



Social Science Woven into Meteorology (SSWIM) D R A F T Proposal for Hazardous Weather Societal Impacts Testbed or “Communitarium” May 27, 2009
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Two questions emerge from recent workshops and NOAA and National Research Council reports are

- What are current and future weather and climate information requirements and expectations of the broad spectrum of stakeholders ranging from the scientifically unsophisticated to the most technologically advanced?
- How can new and proposed products *mesh with* and *improve upon* existing stakeholder preferences for spatial and temporal information used for decisions?

The people on the receiving end of the new technologies, tools, and products already are using decision support tools and information to meet their needs.

SSWIM (Social Science Woven into Meteorology) and the HWT (Hazardous Weather Testbed) propose a socio-economic Testbed or “Communitarium” to address these questions. The “Communitarium”, a term selected to highlight the stakeholder or community-based approach, will provide a platform for

- Developing sustainable two-way communication that actively recognizes that forecasters, and the broad spectrum of stakeholders along the continuum, from the least to the most technologically sophisticated, have spatial, temporal, and other needs for weather data to make decisions to assure built-in societal relevance
- Addressing the growing recognition that new tools and products for future weather operations and research must be developed with active collaborations from intended stakeholders, including forecasters, official decision-makers, and the various publics
- Learning from diverse user communities which information sources are preferred and trusted and what information and situations motivate behavioral changes and influence decisions about hazard exposure and response times
- Building sustainable relationships between all types of users and probabilistic warning tool developers regarding the current state of the science of hazardous weather warnings
- Developing qualitative and quantitative methods for new ways to integrate a wide variety of user perspectives in NOAA Testbed experiments
- Exploring ways to communicate uncertainty using existing and proposed NWS technology, terminology, and probabilistic information capability
- Reducing the emphasis on the top-down, one-way “educate the public” model that is currently practiced and facilitating sustained partnerships between stakeholders and researchers and product developers to ensure the development of societally-relevant tools and products.

The SSWIM-HWT Communitarium at the National Weather Center will foster

- collaboration possibilities for agencies and groups involved in weather and climate research and practice and
- prospects for interdisciplinary Master’s theses and Ph.D. dissertations based on the experiments and the new qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

A Budget will be developed based on the scope of Communitarium activities. At minimum SSWIM would expect funding for graduate student assistantships, at least one post-doc, and several months of P.I. salary.