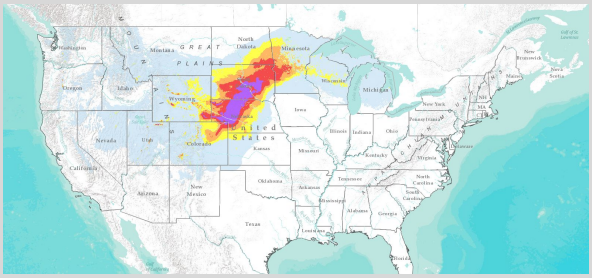

Winter Storm Severity Index – Alaska Fairbanks

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Focus Group Agenda

Introduction to the Project and Introduction of all Participants

Pre-session survey

Scenario

Post-session survey

Intro, discussion of event, briefing format, take questions at the end

AKZ222-250200-/O.NEW.PAFG.WS.A.0030.211225T1800Z-211227T0600Z/

Middle Tanana Valley-

Including Fairbanks, Fort Wainwright, Eielson AFB, Ester, North Pole, Moose Creek, Two Rivers, Fox, Chatanika, Chena Hot Springs, and Sourdough Camp

547 AM AKST Wed Jan 22

...WINTER STORM WATCH IN EFFECT FROM SATURDAY MORNING THROUGH- SUNDAY EVENING...

* WHAT...Heavy snow and freezing rain expected. Travel will be very difficult to impossible. Total snow accumulations of 8 to 12 inches, with localized amounts up to 18 inches, and ice accumulations of a light glaze are possible.

* WHERE...Middle Tanana Valley.

* WHEN...From Saturday morning through Sunday evening.

* ADDITIONAL DETAILS...Significant reductions in visibility are possible.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

A Winter Storm Watch means there is potential for significant snow, sleet or ice accumulations that may impact travel.

Continue to monitor the latest forecasts.

OK - how are you feeling about your risk based on this watch? Do you use winter storm watches in your decision-making? How? Do you share watches, and if so, with whom?

Intro, discussion of event, briefing format, take questions at the end

Special Weather Statement

National Weather Service Fairbanks AK 155 PM AKST Thu Jan 23

...Major Winter Storm Late This Weekend...

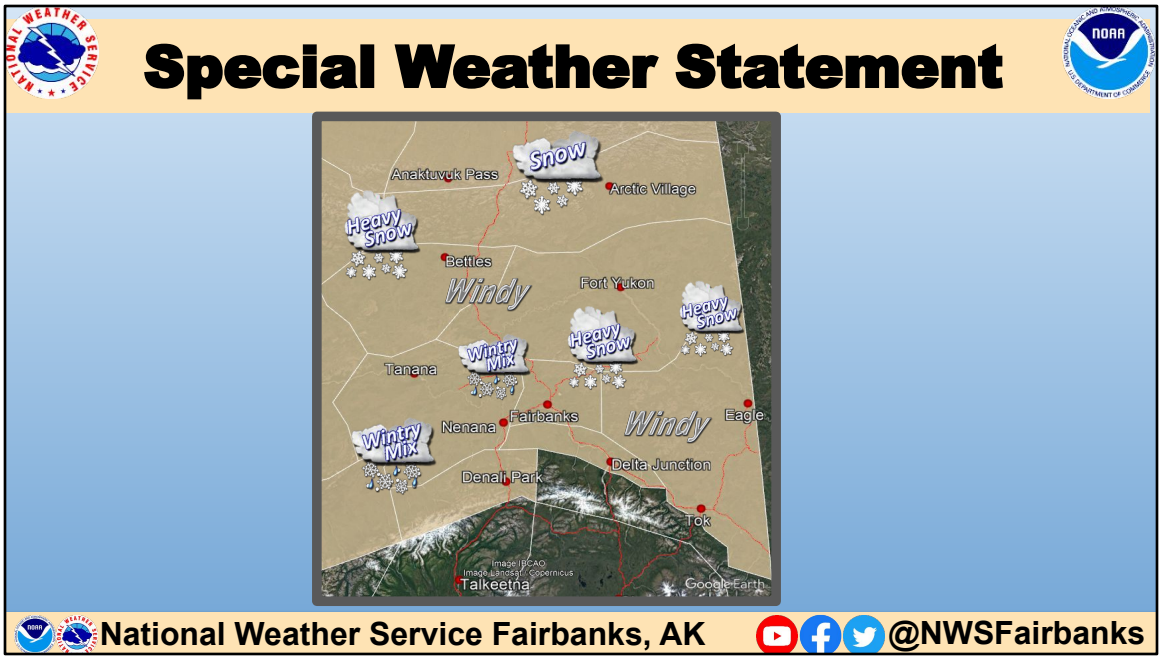
A strong weather front is expected to push east across northern Alaska over the weekend, with significant winter storm impacts beginning on Sunday and lasting into early next week for the Interior.

An initial front will bring light snow across the Interior on Saturday, with 1 to 2 inches of accumulations through Saturday night. Heavy snow will then push in from the west beginning on Sunday morning and last through Sunday night before dissipating.

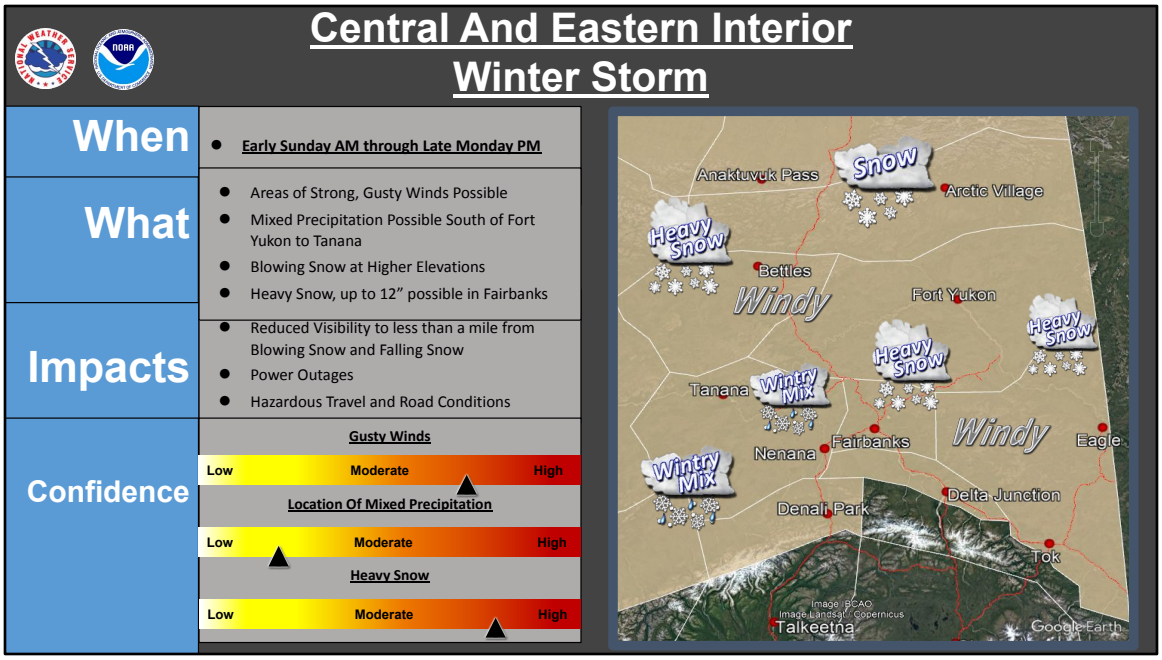
Snow accumulations exceeding one foot for the Fairbanks area is not out of the question at this point. Additionally, there is a chance that snow will transition to rain as far east as Fairbanks Sunday night into Monday, but confidence remains low of this possibility at this time. Expect strong west winds to develop Sunday afternoon, resulting in significant blowing and drifting snow across the Interior going into Monday.

Residents should take proper precautions to ensure safety in preparation for any holiday travel over the weekend. Stay tuned to www.weather.gov/fairbanks as we continue to monitor changes to the outlook throughout the weekend.

What about Special Weather Statements - do you use these? How does this change your sense of your risk? Are you taking any actions right now?



Is this graphic helpful? Have you seen something like this before? How would you use this graphic?

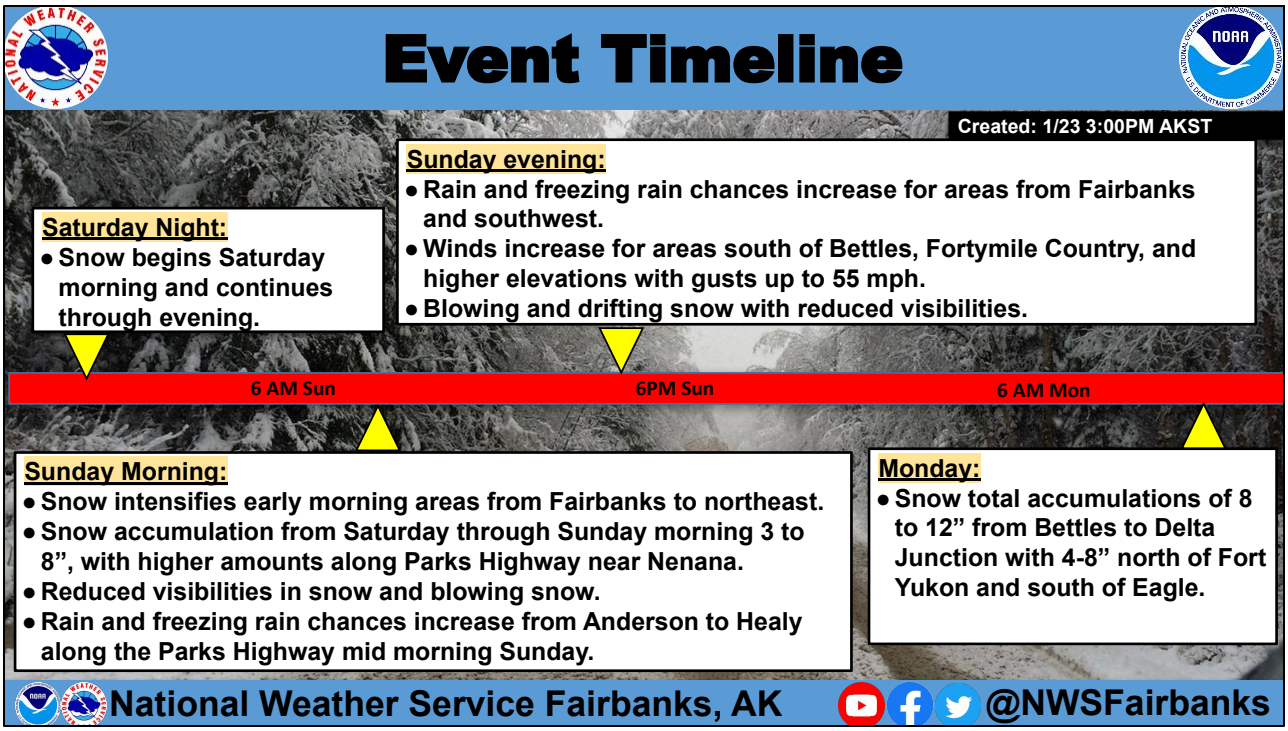


Have you seen this kind of information/graphic before? What are you thinking about your situation after seeing this graphic? What decisions, if any, are you making at this point?
What about the confidence information - how do you use that information? Does that change how you understand your situation?
Look at the impacts: are these the impacts you are concerned about? What else might you be concerned about? How helpful is confidence information as presented?

A wind chill advisory is in effect for the Kuskokwim Delta and for Bristol Bay, north of King Salmon through Saturday afternoon. Expect 15 to 25 mph sustained winds. The strongest winds will occur Friday night, with gusts to 30 mph. Very cold wind chills are expected across the Kuskokwim Delta and Bristol Bay through the weekend.

A wind chill advisory means that cold air and wind will combine to create dangerously low wind chills. Frostbite and hypothermia can occur if precautions are not taken. Use caution while traveling outside. Wear appropriate clothing, a hat, and gloves.

For the latest forecast, please visit www.weather.gov/afc

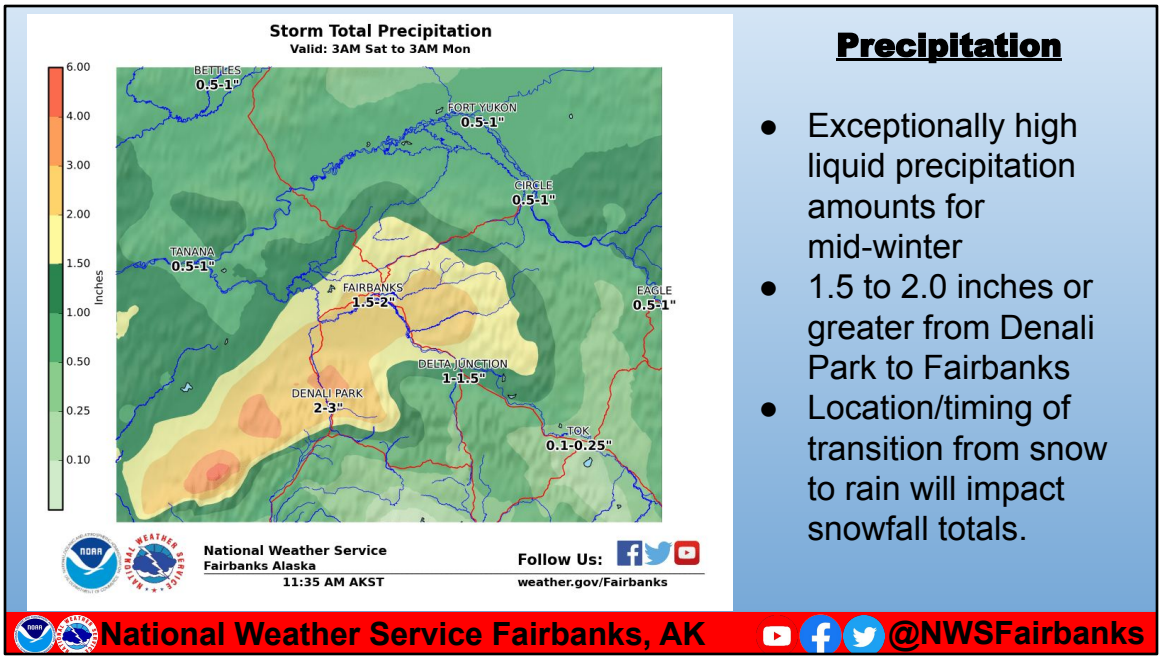


How important is this kind of timing information? Is this format helpful? What else would you be looking for?

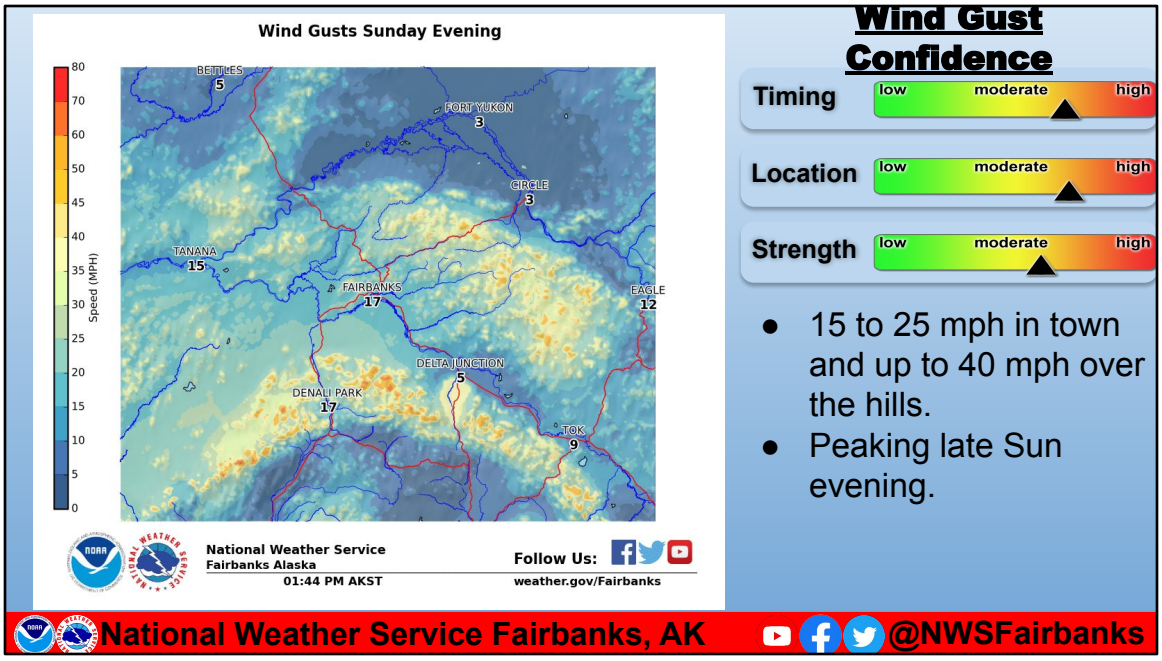
Do you contact your local office? Under what circumstances? Would you be reaching out to them now? Do you follow NWS social media?

Stay tuned for more updates, and if you have any questions please contact us in any of the following ways.

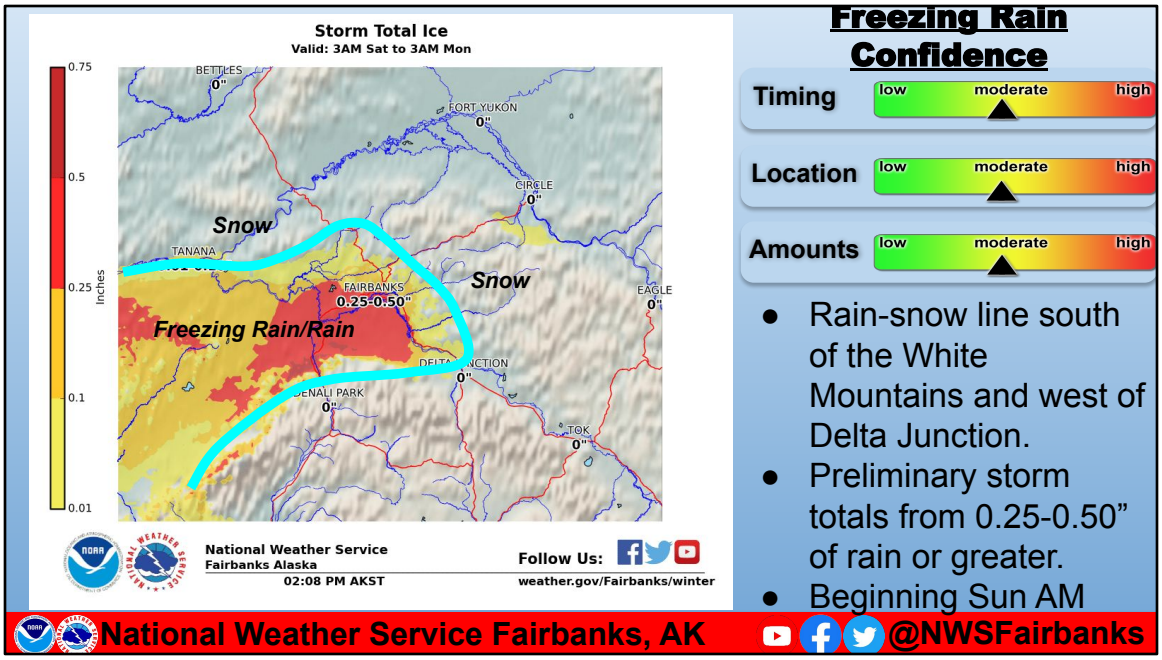
Intro, discussion of event, briefing format, take questions at the end



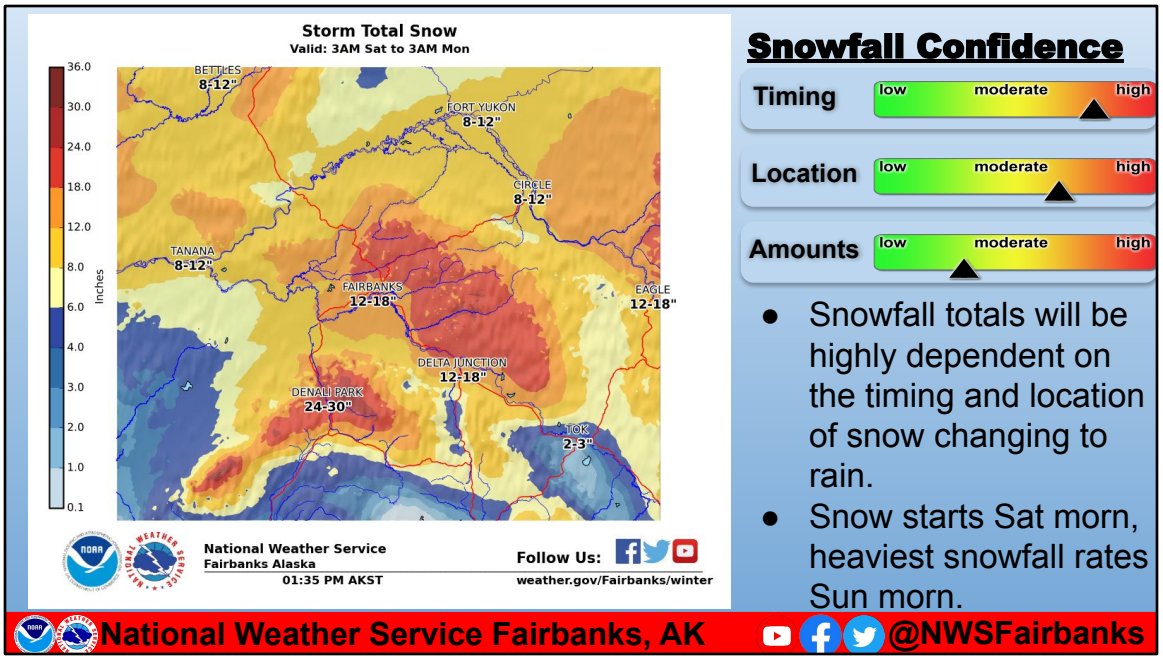
Is this a product you use? What does this tell you? Are you using this information in your decision-making?



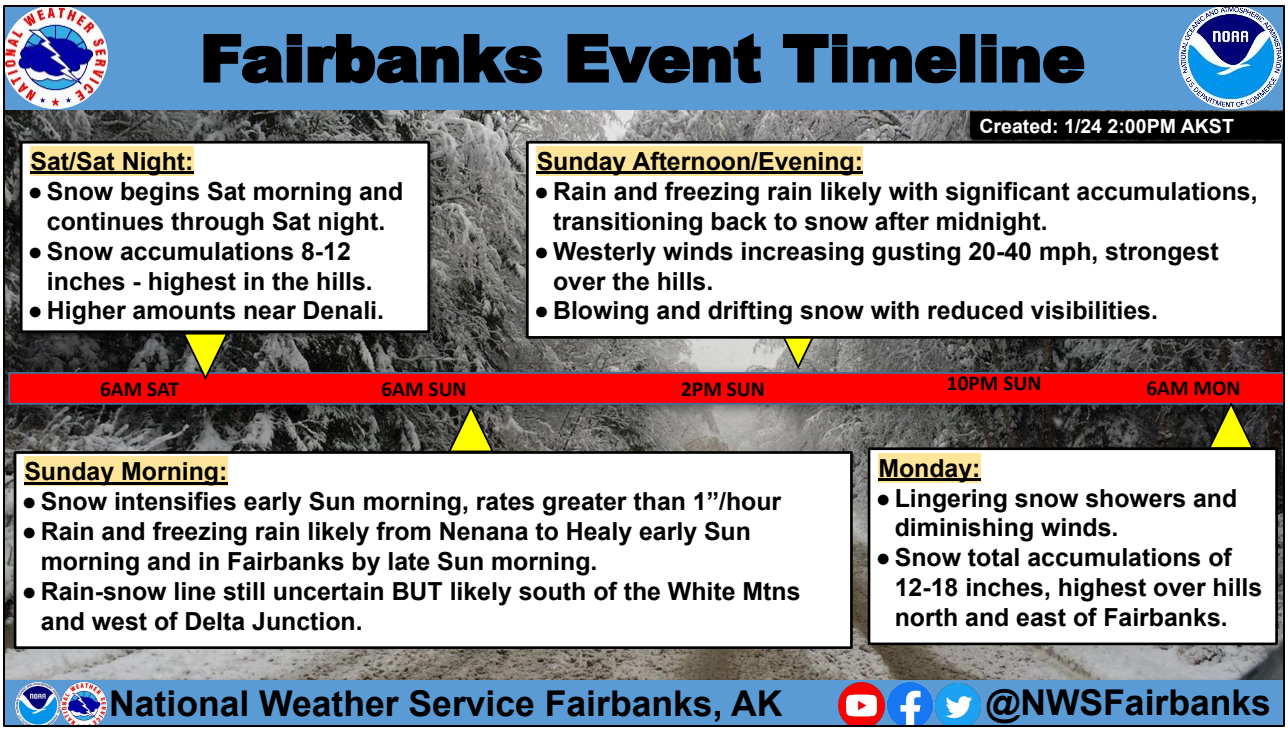
How important is this information in your decision-making? Are you seeking out wind information? How does the confidence scale affect your decision-making?



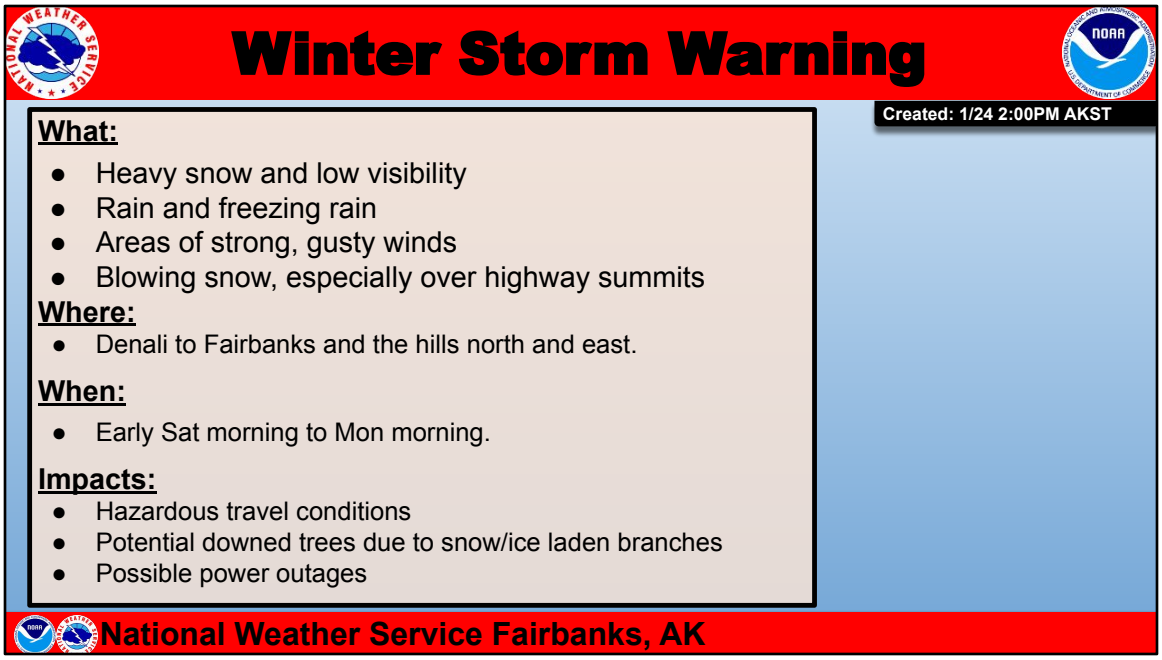
How about ice - how important are ice totals?



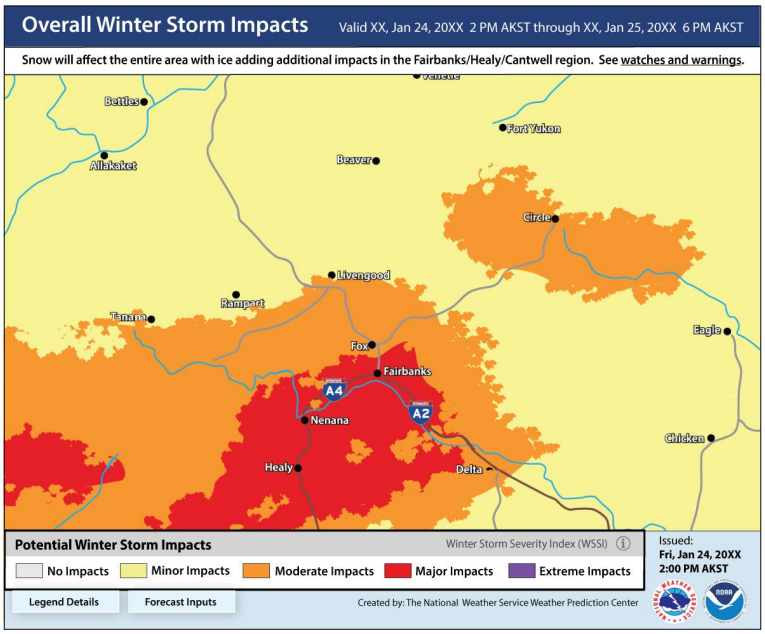
And snow - is this helpful?



Again, timing information. What are you doing right now? Are you sharing this information with anyone? How and with whom?

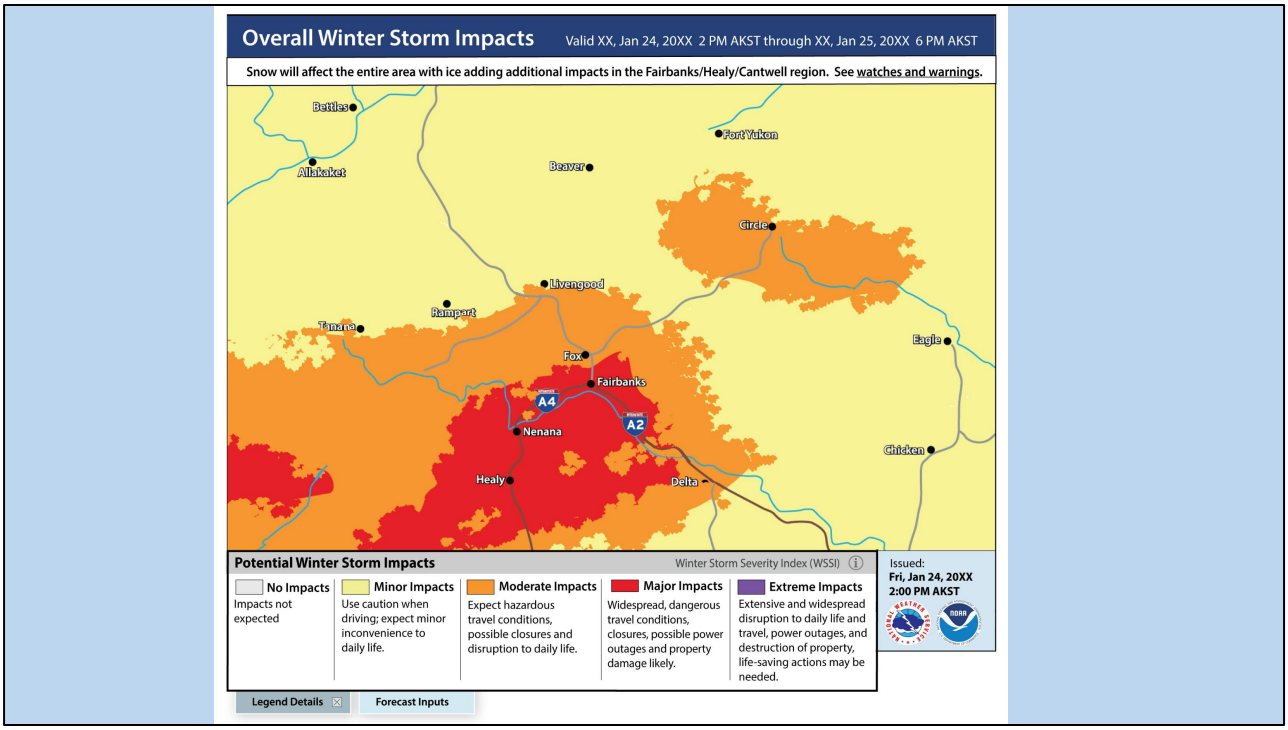


What about storm warnings? How does this change your thinking? Do warnings trigger any actions or decisions?
This is one way of presenting impacts - let's look another.

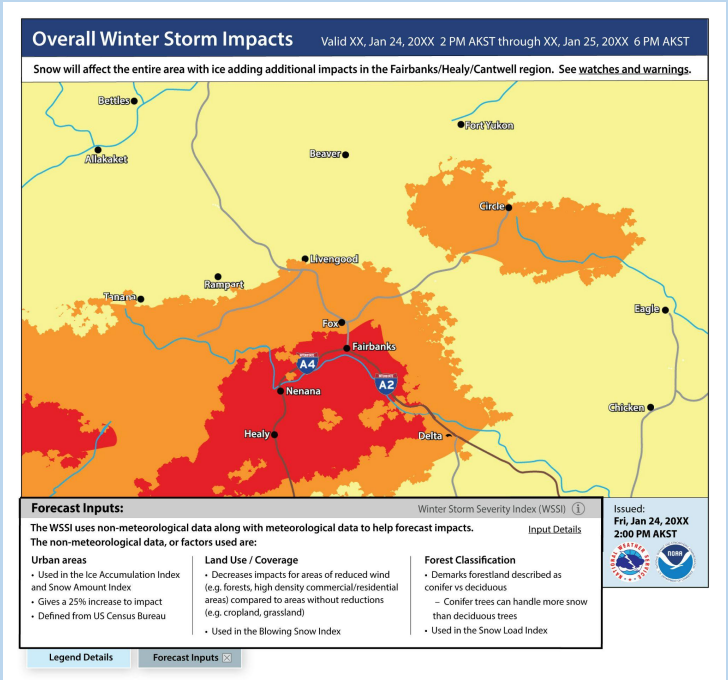


What is this product telling you? How do you interpret the impact levels? What else do you want to know based on this graphic?

Is information like this on impacts helpful or important to you?



This version shows a more complete legend description. How do these impact definitions meet your decision-making needs? Is this product possibly useful to you? How? What else would it need to be useful? Would you share this product with others, and if so, with whom?



Let's study this legend a little more closely. This legend tells you some of the background factors that are used to determine the impact levels (that is, what is considered extreme or major or moderate and why). Is this information helpful to you? What else would you be looking for when using this product? Which impacts are you most concerned about when looking at this product?

Mention forecaster's note and ask if that is helpful. What types of information would you like to see in this element?

Now are you contacting anyone?

Stay tuned for more updates, and if you have any questions please contact us in any of the following ways.

Intro, discussion of event, briefing format, take questions at the end

AKZ222-251500- /O.UPG.PAFG.WS.A.0030.211225T1800Z-211227T0600Z/

/O.EXB.PAFG.WS.W.0028.211225T1800Z-211227T0600Z/

Middle Tanana Valley-Including Fairbanks, Fort Wainwright, Eielson AFB, Ester, North Pole, Moose Creek, Two Rivers, Fox, Chatanika, Chena Hot Springs, and Sourdough Camp

312 AM AKST Sat Jan 25

...WINTER STORM WARNING IN EFFECT FROM 9 AM SATURDAY TO 9 PM AKST SUNDAY...

* WHAT...Heavy snow and freezing rain expected. Plan on difficult travel conditions. Total snow accumulations of 10 to 15 inches, with localized amounts up to 20 inches, and ice accumulations between one quarter and one half inch are expected.

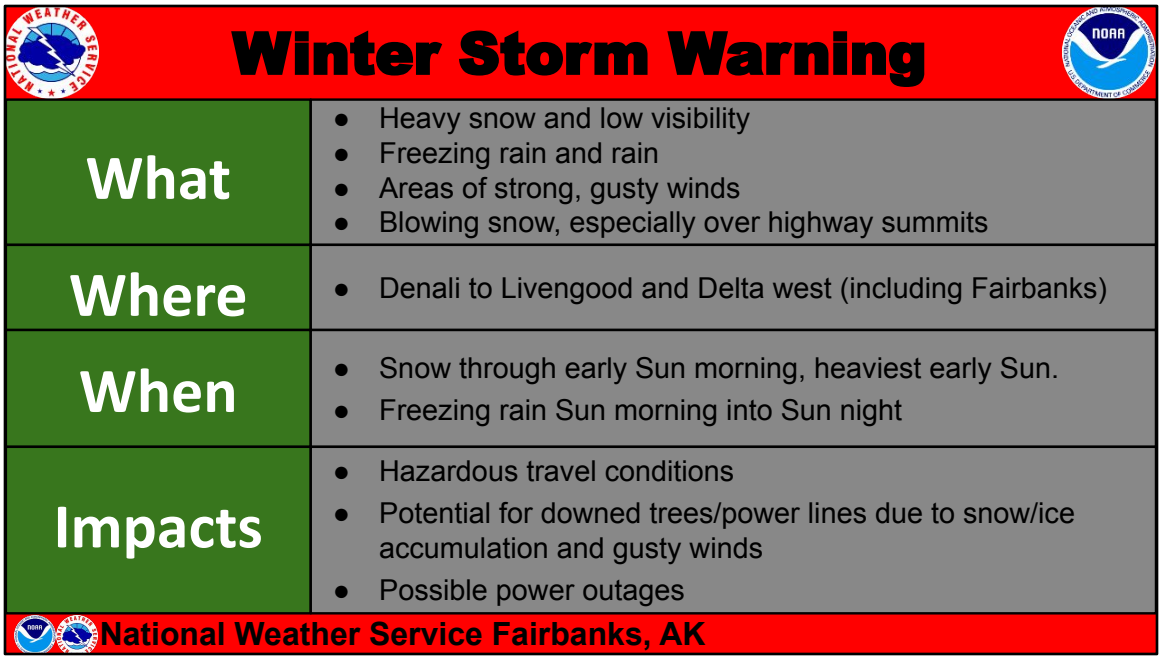
* WHERE...Middle Tanana Valley.

* WHEN...9 AM Saturday to 9 PM Sunday.

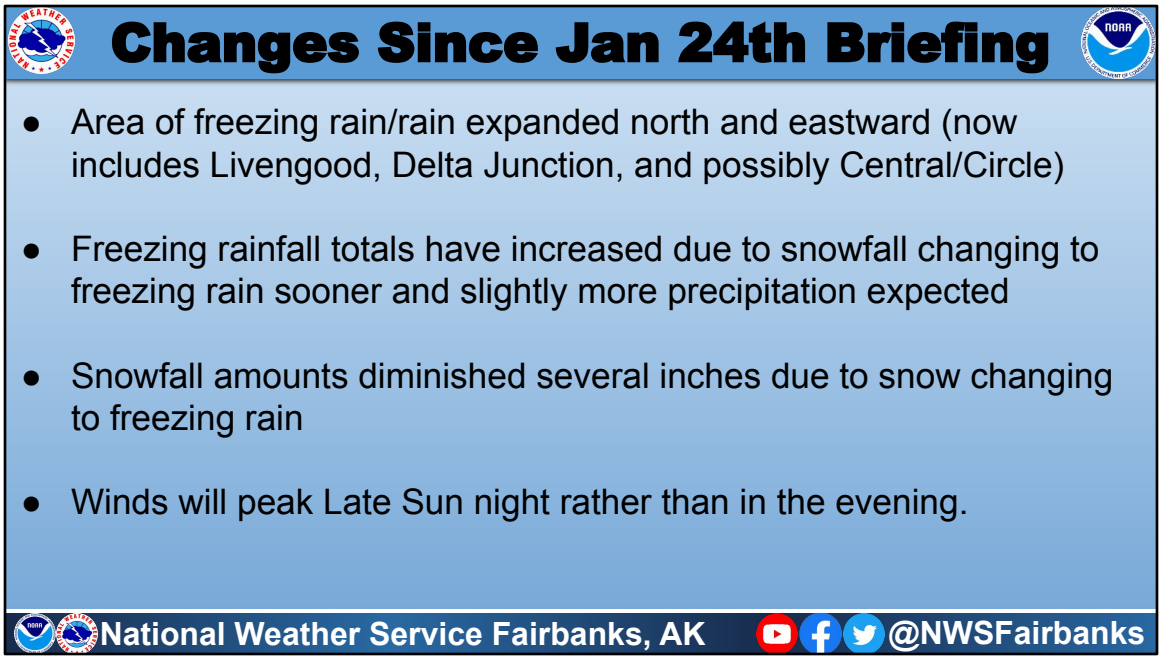
* ADDITIONAL DETAILS...Winds gusting as high as 35 mph will cause areas of blowing and drifting snow will develop Sunday night.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

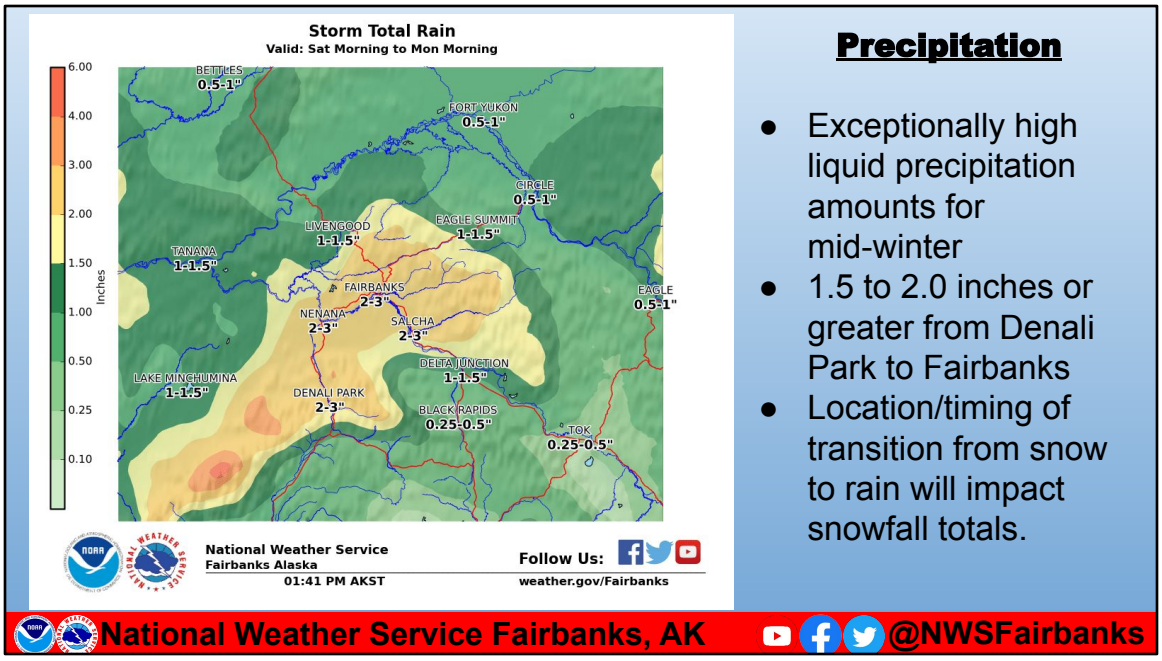
A Winter Storm Warning means significant amounts of snow, sleet and ice are expected. This will make travel very difficult or impossible. The latest road conditions can be obtained by calling 5 1 1.



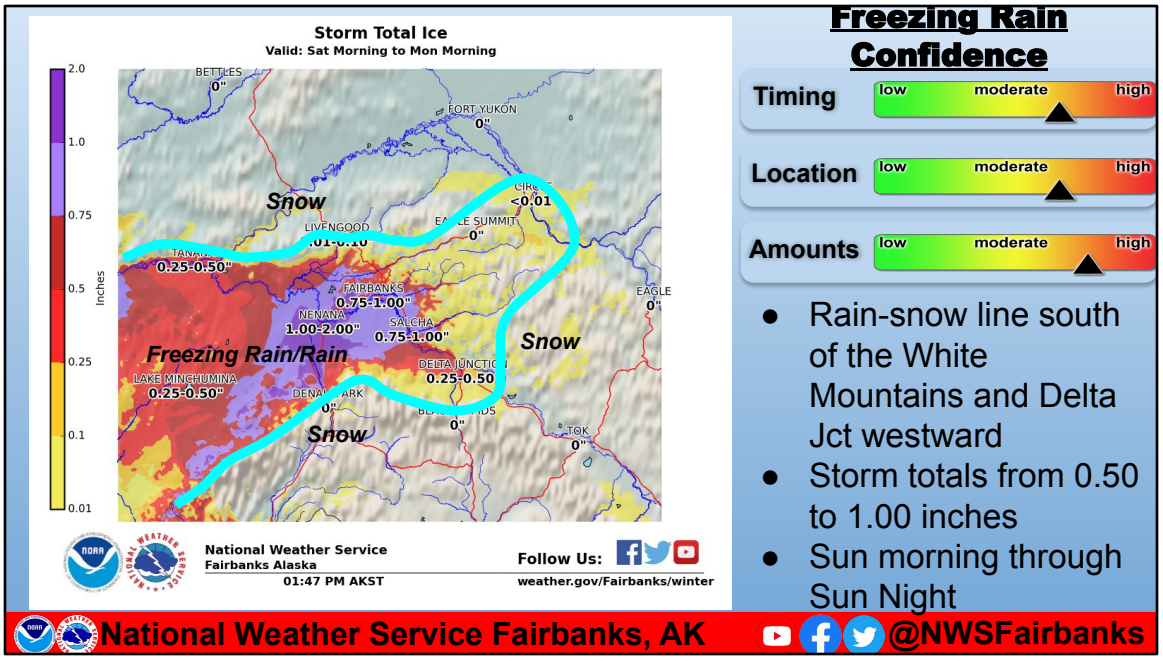
Feel free to change banner colors to if necessary.



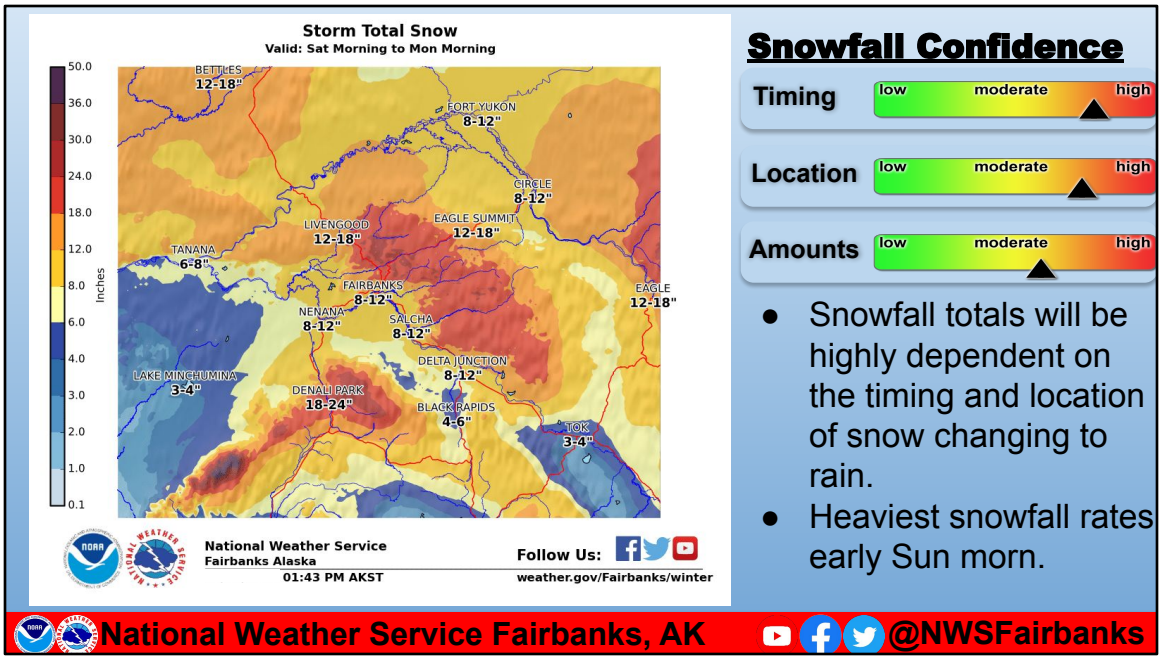
How helpful is this slide?
Stay tuned for more updates, and if you have any questions please contact us in any of the following ways.



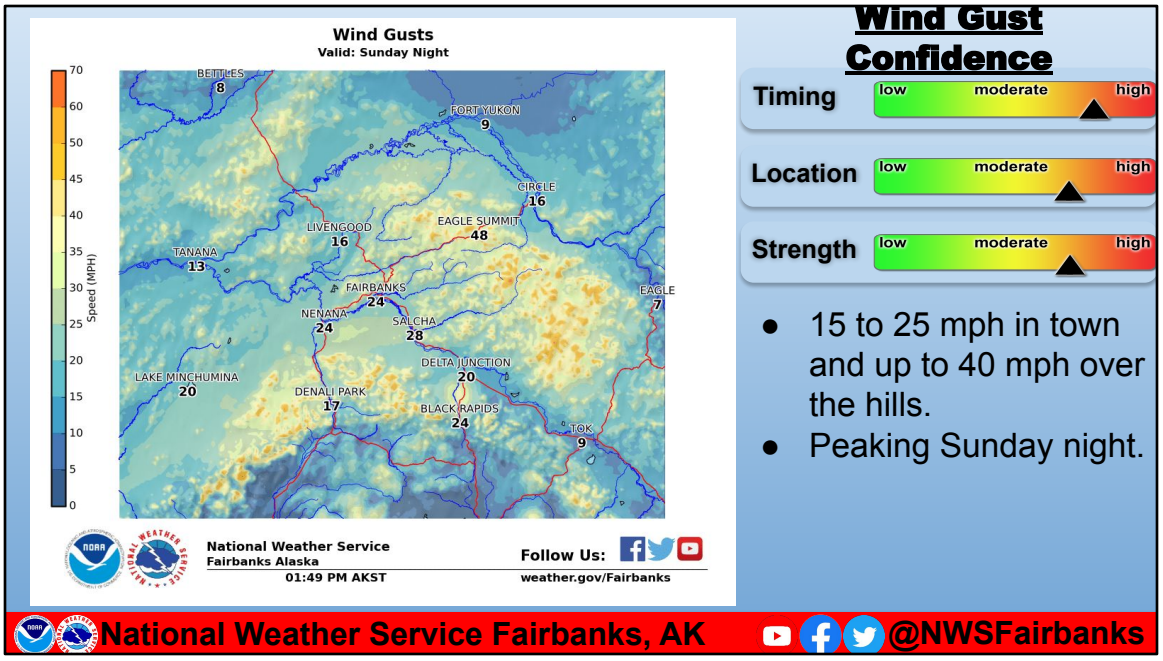
How does this rain forecast affect your thinking?



What about ice?


Storm Total Snow
Valid: Sat Morning to Mon Morning
Inches
50.0
36.0
30.0
24.0
18.0
12.0
8.0
6.0
4.0
3.0
2.0
1.0
0.1
BETTLES 12-18"
FORT YUKON 8-12"
CIRCLE 8-12"
LIVENGOOD 12-18"
EAGLE SUMMIT 12-18"
TANANA 6-8"
FAIRBANKS 8-12"
EAGLE 12-18"
NENANA 8-12"
SALCHA 8-12"
DELTA JUNCTION 8-12"
LAKE MINCHUMINA 3-4"
DENALI PARK 18-24"
BLACK RAPIDS 4-6"
TOK 3-4"
National Weather Service
Fairbanks Alaska
01:43 PM AKST
Follow Us:
weather.gov/Fairbanks/winter
Snowfall Confidence
Timing
low
moderate
high
Location
low
moderate
high
Amounts
low
moderate
high
Snowfall totals will be highly dependent on the timing and location of snow changing to rain.
Heaviest snowfall rates early Sun morn.
National Weather Service Fairbanks, AK
@NWSFairbanks

And snow?



And wind - of all of these, which are most critical? Is there anything else you would be looking for?

Fairbanks Event Timeline

Created: 1/25 2:30PM AKST

Sat Night:
- Snow begins Sat morning and continues through Sat night.
- Snow accumulations 8-12 inches - highest in the hills.
- Higher amounts near Denali.

Sunday Afternoon/Night:
- Rain and freezing rain likely with significant accumulations, transitioning back to snow after midnight.
- Westerly winds increasing gusting 20-40 mph, strongest over the hills.
- Blowing and drifting snow with reduced visibilities.

6AM SAT | 6AM SUN | 2PM SUN | 10PM SUN | 6AM MON

Sunday Morning:
- Snow intensifies early Sun morning, rates greater than 1”/hour
- Rain and freezing rain likely from Nenana to Healy early Sun morning and in Fairbanks by mid morning.
- Rain-snow line still uncertain BUT likely south of the White Mtns and west of Delta Junction.

Monday:
- Lingering snow showers and diminishing winds.
- Snow total accumulations of 8-15 inches, highest over hills north and east of Fairbanks.

National Weather Service Fairbanks, AK @NWSFairbanks

Contact Information

If you have any questions or want more details on this storm please contact the National Weather Service one of the following ways:

Call us at 907-458-3708 (24/7)

Email us at fairbanks.weather@noaa.gov

Facebook: www.facebook.com/NWSFairbanks/

Twitter at @NWSFairbanks

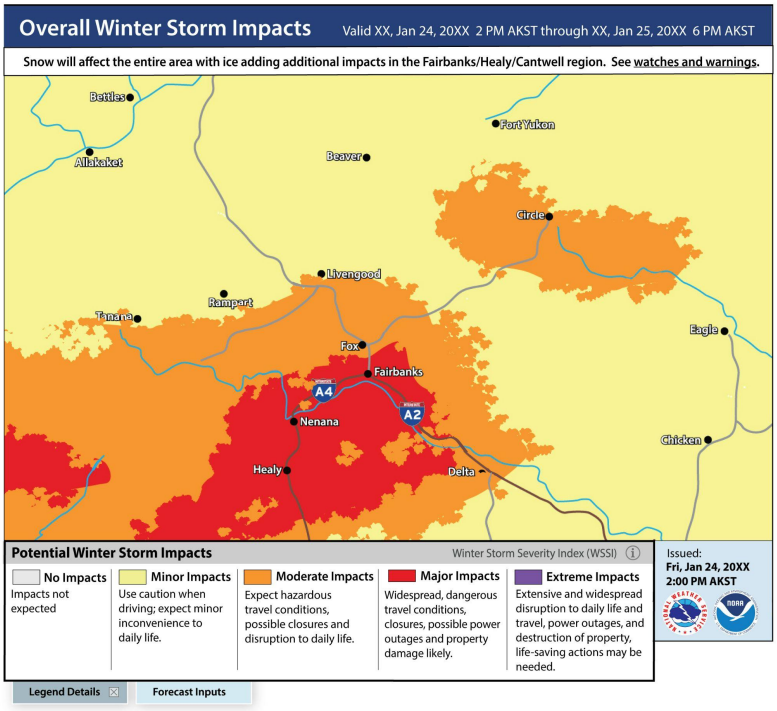
More details at weather.gov/Fairbanks

National Weather Service Fairbanks, AK **@NWSFairbanks**

Stay tuned for more updates, and if you have any questions please contact us in any of the following ways.

WSSI Website

Have you visited this site before?
Explain the features/give tour of the site. Note that this is for CONUS only but that there will be one for Alaska in the future.
What features of the website are most useful to you?
Is there anything that is missing? What additional functionality would be helpful?
Is there anything that is confusing?
How would you use the information/products on this site? When would you use it (i.e. how many days before storm)?
Ask about rolling window - is this useful? Would you use this and if so, how?
Do you prefer static images to the interactive website?



Anything else you would add? Look at forecasters' note and legend again.
Leading components/impacts that need to be included in a useful product.