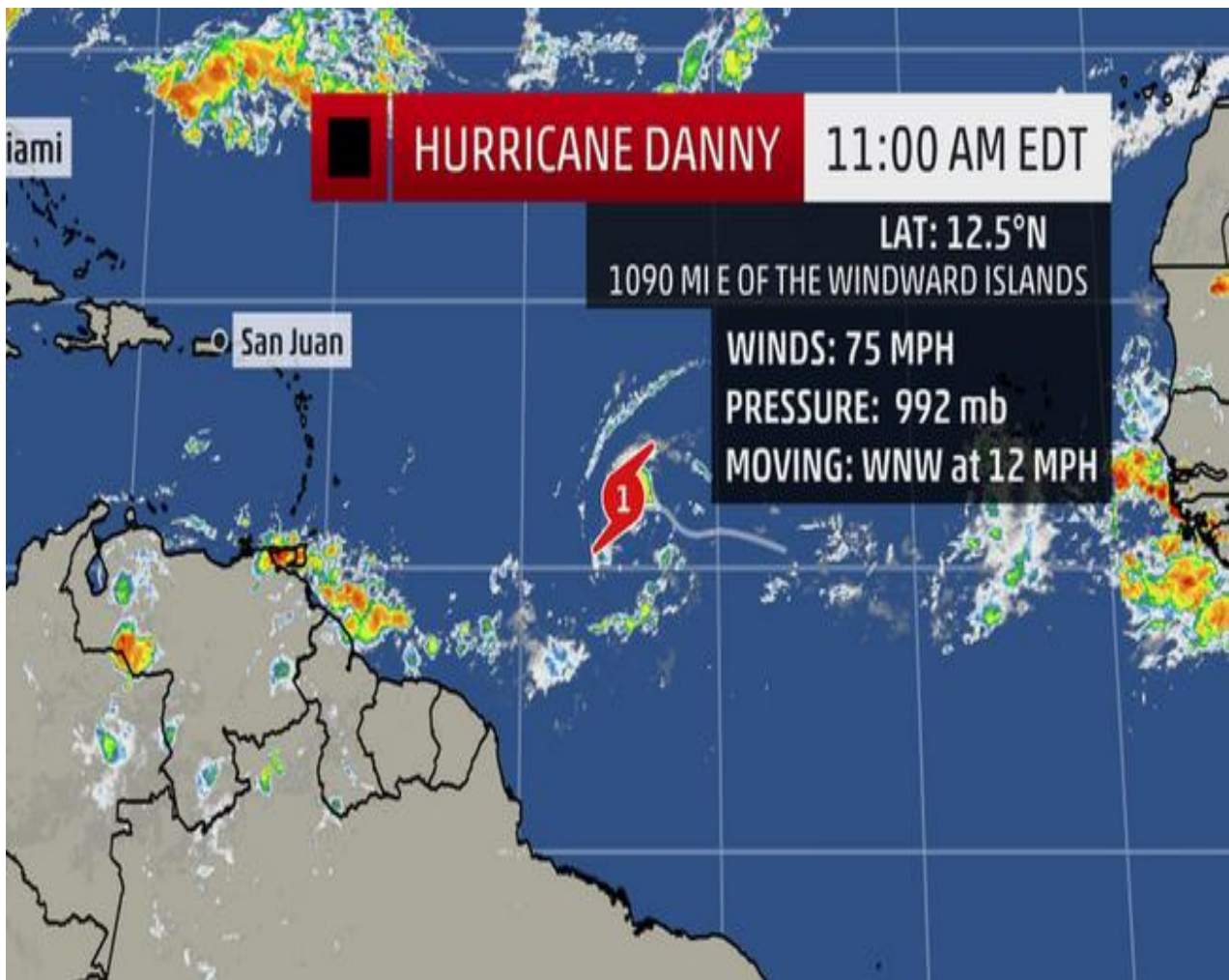


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Top Meteorologists Predict Near-Average Hurricane Season With 12 Storms, 5 Hurricanes

Caribbean / **Published On April 17, 2016 10:26 AM /**

Staff **April 17, 2016**



ST. CROIX -- Meteorologists stationed at Colorado State University this week issued the results of their research into the 2016 Atlantic hurricane season, predicting 12 named storms, five of which will form into hurricanes.

That prediction classifies as near-average based on weather records dating to 1950, which shows a typical year consisting of 0 to 12 tropical storms, of which seven turn into hurricanes. A tropical storm contains sustained winds of 39 mph. It becomes a hurricane when winds reach 74 mph. The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1 to Nov. 30, though storms sometimes form outside those dates.

Meteorologists Philip Klotzbach and William Gray of Colorado State University's Tropical Meteorology Project released the forecast on Wednesday. The organization was the first to issue seasonal hurricane forecasts back in 1984. Wednesday's forecast -- which covers the Atlantic basin (Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico) -- is the team's 33rd forecast.

Of the five predicted hurricanes, two should be major hurricanes — category 3, 4 or 5 — with sustained wind speeds of 111 mph or greater, said Mr. Klotzbach.

Insurance companies, emergency managers and the media use the forecasts to prepare the U.S and its territories, as well as Caribbean countries for the year's hurricane threat. The team's annual predictions provide a best estimate of activity during the upcoming season, not an exact measure, according to Colorado State.

Last year, the team predicted seven named storms, with three becoming hurricanes. The season ended with 11 named storms, of which four were hurricanes.