




Government Opportunities for Meteorologists and Atmospheric Scientists

Andrew Molthan

AMS Board for Operational Government Meteorologists
Research Meteorologist, NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, Huntsville, AL
andrew.molthan@nasa.gov

My Path to Federal Employment

■ Education:

- B.S., Meteorology-Climatology 2003 
- M.S., Geosciences (Meteorology) 2005 
- Ph.D., Atmospheric Science 2009 
 - Participated in two NASA student opportunities:
 - NASA Earth and Space Science Fellowship Program
 - NASA Marshall Space Flight Center Cooperative Education Program
 - The co-op program is similar to a SCEP in the National Weather Service: I alternated between “at work” and “at school” semesters while working as a federal employee.
 - Transitioned to federal employment after graduation.

Background

- Bureau of Labor Statistics:
 - 34% of atmospheric scientists are employed by the Federal Government
 - Most work within the National Weather Service
- Federal agencies employing meteorologists:



... and many more,
including state and
municipal governments.

Federal Employment

PROS

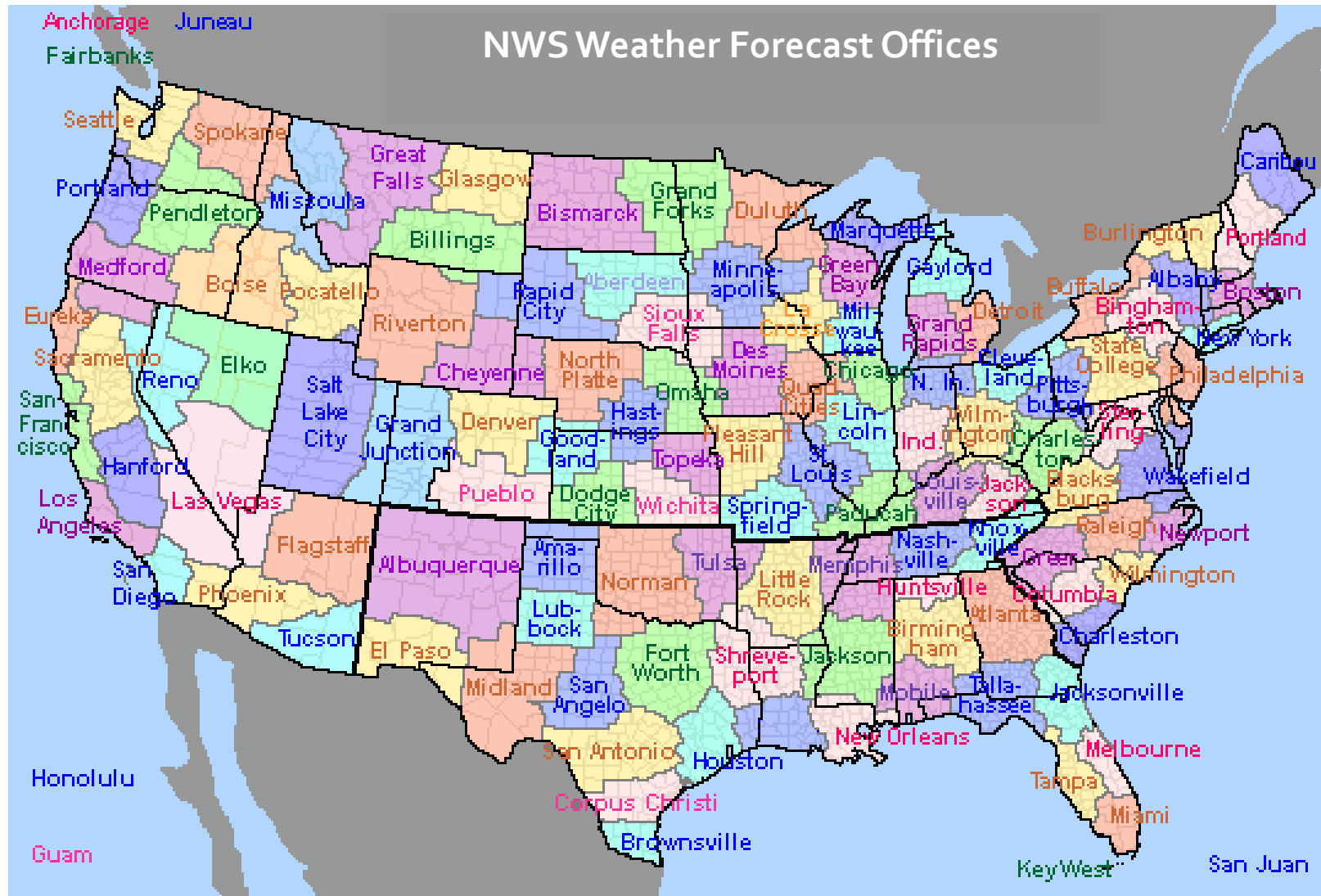
- Salary potential is known
- Some positions include additional compensation for holidays, nights, Sundays, and overtime
- Locations across the country
- Career development and training opportunities within each agency
- Job security and annual pay raises
- Cash or leave awards for outstanding performance
- Excellent benefits
- Relocation expenses provided in some cases

CONS

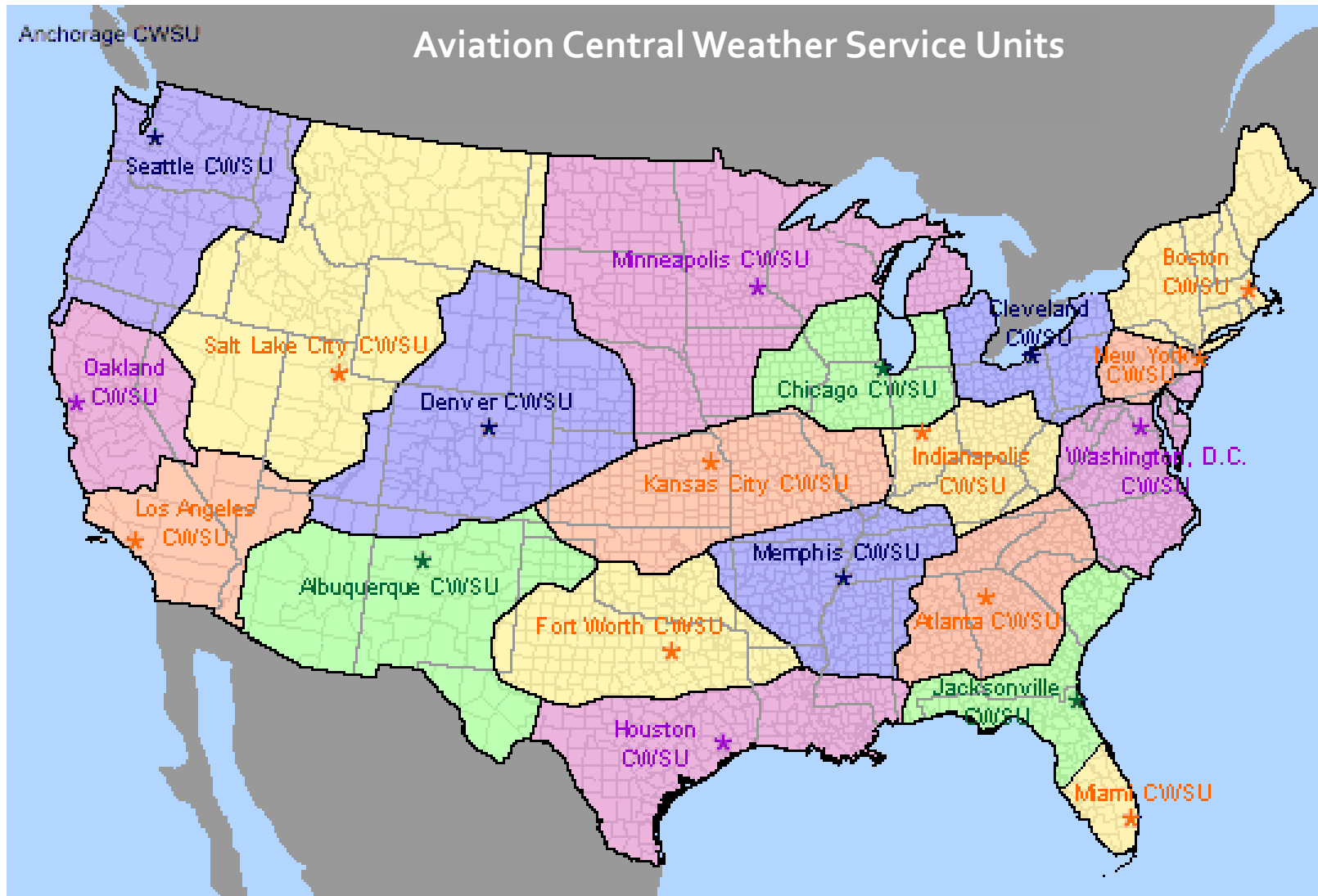
- Salary potential is known
 - Salaries greater than \$150K rare
- Some positions require rotating shift work – weekends, evenings, overnight, holidays.
- Limited number of jobs available
 - 25-50 hired per year in NWS
- Hiring opportunities sometimes limited to fiscal year constraints
- Change can be slower than within the private sector

* Views and opinions acquired from peers and colleagues.

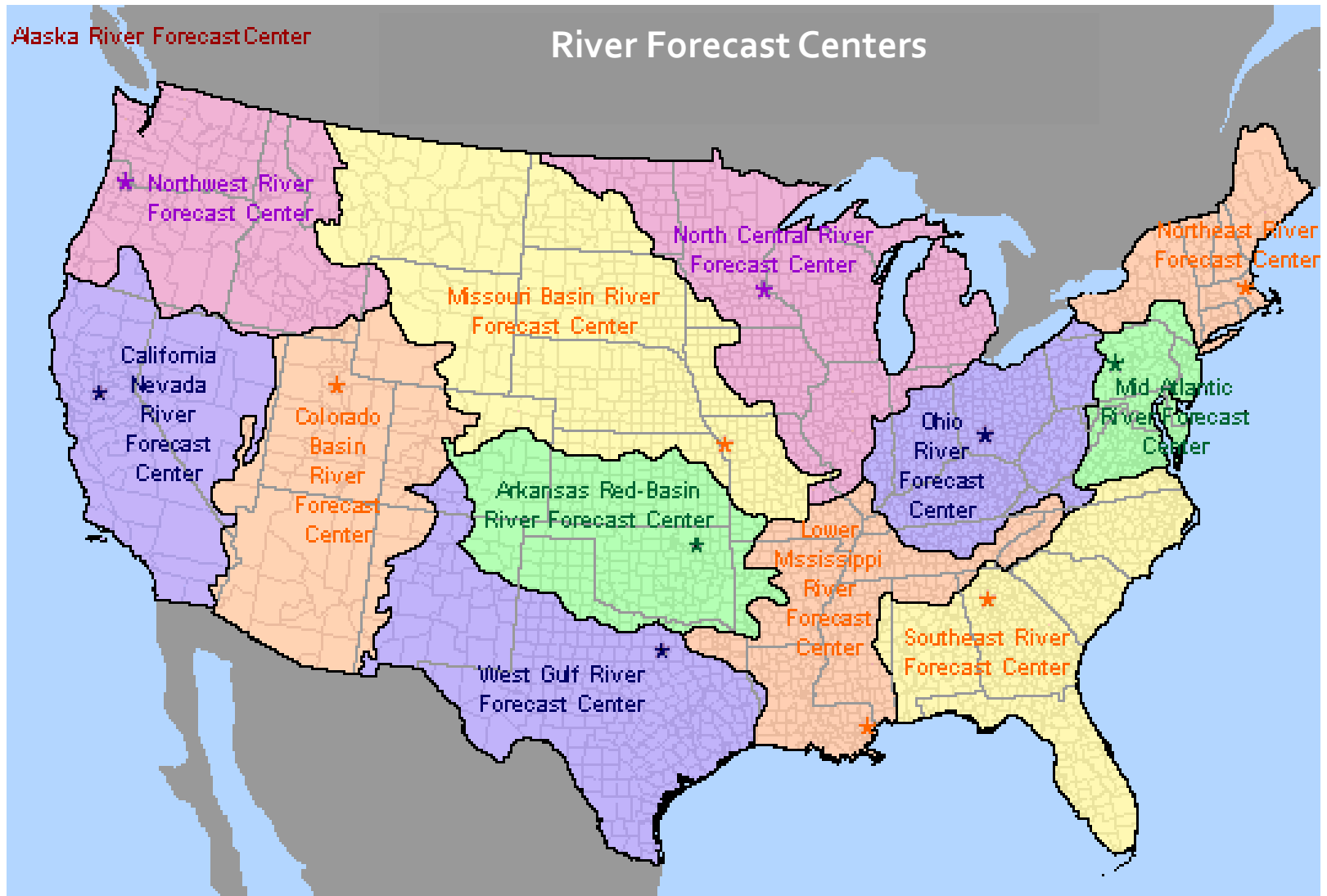
NOAA/National Weather Service



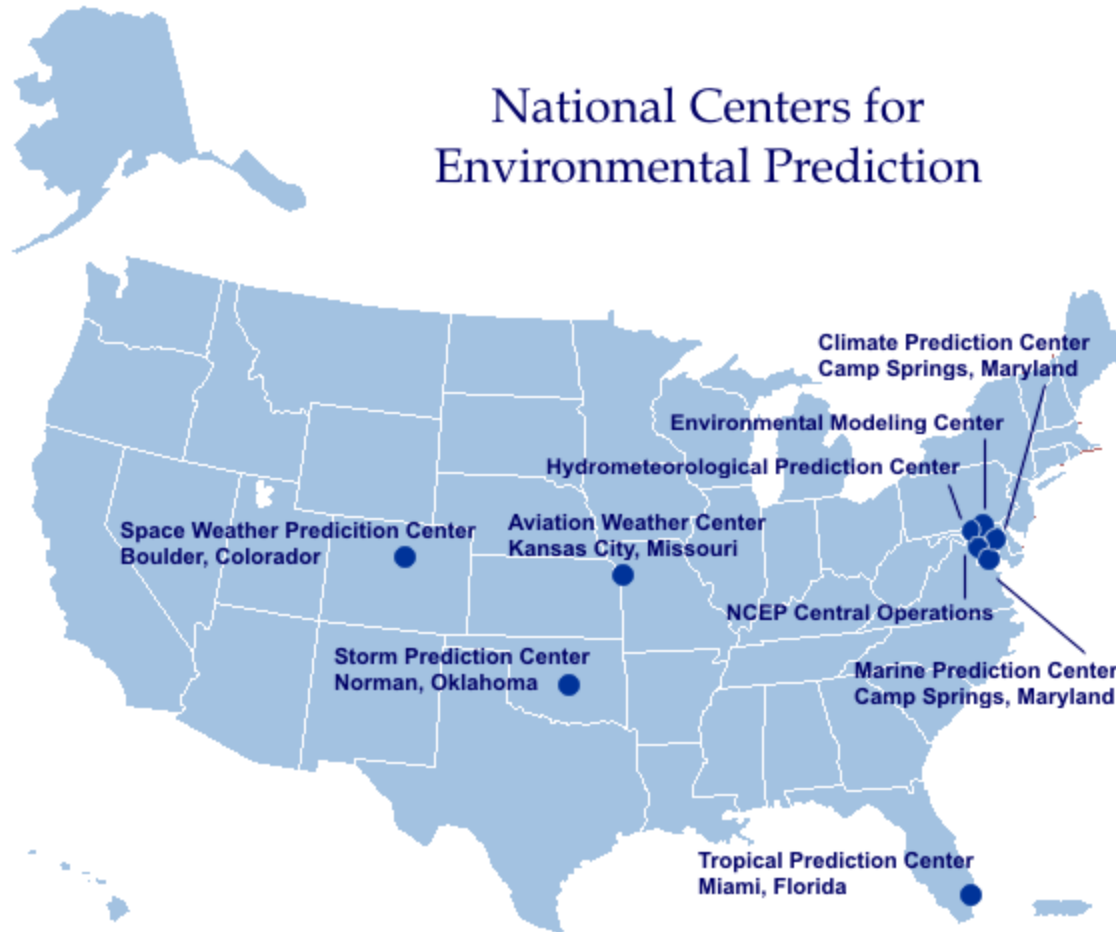
NOAA/National Weather Service

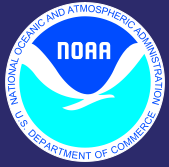


NOAA/National Weather Service

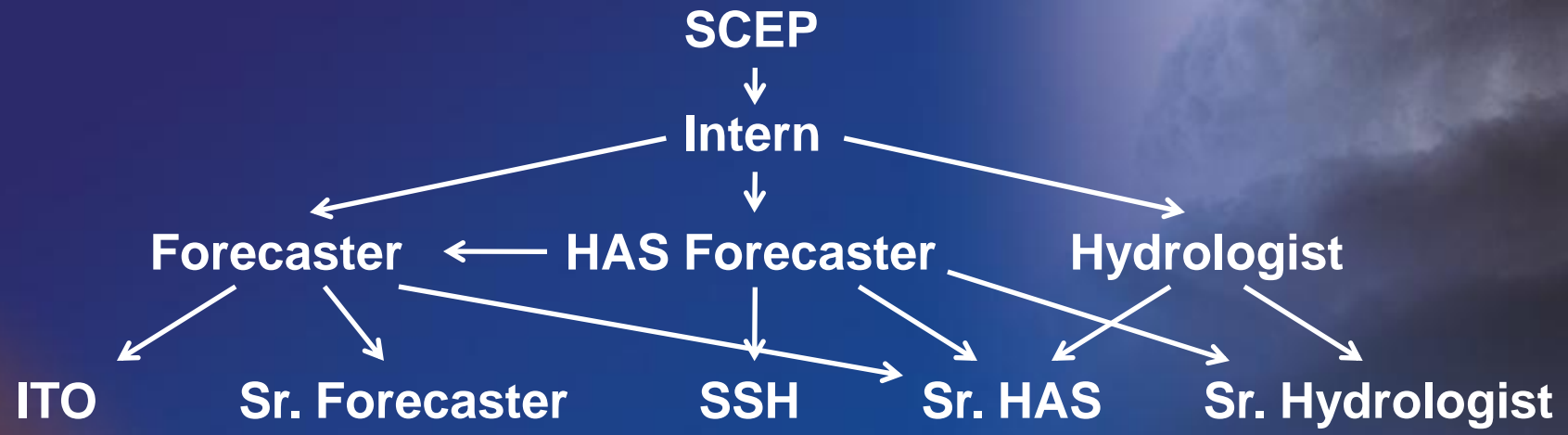


NOAA/National Weather Service





NWS Career Ladders



SOO WCM

MIC

Regional Program Manager

Branch Chief

Regional Director

SCH DOH

HIC

Slide Courtesy of Trisha Palmer
WFO Peachtree City, GA

Federal Salaries

	Grade	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7	Step 8	Step 9	Step 10	
	GS-1	17803	18398	18990	19579	20171	20519	21104	21694	21717	22269	
	2	20017	20493	21155	21717	21961	22607	23253	23899	24545	25191	
	3	21840	22568	23296	24024	24752	25480	26208	26936	27664	28392	
	4	24518	25335	26152	26969	27786	28603	29420	30237	31054	31871	
Intern	5	27431	28345	29259	30173	31087	32001	32915	33829	34743	35657	
	6	30577	31596	32615	33634	34653	35672	36691	37710	38729	39748	
	7	33979	35112	36245	37378	38511	39644	40777	41910	43043	44176	30-55K
	8	37631	38885	40139	41393	42647	43901	45155	46409	47663	48917	
Journey/ General	9	41563	42948	44333	45718	47103	48488	49873	51258	52643	54028	
	10	45771	47297	48823	50349	51875	53401	54927	56453	57979	59505	41-79K
Research	11	50287	51963	53639	55315	56991	58667	60343	62019	63695	65371	
	12	60274	62283	64292	66301	68310	70319	72328	74337	76346	78355	
	13	71674	74063	76452	78841	81230	83619	86008	88397	90786	93175	
Leads/ Mgmt.	14	84697	87520	90343	93166	95989	98812	101635	104458	107281	110104	71-130K
	15	99628	102949	106270	109591	112912	116233	119554	122875	126196	129517	

In addition to the base salary, add 10-35% as a locality cost living adjustment per location.

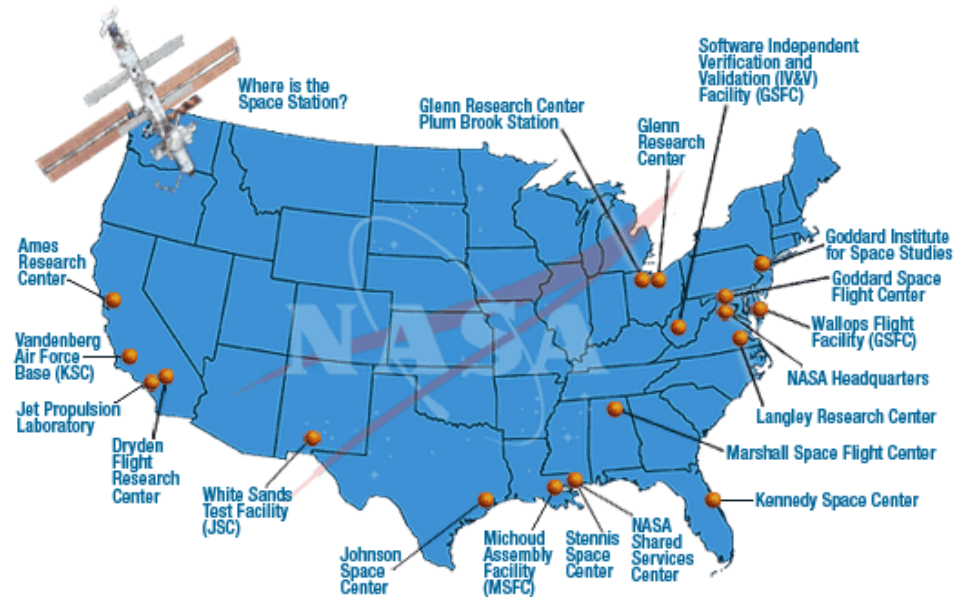
United States Air Force

- Includes military service members and civilian meteorologists or research scientists
- Military service:
 - USAF recruitment/ROTC
 - Requires good physical health and no aversion to physical activity
 - Opportunities as Wing Weather Officers or within Weather Squadrons
- Civilian service:
 - Hired through standard government process



NASA

- NASA scientists and engineers are hired through the government jobs portal.
- The same GS pay scale applies to all agencies.
- Each NASA Center includes a variety of activities related to science and engineering.



Student Opportunities

- Some opportunities for students include:
- Department of Defense
 - SMART Scholarship for Service Program
- NOAA/National Weather Service
 - Student Volunteer and Employment Programs (SCEP)
 - NOAA Hollings Scholar Program
- NASA
 - Student Internship Portal
 - <http://intern.nasa.gov>
 - NASA Earth and Space System Science Fellowships
- Links provided by the AMS Board for Operational Government Meteorologists:
 - <http://www.ametsoc.org/boardpges/bogm/students.html>

Applications



Government Employment: <http://www.usajobs.gov>

- Create a profile and resume.
- Search jobs for “meteorologist” or “meteorology” as a keyword.



NASA Student Opportunities: <http://intern.nasa.gov>

- Select the following from the drop-down menu:
 - “NASA-Related Internship, Fellowship, or Scholarship SOLAR”
 - Register as a student, complete a profile, search for opportunities

Résumé Guidelines

- *Any* experience you have in the field
 - Can be simple: “recorded forecast on automated public forecast telephone line”
 - Use keywords that match the required skill sets.
 - Example: “Programming experience in Java and Fortran” rather than “Programming experience” or “Computer Science 101”
- Leadership experience
 - Does not have to be meteorology-related, but should include a description of your involvement and activities.
- Awards and accomplishments
- Professional papers and presentations
- Memberships in professional societies
- Use bullets, not paragraphs
- Develop your résumé now and update frequently

Questions?
