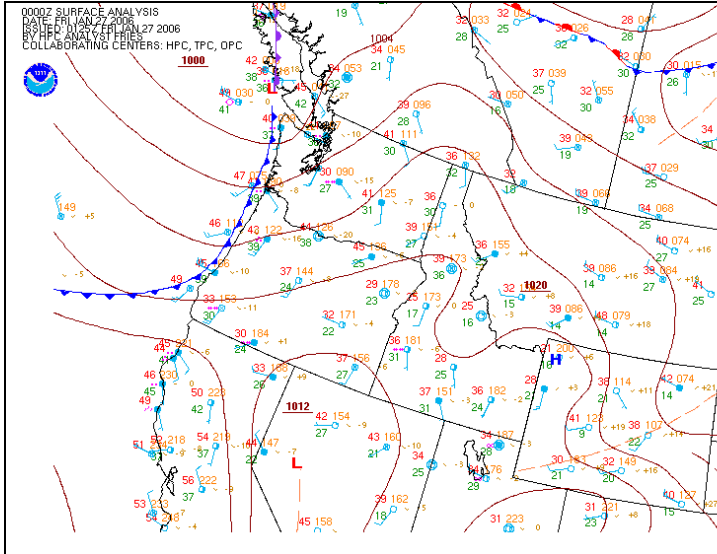


## Predicting Oceanside 01/27

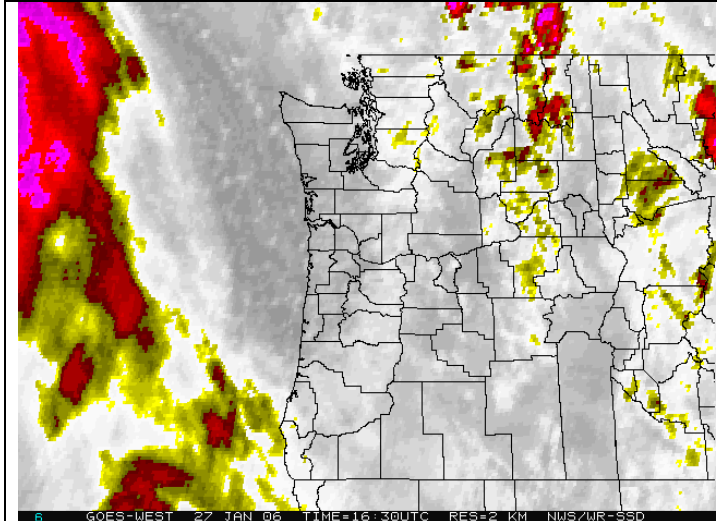
Oceanside requires smoother W or SW winds at 10-18 mph and rain free window. Marine buoys should be at 15 kts and airport winds at 10.



Recently, a cold front has moved through leaving clearer weather and SW winds.

The questions are: will winds remain in the soaring envelope and is rain a problem

There is a two hour drive to Oceanside from Corvallis



The infrared satellite image shows scattered colder and higher clouds and another front offshore moving in. Remember, the infrared doesn't show warmer and lower clouds, so it may be more cloudy than what this image shows.

The distance of the new system offshore will probably put it over Oceanside in the late afternoon.

FPUS56 KPQR 271216  
ZFPPQR

ZONE FORECASTS FOR NORTHWEST OREGON AND SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON  
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE PORTLAND OREGON  
416 AM PST FRI JAN 27 2006

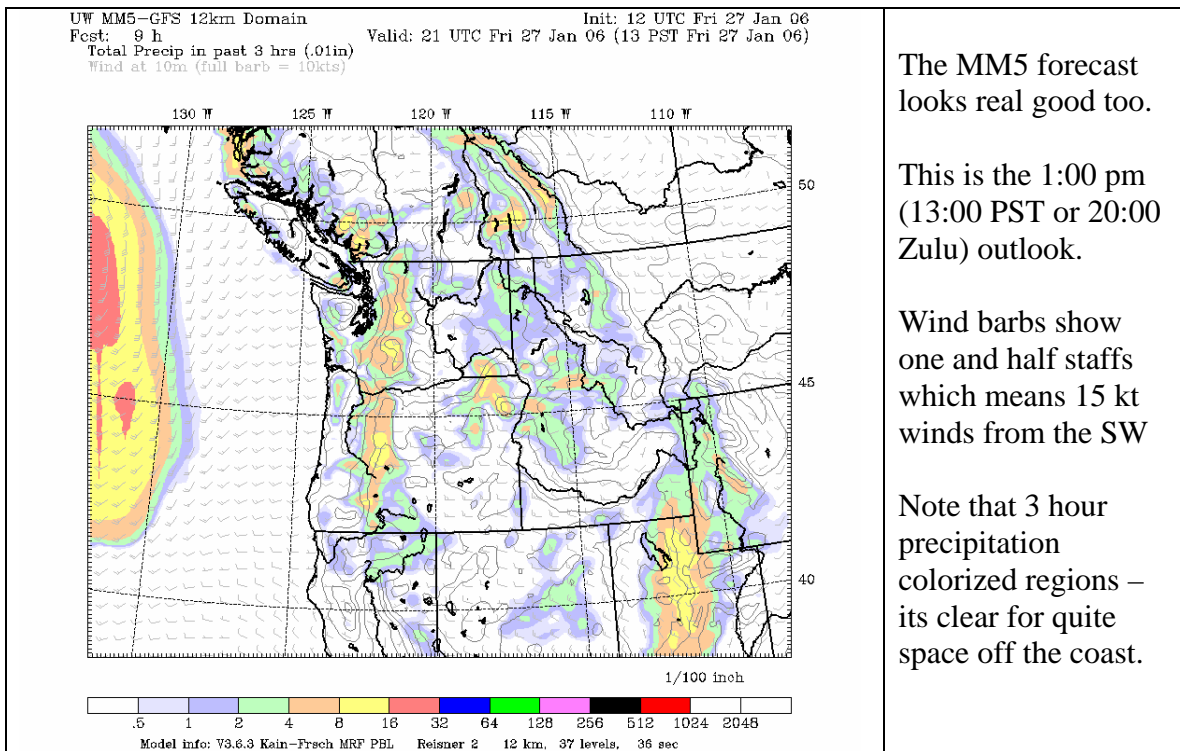
SPOT TEMPERATURES AND PROBABILITIES OF MEASURABLE PRECIPITATION  
ARE FOR TODAY...TONIGHT...SATURDAY...SATURDAY NIGHT...AND SUNDAY.

ORZ001-271845-  
NORTH OREGON COAST-  
INCLUDING THE CITIES OF...ASTORIA...CANNON BEACH...TILLAMOOK  
416 AM PST FRI JAN 27 2006

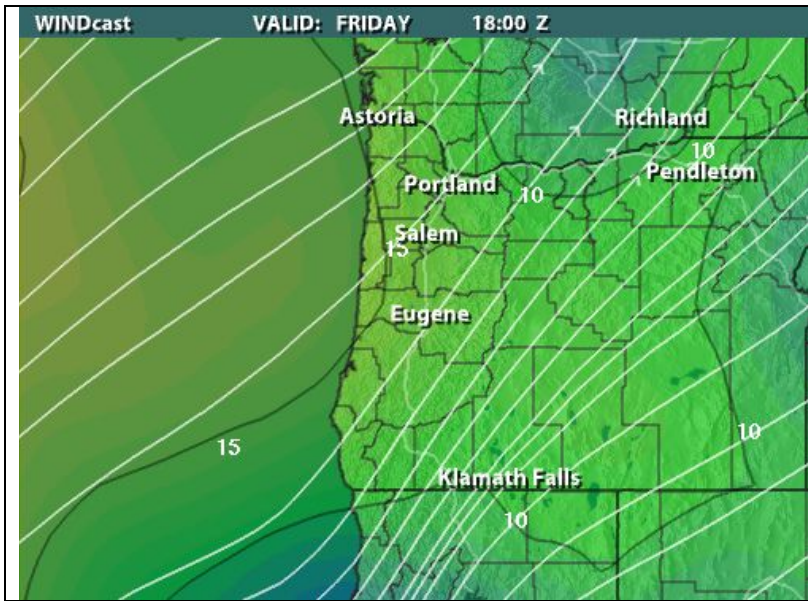
...HIGH WIND WATCH IN EFFECT FROM THIS EVENING THROUGH LATE  
TONIGHT...

.TODAY...SHOWERS LIKELY IN THE MORNING...DECREASING IN THE  
AFTERNOON. HIGHS 45 TO 50. SOUTHWEST WIND 10 TO 20 MPH.  
.TONIGHT...RAIN. STRONG WINDS. LOWS AROUND 40. SOUTH WIND 20 TO  
30 MPH INCREASING TO 30 TO 45 MPH WITH GUSTS TO 60 MPH  
POSSIBLE AFTER MIDNIGHT.

The NOAA forecast is consistent with the graphical forecasts. Showers are always a great forecast for the coast and they will be decreasing... but then increasing quickly. Note that the wind forecast worsens in these prefrontal conditions. We will have to be careful not to fly too long, otherwise we could get in trouble with higher winds. Always note the trend. Is it getting better or worse? Could this be our opportunity?

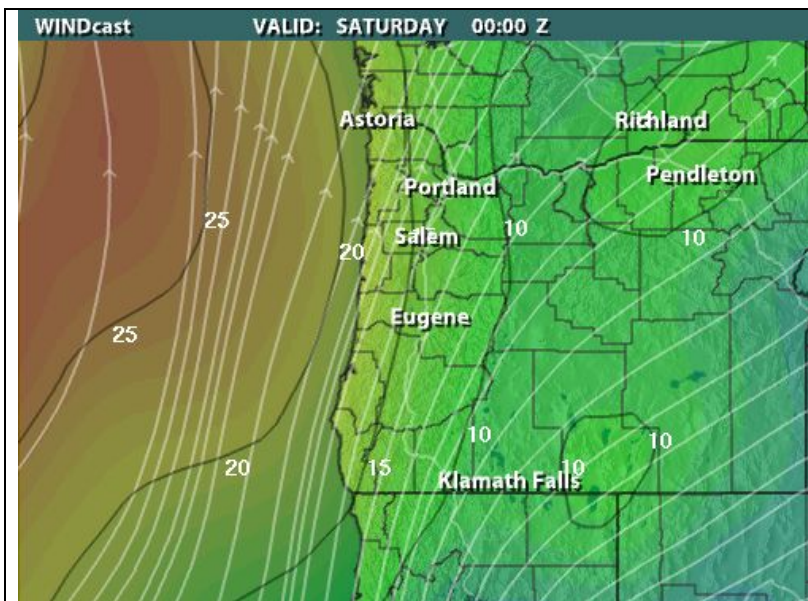


Now, let's see what the Intellicast graphical forecast looks like



The 1:00 pm forecast shows moderate isobar spacing and 15 kts winds.

Note uniform greenish pressure area over the whole map.






The 4:00 pm for Friday\* map shows increasing wind and more compact isobar spacing and an approaching low pressure (reddish brown area)

\*This an updated forecast. The Valid time is now through Saturday

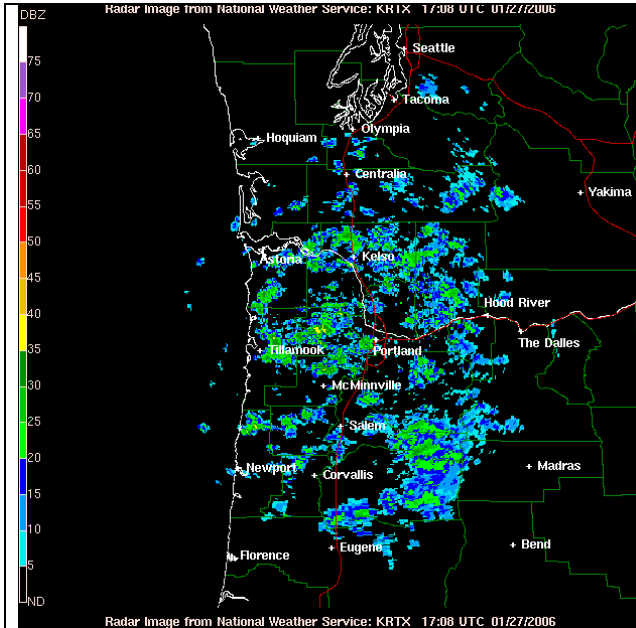
Now, we need to check some real-time observations.....

Conditions at 46029 as of  
(8:50 am PST)  
1650 GMT on 01/27/2006:

-  Wind Direction (WDIR): W ( 270 deg true )
-  Wind Speed (WSPD): 13.6 kts
-  Wind Gust (GST): 17.5 kts

Wow, the direction and speed of the buoy offshore from the mouth of the Columbia River is great.

Is it raining on the coast? Lets check the radar reflections.



There are only a few scattered shower clouds out at sea.

Most of the clouds are dumping over coast range and Willamette Valley.

This could be a Petersen's day too but we are bored with the site and really want to fly the coast.



Checking the local webcam you can see blue sky with scattered shower clouds.

Perfect picture.

Exactly, what we need to see.

Let's check the pressure gradients and wind speeds on the coast using PNW Pressure gradient link. Let's see if we can tie a pressure gradient to the wind speed. Astoria shows 30.00 and Newport 30.10. There is full tenth difference between Newport and Astoria. This is a greater pressure gradient for that amount of wind then in the valley. We'll keep checking this to see if it's generally true.

For comparison look at the pressure difference between Eugene and Salem.  $30.14 - 30.08 = .06$  Look at the wind speed at Eugene, Corvallis and Salem. Anything over 10 mph makes it blown out at Petersens.

CITY	SKY/WX	TMP	DP	RH	WIND	PRES	REMARKS
ASTORIA	MOSUNNY	44	37	76	VRB6	30.00R	
NEWPORT	MOSUNNY	46	37	71	W9G16	30.10F	
PORTLAND	PTSUNNY	43	39	86	S10	30.06R	
VANCOUVER WA	PTSUNNY	42	38	85	S9	30.06R	
SCAPPOOSE	PTSUNNY	41	39	93	S3	30.05R	
HILLSBORO	LGT RAIN	41	38	89	S6	30.06R	
AURORA	PTSUNNY	41	38	89	S10G20	30.08R	
MCMINNVILLE	MOSUNNY	41	37	86	SE13	30.07R	
SALEM	PTSUNNY	41	38	89	S14	30.08R	
CORVALLIS	PTSUNNY	43	37	81	S15	30.09S	
EUGENE	LGT RAIN	40	38	93	S7	30.14R	

## The Decision

From the looks of it, if we leave Corvallis by 10:30 am we'll get to Oceanside at 12:30 pm. We'll be just in time for the 1:00 pm outlook and still enjoy at least a couple hours of decreasing rain and moderate winds. The wind and rain will start to increase later in the afternoon. So, we will have to be efficient and vigilant. Get there, assess conditions, set-up and fly being careful not to get caught in this approaching front. If the front were any closer we would not go.

## Site report

Driving over the coast range mountains in these conditions always takes lots of faith. There is usually rain falling all the way to the coast as the air is lifted and condenses. There was much on this trip. We get to Oceanside right on time. The sky is not as blue as the morning webcam. In fact, it is mostly grey but there defined strato cumulus to the SW. But it is not raining. The wind looks good, very westerly. We are met with one showery squall on top of Maxwell but it soon blows over. The wind is perfect. There is another squall out near Cape Lookout. By the time we set up it should have blown over too. That's exactly what happens. Sun breaks out through thin clouds to the southwest as we ready to fly at 1:30 pm. The conditions are great all the way to 3:45 when the sky turns more grey and the wind increases and gets gustier. By this time, we have landed and are disassembling our gliders.

## Conclusion

Prefrontal conditions - when another front is only a few hours away - is always more unreliable than when it's only post frontal. You are counting on an accurate assessment of the window of opportunity before the front arrives. But you are also hoping the wind and rain trend stays within the flyable zone till the front is almost upon you. There is always more luck in this kind of situation. I should have checked the visual and water vapor satellite images to get sense of how clear the whole region was, not only the sky right in front of the webcam in the morning. All in all, it was nice day flying on the coast.