

# Heavy Rainfall & River Ice Jam Flooding Risk January 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014

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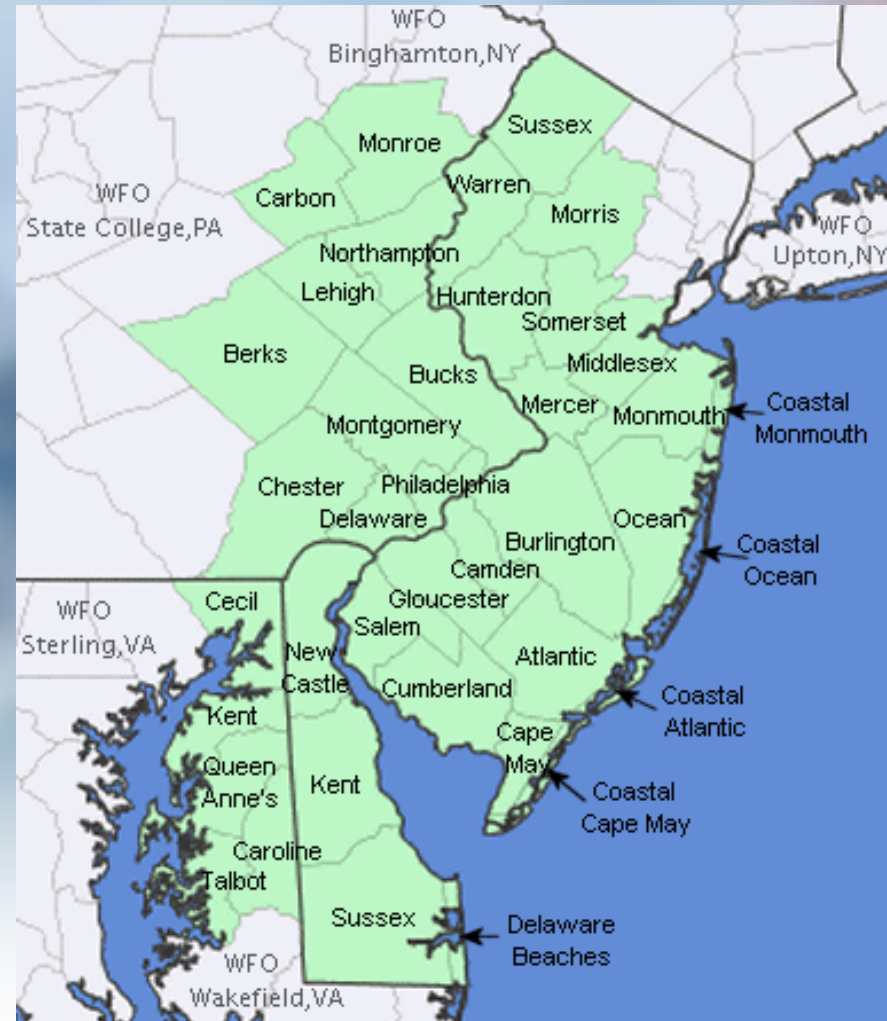
<http://www.erh.noaa.gov/phi/>



National Weather Service  
Philadelphia/Mt. Holly

# Purpose of Briefing

- Briefing #1 (and only) for event
- Promote situational awareness for emergency management community & partners
- Provide guidance for planning efforts
- Briefing applies to Mount Holly service area – shaded in green on map



# Executive Summary

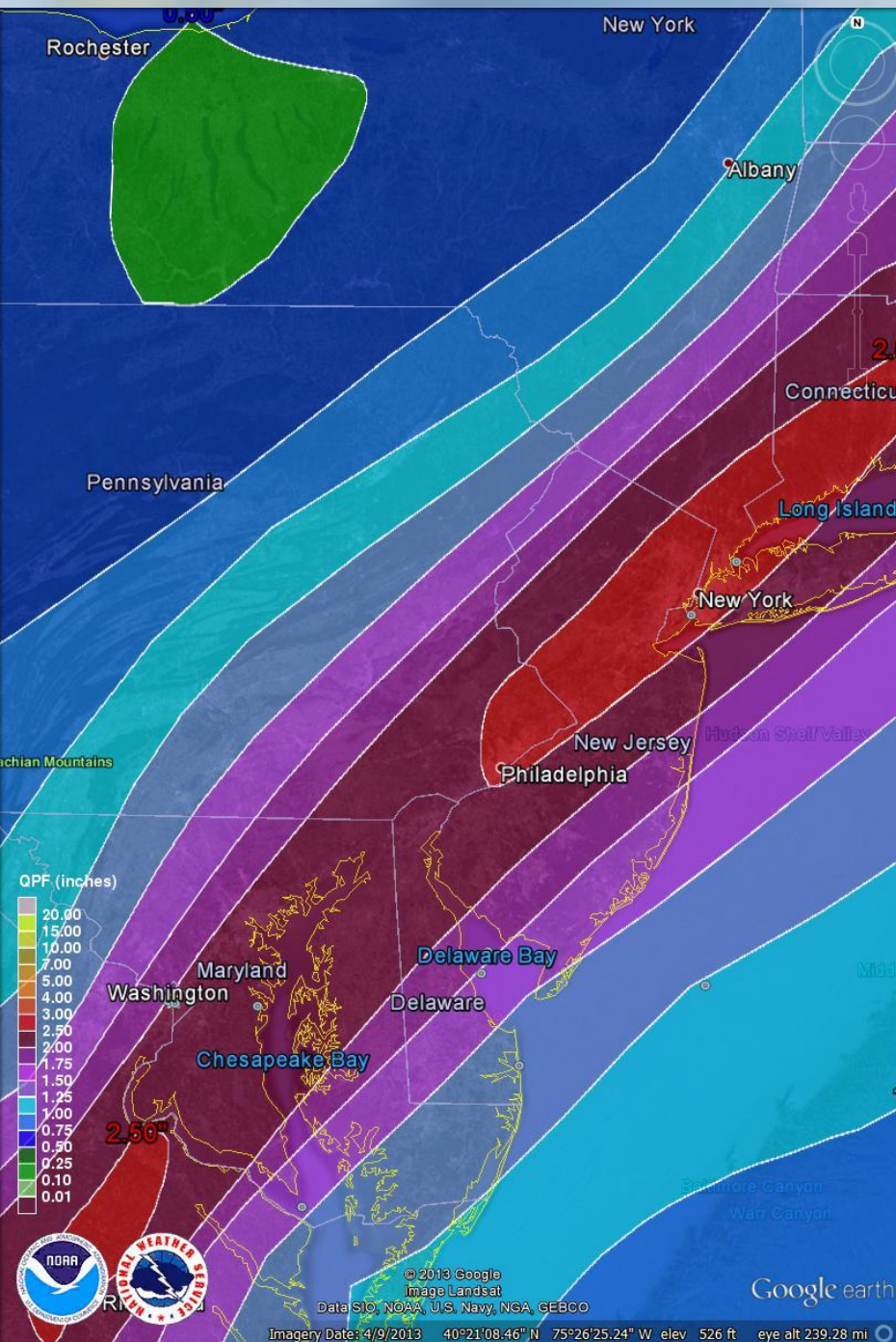
- A storm system forecast to affect the area this weekend will bring warmer temperatures, heavy rainfall, and the potential for **significant river flooding due to the combination of heavy rainfall and ice clogged rivers**. Strong damaging wind gusts are also a risk.
- Rainfall amounts over 2 inches are possible with this storm system. Local flooding due to heavy rainfall and frozen ground conditions is likely.
- Significant river flooding is likely due to the combination of runoff from the heavy rainfall on frozen ground and the ice clogged conditions of most rivers. **Moderate to major river flooding is possible where ice jams form, but it is impossible to predict in advance where these may occur.**
- Residents along all rivers and streams are encouraged to monitor river forecasts closely & be prepared to react quickly if ice jam flooding should develop.
- Some of the storms this weekend may bring strong damaging winds gusts to southern portions of the area, as well as a rumble or two of thunder.
- Unless there is a major change in the threat, no additional briefing packages are scheduled for this event.
- You need to be monitoring our website this weekend for the latest information.
  - <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/phi/>





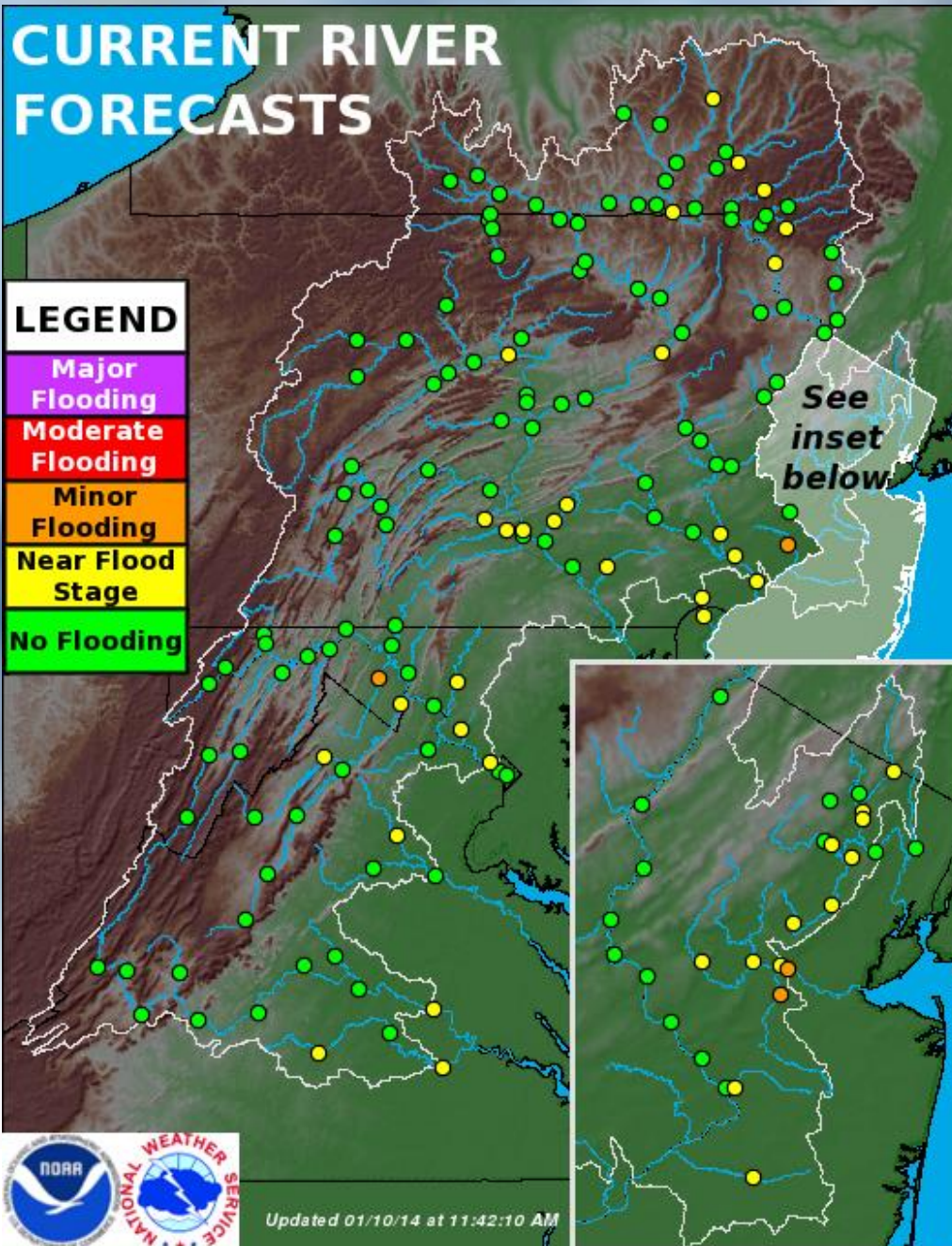
# Rainfall forecast

- Current rainfall forecast has a broad area expecting 2+ inches of rainfall.
- **The heaviest rainfall will occur Saturday afternoon & evening.** Heavy rainfall over a short period of time will result in localized flooding problems, particularly where the ground will still be frozen and water will be unable to soak into the ground.





# Current River Forecasts



- Here is a summary graphic showing the maximum forecast river stage for various points in the area.
- Orange is minor flooding
- Yellow means approaching flood stage.
- This only takes into account the expected rise from forecast rainfall.
- **This graphic does NOT take into account the Ice Jam flooding threat**

# If you only read one slide – **READ THIS ONE!**

- Because rivers are ice-clogged, ice jam flooding is a high risk.
- **Rivers could rapidly rise to moderate or major flooding levels behind an ice jam with little or no warning.**
- **Flooding is also possible downstream from ice jams if they break suddenly.**
- **We cannot forecast the location or timing of ice jam development.**
- If you live near any of the rivers in the region (Passaic, Raritan, Delaware, Schuylkill, Lehigh), you need to be prepared for the possibility of serious ice jam flooding.



# How to monitor river levels

- For the latest observed and forecast river levels:
  - <http://water.weather.gov/ahps2/index.php?wfo=phi>
- For the latest weather forecast and warning information from NWS Mount Holly
  - <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/phi/>





# Other risks

- Some of the storms on Saturday will be strong and a few could approach severe levels. The main threat is strong damaging winds. The higher risk is as you go south in our area.





# Questions?

- For the latest information, visit our website at:
  - <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/phi>
- Our latest briefing package is available from our website at:
- [http://www.erh.noaa.gov/phi/briefing/packages/current\\_briefing.pdf](http://www.erh.noaa.gov/phi/briefing/packages/current_briefing.pdf)
- If you wish to be notified when a briefing package is issued, you can follow us on social media where we post the notice.
- You can ‘friend’ us on Facebook at: US National Weather Service Philadelphia/Mount Holly
- You can follow us on Twitter @NWS\_MountHolly
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