



Status of Proposed Weather Radar for the Washington Coast (Updated January 20, 2011)

Status Summary: The new NEXRAD radar to serve Washington State's northwest coast is on track to be installed and operational by September 30, 2011.

Background: On May 28, 2009 Senator Maria Cantwell announced that Congress had appropriated \$2 Million to start a project for a new weather radar along the Washington coast. A project plan was developed to buy the radar components, prepare the land, and install the radar. The radar will be a high-power, high-resolution, long-range Doppler radar, upgraded with Dual Polarization. Senator Cantwell announced on June 2, 2010 that the installation of the radar would occur a year earlier than originally planned—by September 2011. This earlier installation is possible because critical Air Force weather radar assets became available to the NWS, allowing for the construction of a standard WSR-88D radar, thus avoiding the lengthy federal procurement process required for a modified commercial radar.

Recent Activities (October -- December 2010):

- On October 1 the NWS assumed control of NEXRAD radar components from a USAF training base to begin preparations for installation.
- Work was initiated to acquire a land site for the radar.
- Firm orders were placed for long-lead time NEXRAD components (tower, radome, antenna, equipment shelters, etc.).
- In December, a NEXRAD Radar Operations Center team traveled to Grays Harbor County and Seattle to begin planning infrastructure upgrades for the radar site and Seattle Weather Forecast Office.
- Soil bore samples were taken in December allowing site design activities to begin

Planned Activities (January 2011 – September 2011)

- Complete lease agreement
- Prepare the land site for the radar
- Prepare site design
- Install the site infrastructure
- Install and test the radar
- Begin operations by September 30, 2011