

Interest Statement for Matthew Biddle / University of Oklahoma / Department of Geography

- **why are you interested in participating in this workshop and why you feel you should be chosen;**

There are a number of reasons for my interest in participating. Chiefly – it would seem that the goals of the workshop mirror my personal career ambitions in that I have been working for years to receive the training, experience, and academic instruction that would enable me to conduct successful multidisciplinary research in the human ecology of severe weather hazards, and to establish myself as an emerging leader in research and policy administration bridging fields and personnel in atmospheric and geographic sciences, governmental institutions, and research entities. Secondary interests include my personal desire to remain up to date on contemporary ideas and issues and to work with UCAR personnel and Dr Grunfest in particular – as I am familiar with her work and feel any additional instruction and interaction I can receive from her would be of extreme value to me both professionally and personally, particularly given the timing of my workshop and pending receipt of my doctorate which is to occur in late 2005.

- **what are your career goals and how you feel this workshop would contribute to meeting those goals;**

My career goals are to finish my Ph.D. in Geography and become the coordinator of a 'Societal Impacts of Weather' research center housed in the Department of Geography at the University of Oklahoma and affiliated with the National Weather Center; and to otherwise continue to conduct and oversee research projects which assess the human ecology of severe weather (especially tornadoes), and to advance methods in impact assessment, emergency response, forecasting and warning techniques and communications technology, personal and institutional mitigation, disaster epidemiology and public administration. Clearly this workshop would not only be of interest, but its timing makes it that much more likely that it will help me as I transition into this role as the new National Weather Center evolves.

- **some aspect of the weather/society interface that you particularly would like to learn about during the workshop and possibly make the focus of your interim research project;**

I suppose that I am fluent to some extent on warning systems and risk behavior and thus, I am looking to increase my abilities and expand my perspectives in some of the peripheral areas, particularly with regard to policy design and implementation, multi-disciplinary and multi-jurisdictional project management; community outreach; public affairs, and media relations. I also expect to be a project designer and manager at my institution and thus I will need a variety of skills with which to interface with those from other disciplines. I suspect that I might wish to make my Interim Research Project related to assessments of end user attitudes and capabilities for emerging NWS probability-based short-fuse forecasts and warnings, which different means to convey uncertainty and are superior from a scientific standpoint but have historically been rejected by end users and the 'general public.' Thus I would like to know how to best assess utility and try to devise a means to facilitate communication using the same 'language' between the originators of the products (atmospheric scientists) the policy administrators (emergency managers and NWS Personnel) and various end users, how to ensure open feedback loops and how to devise various metrics to assess value and what constitutes successful implementation in ways that are economical, socially just, and scientifically pure.

- **what else you think we should know about you.**

I have attached my one page vitae, but aside from being a Geographer – giving me a blend of physical and social science backgrounds, I also have experience in the private sector, numerous levels of government services, and in the field as well as in the classroom and research lab. Thus, aside from my desire to learn from the workshop and interact with others, I feel I am a good candidate in terms of bringing broad experience and contemporary understanding to the workshop to share with other attendees.