

Thursday, August 29, 2019 – 11:05 am

With the likelihood of folks taking an extended Labor Day weekend, I wanted to get an update out on the 2 active tropical systems before folks head out for vacation. Quick bottom line, right now, doesn't look like significant impacts to us, but make sure you follow the weather over the weekend and especially Monday to make sure conditions don't change and put VA more into play in 7-10 days.

Little more depth.....

Erin – Erin is the system that has been floating offshore for the last week and has helped churn up the surf at the OBX and VA Beach as well as contributed to the minor tidal flooding that we've seen over the last several days. Erin currently has merged with a frontal system and now considered an extratropical low (e.g. no longer a tropical storm). Erin is expected to continue to move northward well off the east coast.

Dorian – Dorian is the system that had just moved off the African coast in my last update. Dorian is currently a CAT1 (85pmh) hurricane and is just north and east of Puerto Rico. Continued strengthening is expected over the next few days as Dorian moves northwesterly towards the northern Bahamas. A more west-northwestward motion is expected to begin Friday night and continue into the weekend. On this track, Dorian should move over the Atlantic well east of the southeastern and central Bahamas today and on Friday, and approach the northwestern Bahamas on Saturday. Dorian is expected to become a major hurricane (111MPH+) on Friday and is forecast to be near 125mph (a strong CAT3) as it nears Florida.

The models continue to diverge after 48 hours, so there is still continued uncertainty in the forecast beyond that point. The current consensus is that a landfall along the east coast of Florida as a major hurricane is likely– although it is too soon to determine the location of where it will occur. Current forecast models have Dorian just offshore of Florida Sunday/Monday. Dorian's actual track is going to be greatly impacted by a ridge of high pressure that will be building off the east coast north of Florida. The stronger the high pressure, the less northward Dorian will move and the more likely a Florida impact is. However, current forecast models are showing some weakness in this high pressure ridge, which could open a window for Dorian to make more of a run up the east coast – Georgia to South Carolina is definitely still in play and if the high pressure weakens enough, even North Carolina/VA need to be keeping a close eye out.

The timing of when the track shifts from the more west northwest track to a more northerly track is critical on who will see significant impacts from Dorian. While the current forecast likely has Dorian moving onshore in Florida and then making the turn northward, just a difference of 50-100 miles in when the turn happens could put much more of the east coast in play for impacts from Dorian. If the turn occurs before a Florida landfall or in conjunction with a more northerly landfall in Florida, the east coast could very much be back in play for direct impacts from Dorian. It will likely be Monday

when we know for sure where the turn to the north begins to occur and where Dorian is most likely headed.

Here's the 11am National Hurricane Center (NHC) forecast map and a graphic showing the likely chances of seeing at least tropical storm force winds (39mph+) in the next 5 days. As always, it is important to note that the actual track of the storm has a chance of being anywhere in the forecast cone – and too much focus should not be put on the center line of the forecast cone. Additionally, Dorian will likely be a fairly large storm once it approaches the coast and wind impacts are possible well outside the forecast cone.

