

A quick update as we head into the weekend. VA/NC landfall is still unlikely, but Maria could be nudging closer to the coast. As of the 11am National Hurricane Center (NHC) forecast, most of Outer Banks has a 10%-20% chance of seeing tropical force winds (39+mph) winds in the next 5 days. The NHC is currently giving eastern NC/VA a 5%-10% chance of tropical winds in the next 5 days. Most likely scenario at this point is that we'll see conditions similar to Jose early next week. The forecast track will likely continue to wobble as Maria makes her way northward, any shifts westward in her actual track will increase the chances for impacts in our area. Continue to monitor the local weather forecast closely over the next few days and be prepared to put your emergency plan in place if necessary.

As noted in early updates, the key to Maria's track will likely be how long Jose stays strong enough to provide a path further out to sea for Maria. If Jose leaves the party too soon, high pressure could build north of our area and help hold Maria closer to the coast. Jose has weakened over the last few forecast cycles, and while the models still seem to be in good agreement that Maria will likely not make a direct landfall in the NC/VA area, the forecast tracks are still trending westward and the models are not as closely aligned by the time they reach as far north NC/VA. Not the most likely scenario, but should Maria's actual forecast track follow closer along the left side of the forecast cone of uncertainty, at least a brush across coastal NC/VA is not out of the realm of possibility. Maria will likely be a CAT1 hurricane by the time she makes this far north.

As of the 11am National Hurricane Center (NHC) forecast update, Maria was located 90 miles north of Grand Turk Island and had sustained winds of 125mph. A gradual weakening is forecast during the next 48 hours. Hurricane-force winds extend outward up to 70 miles from the center, and tropical-storm-force winds extend outward up to 160 miles. On the current forecast track, Maria's core will move away from the Turks and Caicos Islands today, and pass northeast and east of the Bahamas through Sunday.

We'll keep watching and will provide updates as necessary. Keep those eastward thoughts going!

