

Interest Statement for The 2007 WAS*IS Summer Workshop
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To Whom It May Concern:

For most of my career in operational meteorology with the National Weather Service (NWS), I have had a keen interest in how the information we provide is used by not only our customers, but society as a whole. Despite and increased amount of information, as well as technological improvements in how this information is disseminated and received, there are still documented cases when sizeable numbers of the general public are confused, or surprised, by the occurrence of hazardous weather. This is most troubling when the information has been provided with ample lead time for protective, life-saving actions to be completed. One such case occurred in late October, 2005, when Hurricane Wilma sliced across heavily populated South Florida.

Improving society's understanding of the impact of hazardous weather requires a two-pronged approach: First, the operational meteorology community must continue to clarify the information in order for all levels of society of understand its meaning. Second, the meteorological community as a whole must educate *all levels* of society, especially those of lower incomes and ethnicities, on threats to life and property from these hazards.

As a Senior Forecaster at the NWS office in Tampa Bay, FL, I have taken the initiative to lead efforts to improve how weather threats are communicated to a variety of users, from decision makers to broadcasters to society at large. Between 1999 and 2000, I developed plain-language impact statements to be used in tropical cyclone text messages issued by local NWS offices. The impact statements included expected man-made and natural damage from increasing thresholds of wind, freshwater flooding, and storm surge flooding. Prior to Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the local NWS office near New Orleans included one of these statements, for a Category 5 storm, to great effect. In many of the investigations that followed, this particular [statement](#) (see boldface, page 2 of Executive Summary) was lauded as a clear conveyance of life threatening danger.

I am now a vital member of a NWS team for tropical cyclone product and service improvements, and have been instrumental in developing a vision for the future which will both improve the collaborative process among local NWS offices and the National Hurricane Center (NHC), and clarify our tropical weather hazards information by reducing the number of products and allowing us to speak as "one voice". Since 2005, I have spoken at several tropical weather conferences on the topic of hazardous weather threat communication. I have discussed the vision of building an interconnected "house" of information that includes gridded, graphical, and text data for all of our users, for any level of sophistication.

My personal goal is to realize the vision of clarified, yet specific, weather hazard information become available to all levels of society. Most importantly, I intend to work toward having this information better understood by all. To that end, becoming a member of the Summer 2007 WAS*IS Workshop will allow me to focus my energies on becoming a better steward for educating society on weather information, from which I can apply the knowledge gained to the customers I serve.