

NOUS41 KWBC 191440  
PNSWSH

Service Change Notice 25-95  
National Weather Service Headquarters Silver Spring MD  
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To:           Subscribers:  
              -NOAA Weather Wire Service  
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              -NOAAPORT  
              Other NWS Partners, Users and Employees

From:        Mary Mullusky, Chief  
              Operations Services Division

Subject: Changes to Public Forecast Zones for WFO Bismarck, ND, effective  
March 3, 2026

Effective on Tue, March 3, 2026, at 3:00 PM Central Standard Time (CST),  
2100 Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), the NWS Weather Forecast Office in  
Bismarck, ND (WFO BIS) will change Public Forecast Zones encompassing  
McLean, Morton, Sioux, and Ward Counties in central North Dakota. The  
McLean, Morton, Sioux, and Ward Forecast Zones will each be split into  
two zones. After this change, all forecasts and related products will  
use the zone numbers and names shown in Table 2 below.

If March 3, 2026 is declared a Critical Weather Day, this implementation  
will be postponed to March 4, 2026 at 2100 UTC

These changes will result in more geographically precise forecast, watch  
and warning products for the general public and will enhance web-based  
graphical product consistency and appearance.

Four current zones will be converted into eight separate zones. These new  
zones are being divided to optimize issuance of hazard products for  
conditions that vary significantly in central North Dakota, especially  
during winter weather and high wind events. The new zones are listed in  
Table 2.

Table 1. Universal Geographic Codes (UGC): Current  
Public Forecast Zone Name

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NDZ011: Ward  
NDZ021: McLean  
NDZ034: Morton  
NDZ045: Sioux

Table 2. UGC: New Public Forecast Zone Name

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NDZ055: Northwest Ward  
NDZ056: Central and Southern Ward/Minot Area  
NDZ057: Western McLean  
NDZ058: Eastern McLean

NDZ059: Western Morton  
NDZ060: Eastern Morton  
NDZ061: Western Sioux  
NDZ062: Eastern Sioux

Table 3. NWS products affected by the WFO Bismarck, ND, by these Public forecast zone changes are listed below.

Product Name	WMO Heading	AWIPS ID
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Area Forecast Discussion	FXUS63 KBIS	AFDBIS
Flood Watch	WGUS63 KBIS	FFABIS
Hazardous Weather Outlook	FLUS43 KBIS	HWOBIS
Non-Precipitation Weather Message	WWUS73 KBIS	NPWBIS
Point Forecast Matrices	FOUS53 KBIS	PFMBIS
Public Information Statement	NOUS43 KBIS	PNSBIS
Recreational Forecast	SXUS43 KBIS	RECBIS
Special Weather Statement	WWUS83 KBIS	SPSBIS
State Forecast Product	FPUS63 KBIS	SFPND
Winter Weather Message	WWUS43 KBIS	WSWBIS
Zone Forecast	FPUS53 KBIS	ZFPBIS

NWS partners and users will need to make necessary changes to their communications systems to accommodate these weather forecast zone changes.

Preliminary shapefiles for public forecast zones are available online at:  
<https://www.weather.gov/gis/PublicZones>

Final versions of these shapefiles will be available on February 13, 2026.

A graphical depiction of this change is online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/bis/zonechange2026>

For more information, please contact:

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National Service Change Notices are online at:

<https://www.weather.gov/notification/>

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