

Thursday, July 30, 2020 – 12:30 pm

The National Hurricane Center (NHC) upgraded PTC9 to Tropical Storm Isaias last night. They are watching Isaias's interaction with Hispaniola very closely today and it will likely have a significant impact on the storm's intensification as it moves forward and its ultimate track. It is possible that a new center will re-form along the northern coast of Hispaniola as the system interacts with the high terrain of that island later today or tonight. The NHC forecast trends towards a track that puts much of the southern east coast in play for possible impacts. The NHC's overall confidence on the current forecast track remains lower than normal due to the expected land interaction with Hispaniola and the potential re-formation of the storm center.

As of the 11am NHC advisory, maximum sustained winds were 60mph with higher gusts. Tropical storm force winds extend outward up to 310 miles (the wind field is currently weighted very heavily to the right and north side of center of the storm). NHC's intensity forecast also remains challenging – NHC is currently taking a conservative approach and holding Isaias at Tropical Storm strength as it moves northward. There are models that continue to suggest Isaias could become a hurricane when it is near the U.S., but given the continued uncertainty, the NHC intensity forecast remains near the model intensity consensus.

That said, it's still too early to have a firm handle on Isaias's track and intensity and whether we will see any significant impacts in our area. However, given the uncertainty at this point and since we are heading into the weekend, we did want to make sure that everyone was preparing for possible impacts early next week and remind everyone to keep a close eye on the forecast over the next few days. Again, now is the time to make sure you are reviewing your hurricane plans with the possible need to implement them by early next week.

We'll keep watching Isaias and will provide updates as warranted.

