

**Dan Stillman**

2007 Summer WAS\*IS Interest Statement

Throughout my professional and academic career, I've maintained an equal balance between science, especially meteorology, and the communication of science to society. During this time, I've become keenly interested and engaged in effectively communicating weather and environmental information to the general public, and I believe the meteorological community has much room for improvement in this area.

Since 2003, I have served as science communications specialist (now science communications manager) at the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies. My primary responsibility is to translate NASA Earth and space science information into easy-to-understand language for students and teachers of varying grade levels. I also help organize, and produce communication materials for, workshops and forums that bring government officials and private industry together to discuss the integration of environmental information for better decision-making.

As a freelance writer, I have written numerous articles for various publications, including the Washington Post and Weatherwise magazine, that explain the science of weather and weather forecasting to kids and adults.

In my role as executive editor and lead meteorologist for CapitalWeather.com, I not only predict Washington, DC, weather, but also ensure that the forecast is effectively communicated to the Web site's visitors. CapitalWeather.com serves as a test bed for innovative tools that help express forecast uncertainty and cater weather information to people's everyday lives. These tools include forecast confidence indicators, snow accumulation probability charts, travel and school closing forecasts, and specific forecasts for sporting events and other outdoor activities.

I am especially interested in how the general public interprets elements of the weather forecast such as partly cloudy vs. partly sunny, the percent chance of precipitation, radar images, the significance of temperature or precipitation being above or below "normal" (see [http://www.capitalweather.com/archive/2007\\_03\\_18\\_archive.php#normal](http://www.capitalweather.com/archive/2007_03_18_archive.php#normal)), and deterministic vs. probabilistic predictions.

I also believe that society could greatly benefit from better communication within the operational meteorology community. More discussion among meteorologists -- whether employed by the National Weather Service, a local TV or radio station, or a Web site -- about model biases and forecast verification could lead to more accurate weather forecasts.

If accepted, I would look forward to discussing these and other ideas at the WAS\*IS workshop, and to working with other participants on projects that address such issues in the months and years that follow the workshop.