

J. Samenow

Since the age of 10, I have had a passion for communicating climate and weather information as it impacts decision-making and people's lives. I have pursued this passion through graduate school and my entire career. For the past four and a half years, I have worked as a Climate Analyst at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), covering the issues of global climate change and stratospheric ozone depletion.

I have dedicated myself to providing unbiased science analyses in a politically charged environment. I have produced a wide range of communications products including reports, brochures, interactive web tools, videos and responses to public inquiries. I have also provided EPA management and staff with regular briefings and presentations on the latest global change science and science policy developments, and recommendations on how best to communicate those developments to a range of audiences.

In the past year, I have completed two projects directly related to weather impacts. I led an interagency effort with NOAA, CDC and the Department of Homeland Security to develop best practices for responding to excessive heat events. Our team held monthly meetings with state and local government officials, emergency responders and meteorologists to assemble this guidance which will be published in the spring of 2006. In addition, working with colleagues at the National Weather Service, I led the development and launch of a new UV Alert system to notify the public when UV levels are anomalously high (for more information, see: <http://www.epa.gov/sunwise/uvalert.html>).

As a weather enthusiast, in addition to my position at EPA, I founded CapitalWeather.com, a portal and interactive web log that provides useful and entertaining coverage of Washington, DC weather. At CapitalWeather.com, I have focused on providing forecast commentary that provides value-added information about how the weather may affect the lives of Washingtonians. The site provides probabilistic snowfall forecasts during winter as well as information about how the storm may affect school operations and travel (see: <http://www.capitalweather.com/2005/01/final-storm-assessment.jsp>, for an example winter blog entry).

My career goals involve perfecting practices for conveying credible and salient weather and climate information to decision-makers. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, this seems more vital than ever (for an example of CapitalWeather.com's coverage of Katrina, see: <http://www.capitalweather.com/2005/08/sum-of-all-fears-historic-weather.jsp>). In the WAS*IS workshop, I would be interested in discussing and studying the advantages and disadvantages of probabilistic vs. deterministic predictions. In my experiences there are important tradeoffs in these approaches and I think it's important to document them and conduct additional surveying to confirm or refute certain hypotheses. Lessons learned from understanding how different audiences interpret and use predictions are important not just for weather, but also for climate change. These issues are

inextricably linked and I believe my interest and expertise in both areas will offer a unique “forest for the trees” perspective for this workshop.