

Texas Section Society for Rangeland Management  
Special Recognition Award

Jason Runyen, John Metz, and the Fire Weather Forecast Staff  
Corpus Christi, TX

The National Weather Service Forecast Office in Corpus Christi, Texas continues to be an invaluable partner to rangeland management professionals and agricultural producers. This Forecast Office serves 14 counties in South Texas and the Coastal Bend. The staff at this office constantly goes out of their way to make themselves available to provide the best information available for Fire Weather and Drought Forecasting.

Jason Runyen and the fire weather forecast staff are always readily available to give spot forecasts over the phone. The forecasters excel at explaining the current and anticipated weather conditions in an easy to understand manner. This real-time, site-specific information gives prescribed burn managers the absolute edge in prescribed burn planning and management. There is no telling how many escaped fires have been prevented by a quick call to the fire weather forecasters in Corpus Christi. In addition, these forecasters are extremely valuable when it comes to smoke management. Forecasters are always willing to monitor smoke plumes and smoke transport. More than once, satellite images from the Corpus Christi Forecast Office have been used to document proper smoke movement and transport when prescribed burns have inadvertently been blamed for putting smoke on sensitive receptors.

Finally, Jason Runyen has given numerous fire weather presentations to agency personnel, prescribed burn associations, and landowners. Jason goes out of his way to educate others on the subject of fire weather. On numerous occasions, Jason will work a full shift forecasting, get off, then travel and present fire weather information at field days, workshops, and training sessions. Obviously, this makes for some very long days and we greatly appreciate his efforts.

On the subject of drought forecasting, John Metz goes the extra mile to provide the best information available. John is repeatedly requested at field days and workshops to provide discussions of short term and long term forecasts as well as El Nino and La Nina conditions.

Numerous land managers have made very difficult decisions to move or sell livestock based on this information. With the best forecast information available, land managers are making the best decisions they can to take care of their rangelands. John also provides top-notch fire weather presentations when there are schedule conflicts with other members of the fire weather team.

The forecast team at the National Weather Service Office in Corpus Christi relentlessly displays excellence and professionalism in all they do. For this, agency professionals and landowners alike are deeply grateful for all of these efforts. The National Weather Service Forecast Office plays a vital role in Texas rangeland management.

