

Meeting Minutes from WX1GYX SKYWARN Coordinator's Meeting at GYX March 22nd 2008

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Attendance

KA1RVR-Jay Carter via phone	New Hampshire State SKYWARN Coordinator
KI4BGF-Jack Jackson	NWS Gray, Maine SKYWARN Coordinator
K1WTX-Jerry Hume	NWS Gray, Maine SKYWARN Coordinator
N1DOT-Ken Grimard	NWS Gray, Maine SKYWARN Coordinator
WE1U-David Lowe	NWS Gray, Maine SKYWARN Coordinator
KB1PNB-Jeff Ferland	NWS Gray, Maine SKYWARN Operator
N1KTA-Tom Berman	NWS Gray, Maine SKYWARN Program Leader
John Jensenius	NWS Gray, Maine WCM
W1MPN-Mike Neilsen	NWS Taunton SKYWARN Special Advisor
N1VUX-Bill Ricker	Metro Boston SKYWARN Coordinator
KD1CY-Rob Macedo	NWS Taunton, Mass. SKYWARN Coordinator
KB1KQW-Jim Palmer	North Shore Assistant SKYWARN Coordinator

Meeting Summary

The first item discussed was additional support for NWS Gray Maine operations. Rob Macedo-KD1CY announced that Bill Ricker-N1VUX can potentially be utilized for SKYWARN Operations given he has family in Southern Maine that he can stay with and potentially help with operations that have much lead time and are near or on weekends. Mike Neilsen-W1MPN will serve to help from a management consultant role and possibly with operations as needed if he gets a summer home in the area. Mike and Bill will be taking on a greater role in these areas to continue to grow the NWS Gray, Maine SKYWARN program.

The second item discussed was SKYWARN Training in the NWS Gray, Maine area. SKYWARN training was completed in Augusta, Maine on March 19th. Mike Cempa recently confirmed two new SKYWARN Training sessions in New Hampshire, one in Hanover, New Hampshire and the other in Derry, New Hampshire. Jay Carter-KA1RVR recommended an open date list format similar to what NWS Taunton does to ease the "back and forth" on picking open dates. Tom Berman-N1KTA took an action to look into getting a calendar of open dates for weeknights and during the day on weekends for coordinators to pick from when they find locations. John Jensenius, Warning Coordination Meteorologist for NWS Gray Maine, noted that it may be difficult for Tom and Mike to accommodate this request due to their small staff but Tom and Mike will look

into making this happen.

The next items discussed surrounded liaison paths, report generation and net controls, liaisons and operators for WX1GYX. After much discussion, the following is a bulleted list of actions and updates:

- Jay Carter-KA1RVR took an action to put into motion a plan where the K1JY Linked Repeater System would become the regional network for SKYWARN in New Hampshire and attempt to establish liaisons with the local ARES Nets that may be utilized for SKYWARN within the state and work with the ARES Emergency Coordinators to provide more support for this framework for SKYWARN and to spread across ARES people and SKYWARN Spotters in the state of New Hampshire.

- Jay Carter-KA1RVR also took an action to make sure liaisons could be established between the local and regional networks mentioned above and the KQ1L Linked repeater system to allow traffic to flow from New Hampshire to Maine through a VHF/UHF means.

- The NWS Gray Maine Coordinator team took an action to try and get more Amateurs to perform liaison functions using the K1JY repeater system and any local New Hampshire repeaters they can hit to assist them with paths between New Hampshire and Maine.

- The NWS Gray Maine Coordinator team took an action to spread the word of the New Hampshire SKYWARN liaison system and network structure once Jay has ratified this work.

- The NWS Gray Maine Coordinator team took an action to put together a short note when active either from WX1GYX or remotely to handle reports to the gyx-skywarn email list.

- Jay Carter-KA1RVR and the NWS Gray Maine Coordinator team jointly took an action to put together a SKYWARN Newsletter similar to the NWS Taunton SKYWARN Newsletter that could be posted not only to the WX1GYX web site but also through the GYX-SKYWARN email list as a way to "push" the word on how the network will work to the spotters and Amateurs. A regular paper/mail newsletter may be posted and sent to all spotters on a less frequent basis (following the NWS Taunton model for newsletters).

- The NWS Gray Maine Coordinator Team and Jay Carter-KA1RVR took an action to present the NWS Gray, Maine SKYWARN program overview to Amateur Radio Clubs in the County Warning Area. A presentation has been put together for the Maine State Convention for the first weekend in April and that presentation looked excellent and could be utilized and slightly modified as required for presentations in New Hampshire and Maine and could be modified further if

damage and storm related pictures are obtained and can be added to the presentation as a good "show and tell".

-An action was taken by Jay-KA1RVR and the NWS Gray Maine Coordinating team to look at APRS/Mesonet/Personal Weather Stations and Eastern US Weather for reports and data when either they have "down time" in their nets to do the work or establish liaisons to check these sites. The following are links to these various sources:

Eastern US Weather Forum: <http://www.easternuswx.com/bb/index.php?act=home>

MesoNet Link to NWS Gray, Maine Weather Stations:

http://www.met.utah.edu/cgi-bin/droman/raws_ca_monitor.cgi?rawsflag=290&state=GYX&type=&orderby=n&day1=24&month1=3&year1=2008&hour1=3&refresh=0&timeobs=12

Personal Weather Stations Wind Gust Link:

<http://www.pdfamily.com/weather/mesowind.htm>

Personal Weather Stations Wind Main Page:

<http://www.pdfamily.com/weather/>

-Other ways of report generation were discussed for coordinators to specifically utilize and perhaps utilize with specific trusted liaisons as needed and actions were taken in this area.

Liaison paths to other NWS offices were discussed. Liaison paths have been established with NWS Taunton on EchoLink and HF. Other paths could be established from North Shore Hams with home base stations reaching the KQ1L repeater system and act as a liaison, one hop path, between offices. The NWS Gray Maine Coordinating team has been in contact with the NWS Burlington, Vermont office and will work with NWS Caribou Maine office. Rob-KD1CY recommended that NWS Albany be lowered in priority because Albany's County Warning Area is really adjacent more with NWS Taunton than any of Gray Maine's area.

HF Nets were discussed. The New Hampshire, Maine and Mass/RI HF Net frequencies were reiterated as liaison paths. Dave Lowe-WE1U brought up a good point about using out of area liaisons that may have a path to the areas of New England when the band goes long. Given the large number of actions on the table, the action to research this item was tabled until more of the important short-term actions were worked. HF Propagation sites were mentioned including hamwaves.com and others to monitor the potential use of HF conditions during activations when needed.

The NWS Open House for Gray Maine was discussed. While they typically do

every other year, response to the previous open house was so good, another open house may be held in 2008 at NWS Gray. There were long lines into the NWS office and the NWS Taunton team gave some recommendations on how to remedy that based on the NWS Taunton experience including tents with programs and exhibits outside as well as a tour inside the facility. These actions were taken under advisement by Tom Berman and John Jensenius. Word should be given across Ham Clubs, SKYWARN Spotters and all other interested groups in coordinated fashion with a strong Amateur Radio presence to take advantage of the PR, program building that can occur when a NWS Open House takes place.

The next item discussed was the Community Collaborative Rain Hail and Snow Network, CocoRaHS, which is a program being run by NOAA/NWS and Colorado State University for rain, snow and hail data and assuring any implementation of Cocorahs is not done at the expense of the SKYWARN program and at the expense of obtaining near real-time data. Cocorahs can be best leveraged by dealing with resources that have a vested interest in rain/snow/hail data as well as through SKYWARN versus having the two programs stand alone and thus reduce the effectiveness of both programs. There is no significant startup of Cocorahs currently ongoing in NWS Gray's area but the first place that it would be started is in New Hampshire. Details on Cocorahs is listed at the following link:

<http://www.cocorahs.org/>

NWS PC Network access was discussed. The Ham Coordinators and Ham Operators that can operate at the NWS office now have access to Internet Dial-Up for EchoLink and chat and now a PC setup on the NWS network for radar, and other weather information.

The Maine State Convention was brought up again concerning plans for the SKYWARN talk and Mike Neilsen raised the point of the Boxboro Hamfest coming up on August 22nd-24th, 2008 and the fact that there is an ARES/RACES/SKYWARN booth as well as a SKYWARN talk that Rob-KD1CY does. The NWS GYX team took an action to have a presence at the talk and the booth and the efforts of the NWS Gray Maine can be discussed during the SKYWARN talk and at the booth.

The Maine ARES SET was discussed and some basic plans to have staffing at NWS Taunton and possibly the Eastern Massachusetts SET on that date were mentioned. This will be discussed over email and other means as we get closer to the SET. The details of the SET are on the WX1GYX web site and the NWS liaison paths discussion were brought up in the context of the SET.

The afternoon portion of the meeting was spent showing the video from the NWS Taunton meeting and audio clips of past SKYWARN Activations along with

some extremely basic radar and damage assessment training as well as GPS/GIS damage assessments. Some web site links that were discussed as far as retrieving Maine weather products and local storm reports outside of the NWS web site were discussed including the College of Du Page web site at the following link below:

<http://kamala.cod.edu/me/>

The next NWS Gray Meeting will be in the Fall in the October/November timeframe. A specific date will be picked as we get closer to the fall.

Respectfully Submitted,

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