



Spot Request Instructions:

You can request Spot Forecasts via your local WFO's Spot Forecast webpage. These web pages are located at:

Seattle: <http://spot.nws.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/spot/spotmon?site=sew>

Portland: <http://spot.nws.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/spot/spotmon?site=pqr>

Medford: <http://spot.nws.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/spot/spotmon?site=mfr>

Spokane: <http://spot.nws.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/spot/spotmon?site=otx>

Pendleton: <http://spot.nws.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/spot/spotmon?site=pdf>

Boise: <http://spot.nws.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/spot/spotmon?site=boi>

These pages are easily reached from the red "Spot Request" link on your local office's Fire Weather homepage.

The main Spot Forecast page updates every minute and shows you the location and status of any other Spot Forecasts for today. You can view the other forecasts, as well as request a new Spot Forecast of your own.

To start the process of submitting a Spot Forecast Request, click on the button labeled "Submit a new Spot Request". A web-based form will appear through which you provide information to the NWS. Your information is checked for consistency prior to submitting the form. Once you submit the form, NWS forecasters are alerted that a new request has arrived. Each request has its own webpage where all the information about that request is displayed, including maps, information about the request and, eventually, the forecast. Sensitive information about the request (such as phone numbers, names of contact persons, and the exact location of the incident) is ONLY visible on the computer that made the original request and NWS computers. After submitting a request, check the Spot Forecast webpage frequently to view the status of your request. This page automatically refreshes every minute, so you will see the completed Spot Forecast almost as soon as it is available.

If we find a significant error in your request, we will either call you on the phone, or we will send you a question that will show up on the Spot Forecast webpage. You can answer the question, or make other changes to your request from this webpage, but ONLY from the computer that made the original request.

From the main Spot Forecast page, you have the ability to switch to a similar screen for days other than today. You can use this to send us feedback on earlier forecasts, or to copy the information from a previous request to a new request for today. If you have any questions or problems, please call your local National Weather Service office.

Spot Forecast Monitor:

The main spot forecast monitoring page shows you all of today's spot forecasts on both the map and in the list at the bottom of the page. The page auto-updates every minute, so as new Spot Forecasts are requested or their status changes, you immediately see the changes on the page.

The color-coded dots on the map show the location and status of each Spot Forecast Request. **Green squares** indicate requests that are still pending. **Purple squares** indicate requests where the NWS has a follow-up question. **Red squares** indicate requests where the forecast has been completed. You can either click on the dots on the map, or the list of spot names at the bottom of the page to view the individual webpage for each request.

You can use the arrow buttons next to the date to view spot requests from other days, or you can use the CALENDAR link to move to other days more quickly.

To request a spot forecast, click on the button labeled Submit a new Spot Request, and you will be taken to the Spot Request Form.

Spot Request Form:

Fill in this form with the information needed to request a Spot Forecast. The first time you fill out a Spot Request, almost all the boxes will be empty. For subsequent requests, many of the boxes will be filled in with information that shouldn't change much from one request to another (such as your name and phone number).

The elements highlighted in **red** are required for us to complete your Spot Forecast. While the other items may not be necessary, they are very important to our ability to make an accurate and useful forecast.

The form is broken down into seven sections. Let's look at each section individually, and the parameters you will need to fill in:

Project Name Section:

You need to provide a name for your incident. The name cannot be the same as any other incident for the same day. You should use the buttons to indicate the incident type: Wildfire, WFU, Prescribed Fire, HAZMAT, or SAR. For prescribed fires, you should indicate the ignition time and date using a 24-hour clock. Be sure to designate Pacific Time (PT), or the appropriate time zone. The form defaults to an ignition time about ½ hour in the future.

Requesting Agency Section:

You need to tell us who you are! Provide your agency name, your phone number for both voice and fax (please include the area code) and your name. All this information will be helpful if we need to contact you about problems or questions. You will only need to enter this information the first time you request a spot forecast. For subsequent requests, this section of the form will already be filled in with the same information as your last request.

Location Section:

Provide the precise location of your incident. Latitude/longitude is preferred; legal coordinates are also acceptable. When using the lat/lon method, specify decimal degrees like 45.1486, or use degrees/minutes/seconds like 45 13 34. WGS84 / NAD83 datum should be used.

If you use the legal coordinate method, provide something like: T5N R12E Sec24. If at all possible, please specify the name of the 7 ½ minute USGS quadmap where the incident is located. We will cross-check that against the legal or lat/lon location that you give.

If your incident is a burn, please indicate the elevation (in feet) at the top and bottom of the burn in the Elevation boxes. If the burn is on flat ground, you can enter a value in only one of the boxes. Enter the name of the nearest drainage in the Drainage box. This helps us further locate the burn if the legal or lat/lon location leaves some doubt or ambiguity. Enter the slope aspect, such as NE or S (or possibly FLAT) in the Aspect box. This helps us further locate the burn. Also, please enter the size of the burn (in acres) in the Size box.

Fuel Section:

For a burn, please indicate the type of fuel, either using fuel model numbers, or a description of the fuel such as grass, ponderosa pine, etc. Also, if you can indicate the amount of fuel sheltering, it helps us tremendously in providing accurate eye-level wind forecasts.

For HAZMAT or SAR incidents, please leave the Fuel Section blank.

Observation Section:

In this section, please provide us with local observations near the incident. For each observation we need to know the observation location in relation to the incident (for example, base camp, 1 mile NW or something like that), the elevation (in feet) where the observation is taken, and the time of observation (preferably using a 24 hour clock). As an example, the wind (in miles per hour) can be specified as “N12 Gust 25”. The temperature and wetbulb values (in degrees F) should be entered and the RH (in percent) and Dewpoint (in degrees F) can also be entered if known (they will be calculated from the Temperature/Wetbulb/Elevation if you do not provide them). Finally, any remarks about clouds, weather or other important information should be entered in the final box. If you have more than 4 observations (and we like that!) please put them in the comments section below, or fax them to us.

Forecast Elements Section:

Not all Spot Requests are created equal! In this section we are asking you to tell us which forecast elements you need, or are of particular importance. If you have a grass fire that will be out by later today, we don't want to waste time worrying about the temperature for tomorrow, unless you really need it. Likewise, if the wind direction is particularly important for you, we want to know about it. Pick the parameters that you need for today, tonight and tomorrow. If we think something is particularly noteworthy, we will let you know - even if you didn't request it. If you are submitting a request in the evening for the next day - keep in mind that you are requesting parameters for a later operational period; no need to request a forecast for tonight.

Remarks Section:

If there is something else that you think we need to know, or something you couldn't fit elsewhere on the form, please enter it here. There is virtually no limit to what you can put here.

Hysplit Trajectory Output

HYSPLIT trajectory runs are available based on the NAM and GFS models. The trajectory runs will begin at the request time for wildfires and emergency responses, and at the specified ignition time for prescribed fires. [Hysplit information can be found here.](#)

To utilize this feature, simply add the word Hysplit with your email address into the Remarks section of a Spot Request:

Example: Hysplit to very.windy@web.address

Any e-mail address works. The HYSPLIT trajectory raw data, as well as “.gif” and “.kml” files, will be automatically sent to the specified email address.

Submit the form:

When you are ready to submit the form, just click on the “Submit Request” button at the bottom of the page. Other buttons give you the options of cancelling the request, or clearing the form to start over again.

When you submit the form, quality checks are instantly performed. Some problems make it impossible for your request to be accepted (for example, if you forget to enter the name of your incident). Less critical errors will produce warnings and messages for your information. If an error is found, you will be given the choices to fix the request, cancel the request, or submit the request as is. Once you submit the Spot Request, NWS forecasters are automatically notified through our computer workstations. If you have time, we appreciate a follow-up phone call, just in case something goes wrong on the web and we don't get notified of your request.

Spot Forecast Webpage:

After submitting a Spot Forecast Request, an individualized spot forecast webpage becomes available for that incident. The page automatically refreshes every minute so that you know when the status of your request changes. Sensitive information like your name, phone number, and the exact incident location are ONLY visible to you and the NWS.

If we have questions about your request, we will send you a question about it. If this happens, you will see a **purple box** on the forecast page, with our question. Usually, there is some problem with the request that you can probably fix (use the links at the bottom of the page to change the request) or you can call us.

When your forecast is complete, it will show up on the Spot Forecast webpage automatically, and a box to provide feedback will become available. We hope that you provide feedback about how the forecast worked out, perhaps later in the day or several days down the road. This feedback helps us tremendously in improving our forecasts.

At the bottom of the forecast page are links for actions that you can take. For example, you can go “Back to Spot List” to return to the monitor page. If you are at the same computer that made the original request, you can click on Change Request to change the details of your request, or Delete Request to delete the request.

You can also click on Copy Info to New Spot Request. This is helpful for incidents that last several days. Rather than having to re-enter the data to get a new forecast - you can copy all the location parameters to a new request using this link, saving you time.

On very rare occasions, something will go wrong and you might not be able to use the Spot Forecast webpage (for example, if your computer goes down, or our web server fails). In such cases, please fill out the [paper version of the request form](#) and fax it to us. We will fax back the forecast when it is complete. However, this option should be a last resort. Spot Forecast Requests submitted via the webpage will be completed more quickly.