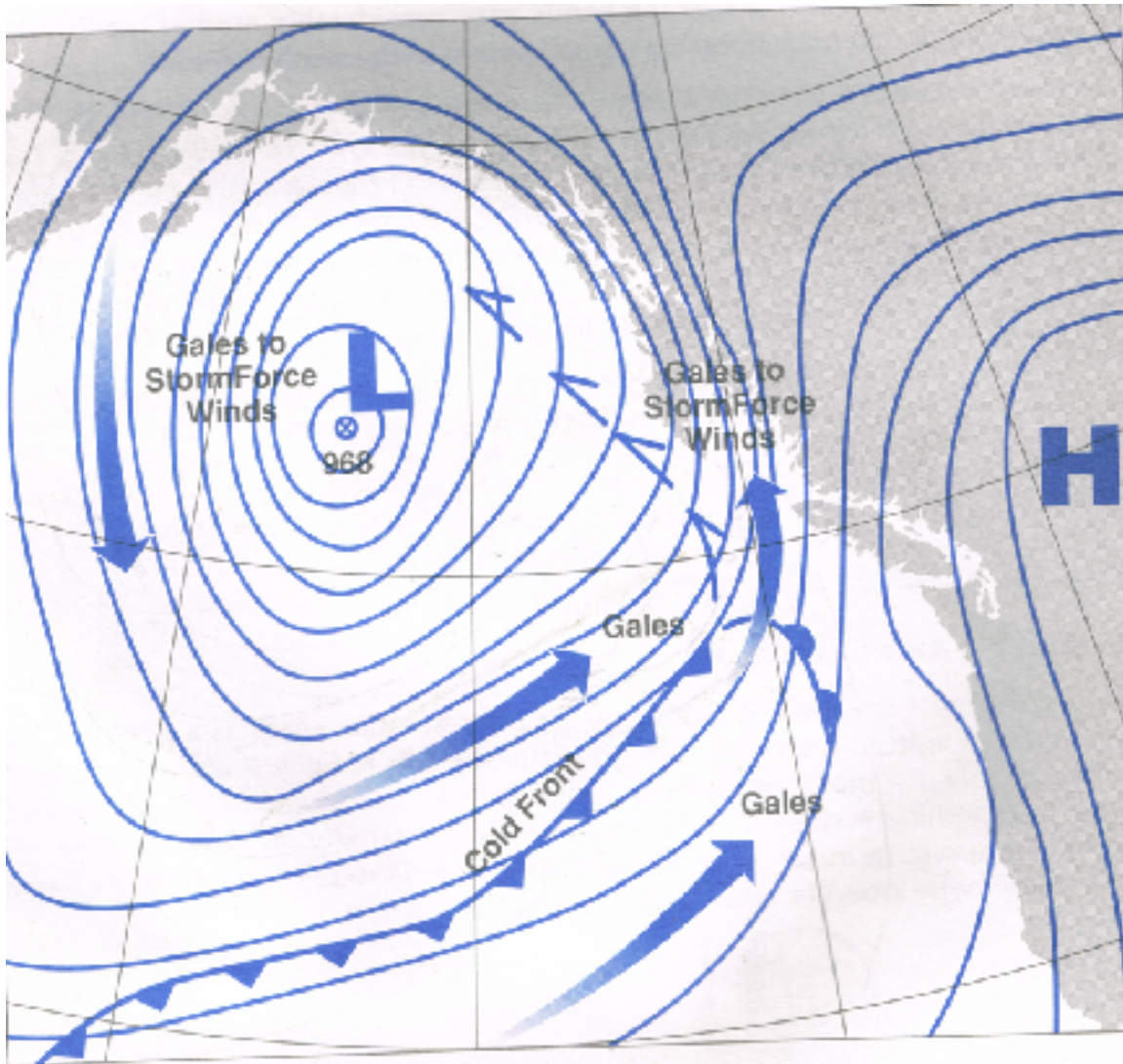


Deep Gulf of Alaska Lows

Winter lows off over the Gulf of Alaska can deepen to 970 millibars and lower. They move northeast at 35-40 knots. The front that extends southward from the centre of the low sweeps over the BC coastal waters bringing southeasterly gale to storm force winds rain and heavy seas. As the storm moves north over the Alaskan coast and the front crosses the BC coast the storm matures and starts to weaken. Ahead of the front southeasterly gales often build the seas to over 9 meters in northern waters and on the west coast of Vancouver Island. The most intense storm seas can reach 10-12 metres. These waves are formed by strong west or northwest winds on the western side of the low.



This sea-level pressure pattern indicates a Gulf of Alaska low with the associated frontal system approaching the B.C. coast. Gale-to-storm-force southeasterly winds are often found just ahead of the front with gale-to-storm-force northerlies just to the west of the low. (Pressure values in millibars)