

Mary Erickson - NOAA Federal

From: Mary Erickson - NOAA Federal
Sent: Friday, September 6, 2019 12:36 PM
To: Julie Roberts; Benjamin Friedman - NOAA Federal
Cc: Dr. Louis Uccellini; Stuart Levenbach - NOAA Federal; george.jungbluth@noaa.gov; Susan Buchanan - NOAA Federal
Subject: Fwd: Birmingham, Alabama's National Weather Service Tweet contradicting NOAA'S graphics

Ben, Julie, Stu & Louis,

See communication which came directly to me this morning, and which had a foxtv employee cc'd. I have not responded, and will not unless you request it.

Best,
Mary

Sent from my iPhone
Mary Erickson
NOAA DAA for Wx Services
(b)(6) (Cell)

Begin forwarded message:

From: Kathleen Ford <(b)(6)>
Date: September 6, 2019 at 11:56:46 AM EDT
To: mary.erickson@noaa.gov
Cc: Paul.Dellegatto@foxtv.com
Subject: Birmingham, Alabama's National Weather Service Tweet contradicting NOAA'S graphics

Dear Ms. Erickson,

It appears Birmingham National Weather Service's September 1, 2019 tweet "Alabama will NOT see any impacts from #Dorian. We repeat, no impacts from Hurricane #Dorian will be felt across Alabama. The system will remain too far east" contradicted NOAA's graphics at that time which showed a chance that Alabama would experience tropical storm force winds.

Earlier advisories (Advisory 21, for example) showed a significant portion of the State of Alabama in NOAA's "Earliest Reasonable Arrival of Tropical Storm Force Winds" graphic, which probably factored into the Alabama Governor's activation of the Alabama National Guard on August 30, 2019 where it described in its tweet August 30, 2019 at 10:11 AM "#HurricaneDorian is projected to reach southern Alabama by the early part of the week. We are watching closely and #ready to act. Are you?"

National Hurricane Center Advisories #32 to #39 from Sept 1, 2019 at 5:00pm EST to September 2, 2019 at 5:00 pm EST, posted on the National Hurricane/ NOAA's website, are accompanied with graphics clearly showing the southeastern part of the State of Alabama in the graphics for the "Earliest Reasonable Arrival time of Tropical-Storm-Force Winds". The 5 day chance was low, nonetheless, it was still a risk.

As a consequence of the Birmingham Weather Service's tweet which conflicted with NOAA's graphics we have witnessed over 5 days of hysterical media stories criticizing President Trump for his statement that Hurricane Dorian could hit Alabama.

After preparing for 4 hurricanes in 6 weeks in 2004, then seeing the utter devastation in Punta Gorda after Hurricane Charlie hit, I understand and appreciate why NOAA and NHC are trying to get the public to focus beyond just the cone and not just on the line in the cone. I believe that is why NOAA's cone graphic states at the top "The cone contains the probable path of the storm center but does not show the size of the storm. Hazardous conditions can occur outside of the cone." I also believe that is why President Trump's advisors advised him to focus beyond the cone to the larger areas described in NOAA's other graphics.

We are still in the middle of Hurricane season and Birmingham has created a real problem, in my opinion, by undermining the President as he tries to prepare the potentially impacted public for future storms. Like it or not, President Trump has a much larger media following than the main stream media which has been lying to the public for the last three years about President Trump colluding with the Russians.

Since NOAA's graphics showed part of Alabama still in the wind graphics, Birmingham Weather Service #alws' September 1 tweet seemed politically motivated. Moreover, ALWX missed an opportunity to educate the public about over-reliance on the hurricane cone, the uncertainty of the path and the potential for harm outside the "cone". This needs to be publically addressed from the top of your organization, in my opinion. Weather tweets should not be politically motivated and ALWX's tweets seemed to me to be just that.

Sincerely,

--

Kathleen Sweeney Ford

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
(b)(6)