this partnership policy should be a clear and unambiguous.

Meteorlogix is a partner of the NWS, and in that spirit, we would like to offer the following comments on the proposed policy.

- 1) Clear policy boundaries between the NWS and private sector activities are needed. While we acknowledge the National Research Council's (NRC) Fair Weather publication recommended removing "detailed and rigid boundaries", some limitation on the role and scope of the NWS must be codified in policy. This proposed policy places no limitations on the activities of the NWS, and allows the NWS by itself to decide whether a new product or service is an expansion of a "current" activity, or something altogether new.
- 2) A clear statement on the limits to expansion of NWS services, and the establishment of a process for such expansion, is needed. The proposed policy may encourage the NWS (and its employees at its regional and local offices) to expand into many areas currently served by the private sector. Even if no such services are currently offered today, the fact that there is no policy boundary will serve to limit private sector investment, since the entry of the NWS into any new service would place that investment at risk.
- 3) Include a formal process for review of specific NWS practices and activities. Current practices for collecting feedback on specific NWS activities allow for very little objective feedback, especially from commercial weather companies. This process should be codified into policy.
- 4) Include some description of how the NWS will enforce the new policy. Current (and past) practices at the NWS suggest that the new policy will be ineffectual at best, unless some means of enforcing the policy is found. The policy should outline a proactive process whereby new products and services are centrally controlled. Today, any NWS employee can create a new product, label it as "experimental", and make it publicly available without any review of its policy conformance. The only enforcement mechanism is by external complaint. For the private sector, this is too late, as the damage to the market may have already been done.

The whole purpose of this policy should be a common understanding between the NWS and all of its partners of how the new policy will make the partnership more successful for everyone involved. If the NWS chooses to create a policy that continues to allow the erosion of the traditional boundaries between public and private weather activities, the eventual result will be a decrease in the amount of investment in private sector weather, which will ultimately have a detrimental effect on the NWS' impact on society, and its efficacy as an organization. On the other hand, a policy that encourages growth and investment within the private sector by articulating the NWS role and intentions, will ultimately aid the NWS in fulfilling its mission.

Sincerely,

James Block
Chief Meteorologist
Certified Consulting Meteorologist"

1222 "The policy proposed by the National weather Service (NWS) regarding interaction with the private sector is unacceptable. The 1991 policy that it replaces, recognized the vital role of the commercial weather industry, the media, and other private sector groups. It has driven the advances in weather and climate services which the nation now enjoys. The proposed policy would allow the NWS to operate with few restrictions and would seriously jeopardize weather and climate services in the private sector.

My perspective is unique. For more than 20 years I was employed by the NWS and last served as the Meteorologist-in-Charge of the Southeast Agricultural weather Service Center located in Auburn, AL. I left the NWS in 1996 when funding for the agricultural weather program was eliminated. With the 1991 policy, I was confident that I could start a business and not worry that the NWS would compete. With the proposed policy, I have little confidence that my business will be able to survive. Can the NWS provide every service that my company currently offers? No, but under the proposed policy, parts of my business will be taken away over time as the NWS expands its services. There would be little remaining business and not enough to sustain the commercial weather industry. There will be no incentive to invest in the development of new products and services. In the marketplace, free wins over fee-based services. The NWS is not filling a void but wants to extend itself into areas that are more than adequately served by the commercial weather industry. Ultimately, the American public will be the loser as they will be left with a mediocre, government-only weather enterprise.

While serving with the NWS, I took great pride in my work as did most of my colleagues. Frankly, I am embarrassed by the poor quality of what comes out of the NWS today. The focus is on bells and whistles, not quality and reliability. More effort is being put into the delivery of content than in improving the content. NWS staff are working on developing sophisticated web pages rather than improving the accuracy of NWS forecasts. With dependence on the new digital forecasts, NWS forecast products are rapidly becoming unreliable. Short-term forecasts have become terrible. It appears that NWS forecasters are paying more attention to their computers than the weather. Forecasters aren't practicing meteorology anymore and are more concerned about feeding the "numbers monster" that spits out the garbage. Many zone forecasts look like a moron wrote them. Even severe weather, the most important part of the NWS mission, has suffered. If it wasn't for broadcasters, the public would be totally confused by the number and frequency of conflicting NWS statements, alerts, watches, and warnings.

After spending billions of my tax dollars for the modernization, we have more "numbers" and more output, but the quality and reliability have seriously declined. There may be increased lead times on warnings, but is the public more confused by the flood of information that now comes out of most NWS offices? It has been the private sector's role to filter, enhance, and disseminate information. The proposed policy would give the NWS authority to take on all those roles. That would be a big mistake and a waste of Federal tax dollars.

I urge the NWS to not implement this proposed policy. A new, fair policy should be crafted in consultation with the Commercial Weather Services Association (CWSA) and others that represent those involved in providing weather and climate services.

Rodger R. Getz, President and CEO
AWIS Weather Services, Inc.
1735 East University Drive, Suite 101
P.O. Box 3267
Auburn, AL 36831-3267 <http://www.awis.com>
ph: (334) 826-2149 ext 104 (voice) (334) 826-2152 (FAX)"

1223 "Dear Reader:

As a meteorologist in the private sector for the last 14 years, I am continually concerned with the increasing disregard NOAA and the National weather Service demonstrates toward the general public and the Commerical weather Service.

The core mission of the NWS has always been to save lives. However, I see more and more evidence that the NWS is more interested in creating products and services that are not needed and distract the government meteoroloigsts from performing their duties vital to the general public. A few of the many examples of this are listed below.

The county breakdowns for severe weather watches are routinely late, while severe weather warnings have been missed altogether. why are these mistakes occurring more frequently with the abundance of technology that tax dollars have allowed the NWS and NOAA to purchase? Why are these delinquencies occurring with more than adequate staffing at each of the individual NWS offices?

why are the U.S. based computer weather models continually making erroneus forecasting errors? A more accurate computer model will help meteorologists produce better forecasts and therefore save lives. why are resources to improve these models being taken away in favor of producing new forecast products and services that are already being created by the private sector and available to the general public.

The hourly observations in the United States use to be the best reporting network in the world. That is not the case anymore. During snowstorms, snowfall reports are either delinquent or not done at all.

Climatology reports that are vital to businesses around the country are late and in some cases incomplete.

why are all these errors that cost businesses money in dollars and time, occurring? Here is another question. why is the NWS producing products and services that are not needed, a waste of tax payers dollars, can hurt the economy of the nation by taking jobs away from the private sector of meteorology and distracting goverment meteorologists from performing their core mission?

The mistakes above were rare when I entered the private sector of meteorology in September of 1990. However, the errors have increased throughout the 90s and are currently increasing at an alarming rate. why is this occurring?.

It has been said that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeats its mistakes. Lets take a closer look at the history of the partnership between the the National weather Service and commercial meteoroloigsts to see how the changing role of the NWS is leading distracting the NWS from its core mission.

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

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Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to including NOAA and other agencies in the federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

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The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

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The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a

breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

A partnership is not a government agency issuing its own rules and regulations without any regard for private business and the safety of the general public. A partnership is a relationship between two or more parties working together for a common goal. The end goal should benefit all, not just one.

This new approach is a step backwards from the 1991 policy and is clearly a mistake. The approach is also yet another example of the U.S. government dictating what is best to its people without the proper knowledge and understanding of the whole picture.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Bernie Rayno
Expert Sr. Meteorologist
AccuWeather, Inc."

1224 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

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Very truly yours,

Katrina Voss
Bilingual Weathercaster
Accuweather
385 Science Park Road
State College, PA 16803
Cellular: (814) 571-6997
vossk@accuweather.com"

1225 "To NOAA:

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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial

Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Nothing operates efficiently or effectively without competition. No one competes with the government. Timely and accurate weather forecasting is a matter of life and death (as was illustrated by the 1900 hurricane in Galveston, when NWS had no competition.). If the government eliminates its competition, we're all going to die.

Very truly yours,

Richard P. Voss
750 Hammond Drive, Suite 12-100
Atlanta, Georgia 30328
Telephone: 404-847-3110; Fax: 678-530-1010
Email: rpv@vosslaw.com
rpv.home.mindspring.com"

1226 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service,"" in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would

replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on Its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

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Very truly yours,

Marshall Moss

--

Marshall Moss

Senior Meteorologist

Process Improvement and Technical Innovation Team Manager

AccuWeather, Inc. - ""Get the best weather on the web . . .AccuWeather.com®.""

385 Science Park Road || State College, PA 16803

<http://www.accuweather.com>

(814) 237-0309 ext. 7756

Email: moss@accuwx.com

1227 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge that the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a real partner in the American weather Enterprise to engage with the NOAA/NWS to amend the present draft so that a win-win is created for all.

Very truly yours,

The Commercial Weather Services Association
Twenty-five of America's Private Weather Services Companies
The Board of Directors
S. Root, President"

1228 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

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National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

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Very truly yours,
Cindy Gibson"

1229 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

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The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

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The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be

strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Evan A. Myers
Senior Vice President
Chief Operating Officer
AccuWeather, Inc.

myerse@accuwx.com

814-235-8505 phone
814-235-8509 fax
814-880-9846 cell"

1230 "Although not a member of CWSA, I found the ""Hello Colleagues"" letter (below), prepared by CWSA President Steven Root, to be a thoughtful summary of the emergence of the Commercial weather Enterprise, of which I am a part, and the gradually shifting lines of responsibility between the public and private weather sectors of recent years.

I endorse the findings and conclusions of this letter, and urge the NWS to consider strengthening and expanding the 1991 public-private sector policy, as generally outlined in his letter.

Sincerely:

Falconer Weather Information Service, LLC
Phillip D. Falconer, CCM, Manager
Certified Consulting Meteorologist
7 Via Maria Drive
Scotia, NY 12302

Hello Colleagues:

As you know, the NOAA/National Weather Service (NWS) has proposed a new policy, to replace its existing policy, called: Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. The comment period on this proposed policy will end on Wednesday, June 30th.

At one time, the government weather service was the nation's only civilian weather source. Government agencies were then the ones that had the tools to collect the observations, move the data, assemble the information and develop and issue weather forecasts. Because of this, the government weather service developed public forecasts and, in response to requests from special interest groups, produced custom forecasts and services for some businesses and industries.

The emergence of the Commercial weather Industry has drastically shifted that paradigm. Through more than 50 years of innovation and internal competitive pressures, the Commercial weather Industry has provided far more weather information than the government, and it is better tailored than ever before for individual users, business and industry, for government and for the media. Additionally, the Commercial weather Industry carries on its activities at no cost to the government or to the U.S. taxpayer. And, as a billion dollar industry in 2004, the Commercial weather Industry generates significant tax revenues and tremendous value-added benefit for the nation.

It is the Commercial weather Industry that has provided most of the creativity and innovation in how the weather information is communicated - in displays, in presentations, in making the information meaningful by customizing it for various uses and users, and by communicating it effectively to the public. This is where the creativity lies. This is where new markets and new uses and new value are created; value in particular. The Commercial weather Industry is the only private sector producer of weather information, services and systems. Combined with the free and open exchange of governmental data required by our form of government, America has the best weather information content for business and the public, and certainly the best television weather presentations in the world.

The Commercial weather Industry understands business, works with business, and is a business itself, whereas government is bureaucratic by nature and design and often does not understand the needs of business nor does it have the same entrepreneurial interests.

Commercial weather companies are driven by the goal to produce a profit - year in

and year out. We risk our capital, our ideas and our life's work. Government agencies are not held to the same economic standards and pressures. The free enterprise system in America rewards those companies who achieve economic success while eliminating those who don't. Hundreds of commercial weather companies have failed to date. Future failures, if there are to occur, must not be caused by governmental competition.

We have experienced an explosive growth in the types of weather and climate services available in this country. Many factors have combined to fuel these rapid advancements, including the declining cost of technology, the ever increasing speed of communications, and an accelerating demand for rich content from all market segments. However, the lines of responsibilities between participants in today's weather Enterprise, once clear, have shifted, and have resulted in duplication of effort and misdirected use of public funding.

This redundant effort and unnecessary waste of resources, if left unchecked, will certainly distract from our ability to sustain our growth trend. Collectively, as participants in the Enterprise, we should focus on excelling in our individual core competencies. In part, this means government should not and must not compete with the Commercial Weather Industry.

In January of 1991, the National Weather Service created policy - identified as Policy Statement on the Weather Service/Private Sector Roles, to define a mission for the agency and to prohibit the agency from competing with the Commercial Weather Industry. It defines an agency process for filing complaints and could serve as a basis for action if the NWS failed to enforce its own policy. This 1991 policy was created in part, at the urging of the Commercial Weather Services Association (of which I am the President), the industry trade association represented by dozens of America's major, private, weather companies.

Against this legal background, the NWS asked the National Academy of Sciences to review the relationship in the ³weather enterprise.² After a study of more than a year (the nature and purpose of which was defined by the NWS), the National Research Council published eleven Recommendations. In January of this year, the Commercial Weather Services Association adopted eleven responses to the eleven National Research Council Recommendations, agreeing with some, and commenting on others (posted at: www.weatherindustry.org <<http://www.weatherindustry.org>>)

With regard to National Research Council Recommendation #1, which stated the NWS should replace its 1991 public-private partnership policy with a policy that defines processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than rigidly defining the roles of the NWS and the private sector², the CWSA adopted the following statement:

CWSA recommends that: the 1991 public private partnership policy should:

be strengthened, not replaced with a process; and
be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the federal weather enterprise;
and CWSA recommends that legislation should be enacted to replace the 1890 Organic Act with a clear definition of mission and roles for the agency.

Essentially, CWSA is recommending that ³a process²

does not provide a mission for the NWS;
does not provide limitations to prevent the NWS from competing with the Commercial Weather Industry;
does not define rights for the Commercial Weather Industry and those people and businesses in it
CWSA is asking for a strengthened legal basis defining the role of the NWS and specifying its limitation as a federal agency.

Recently, NOAA/NWS has advanced a new proposed policy to respond to NRC Recommendation #1 called: ³2004 NOAA/NWS Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the

Provision of weather, water, Climate, and Related Environmental Information².

See: www.noaa.gov/fairweather <<http://www.noaa.gov/fairweather>>

See CWSA 11 Recommendations: www.weatherindustry.org
<<http://www.weatherindustry.org>> ... then see link: CWSA response to NRC Report

This proposed policy would replace the existing 1991 policy, the only modern legal basis defining a mission of the NWS, providing limitations on NWS competition with the private sector and for protecting the rights of the Commercial Weather Industry.

Alarminglly:

where the NRC recommended a new NWS policy defining process - the new NWS policy states no process.

where the current NWS policy says, ³the NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprise, unless otherwise directed by applicable law²; this current limitation in the 1991 NWS Policy on competition with the private sector is to be repealed by the Proposed Policy. Clearly, even the NRC report, suggesting a process, envisioned a continuation policy of non-competition.

The mission of the NWS defined in 1991 is dropped by the Proposed Policy.

The recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologist is deleted by the Proposed Policy.

The recognition that the private weather industry is ideally suited to put the NWS information database into a form and detail that can be utilized by specific users is deleted.

The complaint and appeal process that currently exists is abolished.

In a recent issue of BAMS, the paper titled ³Making the Jump to the Private Sector², the author states ³Predictions are for a continued shift from government, academic, and other jobs, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010.² This labor shift to the private sector can only be absorbed if the sector is healthy and stable.

As a weather-services company owner, and president of CWSA, I have personally witnessed industries grow where risk is controllable or at the very least, predictable. The present path of the NWS controlled federal policy introduces greater risk of government competition to the private sector. Not less.

Ultimately this competitive threat will affect job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry; and, disadvantage American business and industry and the 95% of American citizens who get their weather information everyday from the Commercial Weather Industry.

In 1991, the NWS formalized a right for the private weather industry to be free of unfair competition from the NWS. In 2004, the NWS wants to repeal that right.

NWS attempts to repeal the 1991 policy coupled with its opposition to legislation to define the role and position of the NWS, are not evidence of a partnership. It is government working to free itself from policy and legal requirements.

As stakeholders in the American Weather Enterprise, I believe we should all question this Proposed Policy repealing the existing 1991 public private partnership policy.

Please send your comments to: fairweather@noaa.gov ... Remember --- comments are due on/before June 30th, 2004.

Kind Regards,

Steve

Steven A. Root, CCM
President & CEO
WeatherBank, Inc.
1015 Waterwood Parkway, Suite J
Edmond, OK 73034
President, CWSA"

1231 "Dear Reader:

>
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>the private sector of meteorology.
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>policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial
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>to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.
>
>
>Very truly yours,
>
>
>Mary Rayno
>"

1232 "To whom it may concern:

At one time, the government weather service was the nation's only civilian weather source. Government agencies were then the ones that had the tools to collect the observations, move the data, assemble the information and develop and issue weather forecasts. Because of this, the government weather service developed public forecasts and, in response to requests from special interest groups, produced custom forecasts and services for some businesses and industries.

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Commercial weather companies are driven by the goal to produce a profit - year in and year out. We risk our capital, our ideas and our life's work. Government agencies are not held to the same economic standards and pressures. The free enterprise system in America rewards those companies who achieve economic success while eliminating those who don't. Hundreds of commercial weather companies have failed to date. Future failures, if there are to occur, must not be caused by governmental competition.

We have experienced an explosive growth in the types of weather and climate services available in this country. Many factors have combined to fuel these rapid advancements, including the declining cost of technology, the ever increasing speed of communications, and an accelerating demand for rich content from all market segments. However, the lines of responsibilities between participants in today's weather Enterprise, once clear, have shifted, and have resulted in duplication of effort and misdirected use of public funding.

This redundant effort and unnecessary waste of resources, if left unchecked, will certainly distract from our ability to sustain our growth trend. Collectively, as participants in the Enterprise, we should focus on excelling in our individual core competencies. In part, this means government should not and must not compete with the Commercial Weather Industry.

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Against this legal background, the NWS asked the National Academy of Sciences to review the relationship in the "weather enterprise." After a study of more than a year (the nature and purpose of which was defined by the NWS), the National Research Council published eleven Recommendations. In January of this year, the Commercial Weather Services Association adopted eleven responses to the eleven National Research Council Recommendations, agreeing with some, and commenting on others, of which, I am the president.

With regard to National Research Council Recommendation #1, which stated the NWS should replace its 1991 public-private partnership policy with a policy that defines processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than rigidly defining the roles of the NWS and the private sector", I support the following statements:

The 1991 public private partnership policy should:
be strengthened, not replaced with a process; and
be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the federal weather enterprise;
and legislation should be enacted to replace the 1890 Organic Act with a clear definition of mission and roles for the agency.
Essentially, the proposed policy:
does not provide a mission for the NWS;
does not provide limitations to prevent the NWS from competing with the Commercial Weather Industry;
does not define rights for the Commercial weather Industry and those people and businesses in it
weatherBank is asking for a strengthened legal basis defining the role of the NWS

and specifying its limitation as a federal agency. Recently, NOAA/NWS has advanced a new proposed policy to respond to NRC Recommendation #1 called: "2004 NOAA/NWS Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate, and Related Environmental Information". This proposed policy would replace the existing 1991 policy, the only modern legal basis defining a mission of the NWS, providing limitations on NWS competition with the private sector and for protecting the rights of the Commercial weather Industry.

Alarminglly:

Where the NRC recommended a new NWS policy defining process - the new NWS policy states no process.

Where the current NWS policy says, "the NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprise, unless otherwise directed by applicable law"; this current limitation in the 1991 NWS Policy on competition with the private sector is to be repealed by the Proposed Policy. Clearly, even the NRC report, suggesting a process, envisioned a continuation policy of non-competition.

The mission of the NWS defined in 1991 is dropped by the Proposed Policy.

The recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologist is deleted by the Proposed Policy.

The recognition that the private weather industry is ideally suited to put the NWS information database into a form and detail that can be utilized by specific users is deleted.

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In a recent issue of BAMS, the paper titled "Making the Jump to the Private Sector", the author states "Predictions are for a continued shift from government, academic, and other jobs, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010." This labor shift to the private sector can only be absorbed if the sector is healthy and stable.

As a weather-services company owner, and president of CWSA, I have personally witnessed industries grow where risk is controllable or at the very least, predictable. The present path of the NWS controlled federal policy introduces greater risk of government competition to the private sector. Not less.

Ultimately this competitive threat will affect job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry; and, disadvantage American business and industry and the 95% of American citizens who get their weather information everyday from the Commercial weather Industry.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. WeatherBank urges that the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a real partner in the American weather Enterprise to engage with the NOAA/NWS to amend the present draft so that a win-win is created for all.

Kind Regards,

Steven A. Root, CCM
President & CEO
WeatherBank, Inc.
1015 Waterwood Parkway, Suite J
Edmond, OK 73034"

1233 "To whom it may concern,
I think the National Weather Services latest issued regarding competition with the private sector is terrible. It should not continue and would be disastrous for the general public.

Government intervention, against the private sector weather company/meteorologist should discontinue now.

Thank you.

Dan Ventola - The National Weather Station
Phone: 201-288-6890
Fax: 201-288-6892
Email: storm1dv@verizon.net
Website: www.nationalweatherstation.com

The National Weather Station,
providing excellent weather consulting
services since 1985"

1234 "As one whose sole mission is to communicate the NWS message to a viewing audience, I respectfully request that the 1991 NWS public private partnership policy remain in place and not be repealed or changed.

Thank you,

Frank Billingsley
Chief Meteorologist
KPRC-TV NBC

Accuweather Storm Team
KPRC-TV (NBC)
A Post-Newsweek, Inc. Station
8181 Southwest Freeway
Houston, TX 77074"

1235 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service,"" in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on Its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,
Stephen J. Rayno
InTheIrons@aol.com"

1236 "Thank you for the opportunity to present my comments as a U.S. citizen and taxpayer regarding the Fair weather Report. I am sending them by email to meet the extended deadline of June 30, 2004. I hope that other members of private industry provide their comments as well.

I feel that this report is biased and the bias is for the government meteorologists and against the commercial weather service provider industry. Simply looking at the participants of the National Research Council Committee on Partnerships in Weather and Climate Services one sees that the composition was primarily from academia and government with scant participation from industry. I believe that the partnership should at least remain the same as stated in the 1991 "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service." In fact the role of the commercial industry should be protected and strengthened. Commercial industry should be supported by NOAA and other U.S. government agencies, not competed against. I believe that NOAA has not been following this policy for some time and it is time that they and other agencies within the U.S. government adhere to the policy as if it were law.

Overall, I believe that the Government should provide the basic backbone including personnel, equipment (computer, data collection and more), data storage and provide weather information and products to the public that are for critical health, safety and direct homeland security issues. This does not preclude research. Products other than for health, safety and direct homeland security issues should be provided by industry. The role of academia should be primarily research and development. However, industry should be allowed to compete for research and development money provided through the government. The data collected by all partners (government, academia and industry) should be shared in digital form and be available in digital form, not graphic form, to the general public which includes academia and industry. This would allow for the development of new business opportunities for the private sector for data manipulation and display software that would be developed and sold to the general public and others.

I also feel that as the U.S. government provides data and data products to other countries for free, that these countries should provide all U.S. citizens, including members of the private industry free access to their data and products.

Finally, I support the positions by Steven Root of the Commercial Weather Service Providers Association and by Barry Meyers (AccuWeather Inc.) which are provided below:

Position presented by Steven Root:

___ The NWS should replace its 1991 public-private partnership policy that defines processes for making decisions on products, technologies, and services, rather than rigidly defining the roles of the NWS and the private sector.

CWSA Position Statement

___ CWSA recommends that: the 1991 Public Private Partnership Policy should (1) be strengthened, not replaced with a process; and, (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the federal weather enterprise. CWSA recommends that legislation should be enacted to replace the 1890 Organic Act with a clear definition of mission and roles for the agency.

January 8, 2004 CWSA Response to NRC Fair Weather Report
NRC Recommendation #2

— The NWS should establish an independent advisory committee to provide ongoing advice to it on weather and climate matters. The committee should be composed of users of weather and climate data and representatives of the public, private, and academic sectors, and it should consider issues relevant to each sector as well as to the set of players as a group, such as (but not limited to):

- Improving communication among sectors,
- Creating or discontinuing products,
- Enhancing scientific and technical capabilities that support the NWS mission,
- Improving data quality and timeliness, and
- Disseminating data and information.

CWSA Position Statement

— CWSA supports the establishment of an independent NWS Advisory Committee to bring ongoing advice to the agency on weather and climate matters. CWSA recommends the Commercial weather Industry be accorded a role on such a committee that recognizes its unique place in the American weather Enterprise as the only private sector producer of weather information, services and systems.

January 8, 2004 CWSA Response to NRC Fair Weather Report
NRC Recommendation #3

— The NWS and relevant academic, state, and private organizations should seek a neutral host, such as the American Meteorological Society, to provide a periodic dedicated venue for the weather enterprise as a whole to discuss issues related to the public-private partnership.

CWSA Position Statement

— CWSA agrees with the NRC that the American weather Enterprise's public-private partnership is important and supports the idea of a neutral host to provide a venue for dialogue among the interested parties. CWSA might support the AMS as an appropriate host candidate, (along with the NWA and academic venues) if the Society was able to provide a venue with representative governance and membership from all sectors of the weather enterprise and the Commercial Weather Industry; recognizing the Commercial Weather Industry's unique place in the American weather Enterprise as the only private sector producer of weather information, services and systems.

January 8, 2004 CWSA Response to NRC Fair Weather Report
NRC Recommendation #4

— The NWS should continue to carry out activities that are essential to its mission of protecting life and property and enhancing the national economy, including collecting data; ensuring their quality; issuing forecasts, warnings, and advisories; and providing unrestricted access to publicly funded observations, analyses, model results, forecasts, and related information products in a timely manner and at the lowest possible cost to all users.

CWSA Position Statement

— CWSA supports an NWS mission to carry out activities that are essential to protecting life and property including: (1) the preparation and issuance of severe weather warnings and forecasts designed for the protection of life and property of the general public; (2) the preparation and issuance of hydro-meteorological guidance and core forecast information; and (3) the collection and exchange of meteorological, hydrological, climatic, and oceanographic data and information only at the incremental cost of distribution as provided for under federal law. CWSA calls for the NWS and its oversight bodies to study the products, services, policies, and investments being made, to ensure that public funds are appropriately supporting a properly-defined NWS mission.

January 8, 2004 CWSA Response to NRC Fair Weather Report
NRC Recommendation #5

— The NWS should make its data and products available in internet accessible digital form. Information held in digital databases should be based on widely recognized standards, formats, and metadata descriptions to ensure that data from different observing platforms, databases, and models can be integrated and used by all interested parties in the weather and climate enterprise.

CWSA Position Statement

— CWSA endorses the dissemination of all NWS data and information (including experimental) in real time without delay in Internet accessible digital form to the private sector for distribution to the public in formats that are appropriate to carry out a properly defined NWS mission. The digital database should not be used to allow the NWS to expand beyond its core mission, jeopardize the existing infrastructure, or enter areas creating publicly-funded competition with the Commercial Weather Industry.

January 8, 2004 CWSA Response to NRC Fair Weather Report
NRC Recommendation #6

— The NWS should (1) improve its process for evaluation of the need for new weather and climate products and services that meet new national needs, and (2) develop processes for discontinuing dissemination of products and services that are specific to particular individuals or organizations or that are not essential to the public.

CWSA Position Statement

— CWSA agrees with the NRC recommendation calling for the NWS to improve its process for evaluating new weather and climate products and services and to determine which products and services should be discontinued. CWSA agrees with the NRC that all products and services that are specific to particular individuals or organizations or that are not essential to the public should be discontinued. CWSA supports the stated objective of the NRC of "keeping the Public Private Partnership healthy." CWSA supports legislation and appropriate oversight that would require the NWS to act on this NRC Recommendation #6 and to ensure compliance.

January 8, 2004 CWSA Response to NRC Fair Weather Report
NRC Recommendation #7

— NWS headquarters and regional managers should develop an approach to managing the local forecast offices that balances a respect for local innovation and creativity with greater control over the activities that affect the public-private partnership, especially those that concern the development and dissemination of new products or services.

CWSA Position Statement

— CWSA agrees with the NRC that the NWS needs to manage local forecast offices to balance local innovation, with greater centralized agency control over activities that affect the Public-Private Partnership, especially those that concern the development and dissemination of new products and services.

January 8, 2004 CWSA Response to NRC Fair Weather Report
NRC Recommendation #8

— The NWS should continue to adopt and improve probabilistic methods for communicating uncertainties in the data and forecasts where such methods are accepted as scientifically valid.

CWSA Position Statement

— CWSA agrees with the NRC that the NWS should continue to adopt and improve probabilistic methods and other means for communicating the uncertainties in all NWS products where such methods are accepted as scientifically valid.

January 8, 2004 CWSA Response to NRC Fair Weather Report
NRC Recommendation #9

— The NWS should retain its role as the official source of instrumentation, data, and data collection standards to ensure that scientific benchmarks for collecting, verifying, and reporting data are maintained. It should lead efforts to follow, harmonize, and extend standards, formats, and

metadata to ensure that data from NWS and non-NWS networks, databases, and communications technology can be integrated and used with relative ease.

CWSA Position Statement

— CWSA agrees with the NRC that the NWS should play a lead role in setting the standards for instrumentation, data, and data collection. It should facilitate efforts to follow, harmonize, and extend standards, formats, and metadata to ensure that data from NWS and non-NWS networks, databases, and communications technology can be integrated and used with relative ease. CWSA believes that the NWS should acknowledge, respect and promote the growth of private sector networks that support the weather enterprise. CWSA believes integrating NWS data and non-NWS networks, databases and communications technology is the role of the private sector.

January 8, 2004 CWSA Response to NRC Fair Weather Report

NRC Recommendation #10

— The commercial weather sector should work with the other sectors, using mechanisms such as those proposed in this report, to improve the techniques and processes by which the weather and climate enterprise as a whole can minimize friction and inefficiency.

CWSA Position Statement

— CWSA agrees with the NRC that the Commercial Weather Industry should work with other sectors to improve the techniques and processes by which the weather and climate enterprise as a whole can minimize friction and inefficiency, recognizing that the Commercial Weather Industry is the only private sector enterprise which is the producer of weather information, services and systems for industry, government and the public and as such occupies a unique position in the American Weather Enterprise.

January 8, 2004 CWSA Response to NRC Fair Weather Report

NRC Recommendation #11

— Universities seeking to commercialize weather-related research results should follow transparent procedures for transferring technology and for avoiding conflicts of interest. These procedures should be given wide exposure to remove perceptions of unfair competition.

CWSA Position Statement

— CWSA agrees with the NRC that standard technology transfer practices and policies exist in our national law and that Universities and others engaged in such activities should follow those practices using transparent procedures and avoiding conflicts of interest and actively communicate compliance to those within the American Weather Enterprise.

Position presented by Barry Meyers:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast

meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial

Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Sincerely

--

Mitchell A. Roffer, Ph.D.
President"

1237 "To whom it may concern:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists. Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Tim Chuey
KVAL-TV
Eugene, OR
Chief Meteorologist"

1238 "I would like to pass on my support for the idea of officially making national weather data free.

Data that is funded by tax revenue should be available to the tax payers in a license unencumbered, free format, that should be easily used. Corporations can then use this, and compete on the value they add to the service. If they wish to fund the entire cost of collecting the weather data so that they can keep it to themselves, then they should have the entire cost of it passed onto them.

Government funds should not be used to fill private industry pockets.

Yours,

Alex Collins"

1239 "To whom it may concern,

I am wholeheartedly in support of the proposed NWS updates to the 1991 information posting policy. I want NWS data to be available to me, a US taxpayer, directly for free. It is an outrage that those in the so-called ""commercial weather industry"" would have me pay them for access to such data. Don't make me pay twice for the same data.

Sincerely,

Jim Carson
Banner Elk, North Carolina"

1240 "I am writing today in support of the National weather Services XML data feeds. I am offended by Accuweather's attempts to interfere with the ability of taxpayers to access data gathered with taxpayer data.

Commercial services do not provide data feeds that could be used to integrate weather data with public safety and scientific applications. I am a ham radio operator and provide emergency and special event communications. It would have been useful to have a weather feed to my vehicle navigation and Amateur Position Reporting System computer when I was driving around in the last hurricane. And long before the commercial weather companies introduced internet services, I was downloading national weather service maps over the internet while making astronomical observations. The commercial services web pages cannot correlate cloud cover with telescope position. And I use an open source operating system (Linux). The commercial services proprietary weather applications do not run on decent operating systems.

If the commercial weather services are hurt by this, it will be because they fail to add sufficient value to NWS data.

--

Mark Whitis <http://www.freelabs.com/~whitis/> NO SPAM
Author of many open source software packages.
Coauthor: Linux Programming Unleashed (1st Edition)"

1241 "As a tax payer living in the US it greatly upsets me to see that my government is even wasting it time considering this type of proposal. I paid for your gathering, analysis and storage of the weather information. It should be posted on the Internet and distributed free of charge.

It is my understanding that some companies that operate weather sites relay on your data and want you to shut down certain data feeds. HOW DARE YOU EVEN CONSIDER THIS PROPOSAL! If they want to have data to sell let them create it! My tax dollars should not be spent to support their effort. I should not have to pay them to gain access to that data. TELL THEM TO TAKE THEIR PROPOSAL AND SHOVE IT!

Richard Davis
richard@brick.net"

1242 "As a former employee who was the provider of weather information to international clients over the internet, MaxSea, I endorse the change to provide as much data as possible. The local mariner needs to have a complete picture readily available rather than waiting for another ""service"" to compile information to provide forecasts."

1243 "NOAA,
General Johnson,
Admiral Lautenbacher,

Secretary Evans,

I am aware of a conflict between the US National weather Service and commercial weather information providers in the US. I understand that the National weather Service proposes to make weather data publically available via the Internet, and that commercial providers oppose this approach.

I live in Sydney, Australia. This issue does not affect me directly. I have however experienced a similar, albeit less complex issue, here in Australia and I would like to offer my comment in the hope that it might help your decision.

The Australian Bureau of Meteorology operates a 'weather Radar' service which in my laymen's interpretation provides a graphical representation of rainfall activity. I understand that the Australian BOM provided access to this service to a select few paying customers for many years.

A few years ago, the BOM made press releases to the effect that the few paying customers that the service held did not warrant continuing to charge for the service. (The implication being that it cost more to collect the fees than was cost effective) The BOM made the service public, and it is now available to all and sundry via their Internet web site at <http://mirror.bom.gov.au/weather/radar/>

In my view, the Australian weather RADAR service is a very useful tool. I use it at least twice a week, and more often when the weather is wet and I wish to time my departure from my office so as to avoid rain squalls, etc, wherever possible (I commute on a motorcycle). I am aware that it is used by a wide cross-section of the Australian community, and that it is appreciated by all.

I have observed the weather radar site in regular use in all kinds of contexts. There is no doubt in my mind that the opening of the Australian service for free access by the general public is a fundamentally good thing, and a public service of the highest order.

I encourage you to observe the Australian experience in releasing RADAR data to the public, and to consider carefully the benefits your public would draw from the release of weather data that you are considering.

To be honest, I have little time for the 'concerns' of Dr Myers and his colleagues. Even from this distance, it is very clear to me that his interest is purely commercial. Thankfully, we don't have a significant commercial weather industry in Australia - our government service is a very good one - and so the events that I discuss were not significantly hampered by commercial interest.

I thank you for your attention, and I hope that my comments are of some help to you.

Kind regards,

Geoff Breach
PO Box 123
Artarmon NSW 1570
Sydney, Australia"

1244 " am in favor of open-to-all weather data, on the internet, in standard formats such as XML. I am for the new proposed NWS policy, and I am against the position of Accuweather's president Barry Myers. But who cares, I'm just a citizen."

1245 "Please do NOT allow Barry Myers, president of Accuweather have his way in that he wants you to have pay before using Kweather and other similar tools which use the weather information ALLREADY PAID FOR by our tax dollars.

Thank You"

1246 "To whom it may concern:

I heartily agree with and support the National weather Service in its policy to make the data - collected at taxpayers' expense - equally and freely available to all.

Services like Accuweather - by their own admission and common knowledge - merely take the same data and repackage / enhance it, for which they rightly deserve a fee.

But the audacity to now want that same basic data not to be available to everybody else takes one's breath away!

Shame on you, Barry Myers!

Best regards,
Willie van Rensburg
Tel: +27 84 340 3303
mailto:boss@bovan.net

""I'm an apatheist. The question is no longer interesting, and the answer no longer matters."" :-)"

1247 "To Whom It May Concern,

I fully support the ""Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information"".

The citizens of the United States fund the NOAA to perform research and data collection ""to assess and predict environmental changes, protect life and property, provide decision makers with reliable scientific information"" (part of the NOAA missions statement). All data collected should be made publicly available in accordance to the Freedom of Information Act.

FairweatherComments2.txt

In my opinion, the Internet offers a simple mechanism achieving that requirement. By using the Internet and open standards for data encoding, the NOAA can make the data it collects available to the public that funds it with a minimum of bureaucracy and overhead (versus other possible means of requesting and obtaining the data). This is similar to other government data sources, for example genetic databases.

I urge the NOAA to ratify the new policy.

Thanks,

Jeff Murphy
New York"

1248 "Dear General D.L. Johnson,

I would like to extend my support of your proposed revision of the 1991 Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather. It is my understanding that private industry is currently lobbying you to limit the amount of data that is made available to the American public. That is outrageously self-serving. Taxpayers have paid for the collection and presentation of NOAA weather data, and it should be provided to all, in its entirety, in as convenient a form as possible.

Private industry should continue to feel free to profit from the value that they add, using your data, by creating forecasts based on their proprietary models. It is important for you to understand that the resistance to free availability is not from industry per se, but rather from existing industry. Ironically, any reduction in the information that you provide would serve to stifle commercial services by impeding start-up businesses that need to rely on your data.

I am both a firefighter and a weather spotter, and rely on your internet content to keep abreast of current conditions for spotting purposes, and determine which areas are threatened by hazardous material incidents and wildfires. Any reduction in free services provided by NOAA will only serve to steal from the taxpayer, and give to the select few in the private weather industry.

Victor-charles Scafati
252 Jefferson St.
Johnson Creek, WI 53038"

1249 "We the people, pay for the National Weather Service in the form of our tax dollars (2003 \$800M, 2004 \$824M). ""The National Weather Service provides weather, hydrologic and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters and oceans."" (washingtontechnology.com)

We all pay taxes that support things like weather satellites, weather balloons, remote weather stations, etc. This is where the majority of the weather data comes from, and the funding comes from taxpayers ultimately. The NWS is a government agency. They compile the data from the balloons, stations, and satellites, and make forecasts and charts and maps and graphs. Pilots and Mariners, in particular, get a lot of data from the NWS directly and indirectly. On the other hand, Accuweather is a commercial venture designed to profit by delivering weather content to television studios and radio stations. They own no balloons nor weather stations nor satellites. Why should we have to pay them anything?

I think having free weather information is not only a good thing, it could save

FairweatherComments2.txt

lives. Barry Myers sounds like a real [word deleted] because, while I could understand if the companies were doing any work, them wanting to make money, his complaint seems to be ""Hey, don't just publish this information in a way anyone can get it for free, obfuscate it first so that we have a product to sell."" I see no reason that we should have to pay for Accuweather to make a pretty graphic or the like. By opening up the data on the Internet you provide researchers, hobbyists, and tinkerers with a means to get up-to-date and accurate weather information easily as well as historical data.

Sincerely,

Bert Audette

Waterville, ME"

1250 "Hello,

I am sending a quick note to say that I am very supportive of NOAA's new Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. I particularly like the leading edge work that NOAA is doing with the National Digital Forecast Database XML web Service (<http://weather.gov/xml/>). I see this service fostering many new innovative services and research in the private sector, among weather hobbyists, and in universities.

Thank you,
Richard M. Smith
<http://www.ComputerBytesMan.com>"

1251 "Comments in SUPPORT of NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information:

As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public.

Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized.

I therefore support and urge the adoption of NOAA's proposed policy.

It would appear that NOAA is receiving pressure from commercial interests to maintain the 1991 policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars.

Regards,
Charles Sullivan
711 Sunset Drive
Greensboro, NC 27408
cwsulliv@triad.rr.com"

1252 " am told the the private weather services want noaa to discontinue the xml feeds, please do not discontinue the feeds, I find it very useful to be able to access weather this way. Also NOAA is going to be making some policy changes in

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regards to the way weather data is distributed, I am reviewing this now and commenting now because of the upcoming deadline. I am hearing that the private weather sector is proposing data formats that would make it harder for private citizens to access weather data, and possibly making it so we would have to pay for services we now get free. There is also quite a bit of software written for weather data extraction from NOAA, if this were to change would this software become unusable? There are many weather groups skywarn, amateur weather scientists that contribute to weather data gathering. Please do not make it so the only way we can get detailed data is from the private sector.

Thank You,
Jim Zorger"

1253 "Dear sirs:

I am writing in support of your policy proposal. As a private citizen, I am concerned by the pressure by some private sector corporations and organizations to stem the flow of information regarding weather.

Weather predictions, modeling, and just basic information should be freely available to anyone in the public - corporations and citizens alike. Anyone who wishes to help provide information - information that could save lives - by crunching your data should be encouraged.

My tax dollars already pay to obtain this important data -- and in the case of weather, it should be distributed freely and widely.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Ken Curtis
4 Centre Street
Danvers, MA 01923"

1254 "I strongly support NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information.

The public interest is in no way served by preferential treatment of commercial or academic entities regarding the distribution, analysis, and presentation of weather and climate data. The proposed 'Equity' provision is most appropriate and welcome.

In recent years, NWS has done an outstanding job providing increased access to weather data, forecast, interpretation, and presentation on the public internet.

There will be sufficient opportunity for commercial entities to create specialized weather products for various markets without artificially maintained preferential access to NWS data or forecast resources.

Regards,
Jon Fleig
jff@frontiernet.net"

1255 "Speaking as a sailor, I believe that US citizen interests are best served by providing as much meteorological data as possible in open formats, over the internet, as quickly as possible after the creation of the data. Let private companies

compete to provide tools and other services. But let everyone have equal access to the data produced by our tax money.

I am extremely appreciative for the work that NOAA does.

Regards,
Russell Turpin"

1256 "(Not speaking for my employer)

The availability of open and public streams of weather data is extremely important. The availability of this information allows millions of end users to have the US weather at their fingertips when making business or personal decisions. Without this data US citizens (unlike EU and most other citizens) would not have the weather habitually on the computer desktop.

The potential for improvement with easier to parse data sets is huge. Every one of those users with a little weather icon on their toolbar is a user we could deliver provided hazardous weather warnings, tornado warnings etc. Good public data sets can save lives.

The pieces are mostly there to go beyond putting pictures of clouds on users desktops and get alerts out to end users. Surveys show the young are moving away from traditional media to the internet and things like storm warnings really need to move with them. The programming isn't hard only the data access matters.

I thus urge the NOAA to go ahead with its proposed changes, to continue to make good data, and more data available on the net in formats like XML, and to resist the business interest of a minority who would like to lock the weather away for their own private profit. Those businesses that reprocess the data in informative ways will not be affected by better data availability, in fact they may well be helped. Only those who seek to own publically created data and add no value will be harmed. Such businesses have no economic value and are not in the public interest anyway.

In the longer term I would also urge the NOAA to develop recommendations for those who ship software (often free) that reads the weather data so that we do not unnecessarily overload the primary public funded servers.

Ultimately the country would be served very well by a single national source for the combined alerts of government - from terrorist attack through tornado to travel warnings, organised by grid reference.

Alan"

1257 "Date: 27 June 2004

From: Robert Bruce Thompson (thompson@ttgnet.com)
To: NOAA (fairweather@noaa.gov)
CC: Senator Elizabeth Dole
CC: Senator John Edwards
CC: Representative Richard Burr
Subject: Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information

I favor immediate adoption of NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information.

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We, the citizens and taxpayers, deserve equal and direct access to data generated by the NOAA/NWS. It is important for ensuring equal access that this data be disseminated in an industry-standard, non-proprietary format such as the XML data feeds available from <http://weather.gov/xml/>. Your Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information recognizes the importance of making such data readily available to the public in an easily-usable form. Congratulations on your far-sighted approach.

The Commercial weather Services Association (CWSA) is lobbying against this policy to protect their own commercial interests, which are opposed to those of US citizens and taxpayers. As a citizen and a taxpayer, I say that the government has neither the right nor the responsibility to restrict the availability of data generated using public funds for the commercial benefit of CWSA members, or indeed for any other purpose.

I am sending copies of this comment to my Representative and Senators.

Best regards,

Robert Bruce Thompson
4231 Witherow Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27106"

1258 "It has come to my attention that consideration is being given to changes in the 1991 Public Private Partnership policy.

As a voter, tax payer, and citizen of this county I seek support for any changes which will provide greater and unfettered access to weather forecasting information. This, of course, includes the free dissemination of information via the internet without the use of proprietary/closed data transmission standards. The NWS should not support any single company or group of companies above any other company or private individual through proprietary data transmission. Open standards and free transmission will force vendors to enhanced levels of competition. That is, open standards and free transmission are good for the free market.

Regards,

Jeffrey L Gunter, Ph.D."

1259 " recently read that Barry Myers, president of Accuweather, is lobbying to prevent the National Weather Service from putting more accessible data on the Internet.

I sincerely hope you do not take his advice. The taxpayers pay for the weather data to be collected - I fail to see why we should pay more money to any private company for the privilege of viewing data that we paid to collect.

Imagine if western Union was lobbying the US Postal Service to make it

illegal to send checks through the mail. No one would stand for that. Companies with business models that are rendered obsolete through technological improvements should either innovate and offer new services, or go out of business. They should not be propped up at the taxpayers expense.

Thank you for your time.

Jonathan Reed
North Cambridge, MA

I recently read that Barry Myers, president of Accuweather, is lobbying to prevent the National weather Service from putting more accessible data on the Internet.

I sincerely hope you do not take his advice. The taxpayers pay for the weather data to be collected - I fail to see why we should pay more money to any private company for the privilege of viewing data that we paid to collect.

Imagine if western Union was lobbying the US Postal Service to make it illegal to send checks through the mail. No one would stand for that. Companies with business models that are rendered obsolete through technological improvements should either innovate and offer new services, or go out of business. They should not be propped up at the taxpayers expense.

Thank you for your time.

Jonathan Reed
North Cambridge, MA"

1260 "I wholeheartedly support your proposal to make weather data freely available on the internet.

Thank you.
--David"

1261 " First of all, thank you for providing this email address in addition to the feedback form. it's more convenient this way.

I've heard that you are hoping to close up free access to weather information. This is a bad idea, not just for the general public, but probably for you too. It might be wise for you to take a look at the history of filesharing protocols or instant messaging protocols on internet. Whenever one of their protocols have closed off free access and information about their protocol, users simply migrated away from that service and created a more open one.

It's a bit harder to do that with the weather, but what you might find is that people generally only want to know what the current weather is outside instead of the forecast, thus there would be less need for information from a paid team of meteorologists. Most people that I know are dissatisfied with the accuracy of forecasts provided by meteorologists anyways.

As a government run agency, your goal should be to help the people get more and better information, not catering solely to the popular form that relays it to them (ie, Accuweather, weather Channel, etc.). Instead of closing up the information from the general public, you should be expanding it so that eventually people can use their little

weather task bar programs to be alerted when a tornado or hurricane is dangerously close.

The current generation is working on ways to open up the world, not close it down. Please consider that.

Thanks,
Mark Krenz"

1262 "(I am making this both a comment to the NWS, and letter to my local congressmen.)

I saw a news article this morning on a "geek" news site that I read: <http://slashdot.org>. In the news article, it spoke about proposed policy changes at the NWS, and broadening the ability of the NWS to put more information on the Internet in forms that the public can use.

I read through the proposed changes, and the comments of Barry Meyers @ Accuweather.com. I think I understand both sides, but I wanted to voice my opinion.

My family's primary source for weather information is from two sources:

Our local news outlets in the Kansas City area. Specifically, we use KMBC Channel 9, and KMBC 980AM radio;
The Weather Underground, a free Internet weather site, run out of Ann Arbor Michigan.

We live in the state of Kansas, in a area frequented by severe storms and tornados. Although a weather radio (which we own) does a very good job of reporting immediate problems to us, Internet sites provide a tremendous service to us. Through the use of email alerts being sent to PDA/cell phones, we can be warned of storms and problems, and have additional time to prepare compared to the use of the weather radio. Internet sites help give us this warning and news.

It appears that Accuweather.com (and Barry Meyers) is advocating that weather information from the NWS only be provided to private companies, who can then "package" the weather for the public. Although this is a noble cause, and would help keep jobs of people in the weather industry, I believe that the argument is flawed. There are millions of people who will continue to get their weather information through the commercial weather industry. But allowing the NWS to publish weather information in real time, in a format that would allow other free services to use the information and give it to the public (or allow the public to go get the information directly from the NWS) would not cause any real harm to this industry, and would allow people (like myself and my family, and others in our communities) to have additional weather information at our fingertips.

I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain their current policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services; however the

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government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars.

I would encourage you to take a look at the information that the National weather Service provides, and other services (both free and for fee), and see the important role they each provide in providing educational, important weather information to the public. And to see they all play an important role in the protection of the American public. Please do NOT allow private industry to keep the NWS boxed up. PLEASE discuss this with other individuals in congress, and make sure that they get the message. The American public wants to see the fruits of our tax dollars, and be able to have access to information that it creates!

Thank you.

Rich Minear Family
P.O. Box 962
Tonganoxie, KS 66086
rich@minear.org"

1263 "This contact is in regards to the NOAA Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information.

The NOAA as a government entity funded inevitably by the Tax Payers of America, should provide that any policy that is established should provide free public access to all information that is available, including, but not limited to, all underlying information that has been used to create and provide weather forecasts. By providing this information, free to all, the private sector and academia now carry the onus to provide added value to the information. Their services will rise and fall based on their own ability to provide an effective and desirable service. While based on the free and publicly available information from the NOAA, the additional value that they create in presenting that data, adding industry specific information and formula, etc, will dictate the success of their services. This methodology will also encourage additional private sector competition and investment. As the raw product has already been paid for by the Tax Payers of America, the academic and private enterprise will be able to focus their product development dollars on technologies and services that will enhance that data and provide additional value to their customers. This type of policy also enables smaller private industries to compete with a level playing field to the larger ones, while also allowing the private Tax Paying individual to use the same data to come to their own conclusions. I personally have used data from the NOAA site on many occasions over data provided in my local market. I would like that data to continue to be made available for personal consumption by those who have made the greatest investment into its availability, the Tax Payers of America. Please do not allow private industry, such as Accuweather, to convince you that the public is not entitled to this information.

Best Regards,

Matthew Pickens

904-777-8549

Jacksonville, FL 32210"

1264 "I want to offer my support for the proposed NOAA National weather Service policy: Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. Making the NWS data more directly accessible to the public at large will spur development of new weather tools and value-added services by both businesses and private individuals.

As the Internet has matured in the last few years, it has demonstrated that the amount of innovation increases exponentially with each new level of information openness. weather Service data should be made as accessible as possible to encourage such innovation and dissemination to the public at large. Opening the data formats will spur research into new ways to use that data for weather prediction as well as spur the creation of new tools and services based on that data. The ultimate result will be better weather information for individuals and the public at large.

Limiting that data to select groups of weather data providers will only serve to handcuff the development of new tools and services available to the public. Objections by members of the current Commercial weather Industry should be taken for what they are: an attempt to limit and control public data to prevent an increase in competition. Such competition, whether by from new businesses or non-profit organizations will ultimately help the members of this industry. History shows that increased competition creates increased demand for products by increasing the demand for the new innovations.

Open the data to all, and all will see the benefit.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Tim Morgan"

1265 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public.

Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized. Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy.

I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public.

Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information.

The vital services provided by NOAA need to be freely available in the public domain, notwithstanding the ambition of certain elements of private industry to lock up these products and repackaging them for their own profit. In summary, the taxpayer should not be put in a position of having to pay more than once for the products of NOAA.

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Inasmuch as NOAA is a tax-funded government agency, the idea that private industry would have any kind of means of interfering with its data being provided to the public without charge is simply outrageous.

The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars.

Thank you.

Regards,

Ralph Jones"

1266 "Putting your data up in XML is a GREAT move. Please don't let pressure from folks like accuweather cause you to back down. As taxpayers, we've paid for the development of this data.

XML and web services are going to make information services so much more useful. I'm glad to see you taking a forward-looking position.

Tim O'Reilly @ O'Reilly Media, Inc.
1005 Gravenstein Highway North, Sebastopol, CA 95472
707-827-7000
http://www.oreilly.com (company), http://tim.oreilly.com (personal)"

1267 "Private Partnership policy
Date: Sun, 27 Jun 2004 11:03:16 -0500
User-Agent: KMail/1.6.2
Cc: myersb@accuweather.com
MIME-Version: 1.0
Content-Disposition: inline
Content-Type: text/plain;
 charset=""us-ascii""
Content-Transfer-Encoding: 7bit
Message-Id: <200406271103.16914.pben@foobox.com>
Status: R
X-Status: NQ
X-KMail-EncryptionState:
X-KMail-SignatureState:
X-KMail-MDN-Sent:
X-Server: High Performance Mail Server - http://surgemail.com

I don't know much about NOAA's Fair weather proposal beyond what I have read at: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>. I found out about this proposal by reading the website slashdot.org.

I hope that NOAA policy will be to share access to it's raw data, forecasts, and other analysis as widely as possible via the Internet and other means. It is my understanding that Accuweather would like to restrict distribution in order to charge fees to gain access to data that NOAA generated. I have no problem with Accuweather and other private organizations charging for their value added products. I don't think that it is fair to artificially restrict NOAA products so that end users must go to Accuweather and others for simple forecasts and data.

I have no doubt that if NOAA allows the widest possible distribution of it's products that there will be an increasing number of third party originations

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using that data to create innovative products that customers will be able to use at very low cost. I have a feeling that that is really what Accuweather really objects to.

Paul Benjamin
212A S. 2nd Street
Independence, Kansas 67301"

1268 "Greetings,

I have reviewed NOAA's new Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. This seems to me a very sensible policy, and I hope you'll allow it to move forward.

I am particularly excited about the innovative work that NOAA is doing with the National Digital Forecast Database XML Web Service (<http://weather.gov/xml/>). I expect this service to foster many new innovative services and research in the private sector, among weather hobbyists, and in universities.

Please don't let the commercial interests of a few interfere with the general good of everyone else.

Thank you,

Ben Edelman
benedelman.org"

1269 "Please, do NOT change your proposed policy to what Barry Myers of Accuweather wants -- a monopoly for disseminating the weather.

As a government agency, I feel you have an obligation and a mandate to provide weather information free to the people. It is in the interest of public safety. It is vital to how people plan their lives and days. NWS sites inform, educate, and warn us. And because weather has such an affect on so many, it should be free.

As for Accuweather, I view it with distain. It's a company that resells (for usually hefty fees) the free NWS services available. They may package it differently, they may add a comment, they may sell it as a service, but it's still the NWS's weather.

As for the other government agencies mentioned in this proposed policy: I repeat that the government has an obligation and mandate to provide such information to the public.

Thank you,

Jon Gould
410 W. 7th St.
Fort Worth, TX 76102-4709"

1270 "I fully support this policy. Allowing public access to the information will not only aid in the primary purpose of the NWS, but will foster innovation and, perhaps, even produce much more rich analysis from the public/hobbyist sector. Denying, or even limiting, that access will leave the dissemination of vital weather and climatological information in the

hands of corporate entities who do *NOT*, by their very nature, have the public interest as their primary concern.

Sincerely,
Edward A. Graham, Jr.
Elgin, TX"

1271 "Hello,

I'm writing today to express my excitement over your new Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. As a curious, private user of NOAA data (mostly forecasts and current observations at the moment), I've always been interested in your many products and am happy to see that you propose making and keeping them available to all in a fair and equitable manner.

Thanks!

Regards,
Eric Wong"

1272 "Dear Sirs and Madams,

I write to you in support of the proposal to repeal the 1991 public private partnership policy as a citizen, taxpayer, entrepreneur, programmer, and amateur scientist; I would like to thank the noaa and nws for proposing to make full data sets available. As a citizen and taxpayer, I pay for this data every day in a very real sense; while I make every day use of some subsets of this data that are publicly available, I and others are eager to create and contribute new applications for additional data.

Please hold firm against vested commercial interests that would prefer that you restrict access to this information. They want to continue to use your hard work and my tax dollars to hand them a defensible barrier to entry. This forces citizens to pay twice for weather data and prevents the emergence of new free software that uses that data and discourages entrepreneurs such as myself from introducing applications that add value.

Commercial weather services that add real value to this public resource will continue to flourish and have nothing to fear from this change. Those companies that serve as mere gatekeepers to publicly produced data will be forced to innovate or cease to operate. This is exactly as it should be.

Thanks for listening,

Matt Grosso
mgrosso@acm.org"

1273 "As an agency funded through tax dollars, the NOAA collects data which rightfully belongs to the public. That data is most valuable when is it is freely available and widely utilized.

Special interests that may be agitating for this information to be withheld from public access are simply looking to harvest a potential revenue stream rather than serving the public interest. To withhold this data would simply create artificial scarcity.

If the for-profit services which provide presentation of NOAA data at a cost are beneficial ("add value"), then they do not require the added

protection of further expense levied on the user by the government. If special interests are indeed requesting such protection, they are admitting their own redundancy and lack of worth to the citizen.

The public should not be required to pay a second time for data it has already obtained through tax dollars."

1274 "I am writing to you about a story I read where weather value-add companies were reported to be asking the government to either restrict or change data formats for National Weather Service (NWS) forecasting products, seemingly in order to get more people to buy private weather products instead of obtaining it directly from the NWS.

weather information as collected by government agencies has already been paid for by tax payer dollars, and should be freely available to any American who wants it. Furthermore, the National Weather Service, in my view, should make a point of reaching out even more with it's products to citizens who might not otherwise be able to get it.

The value of good weather forecasting information cannot be underestimated, and must be provided as quickly and as widely as possible in order to achieve the maximum benefit. Profit motivated companies cannot be relied upon to deliver or distribute weather to anyone and everyone who needs it. Companies are motivated by profit (i.e. greed), and only go where the money is, not necessarily where citizen's needs are.

Don't get me wrong, I think it's very useful for third party companies, e.g. Accuweather, to help augment distribution of weather information, even if it needs to be paid for, for example, through commercial advertising, that's a good thing.

However, any idea that the NWS should somehow make obtaining its weather products either more technically difficult to obtain or more difficult to use, in order to make de facto availability ONLY through private vendors rips off the taxpayer and must be avoided.

I urge the National Weather Service to avoid commercial pressure from private weather service vendors to do anything that lessens the public ability to obtain and use weather products directly from NWS, and further, would encourage NWS to create even better, and more widely available products as soon and as much as possible.

Note: yesterday my power went out due to storms here in Austing Texas. I run several commercial computer systems and was able to be ready for this, as I monitor NOAA.GOV warnings :)

dcd

--

Dixon Chan Dick
dixon@datamessenger.net
<http://www.datamessenger.net>"

1275 "Date: 27 June 2004

From: Robert Bruce Thompson (thompson@ttgnet.com)
To: NOAA (fairweather@noaa.gov)
CC: Senator Elizabeth Dole
CC: Senator John Edwards
CC: Representative Richard Burr
CC: General D.L. Johnson
CC: Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr.
CC: Secretary Donald L. Evans
Subject: Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather,
Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information

I favor immediate adoption of NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information.

We, the citizens and taxpayers, deserve equal and direct access to data generated by the NOAA/NWS. It is important for ensuring equal access that this data be disseminated in an industry-standard, non-proprietary format such as the XML data feeds available from <http://weather.gov/xml/>. Your Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information recognizes the importance of making such data readily available to the public in an easily-usable form. Congratulations on your far-sighted approach.

The Commercial weather Services Association (CWSA) is lobbying against this policy to protect their own commercial interests, which are opposed to those of US citizens and taxpayers. As a citizen and a taxpayer, I say that the government has neither the right nor the responsibility to restrict the availability of data generated using public funds for the commercial benefit of CWSA members, or indeed for any other purpose.

I am sending copies of this comment to my Representative and Senators.

Best regards,

Robert Bruce Thompson
4231 Witherow Road
Winston-Salem, NC 27106"

1276 "I've read the old policy, the proposed new policy, and Barry Myers' (Accuweather) analysis.

I'm a consumer of local weather forecasts. I use the pages available from www.srh.noaa.gov in preference to all other web services I've tried, for the simple reason that they are of high quality, the most cross platform, and are free of slow-loading commercial advertisements.

Nor does the site above attempt to place cookies which expire in 2010, etc. I *trust* NOAA, regarding matters of privacy, whereas the private sector is rife with examples of .com sites which, in the process of going out of business, have sold data they had indicated was to remain private. I trust NOAA to keep their sites cross-platform (I use Linux, not Microsoft) and have no such trust in the private sector, who may at any time use Internet Explorer-only technologies as a cost saving measure. With potentially far-reaching negative effects, given the abysmal security record of this browser. See The Washington Post article from yesterday for Explorer's

security flaw de jour. This sort of thing is continual.
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A6746-2004Jun25.html>

I do not believe in having to pay for data twice; once through taxation, and again through the private sector, because Barry Myers believe that "... the private weather industry is ideally suited to put the NWS information database into a form and detail that can be utilized by specific users."

Given the revolution in Open Source technologies, and modern hardware, I believe that very soon, anyone will be able to do this. But the data must be there.

I applaud RSS feeds, and any other methods of this kind.

Please don't forget that with these new technologies, the private sector has begun to contribute, as well as consume. I'm an alpha tester of the climateprediction.net distributed computing effort (University of Oxford) which is transitioning to Berkeley's BOINC distributed computing framework.

I believe in open data, standards, and contributions. Particularly in the sciences, and moreso in areas where my tax dollars are being spent. The commercial sector believes only in the bottom line.

NOAA and the NWS have been doing a *fantastic* job, and this proposed policy gives me every confidence you're attempting to do the right thing, even better than you have in the past.

Regards,

Greg Metcalfe"

1277 "I'm writing you to ask you to support current and future efforts to provide free and open access to National Weather Service data. Specifically, I request that you support the proposed policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information and other policy changes that benefit taxpayers by providing them with more access to NOAA data. Thank you for your support in this matter.

--

Tom Forsythe
tom@animelover.com"

1278 "Hello.

I want to add my enthusiastic support for NOAA's new Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. I am pleased to see the effort being made to disseminate the fruits of American's tax dollar investments.

I fear the commercial pressures will attempt to stifle what they perceive as competition. NOAA (and the NWS) have been working long and hard, decades before other popular services, to 'get the word out' on the weather using the then best means possible. It is only natural that the Internet (another fruit of tax dollars!) (and XML) be exploited on behalf of the citizens.

I look forward to future positive developments.

Armando P Stettner
Woodinville, Washington."

1279 "My thoughts on the matter are:

1. If commercial services are available, they should be used.
2. Any data obtained with public funding (i.e. data the NWS or other agency collects, not purchased for internal use) should be made available to the public in an open, standardized, format.
3. Any data used to make public policy decisions should likewise be made available, including its source, regardless of whether the source is public or private.

--

Alan Batie _____ alan.batie.org"

1280 "Any and all data generated by the National weather Service at taxpayer expense should be available to all taxpayers for no additional charge. Providing special data feeds or specialized access to the private sector is blatantly abusive, and should not be condoned. The private sector may of course take freely available data and provide it to the public with added value for a fee if they so choose, but all the information necessary for accurate daily and long term forecasting, including various radar return products, must remain freely accessible to the public. This, in my view, is the essence of the NWS raison d'etre, not using taxpayer-funded research to provide private concerns with raw data which they can then sell back to us.

Sincerely,

Robert G. Ferrell
Mico, Texas"

1281 "Gentlemen and Ladies,

I am writing to you to support your proposed changes to the NOAA/NWS policy--they are appropriate changes for these times.

You will doubtless receive lots of flack from the weather Service Industry; ignore it. They are whiners. In fact, I think they're a bunch of crybabies. If the only thing they bring to the table is mindlessly repeating the data that they receive from NOAA/NWS, then perhaps they should never have gotten into the business anyway.

Be strong.

Sincerely,

Brian Cunnie

--

Brian Cunnie phone 650.468.7433
http://brian.cunnie.com mailto:brian@cunnie.com"

1282 "As a taxpayer, my money is already going to fund you, and I appreciate the valuable service you provide. who doesn't want to know what the weather forecast is?

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But apparently there are plans by the commercial weather industry to stop this. I urge you to resist their efforts, and usher in an era of free, widely available weather forecasts.

I am going to send a copy to my senators and congressmen, as well.

Thank you,
Matthew Davidson"

1283 "Dear Sirs/Madam

Please register my strong support for your proposed policy. In particular, policy points 7 & 8.3 are unquestionably desirable for our society as a whole. While this may inconvenience private sector providers of meteorological data, they have shown themselves quite capable of providing "value added" services or exploiting other market niches; as should be the case.

"Open information dissemination: NWS recognizes that open and unrestricted dissemination of high quality publicly funded information, as appropriate and within resource constraints, is good policy and is the law."

Thank you.

M. Sean Green
Portland, OR

Dear Sirs/Madam

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"<fontfamily><param>Arial</param>Open information dissemination: NWS recognizes that open and unrestricted dissemination of high quality publicly funded information, as appropriate and within resource constraints, is good policy and is the law."

Thank you.

M. Sean Green
Portland, OR</fontfamily>"

1284 "In January of 2004, the Commercial Weather Services Association (CWSA) published its "Position Statements Regarding National Research Council Fair Weather Report" (<http://www.weatherindustry.org/CWSA%20ppt.pdf>). In this position paper, the CWSA urges the strengthening of the 1991 public-private partnership policy, and supports the exclusive access to government-produced weather data to private entities, for

subsequent dissemination to the public.

As a taxpayer, I am resolutely set against the use of taxpayer funds to subsidize the for-profit interests of the CWSA and its member organizations. Private for-profit interests should not usurp the greater interest of open public access to data made possible through taxpayer dollars.

As an academician, I am concerned that controlled access to government weather data through private interests will severely curtail the teaching and research mission of our education system. As a technology instructor, my students enjoy the privilege of accessing near-real-time weather

data so students have a "real-world" platform upon which to learn data processing techniques as well as to gain greater insights into the environment. Providing for-profit entities exclusive use and access to weather data would severely impact the learning process and force educators to expend scarce funds to secure data that has been selectively manipulated and screened by private for-profit weather interests.

I urge you to adopt a policy which will in no way infringe upon the ability of the public to access weather data on an even keel with private interests. I should also point out that the private weather industry would not be adversely impacted by such a policy, since their profit is derived from the "repackaging" of weather data into products specific for a particular industry (such as aviation, broadcast, etc.).

Brian Koontz, Instructor
Coordinator, Computer Science
Business/Information Technology Division
North Lake College, Irving, TX
972.273.3461"

1285 "Thank you so much for making your weather feeds available in XML format. As a teacher, I am going to be using these feeds in my classroom next year.

Again thank you so much for making government data public for all to use.

Dan Anderson
California"

1286 "Dear Reader:

As a meteorologist, American Meteorological Society member and commercial weather service employee for the past seven years, I am compelled to offer my view on the 'Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information'.

As stated 'This new proposed policy is intended to strengthen the existing partnership between government, academia and the private sector which provides the nation with high quality weather, water, climate and related environmental information.' However, after reviewing the document, I am struggling to grasp how this new policy will do nothing more than strain and distance any partnership that now exists within the Enterprise.

I realize the struggle between determining the roles of the industry has been occurring for a number of years. However, I question why we cannot learn from the mistakes and complaints of previous attempts and build on the growth of the past 60 plus years to outline how this partnership should exist.

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial weather

Services Association, led to the adoption of the ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service,"" in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

These statements should not be removed from any 'new' policy, but strengthened, enforced and used as the core of a true partnership between all sectors.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions

on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift

From government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy. If a strong partnership is truly the goal of this policy, then I implore you to consider direct input and inclusion from the commercial sector in any policy revisions in the future.

Very truly yours,

Steven R. Smith

Meteorologist

Data Acquisition and Utilization Manager

AccuWeather, Inc. - ""The Best Weather on the Web™.""

385 Science Park Road || State College, PA 16803

814-237-0309 x7736 || email: smithst@accuwx.com

<http://www.accuweather.com>"

1287 "As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public. Data which has been generated or collected using tax dollars belongs to the public and should be freely available to the public.

Information provides the greatest benefit when it is freely available and most widely utilized.

Thus far the NOAA has had a ""non-compete"" policy. I have no doubt the NOAA is receiving pressure from special interests to maintain that policy and to withhold data from the public. Business is a good and valuable thing when it provides the public with needed services, however the government should NOT be protecting unneeded redundant services at the direct expense and detriment of the public. The government should not be creating an artificial scarcity of information. The public should not have to pay a second time for information it has already obtained through tax dollars."

1288 "Please keep putting data on the internet for free, and make it policy.

Tax payers should not have to pay twice for weather information. Data gathered by a national/federal or local entity should not, and most likely legally can not be charged for, or provided in exclusivity to privileged parties as I am sure you are aware.

Instead, those parties seeking such privilege should fix their fault and dependency laden business plan and stop trying to strong arm citizens.

If you charge for your information, or provide it in a proprietary fashion to limited parties, you are charging your constituents for the avarice and laziness of a few i.e. Barry Myers et. al. If they become soul proprietors of weather data, then they will reduce meteorology to alchemy on the eyes of the public.

Thank you for your time,

Bret Kulakovich"

1289 "As a concerned tax payer, I would like to strongly urge NOAA to make it's atmospheric and climate data freely available on the Internet. This policy change would serve the greater good of tax payer whose tax money fund NOAA. Commercial partners will continue to provide ""value added"" service with this raw data without loss of revenue. Thank you for your consideration.

Mark Lewental"

1290 "Greetings,

First things first: Let me express my deep appreciation for NOAA's great services to the public. As a cruising sailor, Ham radio operator, computer programmer, and wide-ranging traveler, I have been your customer for years and have watched with interest as you have incrementally enhanced your offerings to the public. ""Government"" sometimes takes a beating in the court of public and media opinion. I think that NOAA stands as an example of all that is right with government.

With respect to the possible reconsideration oif the 1991 public/private policy, I would say this: Private weather concerns should have unfettered access to weather data; to the extent that they can repackage and add value to that data in the way of presentation or abstraction, then good for them. However, individual private citizens such as myself should have the same unfettered access to that data. It is likely that I want to create my own unique system to process that weather data...or, who knows?...it is not impossible that I may want to start my own business to redistribute weather date to customers. In the interests of fairness, competition, and just return to taxpayers, I can't see how you could limit access to weather data.

In a nutshell, then, I guess you could say I supprt the reconsideration of the 1991 policy.

Again, my many thanks for your great work!

Jim Hogan
N7BFD
S/V Nola Hull #533439
Seattle, WA"

1291 "The 1991 NWS public-private partnership policy should be replaced. I heartily endorse the proposed replacement.

The Nation Weather Service does an outstanding job for the tax payers of this country and the fruits of their labor should be directly and freely available to those same tax payers.

The Internet allows for unheard of dissemination of information. It is quite likely that new projects and new ideas will stem from the availability of the NWS observations in new easily accessed formats. Undoubtedly, at some point, lives will be saved and improved.

Companies should have the same access to the data generated by the NWS as any individual, no more, no less. A company who is able to produce a value added product based on the data collected by the NWS will survive and thrive. A company who has based their business model on restricting access to public information frankly has nothing to offer this country or their customers and should not be subsidized by the tax payers.

Darren Henderson

37 Clifton St.
Madison, ME 04950

darren@nighttide.net"

1292 "To whom It May Concern:

I would like to register my strong opinion that our nation, and the world at large, benefits from free, open standards based weather data being as available as possible to the public at large.

Today, that means technology like XML - in the future, it is hard to say. But as a public organization, proving this data in a raw format will have the greatest possible benefit for citizens and non citizens alike to develop their own ways to use.

Pleas from the for-profit weather industry should be discounted - they are a value-added delivery service - available information does not threaten them so long as they add value to it and / or make it even more accessible. They should not, however, be able to profit simply by acting as middle man and helping end users get data they already paid for with their tax dollars.

Sincerely,
Ben Hubbard
Detroit, MI"

1293 "I have no problem with a government agency releasing data to commercial enterprise. I do, however, have a HUGE problem with them doing do in any way preferential to what and how they provide data to the general public. If there is to be ANY preference given by a government agency it must be preferential to private citizens. Please do not bow to pressures from the commercial world who want to ensure that they are making money from the data my taxes provide.

Release the data to everyone on the same basis. If private industry also wants the same data, they can have it. If you want to charge someone to get it to cover some noaa costs, charge the profiteers as they will still make a profit from it. But don't force me to give them profit from what my taxes pay for."

1294 "I'm contacting you to applaud the delivery of weather observation information in XML format. I would appreciate it if this information remains publicly accessible. I use this in my home for display of the temperature on an LED sign.

Thanks,
Sean

--
I think Python should have been called EmptyOyster. It's like perl, but without the irritating bits. -- K<bob>
Sean Reifschneider, Member of Technical Staff <jafo@tummy.com>
tummy.com, ltd. - Linux Consulting since 1995. Qmail, Python, SysAdmin"

1295 "Dear Sirs:

Please do follow through to make weather forecasts easily accessible to the public

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via the web. If private companies want to make their own forecasts and data acquisitions (separate from the weather Service), then they can. But they should have no say about the output of the government service. Moreover, they should not have the only means to access these government provided data.

The web is a powerful tool, and our government should take advantage of it to provide such information free to the public.

Thanks.

Henry C. Goldwire, Jr."

1296 "To:

General D.L. Johnson, Director, NWS
Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr, Under Secretary of Commerce /
NOAA Administrator
Secretary Donald L. Evans, Office of the Secretary, Dept of Commerce

Dear Sirs,

As a weather enthusiast/hobbyist in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania (I have my own weather station and post my data to multiple sources and have my own web site) I use the information provided by the NOAA/NWS to augment my own daily observations and retrieve information on local weather events.

I'm also a taxpayer.

Since the NOAA/NWS is a taxpayer-funded organization, the data it collects needs to and should be made freely available to the public in as useful a form as possible. In the past, this was in the form of FTP- and HTTP-accessible flat text files. As technology has evolved and time has passed this has evolved to XML-based web services (very cool might I add!) and a very useful and organized set of web sites that present information from around the U.S. in a uniform fashion. The web site redesign was done well and is a highly useful resource, as is the raw data.

Private companies object to the NWS releasing free information because they would like taxpayers to pay for weather information twice - once to fund the NWS and again to actually get the information through a private company. This is wrong - the NWS should release information freely since the code to do so is essentially zero after some initial setup.

Private companies can still develop software to better process, analyze and present this information. The information itself, however, should be free for all. Taxpayers should not have to pay for access to information that they have paid to be collected.

Please keep the data available for free to the general public and keep up the great work!

Best regards,

Bob Rudis
4580 Steuben Road
Bethlehem, PA 18020-9639
bob@rudis.net
610-614-1878"

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1297 "It's a good idea. We paid for the data once as taxpayers, we should not have to pay for it a second time just because this would make life easier for certain commercial ventures.

A.Lizard

--

member The Internet Society (ISOC), The HTML Writers Guild.

""They need to wake up and smell the fire, it is their pants that are burning.""
hombresecreto, re: the famous SCO threat letter"

1298 "STOP THE ATTEMPT TO TAKE AWAY NOAA SERVICE! Expand NOAA service and stop private enterprise from charging tax payers for NOAA services. KEEP NOAA FREE AND EXPAND THE ALL READY OUTSTANDING NOAA SERVICE BEING PROVIDED. DO NOT ALLOW PRIVATE ORGABIZATIONS OUTSIDE NOAA TO TAKE AWAY THE EXCELLENT SERVICE BEING PROVIDED.
Thanks,
E. A. Hebert
Abilene, Texas"

1299 "Hello,

I live in Austin TX and would like to know if you need my help to keep NWS data feeds ""free"" to the public. I saw this article on Slashdot and I sent in feedback to the NWS site. Here is the article:
<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>
I also reviewed this page: <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>

I fully support making the weather data available to ALL parties in an even-handed manner - no one group (private vs public) should have an advantage over the other for weather data access and data formats since both entities are tax payers and therefore deserve equal treatment. I am a weather hobbyist and a U.S. resident and tax payer.

If you need me to write my Senators + Reps please let me know :)

thanks,
Ron
rbassett@gmail.com
512-289-4533"

1300 "Dear NOAA

The proposed new policy is good news. Making all weather data easily available to everyone will lead to increased innovation in producing forecasts and in methods for making those forecasts available to the public. It is also a fair policy since the data is produced using taxpayer money and so should be available to the general public.

Stefan Hollos
Exstrom Laboratories LLC
P.O. Box 7651
Longmont, CO 80501"

1301 "Dear Sir,

I am in support of your agency providing weather information to the general public at no cost to the user. My tax dollar is already paying for this information so I expect to receive this information as a public service.

Anthony"

1302 "Not long ago - my brother was sailing from Hawaii to California with several people. He had a slow e-mail link and asked me to update him since the weather was looking nasty and needed advice. I was able to go to the NOAA website, find the gales to his south and north-west. Of particular help to me was the graphical maps and satellite imagery. I was able to e-mail him back a short text message which contained the information he needed to arrive home safely. It may have saved his life.

My point is that your providing detailed information in both text and a graphical format to the public is an excellent use of taxpayer resources and I am in favor of you continuing to do so.

The new plan <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php> seems innocuous but vague. I hope that you change the phrase

""will provide information in forms accessible to the public as well as underlying data in forms convenient to additional processing by others.""

to

""will provide information, maps, and data in formats accessible to the public as well as underlying data in formats convenient to additional processing by others.""

so that it is explicit in that it will continue to provide the public the same services that you provide today. I know that costs are always an issue - but as a web-database programmer who has worked with real-time graphics in php (e.g. www.phplot.com) I know that the graphical display of data can be automated and so can be a low-cost component of the services you provide.

Thank you for your time,

Afan Ottenheimer
CEO
JEO.NET"

1303 "Keep the weather FREE, rain hail or shine!"

1304 "To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you in regards to the solicitation for comments available at <http://www.weather.gov/fairweather/> on the proposed NWS policy.

I feel that the proposed policy is an excellent idea, as it allows for NOAA/NWS to provide data directly to the public at the lowest cost possible.

First off, NOAA is a government agency paid for by taxpayers so that U.S. citizens (and many others) may benefit from accurate weather data. If taxpayers are funding NOAA, clearly the data and services provided by NOAA should be available to the general public.

Secondly, I will be heading to college in the fall to study meteorology. By allowing the public to have access to all NWS weather data (as deemed possible by current funding and technology), people like myself will be able to enjoy a

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greater knowledge of our weather as well as use the data for research and other projects -- especially those that would help the community.

Thirdly, I am the webmaster for a weather website, weatherUSA.net. While I earn revenue from advertisements on the website, I believe that all weather data should be in the public domain (as a good amount of NWS data currently is) and easily accessible by the public. I currently disseminate NWS weather warnings by parsing the ""Experimental XML alert feeds"" on weather.gov -- and I would love to see more weather data accessible in open-standards formats such as XML.

Lastly, in response to some companies opposing the Proposed Policy, I would like to mention the following: Most businesses/corporations exist to make money -- therefore, I can understand them being weary to the distribution of the very data they make money from -- but I would rather save lives than make money.

Thank you for your time.

Wesley Haines
webmaster, weatherUSA.net"

1305 "As a voting, tax-paying US citizen, I encourage the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to revise the rules for access to the weather data from the 1991 rules.

I encourage you to make the access as wide as possible and not to be co-opted by a group of private sector business people who profit off of the public good. I support the NOAA's move to update the 1991 rules under the ""Fair weather"" idea.

thank you.

David

Dr. David Mikosz
14844 28 Mile Road
Washington Township, MI 48094"

1306 "To whom it May Concern,

Like others who have taken the time to respond to the call for comments, I would have preferred taking more time to draft a more thorough comment about the proposed revision in the 1991 Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service, but allocating significant time to this effort has been a struggle. I'll admit that despite major concern over the proposed changes and the need to object, or at least question, the prospect of what actual power we have over influencing this policy has introduced some skepticism. That being said, one cannot complain about policies without having attempted to help shape them.

I am writing you as senior meteorologist with weatherFlow Inc. Our firm, like many others in the private sector, provides specialized forecasts for niche markets in marine weather market. In addition, our firm is somewhat of an outlier with respect to private sector businesses in that we also collect data to support our operations. The best method to convey our feelings to towards the proposed clarification or revision the NWS's role may be through an example. Although the following sequence of events is not directly related to the FairWeather Policy, it demonstrates the need for all parties

to set clear missions and work, in a rapidly changing technical world, to fulfill these missions. Our firm provides a data demo on the company web page in which real-time data are displayed from a subset of sites on the Chesapeake Bay. We changed the format of a tabular product on the free site to interface with a US Coast Guard Search and Rescue software routine. In this process, we unknowingly eliminated a product that a local WFO had been using to aid in triggering special marine warnings. The irony is this chain of events is that the National Weather Service's slogan "helping save lives" is being fulfilled with the aid of a private sector firm, weatherFlow... at no cost. weatherFlow feels as though that the best solution for all parties is to work together, and has demonstrated this by giving a valuable resource to the NWS for its primary mission. Now it is time for the NWS to reciprocate by bringing an open mind to the issue of determining and abiding by missions.

With this lead-in, here are several items that warrant attention from the National Weather Service, as well as our policy makers in Washington:

- 1) If the NWS is to remain true to its mission, there is little justification for the provision of surf, coastal(non-advisory), agricultural forecasts among other non-life threatening products.
- 2) The term "value-add" is incorrectly defined by many in the public sector as taking NWS information and prettying it up to make money.
- 3) Value add is what will drive the future of the weather business that will only get bigger, more profitable, and become a more energetic sector of US commerce if the government clearly determines and stands by a clear policy of NOT getting into the "value add" business.
- 4) What is "value-add"? Value add is spending resources to address the various niche markets and determining their weather information needs, NOT spending US taxpayer dollars to do so. Value-add is supporting a customer with the latest means of safe, reliable, and economical information transfer. Value-add is taking the risk of installing hardware for a client who values its usefulness to the point that they are willing to pay for such expenditures. Value-add is marketing the latest advances in science to a client who may need help comprehending how to capitalize on such information. The private sector can help grow the field of meteorology at a rate never seen before, IF the US government allows this to happen by staying out of the weather business.
- 5) Specifically with weatherFlow, we have been able to build a company in which our main competition, the US government, is providing a similar product for free, and this is not right. If the US government started building cars and gave them away, there would be a few upset soles in Detroit. Altering the policy seems to increase the level of "gray-ness" in an area it is already too much gray.

The NWS public-private partnership, as it currently exists, has its shortcomings, but the proposed changes threaten to send the private sector into a state of shaky existence.

After stating the obvious, a potentially much larger detrimental effect of this proposed policy change might very likely be a scenario where advances in meteorology will slow to a snail's pace. Private sector firms, when faced with shaky future, will be less likely to support strengthening of the infrastructure. E.g., fewer sensor installs, less private funding for satellites/radar, less private sector involvement into research, etc. The negative fallout then results in inferior products that are less sellable, AND not as successful in "helping save lives". For example, if our business fails, then our sensors go away, and the National Weather Service fails too by losing a valuable data resource that does strongly add to its primary mission.

The current policy states ""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."" Careful thought should be given if the need truly exists to necessitate a change in wording of this policy.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Jay Titlow
Senior Meteorologist
WeatherFlow, Inc.

Jay Titlow
Senior Meteorologist
Weatherflow, Inc.
www.weatherflow.com
jtitlow@weatherflow.com
office: 1-757-868-5362
cell:1-757-592-2700"

1307 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

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It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the private sector.

The Commercial weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Karianne Smith"

1308 "I am in total agreement with implementing the more open policy regarding weather data.

More specifically, the I agree with: ""The NWS should replace its 1991 public-private partnership policy with a policy that defines processes for making decisions on products, technologies, and services, rather than rigidly defining the roles of the NWS and the private sector."" This information has already been paid for with Tax Dollars, why should I (or anyone for that matter) have to pay for it again?

-jim ryan
25 bayview avenue
howard beach, new york 11414
646.267.7242"

1309 "General D.L. Johnson
Director of the National Weather Service

Dear General Johnson,

I am delighted to hear that the National weather Service is embarking upon a program involving wider dissemination of current weather information via XML and other emerging Internet technologies. This initiative is clearly in the public interest, and you and the National weather Service are to be congratulated on your foresight and dedication.

Very truly yours,

Don Montgomery

Don Montgomery, PhD donm@methodbydesign.com
Partner Method by Design 972-423-3042
1432 Cross Bend Road Plano TX 75023"

1310 "As a team member in the private weather forecasting services, I would like to offer a few thoughts on the the proposed poilcy of the NWS ""Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information"".

The NWS needs to concentrate on what is does best; that is: the gathering, dissemination, and delivery of weather data to the general public. For the NWS to try to overplay its card and encompass the private sector on a daily operating basis will be a disaster. There are enough ongoing problems in the daily structure and delivery of the products already produced by the NWS. This is not a case where bigger is better, and that more beaurocracy will offer a better product for the private individual.

As a member of a private weather consulting firm, I have seen first hand how the business side of producing customized weather products benefits not only the client, but also gives a more precise and exact answer to the needs of these individuals.

I had the oppportunity of participating in the the 2002 Salt Lake winter Olympic Games as a venue weather forecaster. This was a unique operation in which the private sector joined hands with the NWS in providing the timely and necessary weather information critically needed for the success of the Games and the public's safety. Each entitiy had its own sector to which they were responsible. This proved to be an outstanding effort showing not only the benefits of being able to work together, but a need for separate institutions providing the needs of all concerned. Only the private sector could have provided the detailed and tailored information that was necessary for the Olympic environment; while the NWS concentrated on the general public safety issues.

If the NWS was allowed to have total reign on all weather information and delivery to the private sector in the future, and leaving out the benefits of a free-marketplace then all will suffer. weather information will be a one-approach, monopolistic style where a mass produced product will disallow opinion choice and spirit of excellence.

I heartily advise against this placing this policy into action as it will destroy a free-flowing knowledge envrionment that has developed over the past years where private weather industry has excelled in fulfilling the needs for individualized weather information.

Ryan Wright
rew@weatherbank.com"

1311 "To the NOAA, regarding the so-called ""fairweather policy""

I use your excellent website daily to get accurate, detailed weather information which plays an important part in my life. It has come to my attention that the private weather sector wishes to hinder my ability to use this data by encouraging you to provide digital forecasts only in specialized data formats and shut down the XML data feeds. They are opposed to this proposed fairweather policy.

I plead with you not to give in to these wishes of the private weather

sector. Do not make changes or adopt policies that benefit only a few corporations and leave so many taxpayers without your valuable service. Do not make us pay twice for weather information. Please continue on the excellent course on which you have proven yourself in the past. Please proceed with the fairweather policy as it has been outlined on your website!

Sincerely,
Hans Fugal"

1312 "Comments on the proposed
National Weather Service Policy on Partnerships in the Provision
of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information
John A. Dutton
Weather Ventures Ltd
and

Professor of Meteorology Emeritus and Dean Emeritus
The Pennsylvania State University

The discussion about proper roles for the National weather Service and various private sector entities in supplying weather information to the public has become increasingly intense and acrimonious in recent years. Seeking a fresh and unbiased view, the Congress and the NWS arranged for a study by the National Research Council which presented its recommendations in Fair Weather: Effective Partnerships in Weather and Climate Services.

Fair weather points out again that advances in observational, computer, and communications technology are driving change in weather information services at a daunting pace. Today persons concerned about weather impacts on their activities can readily view satellite and radar images and graphical forecasts in real time on their own computers. As a consequence, they no longer require the services of some segments of the private weather services sector that once enjoyed a prosperous existence as providers of weather information. These providers protest mightily, claiming the government should not provide weather services that the private sector could provide. One might argue with equal force that the private sector should not attempt to interfere with government services being provided to the taxpayers, and that the private sector can succeed handsomely by adding sufficient value to government products to make them attractive and financially rewarding.

I can summarize my views in a few sentences:

§ The NWS should do what the citizens expect it to do.

§ The taxpayers should have convenient and ready access to the federal weather information for which they have already paid.

§ The NWS should ensure that news media can assist in wide dissemination of federal warnings and information critical to the protection of life and property.

§ The private weather sector should not interfere with federal services by seeking special rules, regulations, or status from the Administration or the Congress.

§ The government has no special responsibility to the private weather sector other than to provide the same free and ready access to meteorological information that it provides to all citizens and entities.

Not too long ago, the private weather sector was a key link in conveying critical weather information to the public; it provided an important communication channel and was an essential middleman. But as is increasingly evident, the middlemen are no longer needed in many channels in which they were once key players. That is why the argument is intense and acrimonious: the weather information middlemen see their business being hampered or destroyed by "free" weather information. But they blame the National Weather Service rather than the new realities created by technological advance.

The proposed policy addresses some of these realities somewhat obliquely, and it sets forth the principles which the NWS will use in managing its affairs and serving the public. It does not define a process for making decisions, as the NRC recommended:

The NWS should replace its 1991 public-private partnership policy with a policy that defines processes for making decisions on products, technologies, and services,

rather than rigidly defining the roles of the NWS and the private sector. Some of the private sector commentators are seizing on this apparent discrepancy to fault the policy. And some will point to the fact that, alas, the proposed policy ends by referring to "the customer" rather than user, citizen, or taxpayer, thus confirming in their mind that the NWS is in "competition" with them. It may well be that any specified process would be too formal and unwieldy, and it is easy to envision interminable arguments before beleaguered advisory committees. But regardless of policies and processes, the advance of technology will drive the changes to come and surely it is unwise to try to formulate rules or a decision process will constrain the flow of weather information to the American taxpayers. Both Fair Weather and the earlier NRC Twenty-First Century report emphasized the unique strengths of the American weather information partnership, with the federal, private, and academic sectors all having important—and evolving—roles and responsibilities. In my invited lecture at the first Presidential Forum of the American Meteorological Society in 2001, I argued that rather than trying to circumscribe the efforts of the other partners, the three sectors should combine to seek greater federal support for integrated atmospheric observations and forecasting capabilities that will benefit all. I commented then: when we shackle one of the partners, we all wear the chains."

1313 "I am in favor of changing the 1991 policy that favors the commercial distribution of weather information provided by NWS.

As a taxpayer, with the equipment and the know how to access this information directly, I should not have to rely on a paid service or a proprietary format to access information, that I have already paid for.

I am in favor of the free (cost and format) dissemination of all government information, where practical.

I am not opposed to the commercial weather industry making a profit, but they should have to accomplish this via improved service and value added service, not by prioritizing public information. Let the commercial services survive on their own merits.

The information world has changed drastically since 1991, NWS information can and should be distributed freely.

Thank You
Bill Murphy"

1314 "Public Comment Regarding Access To NWS Weather Data

cc: General D.L. Johnson, Director of the National Weather Service,
DL.Johnson@noaa.gov
Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., Under Secretary of Commerce and
NOAA, Administrator, Conrad.C.Lautenbacher@noaa.gov
Secretary Donald L. Evans, Office of the Secretary, Department of
Commerce, devans@doc.gov

I strongly support the NWS's proposed policy of making weather and environmental data available to the public in a easily used format. NWS is on my Favorites list and is relied upon during severe weather.

There are lots of value-added opportunities for private meteorologists and the companies they work for in the extension of NWS data and in the

local/regional/national/world interpretation of NWS data. However, providing them with ""proprietary access"" would not be in the public interest.

I also find it repugnant that Barry Myers from Accuweather would try to limit public access to government data collected with taxpayer funding.

Lon Crosby, Ph.D.
lcrosby@netins.net
515-826-4995"

1315 "The 1991 public private partnership policy should be strengthened to prevent NOAA from competing with the Private Weather Industry. NOAA should not be allowed to divert money and resources away from its core mission.
Brian Callahan"

1316 "Please I beg of you keep and release as much data as you can for free! Don't allow a single company to control data that should and must be available to everyone for no cost."

1317 "Hello,

I have heard that Accuweather is raising some issues with the free NWS NEXRAD data, is this true? I believe the data should remain free to all, since it has already been payed for by us tax payers. Accuweather is only interested in gaining financial status, rather than helping the meteorological community as a whole. If the NWS were to change the free Free NEXRAD Policy, the meteorological community would become rather upset... Just let me know what is happening/going to happen.

Thanks,
Robert D. Dewey"

1318 " am a broadcast meteorologist, and I have to disagree with the president of CWA on his objections to changes in NWS policy. I enjoy having access to a huge array of weather information without having to subscribe to or order it (at my cost) from a commercial weather agency. It is the commercial weather industry that has chosen to duplicate products that were formerly only produced by government agencies. The NWS has the facilities, equipment, personnel, processes, and experience to continue producing quality weather information which is available and understandable to most people. As to the actual wording of the document, I don't see any reason why a policy statement for the NWS should include statements about broadcast meteorology or commercial weather services. The commercial weather industry is a group of businesses which chose to enter a field in which a government agency already was doing a pretty good job. There really is no reason to expect that government agency to quit making improvements or moving forward. Our government agencies exist to serve the American public, and that is what NWS is doing.

Judy Dickey
WMBB-TV, Panama City, FL"

1319 "To whom it may concern,

I am writing to urge you not to shut down your new free digital weather

services,
<http://weather.gov/xml/>

As a consultant working to help not-for-profit organizations implement open-source technology, the free availability of data feeds of this sort is indispensable. Shutting down this service will act to the detriment of my business.

Sincerely yours,
Sam Nelson
President
Clever Name Here Inc.
390 Park Pl. #2
Brooklyn, NY 11238
(718) 623-2346
sam@clevernamehere.com"

1320 "I recently read a report (<http://yro.slashdot.org/yro/04/06/27/0216251.shtml?tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>) about the NWS's proposal to make online weather data free and the efforts by the Private Weather Section/Accuweather to defeat this plan.

I urge you to continue as planned and make weather data free and available to all in a readily-available format.

The NOAA's budget is funded by tax payers. Allowing a private industry to restrict the NOAA's information only to sell it back to the very people who already paid for it is ridiculous.

Sincerely,
Christopher Dove"

1321 "To All Concerned,

I've recently read through the NOAA/National Weather Service proposed policy changes based on study "" Fair Weather: Effective Partnerships in Weather and Climate Services"". While there are several positive points from the study, I believe the proposed changes in policy and the potential change in emphasis for NOAA/NWS is potentially very harmful to the the relationships between NWS, Private sector and the academic sector.

The private sector has relied on its creativity, technology and innovation to supply many clients in different industries with quality and reliable information. I also believe the NWS has made significant improvement in its proposed mission of saving life and property. I believe changing the policy creates more of a gray area and would result in more tension, friction and inefficiencies between all parties.

The other problem I have, is regarding the use of tax dollars in expanding the NWS role into areas that are already efficient. It's like re-inventing the wheel, and NOT a good or responsible way of using funds.

Thanks for reading through my feedback.

Sincerely,
Joe Nicholls"

1322 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the
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relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

The result of this policy has been better forecasts, delivered in a prompt and professional manner, and a significant number of new jobs created in the private sector.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National weather Service in the private sector.

The Commercial weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process that envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new

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National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on Its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Dr. Joe Sobel
Senior Vice President
Director of Forensic Services
AccuWeather, Inc.
814-235-8765
sobel@accuweather.com"

1323 "Dear Sirs,

As a taxpaying citizen, I would like to weigh in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Weather Service

Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information, a copy of which is available at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/fairweather/>

I am incredibly supportive of the revised policy, specifically where it allows, and encourages, the NWS to disseminate underlying data in forms convenient to additional processing by others. As a former student in Meteorology, I found access to the publicly developed, publicly financed data of the NWS very difficult if not impossible, and I am relieved to see that the NWS is serious about fixing this shortcoming.

Additional data dissemination will not only further the studies of meteorology, but will allow a larger set of companies and individuals to incorporate life-saving meteorological data (warnings, alerts, etc.) in their processes and daily lives. The XML service (new technology to automatically incorporate data into websites and automated systems, such as emergency services planning systems) should be immediately supported rather than made available on an "experimental" basis, and I cannot minimize the importance this technology will have in impacting American lives.

I hope that policy makers in their decision making will heavily weight the interest of the taxpayers and will approve this new policy. I also want to commend the NWS

for looking after Americans rather than a small sliver of opportunistic "commercial" weather services who are attempting at gouging us by withholding taxpayer-financed information from taxpayers.

Sincerely,

Mike Borsetti"

1324 "Boris Debic wrote:

>
> Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
> Boris Debic (debic@epiphany.com) on Monday, June 28, 2004 at 02:47:35
> -----
>
> email: debic@epiphany.com
>
> subject: From weather.gov
>
> comments: This Experimental National Digital Forecast Database XML Web Service is
an excellent service it's absolutely excellent!!! I am a bit worried when I hear
that some folks in the weather industry would like to see this stopped so they can
charge for reselling the same data. I think that would be wrong because we would not
have the ability to forecast without the taxpayers support for the collection of
weather data. This service is certainly a tangible return they (and I) should be
able to enjoy.
>
> Congratulations on such a great idea and such excellrnt use of the most modern
technology!
>
> Sincerely,
>
> Boris Debic
> Foster City, CA.
>
> The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/xml/>
>
> submit: Submit Comments...
>"

1325 "Marshall webber wrote:

>
> Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
> Marshall webber (webwalker@webwrench.com) on Sunday, June 27, 2004 at 22:13:06
> -----
>
> email: webwalker@webwrench.com
>
> subject: From weather.gov
>
> comments: As a citizen tax payer, I strongly encourage NOAA/NWS to proceed with
it's plan to provide more data via the internet directly to the public. I already
pay once for the data that NOAA collects at my expense; to wrap government generated
data in a cloak of business that benefits only business and not the tax payer is
unacceptable.
>
> Please make all of the NOAA collected data available in open formats.
>

> The referring webpage:
>
> submit: Submit Comments..."

1326 """"Mr. Val Roming"" wrote:

>
> Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
> Mr. Val Roming (kemosabe6@excite.com) on Sunday, June 27, 2004 at 11:37:06
> -----
>
> email: kemosabe6@excite.com
>
> subject: From weather.gov
>
> comments: RE: Proposed Internet Policy Changes
> Thank You for your exemplary service to
> our great Republic!
> That said, please disregard Mr. Barry Meyers (Accu-weather Corporation) efforts to
> privatize for profit our TAXPAYER FUNDED weather reportage.
> This is a great Republic, and we, sadly
> seem to have some folks that wish to undermine the foundations so sorely won.
> I have no need for fake/false/misleading and downright WRONG weather broadcasts
> by greedy businesses. Please continue working in
> behalf of your funding source, the US Taxpayer.
> Respectfully Yours,
> Mr.Val Roming
> kemosabe6@excite.com
>
> The referring webpage:
>
> <http://weather.gov/>
>
> submit: Submit Comments..."

1327 "George Adams wrote:

>
> Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
> George Adams (george.adams@att.net) on Sunday, June 27, 2004 at 12:36:46
> -----
>
> email: george.adams@att.net
>
> subject: From weather.gov
>
> comments:
> Dear NOAA policy makers:
> Regarding your plans to make it a matter
> of policy [it is already a matter of
> practice] to provide forecast data in
> publically accessible formats without
> cost: I depend on the service you
> now provide. Its stability as a
> consistent source of weather information
> far exceeds the comings and goings of
> the various commercial weather services
> that rehash information from your
> weather models and sensors. The formats
> and the display technologies you now
> use or have under development are

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> excellent and completely adequate to my
> needs for planning travel, recreation
> and outdoor work. It is the single
> most gratifying benefit of the vast
> billions of tax dollars our government
> spends. I will promptly become an
> agitator and campaigner against any
> administration that turns this vital
> public service information over to a
> private, for-profit reseller for their
> commercial advantage.
>
> Sincerely,
> George Adams
> Lincoln, MA
>
> cc Sen. Kennedy, Rep. Meehan.
>
> The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/hdqrtr.html>
>
> submit: Submit Comments..."

1328 "Tony Scislaw wrote:

>
> Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
> Tony Scislaw (tscislaw@cfl.rr.com) on Sunday, June 27, 2004 at 12:56:04
> -----
>
> email: tscislaw@cfl.rr.com
>
> subject: From weather.gov
>
> comments: RE:Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water,
Climate and Related Environmental Information
>
> Please keep all taxpayer funded data/information free to the public.
>
> Tony Scislaw
> Cocoa, FL
>
> The referring webpage:
>
>
>
> submit: Submit Comments..."

1329 "Jim Wilson wrote:

>
> Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
> Jim Wilson (jjwilson@cableone.net) on Sunday, June 27, 2004 at 13:09:10
> -----
>
> email: jjwilson@cableone.net
>
> subject: From weather.gov
>
> comments: Is it true that Accuweather is trying to convince NOAA to not allow
services to tax payers who access the site? And Accuweather wants to profit from
your services?

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>
> I use NOAA.gov to check for severe weather in my area because it is the most accurate site available. You provide a more detailed report on tornados, and severe weather that affects my area. I can see what is happening well in advance of what TV weather offers. We appreciate the job you are doing and hope you will not allow private companies to put us at risk for their financial profit.
>
> The referring webpage:
<http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1161054/posts>
>
> submit: Submit Comments...
>"

1330 "wrote:

>
> Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
> () on Sunday, June 27, 2004 at 13:37:16
> -----
>
> subject: From Weather.gov
>
> comments: I've heard a plan to charge for NOAA information. Now, in my opinion, I already pay for this, through taxes.
>
> I am absolutely opposed to paying any more than I already do, no matter what AccuWeather wants.
>
> The referring webpage:
>
> <http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1161054/posts>
>
> submit: Submit Comments..."

1331 "t am strongly opposed to the repeal of the 1991 Policy.

I believe that the top-notch service the American public receives from the private weather industry will vanish if the NWS were to assume full responsibility for delivery of weather services.

Thank you,

A concerned tax-payer!"

1332 "Hi,

I'm Robert Eckstein, one of the editors here at O'Reilly. I'm also a Skywarn Spotter for the EWX region around Austin, Texas.

I can only reemphasize Tim's earlier comment about having free access to the NOAA XML data. As both a programmer--and a bit of a weather geek--I'm always looking for new ways to view data that's presented to me. At the moment, I donate my spare CPU cycles to help analyze SETI radio data, and I hope one day I can donate some spare cycles to help create grid models at a far higher resolution than what's available today. I strongly believe XML data exchange with the general public is the first step to getting there.

It's a wonderful move towards understanding our climate better--no

matter what big business says--and I hope it expands exponentially.

Tim O'Reilly wrote:

```
> Great to hear. Let me know if there's anything else we can do.
>
> On Jun 28, 2004, at 4:04 AM, fairweather wrote:
>
>> Dear Mr. O'Reilly,
>>
>> Thanks for the comment and feedback. The weather example in the
>> first chapter of Web Services Essentials played an interesting
>> role about a year ago as it was circulated around the agency as an
>> example how web services could work for NWS.
>>
>> Cheers,
>>
>> Bob Bunge
>> Director, Internet Services
>> Office of the Chief Information Officer
>> NOAA's National Weather Service
>> 301-713-1381 x140
>>
>> Tim O'Reilly wrote:
>>
>>> Putting your data up in XML is a GREAT move. Please don't let
>>> pressure from folks like accuweather cause you to back down. As
>>> taxpayers, we've paid for the development of this data.
>>>
>>> XML and web services are going to make information services so
>>> much more useful. I'm glad to see you taking a forward-looking
>>> position.
>>>"
```

1333 "After reading the proposed new policy, I agree with what is proposed. As far as I understood from reading the document posted (<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>), keeping the information available from the NOAA open to the public sector as a free (after taxes) public service is a proper step. Since public funds are used to support the NOAA, this public should remain open to the public & not restricted to private (& usually costly to the public) channels of access. There are many means for private money-making on the internet. Reducing public access to publicly funded entities (including the NOAA) in order for private entities to profit thereby should be stopped. I am glad to see that the new policy takes this stance.

Sincerely, a concerned & regular weather information gatherer from the NOAA site,
Stephanie Burt

Independent Chemical Engineering Consultant
431 Wymount Terr
Provo, UT 84604
801 371-2442"

1334 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its

relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Donn Washburn
Meteorologist
AccuWeather, Inc."

1335 "I'm a private user of NWS weather data. I would like to commend the weather service for bringing their old policy into compliance with Federal law, the Paperwork Reduction Act, and compliance with government-wide regulation on dissemination, the OMB circular A-130 almost 10 years after they were issued. The government has a central principle of proactive dissemination of government information. The citizens own it, they funded its creation and gathering. This policy fosters innovation, reduces uncertainty in the marketplace, and makes the modern economy more efficient.

Technology has made government's task easier. It is now cheaper and easier to disseminate this information to a wider audience. This is clearly a net benefit to society. Some would argue that this change will endanger the business prospects of some who have made a living off the government's inefficiency of dissemination. It does and it should. Government's principles have not changed. Even the PRA and A-130 are restatements of much older policy. What has changed is the cheapness and efficiency of the technology. These businesses need to be able to adapt their business model not to the whimsical changes of government but rather the changes of the world like any other capitalist business.

If the NWS were not to adopt this policy it is obvious it is because some felt subsidizing these businesses was more useful than the free flow of weather data that directly effects research and innovation across the US. This is absurd not just for its application to weather data but to all the other data the government disseminates. Maybe we should only release agriculture data to a handful of companies so they can make a bundle doling it out to farmers?

This policy will increase research, innovation, and economic growth as the PRA and A-130 intended and must be adopted.

Jonathan Womer"

1336 "To Whom It May Concern:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the

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National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on Its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Sincerely,

Michael A. Sager"

1337 " Russell Cage
1615 Morton Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48104
28 June 2004

Dear Sirs,

I applaud your initiative to make NOAA weather data available more freely. Making the public pay for access to data given to business for free has bothered me for a long time, and I am looking forward to the prospect of creating my own custom weather maps and other things that the commercial sector would never offer to my market of size one.

I know there are business lobbies and their allies in government which want the taxpayer's money to be used for their benefit alone. Please stand firm against them! If the public has paid for the data, the only way business should be allowed to profit from it is by adding value; giving them a monopoly is repugnant.

Yours truly,

Russell Cage"

1338 " wish to make my views known on the proposal to change the 1991 policy on information activities of the National weather Service. As a retired Coast Guard Reserve officer I know that the services of the NWS and NOAA are vital to the life safety of many of our citizens. This vital service should remain as accessible to the general public as it is to large corporations, after all this is a taxpayer funded service. Limiting the information that NOAA and NWS disseminates to commercial users makes no more sense than limiting the majority of the services provided by the Coast Guard to the largest commercial companies in the Marine industry.

Keep the information flowing to the general public at no additional cost, it will continue to save lives and property.

Jon Morris"

1339 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

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American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

James T. Candor
Senior Vice President
AccuWeather, Inc.
814-235-8755"

1340 "Dear Reader:

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Very truly yours,

Brian Pappalardi"

1341 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

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Very truly yours,

Thomas Kines"

1342 "
June 29, 2004

Fair Weather
Strategic Planning and Policy Office
NOAA National Weather Service
1325 East-West Highway, Room 11404
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3283

fairweather@noaa.gov

RE: Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate
and Related Environmental Information

Dear Sir or Madam:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment of the Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information (Proposed Policy). The Proposed Policy recognizes and discusses the need for National Weather Service (NWS) cooperation specifically with academic institutions and private organizations. State governmental agencies are mentioned parenthetically but are not recognized as having distinct information needs for inclusion in the Proposed Policy. The Missouri Public Service Commission (PSC) makes extensive use of observations and information on temperature and precipitation. Because these data and information are used in setting rates for electric, natural gas, and water utility customers in Missouri, some past changes in instrumentation technology and location have resulted in long and costly legal disputes with millions of dollars per year for utility customers involved in the result. It is possible that some of this could have been avoided if NWS had made more of an ex-ante effort to ascertain the impact and consequences of these changes on users of the information.

An example of what has previously caused the difficulties noted above were the 1961-1990 temperature, precipitation and heating degree-day normals for the weather station at Lambert Airport in St. Louis (STL). Most of the contention about the normals did not carry over to the current 1971-2000 normals, and there was some ex-post recognition of the impact of these types of changes on climate information (McKee, Thomas B., Nolan J. Doesken, Christopher A. Davey, and Roger A. Pielke, Sr., 2000: Climate Data Continuity with ASOS (Report for the Period April 1996 through June 2000). Climatology Report No. 00-3, Colorado Climate Center, Atmospheric Science Department, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado, November, 82 pp.)

The details of the STL observations series and the normals are very involved. Some situations in the 1961-1990 period at STL included were the adjustment for station move in 1978 and a station move in 1988 for which an adjustment was not made due to the limited period after the move. This led to a decade long dispute about whether or not an adjustment should have been made. Subsequently, when the ASOS instrument was installed the Data Acquisition and Program Manager at the NWS Forecast office in St. Louis performed a study which included coincident observations of maximum and minimum daily temperature for the current instrument and the ASOS instrument at STL. These important comparison data were not preserved. Although PSC personnel had contact with the St. Louis NWS office there was no official NWS effort to ascertain the effect of the change in instrumentation and location on the climate data series prior to the change.

The PSC has found personnel we have contacted at NOAA and NOAA grantees such as the Midwest Climate Center, and the High Plains Climate Center, the Colorado Climate Center to be very cooperative. State agencies such as the PSC create products from NWS and NESDIS data for specific needs such as setting utility rates. The first

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section of the Policy needs to give equal standing to state agencies along with academia, and the private sector. If state agencies are included in the NOAA Proposed Policy for making decisions on products, technologies, and services then in the future the difficulties described above may be avoided.

Thanks again for the opportunity to comment on this Proposed Policy. If you have any questions, please e-mail me at warren.wood@psc.mo.gov or call me at (573) 571-2978.

Sincerely,

/s/ Warren T. Wood

Warren T. Wood, PE
Energy Department Manager
Missouri Public Service Commission"

1343 "Dear Fair-weather,

This email is affirmation that I strongly agree with the opinions expressed in the CWSA response to the new proposed policy.

The federal government role should involve the creation of infrastructure from which private industry can grow and prosper; not competition with the private sector. It is an unfortunate waste of taxpayer money and harms commerce when the NWS spends efforts to duplicate already available services while neglecting its core mission.

Sincerely,

Jean Vieux

Jean E. Vieux, President/CEO
Vieux & Associates, Inc.
1215 Crossroads Blvd., Suite 118
Norman, OK 73072-3359 USA
Phone +1 405 292 6259 Fax +1 405 292 6258
Cell +1 405 412 6259"

1344 "Dear Reader:

As a meteorologist, a recent college graduate and an employee in a commercial weather service, I feel it is necessary to comment on the National Weather Service's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. In reading background material on the proposal and in talking with fellow meteorologists in the private and academic sectors, it has become apparent to me that this proposal is taking a large step backward, instead of several steps forward in the development of the United States' weather enterprise.

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report
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suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

As a meteorologist who has spent a considerable amount of time on television, I am particularly concerned about the new proposal's failure to recognize the very important role that broadcast meteorologists perform each and everyday- communicating about the science of meteorology to the general public. For many Americans, broadcast meteorologists are a gateway to weather information and the science of meteorology in general. In addition, broadcast meteorologists provide another outlet for National Weather Service warnings- delivering life-saving information in times of severe weather. This role was clearly defined in the 1991 statement and should be carried in any future policies. Failure to carry the same language would be offensive to broadcast meteorologists working hard to deliver weather information each and every day.

Just with any relationship, the partnership between the National Weather Service, commercial weather services and the academic sector requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology. In addition, it is attempting to expunge the "checks and balance" system of resolving disputes between the public sector and the government. If the private sector has an appropriate grievance against the National Weather Service, there must be a valid way to come to an agreement on the issue.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy. Instead of taking five steps backward, let's take 20 forward by working together to improve the agreement that

has governed the NWS/private sector relationship for over thirteen years.

Very truly yours,

Jonathan Porter

Jonathan Porter
Meteorologist, Programmer || 814-235-8681 (Direct)
Accuweather, Inc. - ""Get the best weather on the web . . . AccuWeather.com®.""
385 Science Park Road || State College, PA 16803
<http://www.accuweather.com>"

1345 "Hello,

I support the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Weather Service

Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information.

I also support that the scope of the proposed policy should be expanded to include similar activities of NESDIS, OAR, and the National Ocean Service; and the adoption of the same or similar principles for other NOAA programs would be appropriate.

The data collected by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Weather Service

(NOAA/NWS) is done with tax dollars and should be available to the public at no charge.

The following is from the proposal and may be viewed at <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>.

""The NRC study examined the respective roles of the government, academic and private sectors, and provided recommendations regarding how the partnership can effectively move forward in an era of rapid advances in science and technology.""

""NOAA's National weather Service provides information to support protecting life and property and enhancing the national economy. To carry out its mission, it develops and maintains an infrastructure of observing, data processing, prediction and communication systems on which the public (federal, state, and local government agencies), private, and academic sectors rely.""

""Academia advances the science and educates future generations of meteorologists and specialists in related fields.""

""The private sector (weather companies, meteorologists working for private companies or as private consultants, and broadcast meteorologists) creates products and services tailored to the needs of their company or clients and works with the NWS to communicate forecasts and warnings affecting public safety.""

""The NRC study found this three-sector system has led to an extensive and flourishing set of weather services that are of great benefit to the U.S. public and to major sections of the U.S. economy. It also found some level of tension is an inevitable but acceptable price to pay for the excellent array of weather and climate products and services our nation enjoys, but the frictions and inefficiencies of the existing system can probably be reduced, permitting the three sectors to live in greater harmony.""

""The NRC study recognized advances in science and technology are driving the evolution of the weather and climate enterprise, and the rapid changes in science and technology underlying weather and climate forecasting are likely to continue. Therefore, the study's primary conclusion was""

""*it is counterproductive and diversionary to establish detailed and rigid boundaries for each sector outlining who can do what and with which tools*. Instead, efforts should focus on improving the processes by which the public and private providers of weather services interact. Improving these processes would also help alleviate the misunderstanding and suspicion that exists between some members of the sectors."" [Emphasis in original]""

""With this as background, the NRC's first recommendation was:""

"" Recommendation 1. The NWS should replace its 1991 public-private partnership policy with a policy that defines processes for making decisions on products, technologies, and services, rather than rigidly defining the roles of the NWS and the private sector. ""

""The NRC also suggested NOAA consider extending such a policy to include similar information activities of NOAA's National Environmental Satellite Data and Information Service (NESDIS) and the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR).""

""Accordingly, NOAA proposes the following policy directed to the information activities of the National Weather Service in the area of weather, water, climate and related environmental information services.""

Sincerely,

Bryce C Percival

3817 Ingram Dr

Raleigh NC 27604-3315

bperciv@netbox.com"

1346 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

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That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

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The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

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Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

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- The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.
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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Thank You,
Ternie Moyer

Account Executive || 814-235-8604

AccuWeather, Inc. - ""Get the best weather on the web . . . AccuWeather.com®.""

385 Science Park Road || State College, PA 16803

<http://www.accuweather.com>"

1347 "To whom it May Concern:

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Very truly yours,

Emily Killam"

1348 "Dear Reader:

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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology. I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Best regards,

Don Heaton
Director of Sales-New Media
AccuWeather, Inc.
814-235-8621 office
814-574-0205 mobile"

1349 "Dear NOAA :

In 1991 The Commercial weather Services Association adopted a ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National weather Service,"" that ""Policy"" is still in effect today.

The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of(1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy and allow government funded agencies to compete, on an unequal basis with the private sector. This proposal is a step toward the socialization of a sub set of governmentservices, rather than advancing the good of the nation through private enterprise.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:(1)The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.(2)The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition with the private sector.) (3) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted. (4) The mission of the National weather Service, as defined in 1991, is dropped.(5) The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an
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An effective partnership between the Private Sector and the Government requires cooperation. It appears, this case, that the National weather Service is attempting to further infringe upon it's relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation. On it's own they would breach it's 60-year commitment of non-interference with the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to this proposed new policy. I urge the new proposed policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Respectfully,

Larry Hampton
814-353-9105
960 C East High Street
Bellefonte, PA 16823"

1350 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Randall R. Brachbill"

1351 "

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Holly E. Myers

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As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private weather Industry and the National weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully

articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of

(1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

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It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

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The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Dr. Michelle R. Schoonover,
Human Resources Specialist
AccuWeather, Inc."

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Very truly yours,

Lori Jerulli-Reeves
Chief Editor
AccuWeather, Inc."

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We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial Weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Carol Keeler"

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Very truly yours,

John H. Dlugoenski
Meteorologist
Product Manager of Commercial Weather Services
AccuWeather, Inc."

1356 "I do not agree with the new proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. I don't see the policy as fair to the CWSA. I believe it would create more disadvantages than advantages. I believe a new policy should be created that involves the consultation of the Commercial Weather Services Association (CWSA) and includes more agreeable terms.

Chantel wolff

Customer Service Manager

WEATHERBANK, INC.

(405) 359-0773

chantel@weatherbank.com

""Helping You To Succeed"

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Very truly yours,
Amber Daughtry
Account Executive - Newspaper
AccuWeather, Inc. - ""Get the best weather on the web . . .
Accuweather.com®.""
(814) 235-8602 direct line
(814) 235-8609 fax
daughtry@accuwx.com"

1358 "

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missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Stephanie L. Kirkpatrick
Television Broadcast Coordinator
AccuWeather, Inc.
385 Science Park Road
State College, PA 16803
kirkpatrick@accuwx.com
814-235-8613
814-235-8609 FAX"

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Very truly yours,
Heather Arnold"

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Very truly yours,

Bob Bellin"

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Very truly yours,

--

Jesse Ferrell - Internet Subscription Services Manager / Meteorologist
AccuWeather, Inc. www.accuweather.com"

1362 " heartily applaud and support the language and intent of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration/National Weather Service Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information as published at <http://weather.gov/fairweather/>.

Matthew Conlon
mattzcoz@yahoo.com"

1363 "

June

29, 2004

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Very truly yours,

Mark Lively"

1364 "June 29, 2004

Fair Weather
NOAA National Weather Service
1325 East-West Highway, Room 11404
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3283

To Whom It May Concern:

WSI appreciates the opportunity to respond to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) National Weather Service (NWS) solicitation for comments on the proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate, and Related Environmental Information.

With this new policy, we believe the NWS is taking a giant step backward in public/private sector relations. When comparing U.S. policy with virtually all other nations, there is twenty years of evidence that suggests the NWS's historic policies have enabled both a vibrant government infrastructure as well as a robust private weather sector to become firmly established. This combination has served the public far better than they are served in other nations. What has been, for the most part, an effective partnership over the years will likely be transformed into a dysfunctional relationship by the proposed policy change. Without clarity of roles and mission, it will be impossible to avoid conflict between sectors. The NWS, in an attempt to give itself flexibility, is about to turn what has been a symbiotic relationship into a competitive one.

while the NWS claims the new policy is "intended to strengthen the existing partnership between government, academia and the private sector", we believe the policy will do just the opposite. The proposed policy:

§ Eliminates language defining an NWS mission. This policy is likely to encourage government resources being applied to "non-core" activities at the expense of improvements in core infrastructure and capabilities. The public will not be served by this misallocation of government funds. As currently written, the policy would allow the NWS to do whatever it wants, without limits or constraints;

§ Eliminates guidelines on the respective roles of the commercial versus government sector, and is likely to foster vocal and contentious disagreement between public and private sectors that will benefit no one;

§ Fails to identify a process for deciding what NWS products ought to be created, or a process for dispute resolution. While the proposed policy speaks in generalities about using appropriate "mechanisms to encourage the maximum practicable and timely input from and collaboration with all interested parties" and that it will describe a "mission connection" with "no surprises", there are no specifics with respect to any formal review or appeal processes as exists in the 1991 policy and as recommended by the National Research Council's "Fair Weather" report.

The private sector is an integral part of this country's public notification and alerting process, particularly when it comes to disseminating critical weather information and protecting vital economic assets. Specific examples of this role are the vast array of media broadcast outlets and critical transportation interests that are served by private sector weather providers. Since the NWS relies on these outlets to convey critical weather information to key decision makers and the general public, the private sector should be recognized for its critical role in the nation's dissemination and notification infrastructure. The NWS would not have nearly as favorable a position in the minds of the American public were it not for the role the commercial sector plays in getting the word out. The proposed policy will have the effect of limiting investment and employment in the private weather industry upon which the NWS depends for its ultimate success in protecting lives and property.

We recognize the importance of the National Weather Service, and commend it for being an instrumental part of what makes the American Weather Enterprise work so well. We ask for the same recognition from you towards the private sector and offer our support and assistance in crafting a policy that strengthens an effective partnership and promotes collaboration among the sectors. A failure to describe roles, a failure to clarify mission, a failure to set limits, and a failure to articulate process is not good public policy and does not serve the public good.

Best Regards,

Mark D. Gildersleeve
President, WSI Corporation"

1365 "I am writing to offer The Weather Channel, Inc. (TWC) comment on the National Weather Service (NWS) response to the NRC Fair Weather Report. In general, our view is that the American Weather Enterprise is highly successful and, as a result, the American public receives the best weather and climate information in the world. This has been accomplished because leadership in government, academia and the private sector has recognized the need to collaborate. However, TWC believes that the level of collaboration between the weather Enterprise sectors can and should be significantly enhanced. It is the opinion of TWC that government policy must

support and encourage stronger and more effective collaboration recognizing that this will provide even greater value to the American public by enhancing their security, economy and quality of life.

Although in general, TWC supports the new NWS policy statement, we offer the following comments. Consistent with the enhanced collaboration mentioned above, NWS should strengthen the language in items #5 and #6 of the new Policy statement. The last sentence of item #5 should aggressively support the premise made in the first sentence instead of attempting some disclaimer about responsibility as an agent of the US government. Item #6 should state unequivocally and without exception that NWS will use "best efforts" to collaborate with the appropriate sectors of the weather Enterprise to ensure maximum optimization of all the weather Enterprise has to offer. This is a good place to add language that speaks to fully integrating the private and academic sectors into the planning process as opposed to merely "seeking input".

In its "Fair weather" report, the NRC talks about NWS headquarters effectively managing weather Forecast Offices (WFO) in Recommendation 7. TWC believes NWS headquarters needs to continue to strengthen enforcement of NWS policy at the regional and WFO levels consistent with the optimization of the weather Enterprise. Much of current private sector frustration with the NWS deals with WFOs not following agreed to policy or guidelines. This leads to a breakdown of trust that creates tension and acrimony instead of synergy and goodwill.

while some in the private sector feel otherwise, TWC believes that in moving forward, the weather Enterprise needs to expand ways and means to foster trust, collaboration and synergistic interdependence. TWC firmly believes this will result in increased value not only to the weather Enterprise but more importantly, increased value to the American people. The NWS policy statement should be a clear, unambiguous and unqualified message to the community that NWS is solidly behind this effort.

Raymond J. Ban
Executive Vice President
Meteorology Science and Strategy
The Weather Channel, Inc.
300 Interstate North Pkwy.
Atlanta, GA 30339
Voice-770-226-2161 Fax-770-226-2951
rban@weather.com"

1366 June 29, 2004

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Very truly yours,

Tammy R. Zanghi"

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In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

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Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC

report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Larson
Expert Senior Meteorologist"

1368 "Dear National Weather Service:

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>Very truly yours, Dale Mohler
Director of International Forecasting
Accuweather.com, Inc."

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Very truly yours,

Suzanne Payne"

1370 " June 29, 2004

Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National Weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

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Dan Lago"

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Meteorologist, AccuWeather"

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Very truly yours,

Jack Edward Fisher, Esq."

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The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial Weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National Weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial Weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Eric Guyer"

1375 "Dear Reader:

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Very truly yours,
Denise M. Kupinski
Collections Division Manager || 814-235-8575
AccuWeather, Inc.-"Simply the Most Accurate."
385 Science Park Road || State College, PA 16803
<http://www.accuweather.com>"

1376 "June 29, 2004

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Very truly yours,
Lakshmi

--
Lakshmi Anand

Accuweather's AccuMail
385 Science Park Road
State College, PA 16803

Voice - 814 235 8524
Fax - 814 235 8549
anand@accuweather.com"

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Very truly yours,

j.i.greco"

1378 "To whom it may concern:

The NOAA and National weather Service proposed effort to attempt to repeal non-competition provisions contained in "The National weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership" are not in the best interests of the country.

A federal agency competing in the private sector would have serious detrimental effects on the commercial weather industry and the multibillion dollar investment it has made over the years.

Please continue to focus your efforts on strictly govermental issues and the collection/distribution of weather data, not on competing with the private sector.

Cordially,

Tom Burka"

1379 "Dear Reader:

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Cindy Mofield
Collections Coordinator

mofield@accuwx.com

(814)235-8570 - Telephone
(814)235-8579 - Facsimile

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Tracy Lumadue
Sr. Accounting Assistant
AccuWeather, Inc.
(814)235-8541
Lumadue@Accuwx.com
Please be sure to visit us at AccuMall.com"

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Elizabeth A. Long"

1382 "Dear Reader:

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Very truly yours,

Mary Merz

Administrative Assistant, Collections

(814) 235-8528

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1383 "I am writing to support NOAA's adoption of the proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information, also known as the ""Fair weather Policy"" posted at <http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>.

NOAA exists because I pay for it with my tax dollars. The data NOAA produces belongs collectively to me and my fellow taxpayers. I understand that the private weather industry is lobbying NOAA to lock up my data in proprietary formats that only they know how to decode, or to provide the data only to them. That is absolutely, unequivocally wrong-minded. If NOAA's budget came exclusively from the private weather industry, then the firms that comprise the industry could legitimately claim that the data should be supplied in a manner that benefits only them. However, since my tax money also supports NOAA, a policy that favors the private weather industry's interests is inequitable and goes against the principles of an open government. NOAA should not implement policies that make it impossible, impractical, or

burdensome for an individual private citizen to access weather, water, climate, and related environmental information.

Once again, I support the proposed ""Fair weather Policy."" I also applaud NOAA for the fairness and openness the proposed policy embodies. Unfortunately, such openness seems increasingly rare from a governmental agency these days.

Sincerely,
Kyle Rhorer"

1384 "Dear Reader:

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Therefore, as a concerned citizen of the United States, I am adamantly opposed to the repeal of the 1991 Public Private Partnership.

Most insistently,
Naomi L. Thull"

1385 "Dear Reader:

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Jon Mc Closkey

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"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . ."

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I am extremely concerned since the proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the National Weather Service will feel free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is exactly opposite of what a government agency should be doing.

I very firmly believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and is made to abide by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it. The citizens of the Commercial weather Industry should not be made to compete with government agencies. Please take the appropriate immediate action.

Best Regards,

Dominique E. Miller
Accounting Assistant || 814-235-8542
miller@accuwx.com || Fax 814-235-8549
AccuWeather, Inc. - ""Simply the Most Accurate.""
385 Science Park Road || State College, PA 16803
<http://www.accuweather.com>"

1387 "Dear Reader:

I am aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed the repeal of the policy entitled "The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

I believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Timothy A. Schoonover
Stover, McGlaughlin, Gerace,
Weyandt & McCormick, P.C.
919 University Dr.
State College, PA 16801
(814) 231-1850 (Ph)
(814) 231-1860 (Fax)"

1388 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

John G. Milakovic, Esquire
212 North Third Street
P.O. Box 11998
Harrisburg, PA 17108
(717) 233-7691"

1389 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Leisa D. Byron"

1390 "Dear Reader:

Commerce Secretary Don Evans has said: ".government does not create wealth and prosperity: people do. It is government's role to create the right conditions in which America's workers and businesses will flourish." This new NOAA/NWS proposal opposes the concept so well stated by the Secretary.

As early as 1948, under auspices of the American Meteorological Association (AMS), concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (now the National Weather Service (NWS)) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial weather Services Association (CWSA), led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

CWSA is the trade Association for the Commercial weather Industry. Like most trade associations, it does not claim all companies in the industry as members; but, CWSA does have over two dozen member companies - many recognized names. The Commercial weather Industry is the only private sector enterprise which produces weather information, services and systems for industry, government and the public and as such occupies a unique position in the American weather enterprise. Its companies provide information, services and systems to tens of thousands of business, industry and media companies and reach much of the American population and a large international audience with their information.

That 1991 policy was the first time since a government weather service was created in 1890, that a definition of government-appropriate roles vis a vis the Commercial weather Industry was fully articulated.

The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of: (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it lays out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy states:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law;" and,

""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and response.

Recently, the National Research Council (NRC) made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the private sector. The NRC offered this recommendation to improve the way government acts toward the Commercial Weather Industry and recommended the new policy include the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) itself.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Essentially, CWSA supports improving the way government acts toward the Commercial Weather Industry.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy.

The policy proposed applies only to NWS and not to NOAA and it steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the American weather enterprise and the nation.

Among the negative approaches and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended. It therefore harms, rather than improves, the way government may act toward private enterprise.

The non-competition language will be repealed. Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted. The NRC report clearly recognized the importance of broadcast meteorologists.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped. The only mission statement in existence will no longer be the modern one from thirteen years ago, but one from the 19th century, fifty years before the idea of a commercial weather industry exists.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated. The process idea, at the core of the NRC recommendation, which already had a beginning in the 1991 policy, is gone in the new policy.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It will negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the

American public.

All of this will lead to greater contentiousness between the NWS and the Commercial weather Industry, the very antithesis of what the NRC sought to accomplish.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

The current policy should be strengthened as recommended by CWSA and any policy should have several mandatory sections to which the entire policy and NOAA/NWS is subject. These would include:

1. A section recognizing the importance of the Commercial weather Industry (including broadcast meteorology) and a pledge to encourage its growth.
2. A statement of non-competition with the Commercial weather Industry, such as:

The National weather Service should not provide, or assist other entities in providing, a service or product (other than a service or product as part of the defined mission of the NWS) if such a service or product is or could be provided by the private sector.

3. A defined mission for the NWS, such as:
 - A. To protect life and property, the National weather Service, shall be responsible for the following:
 - (1) The preparation and issuance of severe weather warnings and forecasts designed for the protection of life and property of the general public.
 - (2) The preparation and issuance of hydrometeorological guidance and core forecast information.
 - (3) The collection and exchange of meteorological, hydrological, climatic, and oceanographic data and information.

4. Requirements for equal access to data, such as:
 - A. All data, information, guidance, forecasts, and warnings received, collected, created or prepared by the National weather Service, to the maximum extent practicable, be issued in real time, and without delay, in a manner that ensures that all members of the public have the opportunity for simultaneous and equal access to such data, information, guidance, forecasts, and warnings.

B. An officer, employee, or agent of the National weather Service, or of any other department or agency of the United States, who comes by reason of such status into possession of any weather data, information, guidance, forecast, or warning that might influence or affect the market value of any product, service, commodity, tradable, or business not -

(1) willfully impart, whether directly or indirectly, such weather data, information, guidance, forecast, or warning, or any part thereof, before the issuance of such weather data, information, guidance, forecast, or warning to the public or

(2) after the issuance of such weather data, information, guidance, forecast, or warning to the public, willfully impart comments or qualifications on such weather data, information, guidance, forecast, or warning, or any part thereof, to the public.

5. A requirement of policy adherence by all NWS employees and a full Department of Commerce complaint, appeal and remedy process.

These are reasonable requirements, similar in many ways to those of the federal agencies.

This approach will help accomplish the objective set by Secretary Evans."

1391 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Paula Schul"

1392 "Dear Reader:

I am aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed

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repeal of policy entitled "The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

I believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,
Barbara A. Brown"

1393 "We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled ""The National weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership."" The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . .""

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Bruce Ditnes

Bruce Ditnes, Sales Director
AccuNet/AP Multimedia Archive
Greenwood Square Two
3331 Street Road, Suite 440
Bensalem, PA 19020
Ph. 888-438-9847, ext. 5363.
Fx. 215-244-5329
Email: ditnes@accuwx.com
AccuNet/AP Multimedia Archive: <http://ap.accuweather.com>
Suggested Applications: <http://www.accunetapdetails.com>
Accuweather Premium Weather Service: <http://premium.accuweather.com>"

1394 "Thank you for reading this e-mail regarding a subject which I think is of great importance to our nation for a variety of reasons.

I have recently been made aware of the fact that the NOAA/National Weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership. In part, the current policy adopted in 1991 provides, that:

The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . .

I was appalled to discover that the proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

I believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Sincerely,

Stephen A. Ragusea Psy.D., ABPP
<http://geocities.com/sragusea>
Child, Adult, and Family Psychological Center
Suite 218
315 South Allen Street
State College, PA 16801
and
17194 Coral Drive
Sugarloaf Key, FL 33042

Phone: 814-234-3010
Fax: 814-234-2170
E-Mail: ragusea@aol.com"

1395 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National Weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises. . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental

missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial Weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Doug Stalker

Senior Account Executive

608.334.2803

stalker@accuwx.com"

1396 "D Sledge wrote:

>
> Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
> D Sledge (sledge@ka2qhd.de.com) on Tuesday, June 29, 2004 at 13:32:14
> -----
>
> email: sledge@ka2qhd.de.com
>
> subject: From Weather.gov
>
> comments: Please do provide the XML data format so I can get weather information
directly form NOAA. I fund it outrageous that Accuweather thinks the public should
pay them for their advertising and weather data. I already pay taxes to support NOAA
so I should have direct access to the data without advertisements. why should I have
to pay twice?
>
> sledge"

1397 "I would like to comment on NOAA's Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. As a taxpaying citizen and Internet user, I support the proposed National Weather Service policy to provide free weather data on the Internet, in a variety of formats. I particularly like the idea of providing it as a ""web service"" (XML data feed). Your proposed policy is really quite innovative. My congratulations to you.

I am told that elements of the private weather sector (e.g. Accuweather) object to this. Apparently they don't like the idea that the American public could get this information directly from the government, instead of through them. Perhaps they fear that new competition could spring up. Competition is good for America. Giving everyone an equal chance is the American way. As a taxpayer, I have paid for this information already. Your duty to the citizens of this country is higher than your duty to any company that would like to stand between you and the public. Stay the course! The US Government is for the people, so increased public access to weather feeds is the right move. Providing the feeds in an open format, like XML, is the way to go.

Yes, the proposed policy is suitable for the activities of the National Weather Service in the area of weather, water, climate and related environmental information services. Yes, I believe the scope of the proposed policy should be expanded to include similar activities of NESDIS, OAR, and the National Ocean Service. Yes, I

think adoption of the same or similar principles for other NOAA programs would be appropriate.

Sincerely,
David Morenus"

1398 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises. . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

we believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,"

1399 "NOAA/NWS:

My personal opinion is that the government should NOT change the current policy. The government should NOT compete with the commercial weather industry. The commercial weather entities have done an outstanding job in driving weather technology, information, and presentation to new heights. This has happened through competition and creative input.

Ed Curran

Meteorologist (TV)

Chicago, Illinois"

1400 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on Its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Brian S. Wimer"

1401 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private weather Industry and the National weather Service,"" in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be

strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to including NOAA and other agencies in the federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Carl Erickson"

1402 "I have just read over your proposed policy change, as well as Barry Meyer's response, available at this address: http://www.weatherindustry.org/BARRYMYERS-AMS-0318_04.doc . I must say that I cannot possibly disagree with Mr. Meyer more. The NOAA is a publicly funded institution providing data that could never possibly contain anything that should be restricted.

Accordingly, I am of the firm belief that any data collected by the NOAA should be made available to the public (i.e. the general population, not merely other agencies) as soon as is practicable, in whatever format is easiest for the public to consume.

Mr. Meyer, and for that matter, the rest of the private weather sector, need to realize that they should never be the sole beneficiaries of the collective tax dollars spent each year by the U.S. in providing such a vitally important service.

--

Andrew Medico <a.medico@gmail.com>"

1403 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology

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Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth M. Clark
Expert Senior Meteorologist
Forensic Meteorologist
AccuWeather, Inc."

1404 "June 29, 2004

To: NWS.Fairweather@NOAA.gov

From: Dr. Devrie S. Intriligator, Director,
Space Plasma Laboratory,
Carmel Research Center, Inc. (CRC)
devriei@aol.com

Re: National Weather Service (NWS) position on public-private partnership policy

We at Carmel Research Center (CRC) firmly believe the 1991 Policy Statement on the Weather Service/Private Sector Roles should be upheld.

The 1991 policy states that:

The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprise, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.

Since 1991, the NWS has been extraordinarily successful with this policy in fostering the Commercial weather Industry. The NWS and the Commercial weather Industry have built a billion dollar industry that generates outstanding value-added benefits to the nation.

We applaud the work you have done under the 1991 policy. We look forward to working with you to promote a similarly successful relationship with the space weather industry.

CARMEL RESEARCH CENTER
P.O. BOX 1732, SANTA MONICA, CA 90406
(310) 829-5275 FAX (310) 453-2983

For more than 20 years, CRC has been associated with the US space program. CRC is a business with a major investment in space weather."

1405 "Contrary to the position stated in the CWSA position paper, <http://www.weatherindustry.org/CWSA%20ppt.pdf>, the NWS should make all weather data available to the general public via the internet. As a sailor, I utilize multiple sources for weather observation and prediction. Timely weather information can improve the decisions that I make that affect boat and crew. The NWS sets the standard of weather services that the commercial sector seeks to attain.

It is both self-serving and condescending for the CWSA to infer that meteorologic data cannot be properly used and interpreted by the public and must be packaged by the commercial weather services. It is incumbent upon me to learn what I may not fully understand. It is particularly irritating that this trade organization seeks a functional monopoly on NWS data produced with my taxes.

The NWS should fully implement the proposed dissemination of its data and products via the internet as stated in proposal #5."

1406 "Do not repeal the 1991 public-private partnership! So many innovative ideas come from the private sector that are based on the raw data the NWS and NOAA collect and provide. Driven by profit, private companies ""learn"" what works and what fails. A government agency is not held accountable for wasted efforts spending my hard-earned tax dollars. Instead of wasting efforts duplicating what the private sector does efficiently, why not try to increase lead times and accuracy on storm warnings or expand data collection in remote areas?

If it isn't broken don't fix it!!!

Nina Ceccacci"

1407 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National Weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial Weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National Weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial Weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Ryan Johnson
Customer Service Manager
AccuWeather, Inc."

1408 "COMMENT RE: ""The NWS should replace its 1991 public-private partnership policy with a policy that defines processes for making decisions on products, technologies, and services, rather than rigidly defining the roles of the NWS and the private sector.""

I have been employed by a meteorological firm in the private sector for 30 years, as a forecaster for the first five years and a meteorological applications developer for the past 25 years. As a private company, we have been able to keep up with and implement cutting edge technology in delivering both products from the NWS and our own value added products.

Our service to industry relies on data gathered by the NWS and the quality of that data. While the quantity of the data has increase, especially over the past decade, that quality has suffered in some areas. In a number of instances, surface reporting stations will go awry with false data. In most cases the station is disabled till it is fixed, but in other cases the false data has continued report for more than a year! More often, the synoptic extremes are in error, and sometimes take months to correct in the LCD data.

Many other stations report intermittently, or are lacking in instrumentation necessary to include precipitation, solar radiance, or sky cover in the METAR reports. For many, and in the case of a couple parameters, all stations, I've had to implement routines to estimate or make good guesses at data that should be available as observed data. Such items are primarily solar radiance and minutes of sunshine, also cloud cover or precipitation are not reported for a number of stations. This are data items which the energy industry demands in real time, yet the are not measured, or are not contained in the hourly observations.

It is my opinion that one of the primary duties of the NWS should be to maintain a nation wide network of high quality meteorological instrumentation for observations both surface and aloft. The NWS should then disseminate in real time this data in its raw form for the public to use at will. NWS web sites should contain generic observed and forecast information in a format easily understood by the general public. The NWS should not take requests from private industry such as utility companies, railroads, airlines etc.. and provide custom tailored data or forecasts, as this is the job of private meteorological firms.

The private sector does not have the funding to implement nation wide weather observing networks, nor should it, as this needs to be a single national entity. The NWS does have this network in place and should enhance it. The NWS does not have the resources to serve every request for every data format or detailed forecast from every energy company, every low firm, every construction company, every railroad and so fourth. The private meteorological sector does have the resources to fulfill every custom request and will continue to do so as long as the NWS maintains it part in providing the raw data. This includes continuing research and developments in new and improved forecasting models as well as maintaining a dense network of reliable observed information.

If the NWS is allowed to provide product previously reserved for the private sector, private meteorological firms will fail. The NWS will find itself overwhelmed with specialized requests and unable to provide civilian needs now provided by the private sector.

The industrial needs for meteorological information are dynamic and need constant reevaluation as technology needs change. This has been accomplished via meteorologists and technical personnel employed by the private sector working closely together with the personnel in the various industries.

Kim Alan Waggoner
Director of Computer Operations
WeatherBank, Inc.
Edmond Oklahoma"

1409 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service,"" in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with

a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Best regards,

Stephen M. Wistar
Certified Consulting Meteorologist #601"

1410 "Fair weather
Strategic Planning and Policy Office
NOAA National Weather Service
1325 East-West Highway, Room 11404
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3283

June 30, 2004

Dear Reader:

After attending the National weather Service Partnership Meeting on June 24, 2004, we feel that a majority of the industry concern is associated with alternative methodologies for disseminating weather products to the public at large. In some cases, these alternatives have the capability to undermine the services provided by the private weather companies as well as their profit margins.

We feel, however, that the National weather Service policy should not be driven by a few select corporations and instead should find a balance between what the corporations almost blatantly demand and what the taxpaying individual requests. While the 1991 policy might technically restrict the National weather Service from making these alternative dissemination methodologies permanent and operational, the newly proposed Fair weather policy provides the National weather Service with additional leverage to pursue such methodologies. This fact disturbs the for-profit weather service corporations for the aforementioned reasons.

Many of these new alternative dissemination methodologies involve the Internet. In 1991, the Internet was just beginning to materialize. It was almost impossible to get the public's opinion on the policy or use it as a medium for distributing weather related data. Only major corporations that knew key individuals within the National weather Service could make influential suggestions. Why is the Internet issue so important in regards to the proposed policy? The issue of taxpaying citizens being able to submit comments on policy via the Internet is important because we believe the 1991 policy, as it exists today, would not have been written the way it was if the Internet was in widespread use at that time. The fact that this letter is reaching you attests to the power of the Internet. It has allowed our organization, Sirius Weather Group, to provide its perspective on the issues surrounding the proposed Fair weather policy. We believe that change is necessary for the future. To an extent, the 1991 policy was produced by a few select participants who profited from the policy. This is absolutely unacceptable where decisions, sometimes life-saving decisions, need to be made.

We believe in the natural evolution of weather data in order to be compatible with modern computer systems. Our organization was the only one to speak up on behalf of every individual taxpayer at the partnership meeting. Our position represents the views of many individuals who have never been heard before now.

The newly proposed Fair weather policy allows the National weather Service to provide a higher level of service by not undermining their mission which is to save lives and property. We feel the Fair weather policy should encompass all of NOAA and not just the NWS.

Thank you.

Sirius Weather Group, Inc.
2253 Boller Drive
Westminster, Maryland 21157

<http://www.siriusweather.org/>

1411 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society, an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Heather Zehr

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Heather Zehr
Expert Senior Meteorologist
Morning Manager of Forecasting Operations
AccuWeather, Inc. (814) 237 - 0309
email: zehr@ntms1.accuwx.com
voice mail: x7738
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1412 "Dear Reader:

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Very truly yours,

Henry Margusity
Sr. Meteorologist
AccuWeather, Inc."

1413 "Dear Reader:

The NWS commissioned the National Research Council to develop the ideas contained within the publication, Fair weather: Effective Partnerships in weather and Climate Services. From this, the NWS has developed a proposed policy entitled, Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of weather, water, Climate and Related Environmental Information, and has requested feedback on this proposed policy. The National Council of Industrial Meteorologists (NCIM) offers the following opinions on NWS' proposed policy in an effort to provide constructive feedback that will assist the NWS in refining the final policy. NCIM strongly supports the policy of "openness" that the NWS is using to obtain feedback on this draft policy and is grateful for this opportunity to provide feedback.

1. Why Critical Policy Boundaries between Normal NWS and Normal Private Sector Activity Are Needed

One of the basic premises of the Fair weather report which is cited by the NWS is:

"It is counterproductive and diversionary to establish detailed and rigid boundaries for each sector outlining who can do what and with which tools. Instead, efforts

should focus on improving the processes by which the public and private providers of weather services interact. Improving these processes would also help alleviate the misunderstanding and suspicion that exists between some members of the sectors.""

and that:

"The NWS should replace its 1991 public-private partnership policy with a policy that defines processes for making decisions on products, technologies, and services, rather than rigidly defining the roles of the NWS and the private sector."

while NCIM agrees that it may be counterproductive to establish "detailed and rigid boundaries", we are concerned by the apparent lack of guidelines on the appropriate roles of each sector. Although probably well-intended, removing clear lines of distinction between the normal activities of the NWS and the private sector could have the negative effect of encouraging vast, unmitigated, and unregulated expansion by the NWS. Further, the needless anxiety between NWS employees and private sector meteorologists or companies as to what is acceptable will likely result in conflicts that are counterproductive to the profession of meteorology as a whole. How can one operate with no boundaries? We are a nation of laws, and even though the NWS is bound by many government agency laws or mandates, such as OMB A-130, the lack of distinction between sectors may cause harm to the profession of meteorology as a whole.

For example, the longstanding, explicit partnership between the NWS and broadcast meteorology to disseminate weather watches and warnings is not cited in the proposed guidance, yet, this is a primary function of meteorologists both within the government and private sectors. Omitting such a successful and crucial mission for the profession of meteorology reflects negatively upon the profession as a whole to our broad customer base (largely the public) and fails to provide assurance of direct, clear, and timely service to those customers.

2. Suggested Insertion of a Clear Policy to Limit Expansion of NWS Services

The new NWS policy, as it is written in draft form, is overly vague. As stated in #1 above, there are no clear dividing lines between what is expected of the NWS and of the commercial weather industry. Although Ed Johnson stated in the recent AMS webcast that the NWS does not plan to expand its services, language to that effect is missing from the policy. NCIM strongly suggests that clear lines of delineation be added to the policy and that these lines be posted for review before becoming NWS policy.

3. Suggested Inclusion of a Formal Procedure for Questioning and Requesting Review of Specific NWS Practices

Further, the NWS should draft a resolution procedure to deal with legitimate concerns of the commercial weather industry (CWI). Mechanisms by which CWI entities can question or enact reviews of NWS practices should be implemented to allow monitored discourse. These mechanisms should be more formal than typical requests for feedback via NWS websites. NWS/NOAA should not always advocate only the NWS perspective by only presenting justifications for existing NWS practices where issues have been raised. Instead, some level of increased NWS understanding and change in NWS policy may occasionally need to be incorporated to make things "right".

4. AMS Is a Good Forum for Unbiased Discussion

The NCIM strongly agrees that the AMS can facilitate "unbiased" discussion on matters that affect the profession of meteorology as a whole. NCIM is already a willing participant in the newly created Ad Hoc Committee on the Weather and Climate Enterprise (John Snow, Chair).

5. Active Nurturing by NWS of the Private and Academic Sectors

Private sector growth in meteorology should be nurtured by NWS/NOAA and the private sector should work with NWS/NOAA as a partner. In some cases, the academic sector may also be an appropriate partner. Mechanisms for long term working arrangements should be pursued. NCIM is willing to work together with all sectors and user groups as appropriate.

Proof of the potential for successful and beneficial partnering between the three major sectors can be found in many existing activities. Watch and warning dissemination is one example. Another example is shared monitoring of environmental parameters such as standard sensor monitoring of surface meteorology, remote sensing of precipitation and storms, and buoy monitoring of ocean state. Similarly, all three sectors contribute to the training of new meteorologists for entry into the workforce. And advancement of the science through research and development occurs vigorously in all three sectors.

Cordially,

John Toohey-Morales, CCM"

1414 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the ""Policy Statement on the Role of the

Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

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It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I

urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

James V. Piro
Climatologist
AccuWeather, Inc."

1415 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Judy Kimmel"

1416 "June 30, 2004

To whom it may concern:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled ""The National weather Service and the Private weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership."" The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . .""

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial Weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial Weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Albert A. Drobka, Architect"

1417 "To Whom It May Concern:

Commerce Secretary Don Evans has said: ".government does not create wealth and prosperity: people do. It is government's role to create the right conditions in which America's workers and businesses will flourish." This new NOAA/NWS proposal opposes the concept so well stated by the Secretary.

As early as 1948, under auspices of the American Meteorological Association (AMS), concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (now the National Weather Service (NWS)) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association (CWSA), led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

CWSA is the trade Association for the Commercial weather Industry. Like most trade associations, it does not claim all companies in the industry as members; but, CWSA does have over two dozen member companies - many recognized names. The Commercial weather Industry is the only private sector enterprise which produces weather information, services and systems for industry, government and the public and as such occupies a unique position in the American weather enterprise. Its companies provide information, services and systems to tens of thousands of business, industry and media companies and reach much of the American population and a large international audience with their information.

That 1991 policy was the first time since a government weather service was created in 1890, that a definition of government-appropriate roles vis a vis the Commercial weather Industry was fully articulated.

The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of: (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it lays out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy states:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law;" and,

".it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and response.

Recently, the National Research Council (NRC) made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the private sector. The NRC offered this recommendation to improve the way government acts toward the Commercial Weather Industry and recommended the new policy include the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) itself.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Essentially, CWSA supports improving the way government acts toward the Commercial Weather Industry

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy.

The policy proposed applies only to NWS and not to NOAA and it steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the American weather enterprise and the nation.

Among the negative approaches and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended. It therefore harms, rather than improves, the way government may act toward private enterprise.

The non-competition language will be repealed. Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted. The NRC report clearly recognized the importance of broadcast meteorologists.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped. The only mission statement in existence will no longer be the modern one from thirteen years ago, but one from the 19th century, fifty years before the idea of a commercial weather industry exists.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated. The process idea, at the core of the NRC recommendation, which already had a beginning in the 1991 policy, is gone in the new policy.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It will negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

All of this will lead to greater contentiousness between the NWS and the Commercial Weather Industry, the very antithesis of what the NRC sought to accomplish.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

The current policy should be strengthened as recommended by CWSA and any policy should have several mandatory sections to which the entire policy and NOAA/NWS is subject. These would include:

1. A section recognizing the importance of the Commercial weather Industry (including broadcast meteorology) and a pledge to encourage its growth.
2. A statement of non-competition with the Commercial weather Industry, such as are stated in the current policy.
3. A defined mission for the NWS, such as are stated in the current policy.
4. Requirements for equal access to data, such as:

All data, information, guidance, forecasts, and warnings received, collected, created or prepared by the National Weather Service, to the maximum extent practicable is issued in real time, and without delay, in a manner that ensures that all members of the public have the opportunity for simultaneous and equal access to such data, information, guidance, forecasts, and warnings.

And requires that employees of the National Weather Service, who comes into possession of any weather data, information, guidance, forecast, or warning that might influence or affect the market value of any product, service, commodity, tradable, or business not willfully impart, whether directly or indirectly, such weather data, information, guidance, forecast, or warning, or any part thereof, before or after the issuance of such weather data, information, guidance, forecast, or warning to the public.

5. A requirement of policy adherence by all NWS employees and a full Department of Commerce complaint, appeal and remedy process.

These are reasonable requirements, similar in many ways to those of the other federal agencies.

This approach will help accomplish the objective set by Secretary Evans.

Best regards,

Joel N. Myers"

1418 "We are all for it! It's about time to let the info flow!

Also, we resent the traditional weather industry's plea for restrictions.

why don't they branch out into providing, say, school schedules and ask the government to restrict the free web publication of such info? It would make just as much sense. Shame on them!

Best Regards, and keep up the good work!

Filippo C. Cattaneo
Managing Partner
OPSTRA SAS
filippo.cattaneo@alum.MIT.edu
(alternate N1JPR@GMX.LI)"

1419 "I am writing to express my disagreement with the new proposed policy by the NWS.

I've only been working in the private sector for 3 years (after graduating from college in 2001). But I do know one thing: we care about our clients. We strive to do our very best work because our income is generated from our clients. As a result, we take ""personal"" pride in the work we do and it directly reflects the quality of the products that we produce everyday. This is a ""personal"" touch and quality of work level that the NWS will definitely not be able to match. For this reason, I know that our clients will not be satisfied or impressed with the forecasts that the NWS produces for the masses.

If your proposed policy goes into effect, many businesses in the Commercial Weather Industry will have a difficult time surviving in this government-only enterprise. Similar to the separation of church and state, it's essential that the current boundaries between the public/private sectors remain in place.

Thank you.

Steven Merkel"

1420 "To Whom It May Concern,

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service,"" in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of

(1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is

currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on Its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Robert Hergenrother"

1421 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed

repeal of policy entitled "The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Lauralee A. Snyder"

1422 "Dear Reader:

As a meteorologist in the private sector for the last 33 years, I am continually concerned with the increasing disregard NOAA and the National Weather Service demonstrates toward the general public and the Commercial Weather Service.

The core mission of the NWS has always been to save lives. However, I see more and more evidence that the NWS is more interested in creating products and services that are not needed and distract the government meteorologists from performing their duties vital to the general public. A few of the many examples of this are listed below.

The county breakdowns for severe weather watches are routinely late, while severe weather warnings have been missed altogether. Why are these mistakes occurring more frequently with the abundance of technology that tax dollars have allowed the NWS and NOAA to purchase? Why are these delinquencies occurring with more than adequate staffing at each of the individual NWS offices?

Why are the U.S. based computer weather models continually making erroneous forecasting errors? A more accurate computer model will help meteorologists produce better forecasts and therefore save lives. Why are resources to improve these models being taken away in favor of producing new forecast products and services that are already being created by the private sector and available to the general public.

The hourly observations in the United States used to be the best reporting network in the world. That is not the case anymore. During snowstorms, snowfall reports are either delinquent or not done at all.

Climatology reports that are vital to businesses around the country are late and in some cases incomplete.

Why are all these errors that cost businesses money in dollars and time, occurring? Here is another question. Why is the NWS producing products and services that are not needed, a waste of tax payers dollars, can hurt the economy of the nation by taking jobs away from the private sector of meteorology and distracting government meteorologists from performing their

core mission?

The mistakes above were rare when I entered the private sector of meteorology in September 1970. However, the errors have increased throughout the 90s and are currently increasing at an alarming rate. Why is this occurring?.

It has been said that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeats its mistakes. Lets take a closer look at the history of the partnership between the National Weather Service and commercial meteoroloigsts to see how the changing role of the NWS is leading distracting the NWS from its core mission.

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National weather Service,"" in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National weather Service was creatd in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to including NOAA and other agencies in the federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recammended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.
The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather

Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on Its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of metorology.

A partnership is not a government agency issuing it's own rules and regulations without any regard for private business and the safety of the general public. A partnership is a relationship between two or more parties working together for a common goal. The end goal should benefit all, not just one.

This new approach is a step backwards from the 1991 policy and is clearly a mistake. The approach is also yet another example of the U.S government dictating what is best to its people without the proper knowledge and understanding of the whole picture.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

John Kocet
Expert Sr. Meteoroloigst
AccuWeather, Inc."

1423 "June 30, 2004

To whom it may concern,

I have been following the changes the NWS is proposing to the NWS policy which will increase their role in the development and sale of custom and specialized forecasts and weather data. This will result in substantial damage to the commercial weather industry. As a small business owner, I have to OBJECT STRONGLY to these changes - because I see the future of my business disappearing if these changes become a reality.

I have been involved in the private weather industry for ten years. I have
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found a way to offer increasingly specialized services and I've developed new technology for the good of everyone in the country. With the proposed changes to this policy, I will most likely lose my existing client base and be put out of business. Something is not right when our own government, not private competition, stomps all over hard working Americans—resulting in more people in the unemployment line.

You have to understand there are two main levels of private weather businesses in this country. There are the huge companies (Accuweather and The weather Channel) and there are many smaller private weather businesses that serve a specific niche or region. Most of these small companies do not have the luxury of losing many, if any, of their clients and still remain a profitable business. Over the past few years the NWS has continued to provide more specialized and customized services and information through the internet and directly to "customers". Small and large weather companies are losing the battle - NOT due to competition (as is the American way), but rather, due 100% to competition from our own government.

This is not the first time the NWS has expanded services, much to the detriment of my company. One service we have provided for ten years involves detailed storm reports from across the country. This was a mainstay of our business, until the Storm Prediction Center decided to provide all the storm reports, custom maps, a searchable database and everything else a paying customer of mine would want for FREE. We add value to the general reports by including other, more specific data, but when these clients see all that information on-line for FREE from the NWS (SPC specifically), they mostly have dropped our service. I have lost more than 75% of my business in this service over the last five years as a direct result of the NWS and SPC websites.

At one point, the NWS backed off a little bit, which was a big help to my company. Back in 1995, I developed, implemented and marketed a severe weather paging service that offered real-time watches and warnings to alphanumeric pagers for EMAs, storm spotters, police and fire officials, and ordinary citizens who were interested in knowing when their lives or property were at risk. I quickly found that several NWS offices were also issuing specialized notification of this severe weather information to paging companies and individuals. We notified the specific offices that were sending this information to pagers and they turned off their direct service and forwarded the people interested in this notification to us and our soon-established competitors. This allowed the NWS meteorologists to once again concentrate on issuing the warnings and severe weather information to protect lives and property. I had several conversations with NWS meteorologists in these offices - and found that they were VERY HAPPY that they did not have the EXTRA duty of sending out warnings through ANOTHER medium, which had been distracting them from their core mission. If the NWS makes these proposed changes, new technological advances such as ours will not be developed in the future, because innovative private weather companies will go OUT OF BUSINESS, leaving this additional burden to NWS employees.

Over the past 3 years, we have spent several hundred thousand dollars on a new weather database and website to display, archive and deliver custom weather data feeds and information from around the country. As we continued to work on this new website technology over the past two years, the NWS has introduced a brand new layout and tons of FREE information on all the local and national NWS websites. Now, before I even begin marketing and delivering information to clients, they can find custom and specific data for FREE from our own government sources?? Something is not right when we cannot even deliver a new product before the government does

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the same thing - for free. The direction the NWS is taking reminds me of countries where 50% or more of the people work for the government. As a direct result of these policy changes, it looks like most private companies could go out of business and many meteorologists will either work for the government, be forced to work in other areas away from their passion and expertise in the weather, or worse yet-they'll be unemployed.

I know I am only one voice from a small company in southern Massachusetts. However, I want it to be very clear that these proposed policy changes will HURT the weather industry as a whole and will have detrimental impacts on new technology, delivery of weather information and custom packaging of this information for the good of all businesses in the country. We charge for services, which offers the government a solid tax base and we employ many meteorologists, programmers and sales people, also adding to the tax base. The existence of a strong private weather industry means we will have constant developments in new technology, services and methods for getting severe weather information to the general public, thus saving lives and property.

The NWS needs to remain EXTREMELY FOCUSED on issuing severe weather watches and warnings and generalized weather data. Leave it up to the private industry to develop the methods and customized services to make this information easily displayed, delivered and customized to businesses and individuals. Let us deal with the customer service issues, billing issues and everything else that will come if the government decides, in effect, to put us out of business.

Finally, for all those people that think they will be paying twice for information provided by the private weather sector if this policy does not pass, they are wrong. General weather information and forecasts will continue to be available through the NWS and the private industry. That fact will not change. It's the development of customized and specific services that the private industry charges for and in most cases, only affects businesses that want more than generalized data and forecasts to better their operations.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Gregg Potter

President and CEO

AnythingWeather Communications, Inc."

1424 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private weather Industry: A

Public-Private Partnership.” The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

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The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Ellen Rayfield

814-235-8688

AccuWeather, Inc. – “Get the best weather on the web...AccuWeather.com(R).”

385 Science Park Road

State College, PA 16803”

1425 "Dear Reader:

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C.L.Myers

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Very truly yours,

C.L.Myers"

1426 "I have just recently heard the topic that there is consideration to stop providing no-charge access to weather related data that has/is being gathered with my tax dollars. And that if I want access I will need to pay (a second) time, so that 'Corporate' weather providers can strengthen their bottom line. Needless to say, I STRONGLY believe this is wrong and is inappropriate of MY civil servants to allow this to happen.

Over the years I have relied on NOAA and its reports to keep myself and family safe, as well as plan activities based on this data. To restrict its access is poor stewardship of those trusted with its collection and dissemination.

Please do the proper thing and keep MY tax dollar\$ working for ME, and not corporate interests. They already get far too many breaks and perks that the real work force doesn't have access to.

Sincerely,
Robert Armbrust
--"

1427 "Dear Reader:

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Very truly yours,

Jamie M. Hockman
Administrative Assistant || 814-235-8540
hockman@accuwx.com || Fax 814-235-8549
AccuWeather, Inc.- ""Simply the Most Accurate.""
385 Science Park Road || State College, PA 16803"

1428 "To whom it may concern,

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National weather Service,"" in 1991, which is still in effect today.

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The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National weather Service in the Private

sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to including NOAA and other agencies in the federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

This new approach is a step backwards from the 1991 policy and is clearly a mistake. The approach is also yet another example of the U.S government dictating what is best to its people without the proper knowledge and understanding of the whole picture.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

I firmly believe that the NWS has to stick to its core mission of collecting and distributing data, as well as issuing watches and warnings. In recent years, surface observations have become less reliable than they were in the past. In particular, there is a major problem with getting accurate snowfall information. In addition, bogus liquid precipitation data shows up from time to time, and

daily max and min temperatures are occasionally wrong. The manpower and financial resources of the NWS have to be used to fix these existing problems.

Very truly yours,

David H. Dombek
Expert Senior Meteorologist
AccuWeather, Inc."

1429 "To whom it may concern,

I wanted to submit my support for the new fair weather policy. I believe that the public should be provided with weather products of sufficient specificity in order to make their own decisions regarding the protection of life and property. This should not be limited to those capable of processing ""raw"" data into a form that can be understood - the products should be consumable in the form provided. warnings alone are not adequate to meet this demand, as such additional data products should be made available. As for the private industry, these data products should also be provided them in a timely manner (raw, derived and processed data), as they do serve a considerable segment of the public - but the implementation of new data products should not be delayed until infrastructure is in place to deliver it when such data directly leads to meeting the critical focus above.

Thanks,
Glen Romine"

1430 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

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We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Rebekah Myers"

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Very truly yours,

Christine D. Peachey"

1432 "Statement by the Commercial Space Weather Interest Group regarding the Proposed Fair Weather Policy of the NWS Because the NOAA-SEC will become part of the NWS and it's National Centers for Environmental Prediction, the issue of the proposed Fair Weather Policy of the NWS is an important consideration for the Commercial Space Weather Interest Group (CSWIG). 1) CSWIG mission statement: • Foster Growth in Operational Space Weather (SW) Services • Establish Cooperative Relationships with Gov. SW Operational and R&D Agencies • Establish Advocacy for Common Commercial Provider Concerns • Identify and Establish Best Practices in the SW Community • Identify and Advance New Space Weather Observation Systems & Forecasting Technologies • Publicize and Inform Existing and Potential Users of the nature of Space Weather Risks and the value of Services that can effectively address risks The Commercial Space Weather Interest Group (CSWIG) seeks to advance our common interests of mitigating the risks of the space environment and space weather for our customers by expanding commercial space weather activity. 2) Policy statement for NOAA SEC: a) From a commercial space weather perspective, the primary mission of NOAA SEC must be to provide calibrated space environment data that is released operationally, publicly, and regularly with ongoing monitoring and correction of missing or invalid data. Both SEC data and SEC products must be fairly and routinely validated to provide tools for continuous institutional accountability. b) NOAA SEC data and products must not compete with commercial space weather activities. c) A NOAA - Private sector methodology must be identified to assure the commercial space weather community that its areas of activity are not being infringed upon but are supported by government activity. d) NOAA SEC space environment activities can be supported by commercial space weather organizations through outsourcing contracts and cooperative agreements that seek to uphold best practices standards."

1433 "Ed and ""Fairweather"" account (NOAA),

Greetings! My comments, through my affiliation with the National Council of Industrial Meteorologists (NCIM) as President and now Past President, are reflected, in an institutional sense, in the response sent today by John Toohey-Morales (President of NCIM). I agree with that position 100%, but I also wanted to send in some of my own comments as well. Thanks in advance for taking the time to read and consider them.

First of all, I want to personally thank you, Ed, for your work in spreading the word, especially to the private sector, about the proposed policy. I appreciate your willingness to attend the recent NCIM meeting in Oklahoma, the recent AMS webcast on this subject, and your active participation in the AMS Ad Hoc Committee

on the weather and Climate Enterprise chaired by John Snow. You have consistently requested input for many months now and have shown a persistence that is worthy of recognition. Thanks for all of your hard work!

Second, I am a government contractor for the US Department of Energy (DOE). In this role, my coworkers and I are highly restricted from competing with other private sector companies, in any manner, since we are using government funds to conduct our work. Given this restriction by DOE, a federal agency, I find it very hard, if not unfathomable, to understand why NOAA/NWS operates without an analogous restriction for its federal employees. How can NOAA allow its employees to develop products and services which the private sector can and are doing? Then, on top of that, I cannot understand why the proposed policy, with no restrictions, can even be considered?

Third, various heads of the NWS are telling meteorology students that there are not going to be many jobs in the NWS and that these students should consider the private sector for employment after graduation. While I can certainly understand that the NWS has suffered through many budget and job cuts over the past decade or so, I cannot understand why the NWS would be considering a policy with no boundaries as to the products and services that can be developed when they know that majority of the employment opportunities are going to occur in the private sector. Why isn't the NWS trying to assist the private sector in developing further to help the whole of the profession of meteorology? If the staffing levels of the NWS are steadily decreasing due to retirements and a lack of hiring, etc., then the NWS' concentration should be upon its core missions only, not expansion. I know several NWS employees---I know how swamped they are right now with a constant slate of changes with no additional help. Under these conditions, why would NOAA even consider increasing, or having unfettered opportunities, to increase its work scope?

A good example of this type of job creep that, in this case negatively affects the private sector, is the initiative to have NWS employees become responsible for running dispersion models for responding to unplanned releases to the atmosphere. If I'm not mistaken, this task is being dumped upon the WCM's in each office. On the face of it, one might think that this is a simple job and that anybody can do it effectively. Well, nothing could be further from the truth. I am intimately familiar with the requirements for such duty since I've been involved in such work for the last 15 years. Understanding the atmospheric boundary layer takes continual training, just like any other aspect of meteorology, and is considerably more complicated than "simple". Accurate dispersion modeling is no easy affair---just ask anybody who has conducted actual tracer studies and has tried to make predictions on where to sample in real time. In response to this need, many organizations, mostly in the private sector or quasi-private sector like the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, have developed and are developing atmospheric dispersion models for just this purpose. Many vendors in the private sector have 24-7-365 emergency response teams to instantly respond to accidents for most any location in the world. This development and service has been ongoing for DECADES, yet the NWS took it upon itself to have their own employees do this. Why? Why reinvent the wheel when the capability already exists? Why dump more responsibilities upon a shrinking staff? A staff that is ill-equipped to handle such an important task (for example, most, if not all NWS observing stations do not utilize instrumentation built to dispersion modeling specifications (especially at the low-end near threshold levels))? This work has nothing to do with providing weather warnings to the public and can be done, and is done, and has been done for decades, by the private sector. Clearly the NWS should not be in the business of running dispersion models, yet that is exactly what they intend to do despite the clear fact that many companies in the private can and do provide this service.

As I said before, thank you soliciting input on the proposed NOAA policy and thanks for taking the time to read and consider my comments.

Sincerely,

Matt Parker

Matthew J. Parker, CCM
Principal Meteorologist
Atmospheric Technologies Group
Savannah River National Laboratory
Westinghouse Savannah River Company
Bldg. 735-7A
Aiken, SC 29808

(803) 725-2805 FAX (803) 725-4233

email: matt.parker@srs.gov"

1434 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

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We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Kathleen M. Fiore

"a concerned citizen"

1435 "Dear Reader: I have the opportunity to attend many meetings each year where I interact with leaders in the National weather Service. In virtually every situation,

we are told how important each member of the weather enterprise is to the overall development of the weather industry within the United States and how that positively impacts the American public. However, there must be a disconnect. Despite hearing these comments, the actions of the National Weather Service indicate a completely different story.

The basic mission of the National Weather Service is a point of little contention by members of the weather enterprise. The core responsibilities center on protecting life and property, the data infrastructure and the preparation of computer models. Yet in the last 3 or 4 years, the stretching and twisting of these core definitions has reached epic proportions prompting some very questionable activities from the NWS, especially the local offices.

I could document at least dozens of these that my company alone has found in the past 12 months and other members of the commercial weather industry have pointed out many more. If the NWS were a true partner in the weather enterprise and knew the extent of these problems, you might expect permanent actions would be taken to correct the situation. Instead, the one policy within the NWS that helps establish the guidelines - the 1991 Public Private Partnership - is being rewritten to eliminate guidelines against competition with the commercial weather industry and offering even more opportunity to justify just about any activity a local NWS office many want to get involved in.

This erosion of the 1991 policy is not new. A variety of other general government regulations have been selectively used to take bites out of the 1991 policy including Paperwork Reduction Act and the associated circular issued by the White House Office of Management and Budget - OMB A-130. These regulations do not direct the NWS to do the things they have done to water down the 1991 policy. They are selectively applied, providing a loophole for new products and services to slip through. It is interpretation of these regulations by management of the NWS and the lack of enforcement of existing policy that have created the lack of trust the commercial weather industry has of the NWS today.

What do we believe? The words of NWS management or the actions of the NWS organization? As is frequently observed, actions speak louder than words. These actions not only have stifled investment by the commercial weather industry but also have pushed some companies either out of business or to a completely different industry. Look at what has happened within the weather enterprise at the university level. Corporate sponsorship of developmental weather programs and scholarships has dropped noticeably at many of the major institutions such as the University of Oklahoma and Penn State University.

The National Research Council's Fair Weather Report set forth a number of recommendations when it was released 18 months ago. This report, sponsored by the NWS, returned watered down concerns from the commercial part of the weather enterprise and proposed the concept of "lets work together". How could anyone disagree with that concept? The problem is the NWS has no guidelines, issued by law, that direct it to accept these comments and act positively on them. A partnership, where the power and control exist with only one side, is hardly a partnership. The commercial weather industry might have been willing to take a wait-and-see type attitude if they could trust the word of the NWS. As indicated earlier, that is just not where the enterprise is at right now. In fact, even the Fair Weather report, as watered down as it was, is being interpreted to increase the competition from the NWS. Recommendation One, which is the foundation for the proposed NWS policy, states there should not be "rigid" boundaries defining the roles of the various members of the enterprise. It does not say there should be NO boundaries like the proposed policy outlines. In addition, Recommendation Seven -- which touched on the serious problem the NWS has with their local

offices and control of the products they issue - is almost completely ignored.

There are many more examples and analogies that could be outlined. I had the opportunity to deliver a few of them directly to the Director of the National Weather Service last Thursday morning. Hopefully they made an impact. At the end of my presentation, I offered several suggestions on how to repair the damage the NWS has done and continues to do to the weather enterprise. All these suggestions are within the direct control of NWS leaders to accept and implement.

--Abandon the proposed policy and return to the 1991 Public Private Partnership Policy

The 1991 policy should be improved upon and strengthened using examples of issues that have come up in the past 13 years. Removing critical ideas about non-competition and concepts such as the role of broadcast meteorologists will cause irreparable damage to the enterprise.

--Apply 1991 Public Private Partnership policy to NOAA as well as NWS

This was under consideration when the 1991 policy was originally adopted. There are examples of how the attitude of the NWS in regards to direct competition with the commercial weather industry is now affecting other agencies under the NOAA umbrella.

--Enforce existing policies within the NWS organization

Without better procedures to give direction to the local offices, they will continue to stray away from the core mission of the organization. These offices must completely understand their role in the weather enterprise to offer the maximum benefit to all Americans. They also need to be better managed to make sure activities remain focused. The commercial weather industry should not be the NWS police force.

I view the 1991 Public Private Partnership policy as a pie that is cut into 4 pieces. There is a piece for NWS, Academia and the Commercial weather Industry. The final piece is available for all to eat from and can be the source of contention. However, the part of the pie in dispute is relatively small. Over the past few years, the NWS's appetite has gotten bigger and they are taking more of the piece set aside for the commercial weather industry because our piece is the closest. The proposed policy sits down all three members of the weather enterprise with a pie in the middle of the table. We all have spoons and have to fight for every bite of the pie. Academia and commercial companies have normal size spoons while the NWS has a spoon the size of Yankee Stadium. Over a short amount of time, the commercial industry will not get enough of the pie and with the lack of nourishment; much of it will weaken and die. The NWS needs the universities to train their future employees so at least a portion of the pie will be saved for them.

Prove to everyone you are serious about your words. Abandon the proposed policy, strengthen the 1991 Public Private Partnership policy, strictly enforce the policies you have in place and work as a true partner to benefit all Americans.

Sincerely,

Kenneth W. Reeves

Director, Forecast Operations
AccuWeather, Inc."

1436 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Edward J. Kabala"

1437 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

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weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Nicole Steffy"

1438 "Dear Reader:

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I believe it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Blaine E. Clapper"

1439 "Hello,

I would like to take a quick moment to request that all weather and weather related data received, created, or obtained by NOAA and related governmental agencies be freely and publicly available to all individuals. This is, in my opinion, to the benefit to all parties involved.

It is my intention to keep my request brief. If you would like additional or expanded comments from me, feel free to contact me. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Michael Johnston
mike@michaeljohnston.net"

1440 "To Whom It May Concern:

I am aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

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Very truly yours,

Adrienne L. Mason

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Adrienne Mason
email: adrienne.mason.wg02@wharton.upenn.edu
Home: 215-209-0269
Mobile: 267-467-0110"

1441 "Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National weather Service and the Private weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

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We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Amy Balash"

1442 "Statement by the Commercial Space weather Interest Group Regarding the Proposed Fair weather Policy of the NWS Because the NOAA-SEC will become part of the NWS as one of its National Centers for Environmental Prediction, the proposed Fair weather Policy of the NWS is an important consideration for the Commercial Space weather Interest Group (CSWIG). We therefore wish to present our mission statement and our view of the newly proposed policy. 1) CSWIG mission statement: • Foster growth in operational Space weather (SW) services • Establish cooperative relationships with Government SW operational and R&D agencies • Establish advocacy for common commercial provider concerns • Identify and establish best practices in the SW community • Identify and advance new Space weather observation systems and forecasting technologies • Publicize and inform existing and potential users of the

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nature of Space weather risks and the value of services that can effectively address risks The Commercial Space Weather Interest Group (CSWIG) seeks to advance our common interests of mitigating the risks of the space environment and space weather for our customers by expanding commercial space weather activity. 2) Policy statement for NOAA SEC: a) From a commercial space weather perspective, the primary mission of NOAA SEC must be to provide calibrated space environment data that is released operationally, publicly, and regularly with ongoing monitoring and correction of missing or invalid data. Both SEC data and SEC products must be fairly and routinely validated to provide tools for continuous institutional accountability. b) NOAA SEC data and products must not compete with commercial space weather activities. c) A NOAA/Private Sector methodology must be identified to assure the commercial space weather community that its areas of activity are not infringed upon but are supported by government activity. d) NOAA SEC space environment activities can be supported by commercial space weather organizations through outsourcing contracts and cooperative agreements that seek to uphold best-practices standards."

1443 "To Whom It May Concern::

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled ""The National weather Service and the Private weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership."" The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . .""

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We believe that it is important that the National weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Carolyn Grove"

1444 "Fair weather
Strategic Planning and Policy Office
NOAA National weather Service
Filed electronically at: fairweather@noaa.gov

Comments on Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of
Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information

NOAA's proposed policy is a good first step toward strengthening the partnership between government, academia and the private sector and minimizing the conflicts and inefficiencies of the existing system. The proposed policy effectively responds to recommendations contained in the NRC's study regarding how to coordinate interaction among the various sectors to improve the weather information system. In particular, NOAA deserves praise for its commitment to promoting open and unrestricted dissemination of publicly funded information in directing NWS to make its data available in Internet-accessible form

based on recognized standards, formats, and metadata descriptions.

Contrary to objections raised by some in the private weather sector, the Center for Democracy and Technology (CDT) believes the proposed policy strikes an important balance between protecting the rights of those who collect and disseminate data and ensuring unfettered access to information already in the public domain. Specifically, CDT has two related concerns for NWS information services in federal E-government policy:

* Public access - The public should not have to pay twice for access to basic government information that has been created at taxpayer expense.

* Competitive and diverse market - while the government generally should allow private services to utilize information and avoid competing with the private sector, providing data feeds in XML and other basic open standard formats will only help extend the marketplace by lowering barriers to entry and allowing new services to flourish.

(1) Public access

The public has already paid for NWS data and information products through taxes that subsidize its research, data collection, and product development activities. Taxpayers should not be charged again to access publicly funded observations, analyses, model results, forecasts and related information products. To the extent practicable, agencies have an obligation to make government information widely available to the taxpayers who paid for it, even if selling that information would generate substantial revenues. Accordingly, we urge the NWS to adopt a policy consistent with its long-standing practice of providing full and open access to data for no more than the cost of its preparation and dissemination.

(2) Competitive and diverse market

CDT firmly agrees with the NRC's conclusion that ""making data easy and affordable to obtain helps NOAA promote scientific understanding of weather and climate phenomena, create a more informed public, provide unbiased information, and give the commercial weather industry an opportunity to flourish."" To this end, harnessing the potential of the Internet and electronic database technologies to enable direct access to data in standardized formats will be crucial.

As discussed above, models and products developed by the NWS already exist in the public domain. Dissemination of vital weather and climate data compiled by the NWS should not be channeled only through for-profit vendors in the private sector who would not contribute any additional value to that basic public information. By providing equal access to NWS data at marginal costs to all individuals and entities and harmonizing standards and formats for data sources, the government can create a more level playing field for potential users of this information, thereby lowering barriers to market entry. At the same time, market competition will encourage the development of more accurate data collection methods and diverse products and services tailored to meet the varied needs of interested parties in the weather and climate enterprise.

Open standards are the key to future openness in the marketplace. In particular, the use of XML based standards offers an unprecedented opportunity. While shutting down new XML data feeds in favor of proprietary standards, may please some companies in the private weather sector today, the end result will be a less diverse and less

competitive market by restricting the creation of specialized weather products, tools, and models in the academic and private sectors. Improved data access benefits all sectors in the weather enterprise by maximizing the affordability, availability and usefulness of NWS weather information services to a large population and will open opportunities for business plans that can not even be predicted today. We hope that the NWS will adopt policies supportive of technical capabilities that allow users to access information directly through standardized formats and believe that the NRC document created a reasonably clear roadmap to reach this goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on this important issue. We commend your continued efforts to promote the broad dissemination of critical weather and climate information in an accurate, timely and equitable manner.

Respectfully submitted,

Ari Schwartz
Associate Director

Center for Democracy and Technology
1634 Eye Street, N.W., Suite 1100
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 637-9800
<http://www.cdt.org>

1445 "Dear Reader,

I write to you as the founder and current President of Oceanweather Inc. (OWI), a small-business private weather company in Connecticut that has over the past 27 years created about two dozen jobs for young Meteorologists here in southern New England. OWI are and have been a member of the Commercial Weather Services Association, which helped the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, a policy still theoretically in effect today. That policy states in part:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise. OWI strongly oppose the dilution of the 1991 Policy Statement implicit in the NRC recommendation and strongly endorse the recommendations of the CWSA. Those recommendations have been eloquently expressed to you within the past week by, among others, CWSA Board Members Steve Root and Barry Myers and need not be repeated here. Rather, I would prefer to direct your attention to just one concrete example

of the negative impact of recent NOAA practices on the health of one segment of the private weather industry, namely the segment involved primarily in the provision of global wave forecasting and hindcasting services.

On March 20, 1996, NCEP Ocean Modeling Branch (OMB) announced on the INTERNET that its Global Wave Forecast Home Page was ""open"" and that it included ASCII digital files of global grid point wind and wave analysis and forecasts in addition to the graphics products. Many private weather firms in the US, including Oceanweather, had for years prior to 1996 been providing specific wind and wave forecasts to the offshore and shipping industries. In fact over the prior decade, several of these firms, including OWI, began to generate and deliver digital wave forecast data, employing innovative data compression and data transmission techniques to get these data into onboard pc-based expert systems.

For over two decades OWI has run its own real time and highly proven spectral ocean wave model in real time at great development and equipment cost, driving the model with inputs derived in a Meteorologist-machine interactive processes. Well over 90% of the customers for this type of service operate outside US territorial waters and constitute foreign corporate entities working in foreign basins with the ability to pay for the services they require for safe and efficient operations on the high seas. In 1996 I wrote to Joe Friday expressing my concerns about the impact of the NOAA Wave Forecast Home Page on OWI's international business. I received a courteous response but no changes in the policy of dissemination of marine products were made.

My greatest fears have been realized as within the past 5 years at least three companies in the Netherlands, at least one in the UK and several in Austral-Asia have entered the marine forecasting marketplace because they can obtain free global wave model data from NOAA, rather than run their own models or purchase data from their parent national weather services. In addition, a number of what had been clients of the private marine weather industry (such as e.g. several major cruise lines) have dropped private services completely because they had acquired broadband connectivity and could access the NOAA global wave data directly. The NCEP/OMB home page, therefore, has unwittingly entered and is disrupting a hitherto highly commercial part of the private weather industry and allowed foreign entities, who already hold a competitive advantage since the market is mainly foreign, to undermine the established business activities of several innovative US private weather firms. In effect, NCEP are giving away a value-added product (the digital wave data files) where alternative and in many cases higher quality data (because of the application of dedicated resources) had been made available to any user at a fair price from a private US firm, who can provide this product at no cost to the US taxpayer.

To make matters worse, the NCEP/OMB page now includes the free dissemination of the application of its global model to the hindcast of 7 years of history. This reanalysis/hindcast sea state database is being utilized by the engineering design and forensic investigation communities, which have over the past three or four decades been a core private marine weather industry constituency. OWI is the recognized world leader in the provision of hindcast data and a significant business volume has been intercepted by this new NOAA hindcast wave database, despite its shortcomings.

We understand the core responsibility of NOAA/MWS to provide public marine warnings
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on the high seas as part of its WMO commitment, but that responsibility is already being fulfilled by the NWS Marine Forecast Branch (MFB) whose many excellent graphics products are also available on the INTERNET. I would think the main purposes of NOAA running the global wave model are: (1) provide guidance to the MFB for use in the generation of its graphical marine products and to NWS forecasters for use in the generation of high-seas and coastal waters warnings; (2) provide an improved description of the surface roughness condition for NWP models when the NWP and wave models are operated in a coupled mode (it is my understanding that they are not so coupled at this time). It is not necessary to release the digital data files to achieve these core objectives, so why do it, and certainly it should not release any products outside US territorial waters and its WMO area of responsibility.

This small example indicates the power of the government to negatively impact at least the small business sector (its dominant sector) of private industry, which is the engine that drives the U.S. economy and that offers the government its greatest tax base segment. I am eager to add my voice to those who urge that the new NRC proposal policy be withdrawn and that the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner with you in the process of strengthening the 1991 policy.

Yours truly,

Vincent J. Cardone
President
Oceanweather, Inc.
5 River Road
Cos Cob, CT. 06807
www.oceanweather.com

and

Fellow, American Meteorological Society"

1446 "June 30, 2004

To whom this may concern:

As a founders of a private sector meteorological consulting company in the 1970's, and having many years of experience in regard to the interaction of the public and private sectors of the meteorological community, we have great concern over the National weather Service's proposed policy change.

A key goal of the Commercial Weather Services Association was the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today. The importance of that

policy statement was to provide guidance for the relative roles, responsibilities and boundaries in the interaction of the public and private sectors. Not only did the Policy Statement help to reduce unnecessary duplication of efforts, but anyone desiring to create a viable business needs to have a reasonable expectation that if they invest the necessary resources to create a new product or service, the government will not then duplicate their efforts and put them out of business.

The Public/Private Policy Statement was the first time, since the National Weather Service was created in 1890, that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

- ""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."
- The policy also provides that ""It is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy"" and it contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy, which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

- The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended;
 - The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.);
 - Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted;
 - The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped;
- and
- The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We have attended many industry Conferences, including the Annual AMS Meeting, in which leaders of NOAA and the National Weather Service have repeatedly emphasized the superiority of the weather information provided to the public as a result of having a vibrant private sector meteorological community. In fact, they emphasize that Public/Private Sector Weather Service Partnership is the reason that the information

available to the American Public is far superior to that available in any other country. If that is true, apparently the current definition of relative responsibilities is allowing the development of the private sector and benefiting the citizens at no cost to the taxpayers.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge that the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a real partner in the American Weather Enterprise to engage with the NOAA/NWS to amend the present draft so that a win-win is created for all.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Wimmer
President
Compu-Weather, Inc."

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- Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted;
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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

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We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge that the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a real partner in the American Weather Enterprise to engage with the NOAA/NWS to amend the present draft so that a win-win is created for all.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tore Jakobsen
President
FleetWeather, Inc."

1448 "Ladies and Gentlemen,

My name is Todd Finney, and I operate a weather information service on the internet. For the past three years, I have provided free weather information in a standard, easily-used, universally accepted data format called XML. It started out on a bit of a whim, but it has grown significantly in the past three years. Thousands of web sites, including some within government departments and programs, use my site to improve their services.

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I generate my weather information using publicly-available data found on the NOAA's web site. Simply, I read their pages, then reformat the information in them into XML. For many interested in working with weather data, this is the ""hard"" part of the problem. Once the information is in a known, standardized format, doing interesting things with it becomes substantially easier.

You might be aware that the NOAA is testing an XML weather service of its own. While I can't say I'm happy about my impending obsolescence, I couldn't ask for a better replacement.

In its proposed Policy on Partnerships (...etc), the NOAA/NWS states that ""open and unrestricted dissemination of high quality publicly funded information, as appropriate and within resource constraints, is good policy and is the law."" I agree entirely. By establishing a policy permitting the free, unbiased dissemination of weather information in an open, standardized format, the NOAA/NWS would become more compliant with its primary mission, defined in the 1991 policy as:

""The primary mission of the National weather Service is the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. ... The national information base forms an infrastructure on which the private sector can build and grow.""

And again in the new, proposed policy:

""NWS provides information to support protecting life and property and enhancing the national economy. To carry out this mission, it develops and maintains an infrastructure of observing, telecommunications, and prediction systems on which the public (federal, state, and local government agencies), private, and academic sectors rely.""

Limiting access to NOAA/NWS information in any way runs counter to its own primary mission, and to the American ideal of public entities serving the public good. Therefore, I would like to encourage the adoption of the proposed policy permitting the NOAA/NWS to make their information more freely available.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Todd R. Finney
Boy Genius Incorporated

References:

NOAA/NWS Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of
Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information
Background: <<http://weather.gov/fairweather/>>
Policy Text: <<http://weather.gov/fairweather/policy.php>>

NOAA/NWS existing policy, 1991
<<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/im/fedreg.htm>>

NOAA/NWS Experimental XML Forecasts
<<http://weather.gov/xml/>>

Boy Genius XML Weather Feeds
<<http://weather.boygenius.com/>>

Slashdot Article ""The Future of Free Weather Data on the Internet""
The angle from the pocket protector crowd.

<<http://yro.slashdot.org/article.pl?sid=04/06/27/0216251&mode=thread&tid=103&tid=126&tid=95&tid=99>>

cc: Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy (via web form), Sec. Donald L. Evans, Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., General D.L. Johnson, Sen. Lincoln Chaffe (via web form), Sen. Jack Reed (via web form), and the weather.boygenius.com mailing list."

1449 " am extremely concerned about the new proposed NOAA policy entitled "Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information." I do not feel that the new policy adequately represents the interests of the private weather industry. Rather than writing a new policy, the 1991 Public-Private Partnership Policy needs to be strengthened so that the National Weather Service does a better job of refraining from direct competition with the private sector.

The private weather industry is an important source of federal tax revenue and our voice needs to be heard. It is a waste of federal taxpayer money to have the National Weather Service engage in activities that are better served or presently served by the private sector. Recent activities by the National Weather Service such as a broadcast weather show on PBS in Alaska and wireless services in Florida are just two examples of where the National Weather Service has stepped on the toes of the private weather industry.

NOAA needs to have strict guidelines prohibiting it from entering areas such as broadcast and wireless that can be adequately served by the private weather industry. NOAA's role needs to be better defined as one of research and development, public safety, and raw dissemination of data. The U.S. has the best weather forecasting services in the world thanks to the efforts of the private weather industry over the past 50 years. One only has to look as far as Europe to see what happens when government-run weather offices unfairly compete with the private sector. When the government tries to compete with the private weather industry, the quality of the weather services goes down and an important tax-base is destroyed.

Any new NOAA policy needs to explicitly prohibit NOAA from directly targeting specific user groups. In addition, a policy that restricts NOAA from engaging in "value-add" services should be put in place. The role of government in capitalistic societies is to provide public goods that private industry cannot adequately supply - the National Weather Service should be no different. Examples of public weather goods include the collection of raw data, the processing of data in weather models, the research and development of better forecasting tools, and the dissemination of timely weather alerts to the public.

Other activities including the creation of weather portals, the delivery of weather information over wireless devices, and the creation of web pages targeting specific industries are activities that should be off-limits to NOAA since they are already well-served by the private sector. Any new projects that NOAA undertakes should undergo a review that considers whether the project under consideration can be provided or is already provided by the private sector. A formal appeal process to project initiatives should be put in place. Pure and simple, U.S. taxpayers should not finance NOAA projects that drive private weather companies, an important source of tax revenue, out of business.

Any money spent by NOAA is best spent in research and development where everyone can benefit. The end weather product should be left up to the private sector. It is my sincere hope that you will give consideration to these concerns as you review and discuss the new "Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information." Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Flint
Vice President, CustomWeather

Jennifer Flint
CustomWeather, Inc.
610-202-8903
jflint@customweather.com"

1450 "The NOAA should not partner with the private weather sector to restrict weather data from the public. Accurate weather information is crucial to the health, safety, and property of pilots, boaters, farmers, and the general public. The funding for the NOAA to generate and collect its weather data comes from taxpayers; forcing taxpayers to pay the private weather sector to access this data would in essence cause taxpayers pay twice for this vital information. As a government agency, the purpose of the NOAA is to serve the public rather than to serve the interests of the private sector.

Claire Launay"

1451 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (the National Weather Service's predecessor) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of the Commercial Weather Industry and private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. It also laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation from the Commercial Weather Industry service as is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.

The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the Private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy be

strengthened and not replaced with a process and also be expanded to the remainder of NOAA and other agencies in the federal government.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society, an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American weather enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Frank D. Strait, Jr.
Bellefonte, PA"

1452 "To whom It May Concern:

We have reviewed the proposed changes to the January 1991 Policy Statement on the Weather Service/Private Sector Roles suggested in a recent NRC report including a proposed new policy advanced by NOAA/NWS to replace the 1991 policy. We are categorically opposed to any modification of the 1991 policy.

Don A. Griffith
8160 S. Highland Dr., Ste. A-2
Sandy, UT 84093
801-942-9005
801-942-9007 (fax)
nawc@nawcinc.com"

1453 "Dear Reader:

In recent weeks I have had the opportunity to represent the viewpoints of a few key leaders of the private sector's broadcast community. I was invited to the AMS webcast in April, and also presented at the AMS Broadcast Conference in June. It is important that these opinions be relayed formally in writing to you:

My chief concern is that the proposed NOAA/NWS policy does not exclude the NWS from providing a service which is or can be provided by broadcasters. It is important that the final policy not give the NWS more elbow room to expand into the broadcast realm. Despite verbal assurances that the NWS will not do so, it is critical that this be defined in writing.

I am also concerned that the critical partnership between the NWS and broadcasters in the dissemination of watches and warnings is no longer recognized in the proposed policy document.

In summary, I request that the NWS reaffirm the unique NWS/Media partnership as being an integral part of the core mission of protection of life and property. In addition, I ask that the NWS does NOT eliminate explicit language that limits the NWS role in broadcast and/or the private-sector-served segment of the weather enterprise.

Cordially,

John Morales, CCM
Chief Meteorologist
Telemundo
Miami, FL
954-622-7626 (direct)
786-412-6732 (mobile)

<<...OLE_Obj...>>"

1454 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

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meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides ""it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy.""

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The non-competition language will be repealed.

(Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

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The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

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An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Richard J. Smith"

1455 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the ""Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service,"" in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law.""

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The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from

FairweatherComments2.txt

government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

We want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,
Karianne Smith"

1456 "To Whom it May Concern:

I am aware of the fact that the NOAA/National Weather Service has proposed repeal of a policy entitled "The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial Weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

I believe that it is important that the National Weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial Weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,
Sharon A. Myers"

1457 "Dear Reader:

FairweatherComments2.txt

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National Weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

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Very truly yours,

Bradford Mason
Virginia"

1458 "Dear Sirs:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

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That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

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Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National Weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial Weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I've been a operational meteorologist for 27 1/2 years. I feel my job and my company will suffer if these changes are made. This new proposal sounds like a move toward bigger government and more unnecessary government spending. This is something more than 80% of the general public wish not to see. Our taxes are already high enough. Let the private sector do what it does best, create more jobs and create products and services that are better run and created more efficiently. When government gets involved this process becomes expensive, wasteful and inefficient. We already have enough wasteful spending in our government.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Dan Kottlowski
Expert Senior Meteorologist
AccuWeather Inc."

1459 "Dear Reader:

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial weather Service Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial weather Industry.

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It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

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Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

the sort of creative access to data that the public has already paid for that other government agencies should strive to provide. This is the sort of access that the proposed policy will foster.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Donald Pratt
Alternative Energy Systems Consulting, Inc.
858-573-9534
don@aesc-inc.com"

1461 "HOW THE WEATHERWORKS
301 Creek Valley Lane
Rockville, MD 20850-5604
301-527-9339
hmmogil@weatherworks.com

June 30, 2004
Fair Weather
Strategic Planning & Policy Office
NOAA - National Weather Service
1325 East-West Highway
Room 11404
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3283
To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to your office concerning the draft POLICY ON PARTNERSHIPS IN THE PROVISION OF WEATHER, WATER, CLIMATE AND RELATED ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION. It is well known that many in the private sector (including private sector weather organizations) have written you expressing their concerns about NWS inroads into various aspects of private sector business under the proposed policy statement. I, too, have concerns about this especially when the NWS publishes a general weather education site (Southern Region) and when NWS employees serve as consultants in the making of Hollywood movies. These are clearly beyond the NWS mission and these were done under a well-defined public-private sector agreement.

I also realize that some of my colleagues are concerned the NWS may want to start encroaching into media venues. I agree that this could more easily happen under the proposed policy.

And I am also concerned that under the proposed policy, NWS staff may even find themselves asked to become forensic weather experts, serve as educational weather consultants and otherwise lose sight of their main agency mission.

So, I started to ask myself, "why are we so concerned?"

Clearly, the NWS has mostly kept out of private sector venues in the past. But, when one carefully reviews the changes from the existing policy (in which there are boundaries, for the most part clear-cut) to the new policy (which is so broad as to be likened to a wheel of Swiss cheese), the answer is obvious. Without defined boundaries and responsibilities, it would be so easy to just trespass on private sector turf without redress.

So, I worked backward to view the entire concept of "partnerships". According to the Miriam Webster online dictionary, a partnership is: "a relationship resembling a legal partnership and usually involving close cooperation between parties having specified and joint rights and responsibilities."

You'll see that "close cooperation" and "specified and joint rights and responsibilities" are the watchwords. In the proposed policy statement, both of these are woefully lacking.

If close cooperation is the key component of this policy statement, then I have to wonder why a JOINT task force didn't write it. This document is clearly a draft written by NWS, sent out to solicit wide-ranging private sector input. Sorry, but that's not cooperation!

Cooperation would say that the parties discuss the existing policy document, which was working for the most part, updated to reflect new and changing situations, and then sent out for comment. What we have here is an NWS honed document, scattered to

the winds, such that disparate comments from the private sector community will have to be digested by NWS to create a revised document. There is no way this fits under a COOPERATION umbrella!

Also, lacking are specific rights and responsibilities and the framework in which violations / disagreements can be addressed. Two years ago at the NRC hearings, I commented on the need for resurrecting the NWS' Office of Industrial Meteorology. Good, bad or otherwise, this office ensured a framework in which dialogue between the NWS and private sector communities could be addressed on a routine basis. That Office was dismantled several years ago. I still believe that such an office, staffed with a few individuals who understood both sides of the true partnership, could collaborate with key NWS offices and the private sector community to craft the needed partnership framework. And that crafting really needs to be done at a table in which people from both sides can negotiate issues rather than review drafts. Can you imagine settling an international conflict by sending drafts back and forth without the parties creating the initial draft document TOGETHER?

At the recent AMS Broadcast Meteorology Conference, NWS representatives made statements that indicated "their intent" under this draft policy document was not to trespass on private sector venues. (The new document no longer specifically excludes NWS from providing private sector work.) That being the case, then why not make those feelings crystal clear in this document instead of opening them to interpretation and understanding by people who follow current policy makers? These new policymakers, who will surely arrive as administrations change and as people embark on their career paths, will have no knowledge of current intentions. We are really faced with "intentions" as opposed to what could or would be done.

In fact, this entire situation has made me think back to the early days of my second marriage. My wife, Barbara, was very clear when she noted, "you have to tell me what you are thinking...I can't read your mind". And in 16 plus years of happy matrimony, the only times we have had any conflict is when one or both us had forgotten to use those watchwords.

Look to any TV sitcom and its premise is almost always built around a lack of communication. Unfortunately, this isn't a funny situation. This policy document is so open ended as to leave almost everything to interpretation and misinterpretation.

Attendees at the aforementioned AMS Broadcast Conference also noted that current guidelines don't allow for such coordination because everyone has to have equal opportunity in the process. If this is indeed the case, then it is clearly not followed in other areas of government. Lobbyists routinely meet with key governmental officials to push for favorable legislation, contracts and other outcomes.

But, here, I am talking only about meeting to create a jointly worded draft that would still go out to the masses for comment. I find it hard to believe that a vehicle to foster cooperation like this isn't available to the NWS and its private sector colleagues.

If, however, the NWS' hands are tied and they cannot do something along the lines I suggest, then perhaps the NAS or another independent group should serve as the facilitator.

In closing, let me clearly state that the wording and contents of the current draft policy statement are seriously flawed. I have no choice but vote strongly against its adoption.

Sincerely,

H. Michael Mogil, M.S.
Certified Consulting Meteorologist

CC: NCIM
CWSA
AMS"

1462 "Daniel Myers

220 Regent Court
Suite B
State College, PA 16801

June 30, 2004

Dear Reader:

We are aware of the fact that the NOAA/National Weather Service has proposed repeal of policy entitled "The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public-Private Partnership." The current policy adopted in 1991 provides, among other things, that:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, . . ."

The proposed new policy does not contain this language. As a result the NWS is free to broaden or expand its mission into areas where significant investments have been made by the Commercial Weather Industry. This is the antithesis of what a government agency should be doing.

We believe that it is important that the National Weather Service has in place, and abides by, a policy that indicates that it will focus its attention on governmental missions and will not venture into the commercial areas occupied by the Commercial Weather Industry and will not compete with it.

Very truly yours,

Daniel Myers

Daniel Myers

President

Lazerpro Digital Media Group, Inc

www.lazerpro.com

814-238-6201 x121"

1463 "As co-chairs of the weather Coalition, we would like to comment that the bullet on ""Equity"" near the end of the statement is confusing and can be interpreted as being potentially hostile toward some non-governmental sectors. The phrase ""NWS...will not show favoritism to particular classes of partners or individual entities, particularly those in academic and commercial sectors,"" seems unnecessarily to single out academic and private business users of information provided by NOAA. We hope that this was not the intention of the authors of this language and suggest that, at the very least, the phrase, "Particularly those in the academic and commercial sectors" be stricken. Full explanation of what is really intended by this bullet would also be of help to clarify NOAA's position on the issue of equity that is extremely important in NOAA's relationships with its external partners. The success of these partnerships is critical to achievement of the goals of the NOAA mission; unfortunate language should not interfere with NWS collaborations with the academic and business sectors.

Submitted by:

Ray Ban, Executive Vice President, The Weather Channel
John Snow, Director, Oklahoma Weather Center and
Dean, College of Geosciences, University of Oklahoma

<!--[if !supportEmptyParas]--><!--[endif]-->

[The weather Coalition is a diverse group of representatives from industry, academia, science and education consortia and a national laboratory, committed to improving the capabilities of the country's weather prediction and warning capabilities. For the membership list and activities, please see http://www.ucar.edu/oga/wx_coalition/]

--

Cynthia Schmidt
Director
Office of Development & Government Affairs
University Corporation for Atmospheric Research
3450 Mitchell Lane, Boulder, CO 80301
303 497-2107 303 497-2100 Fax
www.ucar.edu"

1464 "To whom it may concern:

This is to express concern about the proposed policy shift away from cooperation with the commercial sector, particularly in the area known as space weather. Recently the primary Department of Commerce agency in the arena has actively encouraged the development of a commercial ""third-party vendor"" space weather community and recognized the benefit to the Government space weather agencies of a vital commercial sector. However, the commercial space weather marketplace is very much in its infancy and, to date, those commercial agencies involved have been investing on the anticipation that future growth will make the sector economically viable. The proposed policy changes appear to essentially bring the Government into direct competition with any possible commercial space weather

opportunity.

As early as 1948, under AMS auspices, concerns were addressed about the relationship between the U.S. Weather Bureau (NWS) and commercial meteorologists.

Ultimately, this movement, urged forward by the Commercial Weather Services Association, led to the adoption of the "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service," in 1991, which is still in effect today.

That policy was the first time since the National Weather Service was created in 1890 that a definition of government-appropriate roles was fully articulated. The 1991 policy also recognizes the important contribution of (1) the Commercial Weather Industry and (2) private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. And, it laid out National Weather Service views of the positive contributions to the nation of the Commercial Weather Industry.

In addition, the policy stated:

"The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law."

The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

Recently, the NRC made a recommendation that the National Weather Service replace its 1991 policy with a new policy that would define processes for making decisions on products, technologies and services, rather than a rigid policy that defines the roles of the National Weather Service in the private sector.

The Commercial Weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.)

Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eliminated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

The recent decision by the Department of Commerce to include space weather within the scope of the National weather Service emphasizes the applicability of the current policy to the space weather community. The NOAA Space Environment Laboratory has encouraged the development of commercial space weather providers community and that group can best be described as being in its infancy. Commercial agencies, corporate and individually owned, have begun to make progress in creating a profitable commercial space weather marketplace, but new policy appears to eliminate the possibility of a successful commercial space weather marketplace. Particularly, eliminating the non-competition language will remove any reasonable change of a successful business plan for a commercial space weather enterprise.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology. As a marketplace still in its infancy, the commercial space weather sector is especially vulnerable to competition from the Government and this new policy directly contradicts recent encouragement of the development of a commercial space weather sector.

We want to object to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. We urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,

Robert D Prochaska"

1465 "To whom It May Concern:

I am writing to voice my concern over the recommendation that has been made to eliminate the 1991 National Weather Service policy which governed the role of the NWS relationship with the Private Weather Industry.

This policy recognized the importance of the Commercial weather Industry and private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers and news agencies. It also acknowledged the NWS views of the positive contributions that the Commercial weather Industry makes to the nation.

In addition, the policy stated:

""The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless

otherwise directed by applicable law.""

The policy also provides "it is the responsibility of all NWS officials and employees to comply with this policy."

It contains a process of complaint and remedial action to ensure compliance with the policy, including appeal to NOAA administrative levels.

The Commercial weather Services Association has gone on record, in commenting on the NRC report, asserting that the 1991 policy (1) be strengthened and not replaced with a process and (2) be expanded to include NOAA and other agencies in the Federal enterprise.

Earlier this year, NOAA/NWS advanced a new proposed policy which would replace the 1991 policy. This proposal steps backwards, rather than advancing the good of the nation.

Among the negative approach and effects of this proposal are:

The new policy provides no process, as the NRC recommended.

The non-competition language will be repealed. (Even the NRC report suggested a process envisioned a continuing policy of non-competition.) Recognition of the importance of broadcast meteorologists is deleted.

The mission of the National Weather Service, defined in 1991, is dropped.

The complaint and appeal process is eradicated.

In the February 2004 issue of The Bulletin of the American Meteorology Society an article states that predications are for a continued shift from government, academic and other jobs in meteorology, to the private sector, passing through the 50% mark in 2010. The present path of the proposed new National weather Service policy introduces greater risk for the private sector, not less. It can negatively impact job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial weather Industry and it will disadvantage the American public.

An effective partnership requires cooperation. In this case the National Weather Service is attempting to change the rules of the game and of its relationship with the Commercial weather Industry and the nation, all on its own. It would be a breach of its 60-year commitment to the growth of the private sector of meteorology.

I want to voice objection to this approach and to the thrust of the new policy. I urge the new proposal policy be withdrawn and the Commercial Weather Industry be engaged as a partner in the American Weather Enterprise to work together to strengthen the 1991 policy.

Very truly yours,
Anthony Zartman"

1466 "Richard Schwarting wrote:

>
> Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
> Richard Schwarting (aquarichy@gmail.com) on Friday, July 2, 2004 at 19:03:48
> -----
>
> email: aquarichy@gmail.com
>

FairweatherComments2.txt

> subject: From weather.gov
>
> comments: I recently read in an article that the NWS was interested in increasing free accessibility to their data, while certain private services wanted to increase restrictions on it, presumably to have consumers of that data go through them to generate business for them.
>
> I greatly appreciate the NWS's services, and would encourage them to make as much freely public as sensible, and not to simply bow to private interests.
>
> Sincerely,
> Richard Swarting
>
> The referring webpage: <http://weather.gov/>
>"

1467 "Hi,

OK, I'm a week late - But, I'd like to add a comment in support of the free access to weather data. I have developed a small application (<http://nwsmon.sourceforge.net>) that is a consumer of the CAP XML format weather alerts.

Having the alert data available in XML is significantly more reliable than methods used by other applications in the past (principally scraping the data of the HTML pages), it also places less load on your servers (as the XML can be more compact, and there is less need to fetch multiple pages).

As far as I can see if you are generating the data anyway as part of your normal work, you may as well go ahead and make it public ally available in a reasonable format (e.g XML).

Thanks,

David."

1468 "June 1, 2004

Fair Weather
Strategic Planning and Policy Office
NOAA National Weather Service
1325 East-West Highway, Room 11404
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3283

Re: NOAA/NWS Proposed Policy

The City of Indianapolis, Department of Public works (DPW) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the proposed NOAA/NWS Proposed Policy on Partnerships in the Provision of Weather, Water, Climate and Related Environmental Information. The draft policy is well written and appears to adequately address concerns in general. Due to the nature of the general policy statement, specific issues of concern are not addressed. Increased use of technology and related techniques in snow and ice removal has caused the need for accurate surface forecasts. We feel the proposed policy would be enhanced if there would be an emphasis on roadway surface level forecasting.

A recent publication of the National Research Council, ""Where the weather Meets the Road"", provides an excellent overview of this need. It notes that forecasts in the past have not concentrated on the microclimate near the road surface. Accurate pavement forecasts would provide an excellent tool for our winter operations. The

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result would be safer roads, economic savings, decreased delay, decreased accidents, and fewer injuries and deaths. We appreciate your consideration of our comments. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

John P. Burkhardt
Administrator Maintenance Services
Chair, TRB Committee On Winter Maintenance
Department of Public Works"

1469 "April 29, 2004

The Honorable Donald L. Evans
Secretary of Commerce
14th Street and Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Since 1948, the National weather Service (NWS) has had policies recognizing the importance of focusing on core governmental responsibilities and not creating commercial products and services which compete with the Commercial weather Industry.

I am writing to request your assistance in preserving these important principles and the existing NWS policy underpinning those, published in the Federal Register on January 18, 1991 as ""The National Weather Service and the Private Weather Industry: A Public Private Partnership.""

The 1991 policy, although unevenly enforced by the National weather Service, has provided a useful articulation of the respective roles of the NWS and the Commercial weather Industry. In addition, the 1991 policy has provided an avenue for companies to communicate with the National weather Service regarding perceived agency violations of the policy.

Now NOAA and the NWS are proposing to eliminate the policy and replace it with a vague new statement that would no longer provide limits on NWS commercial and business activities and it would open the door for NOAA/NWS with private industry.

In fact in a recent study, the National Academy of Sciences recommended that any new policy define a process for controlling NOAA/NWS products and services that can impinge upon the Commercial weather Industry. This new policy states no such process.

Additionally:

\$ Explicit language in the 1991 policy that says ""the National weather Service will not compete with the private sector..."" is to be repealed by this proposed policy.

\$ The mission of the National weather Service as defined in the 1991 policy is dropped and no new mission is stated.

\$ The recognition in the 1991 policy that the private weather industry is ideally suited to put the National weather Service information database into a form and detail that can be utilized by specific users is also to be deleted.

\$ The complaint and appeal process that currently exists within the agency is eradicated.

Taken together, these proposed policy changes suggest that NOAA and the NWS will no
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longer be constrained to avoid competition with the private sector and could embark upon the creation of commercial products and ""business ventures."" It opens the door for these federal agencies to duplicate commercial services and stifle industry growth. The present path of National Weather Service policy introduces great risk to the private sector and may quickly affect job growth and corporate stability in the Commercial Weather Industry. Members of the industry are rightfully very concerned.

I believe it is imperative that the public/private line of demarcation continue to be clearly stated and that NOAA and the NWS make a vigorous effort to ensure that they, their officers, and employees, focus on important core missions as a government agency: that is maintaining a modern and effective meteorological infrastructure, collecting comprehensive observational data, and issuing warnings and forecasts of severe weather that adversely affect life and property. Scarce budget dollars and governmental energy should not be diverted to weather related services outside of this core mission and that already exist or can be serviced by the Commercial Weather Industry.

Private sector companies using NOAA/NWS basic data produce value added products and services to segments of the population that have specialized needs. The industry currently provides over ninety percent of the weather information that the public receives through newspapers, radio, television, and the internet.

The success of the Commercial weather Industry will be imperiled by increased risk and uncertainty where the federal government also provides, or is free to provide, commercial products and services. This is not a function of those agencies and runs counter to the mission of the Department of Commerce to support and encourage the growth of private industry.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in preserving, and looking for ways to strengthen, the 1991 policy.

Sincerely,

Steven A. Root, CCM
President & CEO
WeatherBank, Inc.

President, Commercial Weather Services Association"

1470 "June 2004

To: National Weather Service

Northtree Fire International is a Private Wildland Fire Company offering a wide range of emergency response resources including Incident Meteorologists. Our Incident Meteorologists provide both fire weather forecasting and predictive services for the federal and state agencies. After reviewing both the current policy on National Weather Service partnerships with the private sector, the proposed changes and the book, Fair Weather, offer the following:

Northtree Fire strongly endorses the recommendations of the National Research Council of the National Academies on page 96 of the Fair weather publication. A combination of Options 2, 5 and 6 will best foster the NW S and private sector partnership.

To do otherwise, which creates strict role statements and standards, will accomplish two things which are counterproductive:

1. Result in the NWS making a ""de facto"" business decision of constantly changing policy to stay current with technology changes and public expectations, rather than working in a collaborative fashion with the private sector and customers

to provide solutions and serve the customer.

2. Continue with the proliferation of the "we vs. them" climate that currently exists which has created a serious trust issue with the NWS and the customers.

Northtree Fire strongly endorses the findings in the Fair weather publication in Appendix B, Defining the Policy Problem (page 119), which clearly articulates the problem and succinctly addressed the climate with both the NWS and the private sector with the following finding and quote regarding the 1991 policy, "No guidance is provided on how the policy would be implemented, including mechanisms for dispute resolution, oversight, sanctions, and accountability to the policy. Not surprisingly, little evidence can be found to suggest that either the NWS or the private sector had interest in reconciling the ambiguities resulting from the 1991 policy. Perhaps more accurately, actors in the NWS and the private sector saw in the 1991 statement (The NWS will not compete with the private sector when a service is currently being provided or can be provided by commercial enterprises, unless otherwise directed by applicable law) what they wanted to see and acted accordingly."

Northtree Fire strongly recommends that the NWS, working with the private sector AND the customer, develop policy revisions which provide processes to solve the generic conundrum illustrated in the above example.

Northtree Fire offers an outstanding example of a NWS programmatic issue that the proposed process for resolution can be the "policy model" in the future. The issue is the Fire Weather Forecasting Program. Without expounding on all historical components, the following milestones highlight the conflict:

1950 1986: The NWS and Federal wildland Fire Agencies (Forest Service, BLM, NPS, F&WL and BIA) were enjoying tremendous support from the public, the Congress and Administrations for managing wildland fires and protection of both natural resources and the public. The Federal wildland Agencies worked in a collaborative fashion with NWS to develop the Fire weather program and the customer was pleased with the results.

1987 1995: For many reasons (drought, fuels, past fire suppression, WUI, public expectations) "mega fires" occurred and more importantly communities were threatened or lost, and young men and women died on the fireline. The NWS and the Federal wildland Agencies were forced by budgets, pressure from Congress and Administrations and the public to make substantive program changes. One significant change the NWS made as a result of the modernization process was to change both the total numbers and skill level (core forecasters) of Fire Weather Forecasters and Incident Meteorologists (IMET's) that was never agreed to by the wildland Fire Agencies. Volumes of correspondence, meeting notes and "working committees" have documented that basically the NWS and the wildland Agencies have "agreed to disagree" on the standards, skill level and total numbers of Fire Weather Forecasters and IMET's necessary to safely provide fire weather forecast for wildland firefighting. This disagreement continues today.

1995 to present: The Federal wildland Agencies have hired former NWS employees into Predictive Services positions to provide the level of service perceived by the customer and not provided by the NWS. The NWS has continued with the agency version of Fire Weather Forecasting and IMET's that excludes former NWS employees who still work for the Federal wildland Agencies; and have excluded former NWS employee with fire weather forecasting and IMET skills who now work in the private sector. This situation is a classic example of the example in Appendix B of, "Perhaps more accurately, actors in the NWS and the private sector saw in the 1991 statement what they wanted to see and acted accordingly." What is missing with this statement is the role and expectation of the customer in the debate. Regardless of what is "stated as the party line" for the Agencies at the higher levels, the rank and file firefighter, dispatcher, and on some occasions IMET's, will tell you that the Fire Weather Forecasting Program is broke and there is no process for fixing it other than to continue to disagree.

During the last summer's fire season, Northtree Fire learned that even though the National Weather Service has an existing policy on not competing with private sector when a service is currently provided or can be provided, we were told by NWS personnel in Boise Idaho that ""our services were not needed,"" furthermore ""fire weather forecasting is an inherently governmental function and the private sector can not do this job.""

Additionally, the mobilization of Incident Meteorologist occurs in a ""closed system"" from the perspective that the Federal wildland Agencies go directly to the National Weather Service for fire weather forecasting and the National Weather Service will always fill those requests internally. Northtree Fire is certain that some Incident Management Teams were forced to share Incident Meteorologist because of critical shortages of the position last fire season, in part because the National Weather Service refused to consider external or the private sector as currently directed by NWS policy. The Incident Meteorologists from Northtree Fire are former NWS employees and are trained by NWS standards. Furthermore, the NWS Fire Weather Program leaders will not use former NWS employees who now work for the Federal wildland Agencies because the perception is that these employees are no longer qualified by NWS standards.

Additionally, a cost analysis comparing like services from the NWS compared to Northtree Fire revealed a substantial cost saving whether measured daily or over the life of a large wildland fire. Once confronted by the cost savings examples, the NWS changed past fiscal policies for charge backs to the wildland agencies, and the wildland agencies have been under the impression that the service was essentially free until 2003. This is another example of no resolution, only spending energy competing rather than address the issues.

Northtree Fire offers another compelling reason for the NWS to examine and resolve the issues with the fire weather forecasting program, and that being the trust level from the customer degraded to the point that the NWS is now being named as a potential causal factor in the deaths of firefighters. Fire weather forecasts were a focal point in the South Canyon Fatality Investigation Report where 14 people died and have been mentioned in others since 1994. The Cerro Grande Escaped Fire Investigation Report included a controversial aspect with fire the weather the forecast, and most recently the Cramer Fatality Report, specifically the Management Evaluation Report, Addendum, Items 2 and 3 states, ""Because fire personnel on the forest believe that spot weather forecasts from the NWS Pocatello Office are inaccurate and unreliable, they tend to rely on the general fire weather forecasts and the previous days' weather and fire behavior for their information on the fire line. The SCNF fire staff should periodically evaluate the level and qualification of service they receive from the Pocatello Office and work more closely with that office to endure that the annual fire weather operating plan is complete, current and adequate for the forest's needs."" Item 3 refers to the need of taking frequent fireline weather observations which occurred from the Long Tom Lookout, but those readings did not reflect what was going on at the fire ground, thus a deadly miscalculation. Please understand that people on the fireline did not trust the information from the NWS so they chose to use erroneous weather information from a non representative location which at least vicariously contributed to the decisions that took the lives of two firefighters.

The solution to this is a problem solving model which thru participation of the key stakeholders (NWS, private sector and the wildland Fire Agencies) addresses the needs, standards, qualifications and needed numbers of IMET's fire weather forecasting standards, spot forecasting, predictive services and the remaining components of the Fire Weather Forecasting Program. Northtree Fire volunteers to participate/facilitate in this effort with both NWS and the Federal wildland Agencies. Some immediate steps must be taken:

1. NWS, Private Sector and wildland Fire Agencies convene a small group to establish IMET standards and Fire Weather Forecasting standards which focus on the customer's needs and not driven by what either the NWS or private sector can

provide.

2. Utilize all available IMET's to meet the customer's needs for fire weather support (The stark truth is those needs are not being met now with NWS IMET's and the NWS is facing substantial exposure from a risk management perspective).
3. Utilize a neutral group such as the America Meteorological Society to resolve conflicting issues and those become binding decisions, which become policy for the NWS and business practices for private sector.

This model can be used for future policy issues, whereby the process determines the policy and collaboration with the stakeholders is assured. This process is best referred to as ""In Search of Common Ground.""

At a recent speech concerning the proposed policy changes, John Jones Deputy Director, National Weather Service (NWS) quoted Jack Kelly regarding the role of private sector with the NWS and about our common enterprise, ""we can't do it without you, and you can't do it without us."" These are great words but in practicality are not applied in the area of fire weather forecasting.

Northtree Fire recognizes and understands this to be a continuous issue for both the Federal Government and the private sector. The National Weather Service has our gratitude for ""asking the questions"" about the current policy. The National Weather Service can truly serve the American public by making the fundamental policy changes which include the private sector as a full partner in this enterprise and involving the customer more in a collaborative process which is facilitated by a neutral 3rd party such as AMS.

Following another strategy frankly places the National Weather Service in a leadership role with a management philosophy which is consistent with ""the past being more compelling than success."" The American Public deserves much better from the government, now is the opportunity to retrieve the lost trust.

Sincerely,

Ed Waggoner
Chief of Operations
Northtree Fire International"

1471 "April 19, 2004

Fair Weather
Strategic Planning and Policy Office
NOAA National Weather Service
1325 Fast West Highway, Room 11404
Silver Spring, MD 20910 3283

Dear Sirs,

I am writing with comments towards the ""Fair weather"" policy that is being studied by the National Weather Service. I have read the book ""Fair weather"", and have been the owner of a small 2 person private meteorological company since 1994, as well as being a co owner of a weather related website.

I must strongly object to the direction that the National Weather Service is headed, and will use two examples of how the expansion of services is detrimental to the private sector. This encroachment into private sector work has been accelerated by the wide distribution of data on the internet and the widespread use of the internet by both the public and business sectors.

Prior to the National Weather Services redesign of individual NWS office websites, a partner and I began development of an internet weather website. This site was to include individual weather station data, from metar and asos weather reporting

stations, to raws data from the Forest Service, to local mesonets, and lastly private weather stations. The scope of the weather station data was to be extensive, with history as well as current observations available. Additionally, NWS forecast zone data, all NWS statements/watches/warning information, forecast discussions, severe reports, and most all types of text data available via Emwin and weather wire were included. Satellite and radar data was included, as well as profiler data. The site was designed to be far more extensive than anything available online at the time (design began 6 7 years ago) other than perhaps the weather channel's website, which was (and still is) cluttered and filled with commercial advertisements.

This site was to be supported by sponsorship banners located on the hourly data pages (small and unobtrusive), fees charged for historical data reports, new private station equipment fees as well as custom forecasts on sites such as ski resorts and hotels, and fees for information such as historical severe weather reports (such as hail reports) provided to roofers, insurance companies, and other businesses needing damage information.

Development costs for this project exceeded \$120,000, which of course were backed by me and my partner. Unfortunately, at the time the site was being completed and rolled out, the NWS decided to redesign all local office websites, making far more data available on the internet, and expanding the scope of internet information provided. This ""upgrade"" by the NWS destroyed our ability to market the site utilizing the business model we had developed, and represented a substantial expansion of the NWS into an area that the private sector was already providing. One of the key components of ""Fair weather"", and a policy often repeated by the NWS, is that established services provided by the private sector should not be encroached upon by the NWS. This certainly was not followed in this case. Additionally, the ability to provide value added reports to customers such as roofing companies and insurance companies has all but been destroyed by the widespread dissemination of data and maps by the Storm Prediction Center's website. This has cost the private sector, and specifically my company, considerable revenue. How the historical and mapping of storm data fits into the Storm Prediction Center's role in forecast and providing advance warning of severe weather events (the severe weather role of NWS unanimously supported as proper and important by all virtually all private sector companies including mine) is beyond me. Yet these severe weather reports represent another incursion into work that was previously provided by the private sector.

Both of the above examples regarding the internet have cost my company significant revenue, and lost opportunities, and burdened myself and my partner with extensive debt because of NWS expansionism.

A second example I would like to point out is the April 1, 2004 policy change that allows the NWS to provide spot weather forecasts to a government agency of any type. The NWS with conjunction with the Forest Service has been providing spot weather forecasts in support of wildland fires to federal agencies for many years. This policy is being expanded, with the wording ""NWS will commit to providing spot forecasts to ""public safety officials"" when they deem the spot forecast ""essential to public safety. ""This expansion into providing spot weather to all levels of government, state, county, city, and local, will now allow the NWS to encroach to the core of my private business. Skyview weather supports many city and counties, as well as fire departments and school districts, without which we would NOT survive. Beyond the spot fire weather being provided to an expanded base, the recent policy change seems to support all types of spot weather being delivered to government, hazmat, winds, snow, etc, based upon the wording essential to public safety. This type of expansion into private sector work must not continue, and in fact, must be rolled back, or the very survival of many small, private sector companies will be in the balance. Please understand, my company will not survive with the loss of local government, and fire department accounts.

I could provide additional examples of the expansion of the NWS into private sector activities, including my own, but I feel that the two above examples show my point. Each time the NWS expands into areas already served by the private sector, the private sector is further weakened. My own company, which in previous years could

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support myself, plus a full time employee and a part time employee during the summer, now can only support myself and only a bare minimum of part time help. Very little private sector work remains, and in an already weak economy with prices at best stagnant or falling for many business services (with costs rapidly rising in regard to health care and energy, to name just two), it is time that the policy makers at the NWS as well as the Congress of the United States decide just what role, if any, private companies will be given, and what relief should be given to private companies for the expanded role that NWS now occupies.

Your help in this matter is both appreciated and expected. If you would like to discuss any portions of this with me, I can be reached at 303.688.9175.

Sincerely,

Timothy J Tonge
President Skyview Weather
Partner AnythingWeather.com through Dec 31, 2002.

Cc:

Senator Wayne Allard
Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell
Congressman Tom Tancredo
John J Kelly Deputy Undersecretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere
David L Johnson Director NWS Silver Spring, MD
Larry Mooney NWS MIC Boulder, CO
William F. Fortune NWS MIC Pueblo, CO
Kevin Stewart Urban Drainage and Flood Control District National Commercial
Weather Association
Barry Myers AccuWeather
Gregg Potter AnythingWeather.com"

1472 "March 11, 2004

The Honorable Randy Neugebauer
U.S. House of Representatives
1026 Longworth HOB
Washington, D. C. 20515 4319

Dear Congressman Neugebauer:

The Texas Farm Bureau strongly supports free and open access by all citizens to taxpayer funded data, information and assistance. It is our understanding that an initiative known as the "fair weather" proposal is being considered by the National Weather Service (NWS). Supposedly, much of the data regularly provided by the NWS as a public service would now be provided only to "for profit" companies, which would then distribute that information on a fee basis.

NWS has for decades been an important source of information for farmers, and ranchers as well as information services that disseminate information to them. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provides good, solid and accurate data, which is delivered to tax payers in a timely fashion for their use.

Farm Bureau policy states: "We support accurate, timely reporting of weather information and the maintenance and adequate funding of current weather analysis and information dissemination systems." We are opposed to critical data being distributed only by private companies on a commercial basis. It is important that both the NWS and NOAA continue to serve the public interest. Our members believe the current weather information distribution system serves the public interest much better than a fee based system.

Moreover, we favor the re establishment of agricultural weather services as part of

USDA. This important advice was lost in a previous privatization effort several years ago.

The Farm Bureau strongly objects to attempts by the private sector seeking congressional intervention to limit the availability of weather information.

Sincerely

Kenneth Dierschke
President

April 2, 2004

General David L. Johnson
Director
National Weather Service
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
1325 East West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear General Johnson:

As the National Weather Service evaluates its public and private partnerships, I encourage you to continue to allow public access to weather information generated by federal government agencies. Maintaining open access to publicly funded weather information is essential for farmers and others in my state.

Texas Farm Bureau has raised concerns regarding the future public availability of weather information from the National Weather Service. I would appreciate it if you could respond to them and let the Farm Bureau know more about the Fair Weather proposal and whether it will affect their members' use of National Weather Service information.

Thank you for your attention to the concern expressed by Texas Farm Bureau. I certainly agree with them that the National Weather Service continue to serve the public by providing timely and accurate weather information.

Sincerely,

Randy Neugebauer"

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3403

July 23, 2004

Director David L. Johnson
U.S. Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Weather Service
1325 East West Highway
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Vice Admiral Conrad Lautenbacher, Jr.
NOAA Administrator
U.S. Department of Commerce
14th Street & Constitution Avenue, NW
Room 6217
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Director Johnson and Vice Admiral Lautenbacher:

I am writing in opposition to proposed rule changes to the 1991 "Policy Statement on the Role of the Private Weather Industry and the National Weather Service."

As you know, this policy recognizes the important contribution of the commercial weather industry and private broadcast meteorologists, newspapers, and news agencies. The policy also ensures that the NWS does not compete with the private sector when commercial enterprises provide or are able to provide a given service. Furthermore, the policy mandates that all NWS officials and employees comply with this policy.

The recent proposed changes to the 1991 policy will have a detrimental impact on the future existence and growth of the commercial weather industry in North Dakota and across the country for a number of reasons. First, the new policy does not provide a process recommended by the National Research Council (NRC) for making decisions on products, technologies and services. Second, language to ensure non-competition between the NWS and the private sector will be repealed under the new proposal. Third, the proposed changes will eliminate the complaint and appeal process established under the 1991 policy.

I understand the importance of making government agencies more competitive with the private sector in order to foster innovation and efficiency. However, the proposed changes to the 1991 policy would introduce great risk to the private sector, and would negatively affect job growth and corporate stability in the commercial weather industry.

I understand that your official approval is necessary to see that the proposed changes are implemented. Again, I strongly urge you to reconsider proposed changes to the 1991 policy.

Sincerely,



KENT CONRAD
United States Senate

KC:waws