



PACIFIC REGION TECHNICAL NOTES

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SPECIAL FORECASTS FOR B.C. DEPT. OF HIGHWAYS PRINCE GEORGE DISTRICT

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INTRODUCTION

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SNOW SEASON IN THE FALL OF 1976 THE MAINTENANCE SUPT. FOR THE PRINCE GEORGE HIGHWAYS DISTRICT STARTED PHONING OUR OFFICE ALMOST DAILY FOR A WEATHER BRIEFING. AFTER SEVERAL DAYS OF VERY TIME-CONSUMING BRIEFINGS THE STAFF BROUGHT TO MY ATTENTION THAT THEY WERE IN A QUANDRY AS TO WHAT REALLY WAS REQUIRED OR WANTED AND HOW IT WAS USED. A MEETING WAS HELD WITH THE SUPT. AND TWO OF HIS FOREMEN TO DETERMINE THEIR REQUIREMENTS AND ALSO THE MOST READILY USABLE FORMAT FOR THEIR BRIEFINGS.

REQUIREMENTS

THEY STATED THAT THE REGULAR PUBLIC FORECAST WAS MUCH TOO GENERAL AND THE TIMING OF OCCURENCE OF SNOWFALL, WINDS, ETC. TOO VAGUE TO BE OF MUCH USE TO THEM. THEY WERE TRYING TO SET UP A MAINTENANCE PROGRAM WHEREBY THEY COULD POSITION MANPOWER AND EQUIPMENT WHERE AND WHEN NEEDED FOR BETTER UTILIZATION. ALSO, ROUTINE EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE WAS TO BE SCHEDULED AROUND THE FORECAST. TO ACHIEVE THIS THEY HAD TO HAVE A BETTER IDEA OF THE TIMING AND AMOUNT OF PRECIP. AND WINDS AS WELL AS WARNING OF ABNORMAL TEMPERATURE VARIATIONS ACROSS THEIR DISTRICT.

SOLUTION

WE FELT WE COULD SUPPLY A FORECAST SPECIFICALLY TAILORED FOR THEIR USE BY USING AVAILABLE DATA - NAMELY FA'S, FP'S, MOUNTAIN FORECAST, QPF, SURFACE PROGS, RAWIN, ETC. THE IDEA WAS TO COME UP WITH A CAREFULLY WORDED FORECAST WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TIMING, EXTENT AND INTENSITY OF THE VARIOUS PARAMETERS. AN OUTLOOK WAS INCLUDED FOR PLANNING EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE. THE WORDING AND LAYOUT WAS TO BE IN A FORMAT THAT COULD BE READILY BROADCAST BY RADIO TO THE VARIOUS HIGHWAY MAINTENANCE CAMPS. (SEE FIGURE 1 FOR EXAMPLE OF WORK SHEET)

THE PROGRAM CONTINUED THROUGH THE WINTER OF 1976/77. (OCT.-MAR.) THE GENERAL FEELING OF THE VARIOUS FOREMEN CONTACTED WAS QUITE FAVOURABLE AND SEVERAL QUOTED FACTS AND FIGURES INDICATING BETTER UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES.

CONCLUSION

WE WERE CONTACTED AGAIN FOR THE SAME SERVICES DURING THE 1977/78 WINTER. ALTHOUGH NO EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO GET ANY FEEDBACK FOR THIS SEASON'S PROGRAM WE FEEL THAT IT MUST HAVE BEEN FAIRLY SUCCESSFULL. WE HAVE BEEN ASKED TO CONTINUE WITH MUCH THE SAME PROGRAM FOR THE SUMMER (MAY-SEPT). IT IS AIMED AT ROAD REPAIRS AND CONSTRUCTION WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON TEMPERATURE AND PRECIP WHICH ARE CRITICAL PAVING AND EARTHMOVING DETERMINANTS.

QUESTION

DO OTHER WEATHER OFFICES HAVE SIMILIAR PROGRAMS? IF SO WE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT THEM. PERHAPS MORE OF THIS TYPE OF THING CAN BE WORTHWHILE.

FIGURE 1

EXAMPLE OF WORKSHEET

DEPT OF HIGHWAYS FORECAST

FOR: _____

WX SYSTEM:

SKY CONDITION AND WX: (IF WARRANTED SEPARATE; PLATEAU, PINE PASS
AND HIGHWAY 16)

PCPN: L=<3CM M=3-8CM H=>8CM

WINDS: LOCALLY

ELSEWHERE

TEMPS: (FOR YXS)

HI TDY

LO TONGT

HI TMRW

ABNORMAL VARIATIONS:

OUTLOOK: (WX SYSTEMS AND OR TEMP TRENDS - 5 DAY)