

## **Elizabeth P.K. Lunde**

### Statement of Interest

I've been unintentionally questioning the societal impacts of weather since my college years. One particular instance remains imprinted in my mind. April 13, 2006 a supercell thunderstorm was on track to pass directly over the city of Madison, WI. A severe thunderstorm warning was issued approximately 30 minutes before baseball size hail began to fall on the University of Wisconsin campus. I watched the stones fall, and was stymied by the fact that several students were caught on the sidewalk just outside my apartment. They had been out for their daily run or had been biking to or from class, and were seemingly oblivious to the severe weather potential. I couldn't grasp their inattentiveness to the atmosphere, and wondered what could have been done to raise their awareness of the impending hazardous weather.

The impacts of weather reach far beyond the confines of the local National Weather Service forecast office. The past two years, I've come to realize that more formal interrogation of the integration of societal response to weather events is increasingly necessary. Discovering WAS\*IS was my wake-up call for realizing that I can finally take a step toward truly putting the public at the forefront of our operations, and in the front of my mind while I work. I may not be able to keep every college student out of the path of large hail, but can examine better ways to inform the public of severe weather hazards. My primary interest areas within the field of the societal impacts of weather are therefore in the role of communication between the Integrated Warning Team of NWS forecasters, the media, and emergency managers with the public. Ultimately, doing more detailed analysis of who this "public" is and their inherent decision making with regard to weather is of the utmost importance to improve forecast and warning services.

The past few months, I've become increasingly communicative relaying information about the public to forecasters at the National Weather Service in Topeka. This ultimately helps bond the forecast process to the end user, establishing a more meaningful and practical product. This spring, I distributed an informal survey at NWS Storm Spotter training classes to gather information about attendees' spotting experience, home weather instrumentation, weather radio use, and web knowledge. Preliminary results were presented at a local severe weather seminar, and I intend to pursue and analyze additional such queries in the near future.

My background in meteorology offers the foundation for including me in the 2009 summer WAS\*IS class, but my desire to delve into the public psyche of the decision making process with regard to significant weather presents itself as an opportunity for building several stories of interdisciplinary research. The surface of this concentration has still only been scratched. I view WAS\*IS not just an idea, but as an opportunity to act. I'm young in my career, but offer the drive, passion, and leadership that will help to take WAS\*IS and the integration of societal impacts into meteorology into the future. I hope to utilize the personal connections and tools offered by WAS\*IS to build years of communication, interaction, and progress with not only fellow WAS\*ISers, but the public as a whole. Thank you for your consideration.