

# WAS\*IS

CULTURE CHANGE

weather & society \* integrated studies

[www.sip.ucar.edu/wasis/](http://www.sip.ucar.edu/wasis/)



NCAR



Sponsored by the NCAR Societal Impacts Program

Changing from what **WAS** to what **IS**  
the future of integrated weather studies



# Welcome to Summer Camp for Smart Kids 2008 Summer WAS\*IS

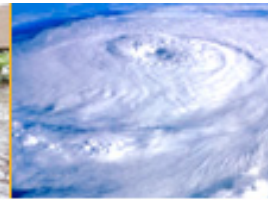
Eve Gruntfest, Julie Demuth, Sheldon Drobot & Jeff Lazo  
August 7, 2008

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**WAS\*IS**

WORKSHOPS

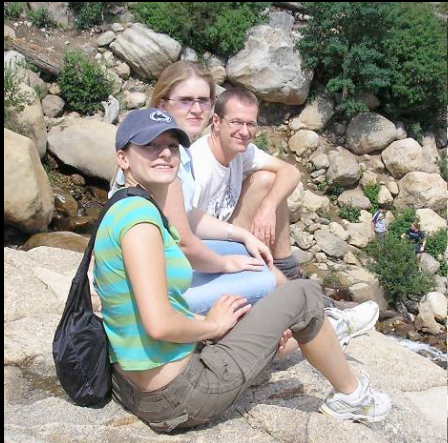
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## Tonight's presentation

1. Eve, Julie, Jeff, & Sheldon's journeys to WAS\*IS crusaders!
2. Why WAS\*IS
3. Plans for the week
4. Barriers we will overcome
5. Ground rules
6. WAS\*IS measures of success



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# Eve Gruntfest's background

- Applied geographer
- Social scientist in world of engineers & physical scientists
- Career based on Big Thompson Flood
- Focus: **Flash floods & warning systems**



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# Eve's background: career based on one event



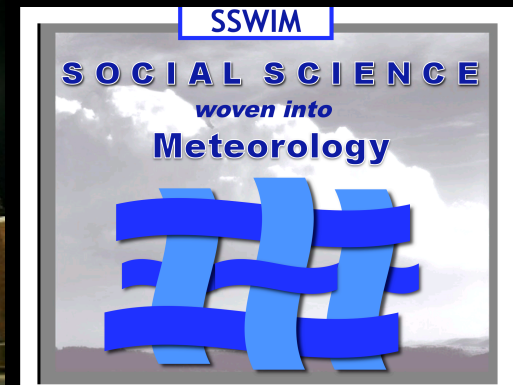
- 140 lives lost - 35 miles northwest of Boulder
- Studied the behaviors that night
  - Who lived?
  - Who died?
  - Led to detection & response systems

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# Social science *woven* into Meteorology (SSWIM)



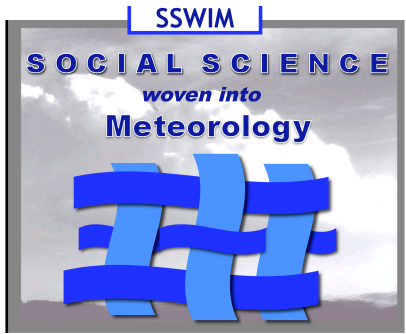
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New initiative @ The National Weather  
Center – Norman, OK

May 1, 2008- April 30, 2011

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**Funding ~50% National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration & 50% U of Oklahoma**

**Three main goals**

1. To **recognize** & develop the existing social science activities in Norman
2. To **build** a strong integrated community of practitioners, researchers, & others to coordinate new projects & proposals that weave social science *into the fabric* of the National Weather Center
3. To **assess** the viability & interest in a new interdisciplinary Ph.D. program at the University of Oklahoma focused on the societal impacts of weather & climate change

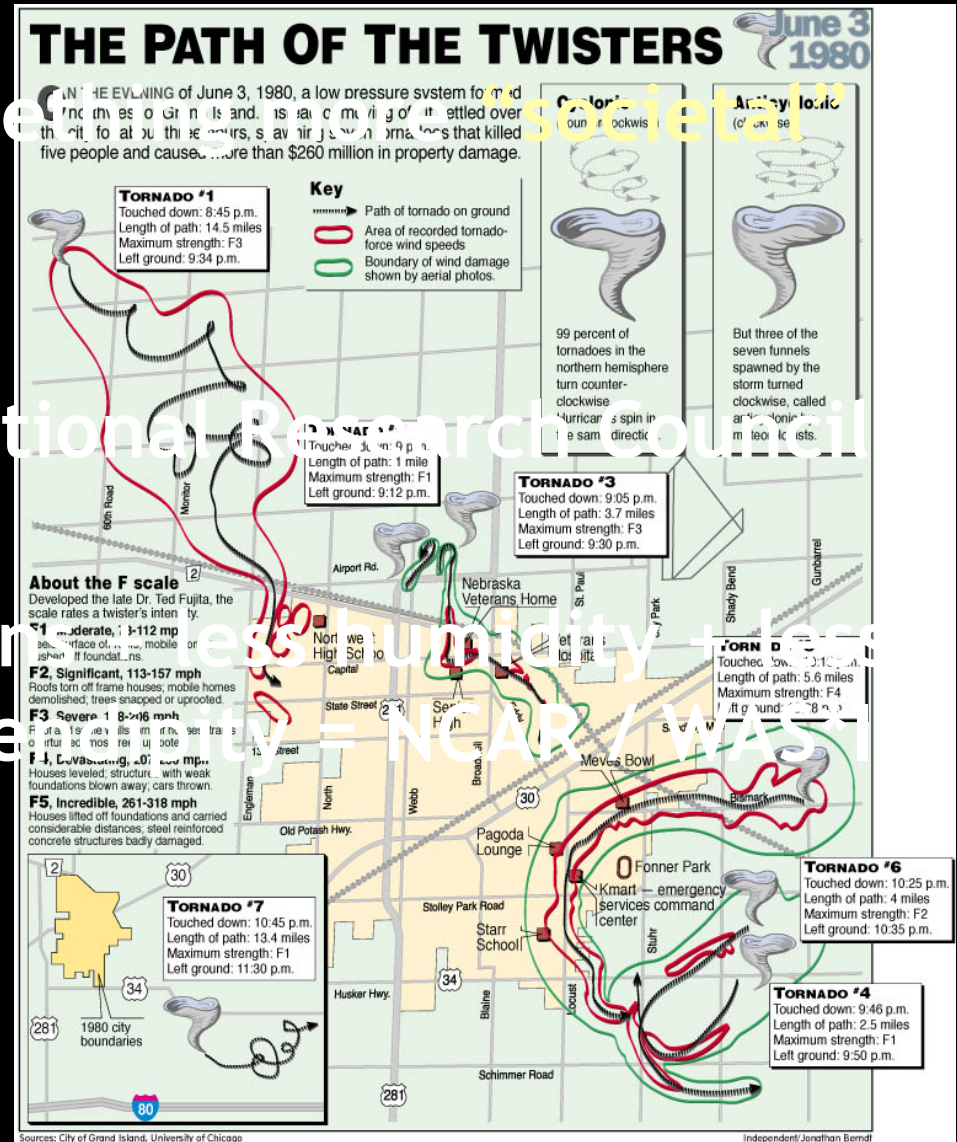
**W\*O\*W TEAM of WAS \* Iusers**

**Heather Lazrus, Gina Eosco & Kim Klockow**

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# Julie Demuth's background

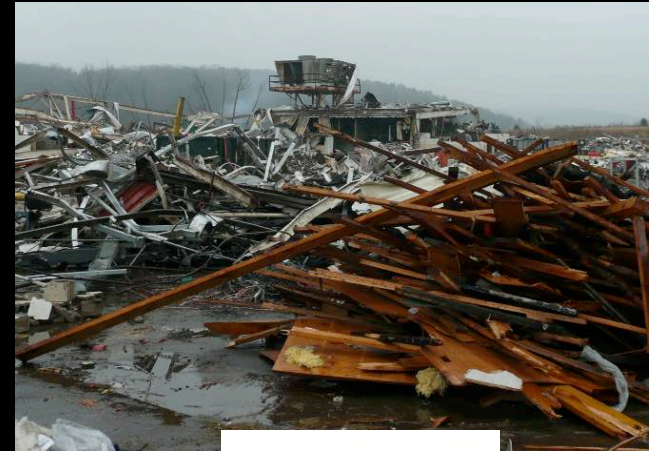
- **\*Always\*** wanted to be a meteorologist
- B.S. from Nebraska
- M.S. from Colorado
- Science policy at National State University Washington, D.C.
- My love for mountain people + a little serene



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# Julie in action – moving from WAS to IS

- People's sources, perceptions, decision-making during extreme weather events
  - **More Saturday!**
- Perceptions, preferences, use for weather forecast uncertainty info
  - **More Wednesday!**
- **NOW ... my big PhD decision**



Chance  
T-Storms  
Lo: 41°F

Pop: 10%

# Sheldon Drobot's background

- Formally trained as a geographer & an atmospheric scientist
- Science policy at the National Research Council (Board on Atmospheric Sciences & Climate; Polar Research Board)
- Research scientist at the University of Colorado



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# Sheldon in action – moving from WAS to IS

- Impacts of a declining sea-ice cover
- Decision-making in hazardous weather events
  - Floods, winter storms



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## Jeff Lazo's background

# Societal Impacts Program

(aka Collaborative Program on the Societal and Economic Benefits of Weather Information)

WAS\*IS Summer 2008



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# After 30 years of being...

- Frustrated at being a social science

ADD ON

with no enduring impacts

- Left out of major scientific initiatives



Attempting to rescue a SUV in Malibu

Being encouraged but kept separate & unequal

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# WAS\*IS addresses two persistent issues



“I want to do work that integrates meteorology & societal impacts BUT...

- I don't know how, and...
- I don't know anyone else who does this kind of work”

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# WAS\*IS Vision

To change the weather enterprise by *comprehensively & sustainably* integrating social science into meteorological research & practice



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# WAS\*IS Mission

1. Build an interdisciplinary community of practitioners, researchers, & stakeholders – from the grassroots up – who are *dedicated to the integration of meteorology & social science*



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# Emphasis on *capacity building*

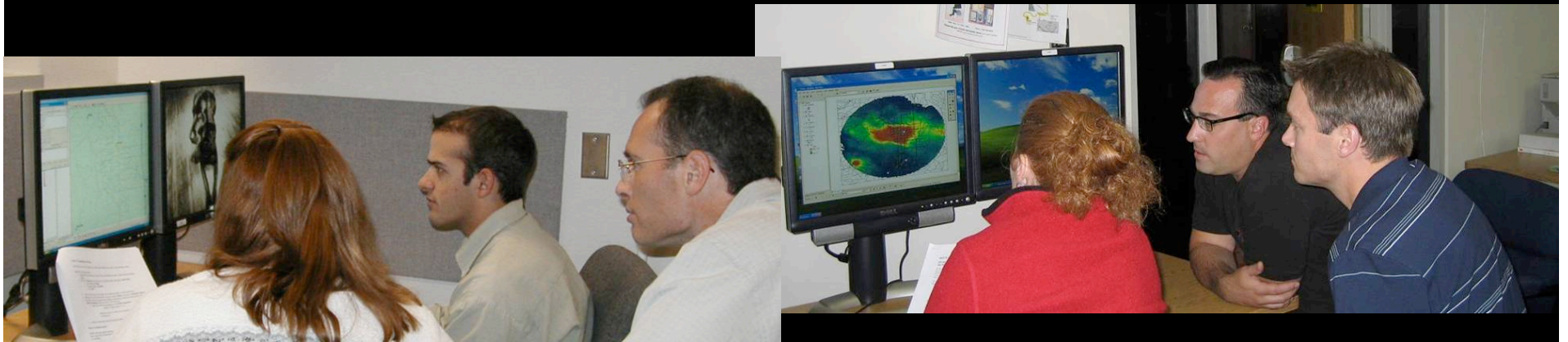
- Lifelong friends and colleagues!
- This week we're doing...
  - 5-minute introductions
  - Videotaping **\*NEW\***
  - 30-minute breaks
  - Sessions to meet other WAS\*ISers and friends
  - Group dinners
- We'll brainstorm later this week about what else we can do to keep us all connected!



# WAS\*IS Mission

2. Provide opportunities to learn and examine ideas, methods, and examples related to integrated weather-society work

- Tools - GIS, surveys, qualitative methods
- Concepts - problem definition, speaking the same language, end-to-end-to-end process
- Topics - risk perception, vulnerability, resilience



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# The WAS\*IS Adventure

- Began as 1 workshop ... now 6 (so far)!
  - Original 2-part Boulder WAS\*IS (Nov 2005, Mar 2006)
  - Condensed 3-day Norman WAS\*IS (April 2006)
  - Summer WAS\*IS (July 2006)
  - Australia WAS\*IS (end of January 2007)
  - Summer WAS \* IS (July 2007)

**NOW ... 2008 Summer WAS\*IS!**

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**As of August 15, 2008, 171 WAS\*ISers!**

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# So much has happened so far!

- New research ... jobs ... collaborations ... ways of doing business ... publications ... weather and society courses ... advanced WAS\*IS workshops ...
- Visibility, events, and presentations at conferences and meetings
- Compendium of WAS\*IS success stories

2008 WAS\*ISers ...

What additional, new, and exciting things will you add to this list?

**Greg Mortenson's *Three Cups of Tea* analogy** *One Man's Mission to Promote Peace . . . One School at a Time* (Best selling book about building schools in Afghanistan & Pakistan)

- 1st cup- stranger
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> cup- honored guest
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> cup- you're part of family... takes years
- 
- With 171 official **WAS\*ISers** & hundreds of other like-minded hard-workers
  - Social science & policy are having our 2<sup>nd</sup> cup of tea with AMS & meteorology— **We're not family yet - but we're no longer strangers**



# Your time at WAS\*IS

- What WAS\*IS is depends on YOU!
  - On the agenda
  - Discussions
- Brainstorming sessions!
  - Further discuss topics?
  - Start planning projects?

# Summer 2008 WAS\*IS Particularities

- Building on earlier workshop lessons
  - **MORE OPEN TIME FOR DISCUSSIONS** and active participation from current & earlier WAS\*ISers
- More opportunities to network
  - **Friends of WAS\*IS reception (Friday)**
  - **American Meteorological Society Summer Community Meeting (Monday)**
- More & more private sector participation ... including broadcast meteorologists!
- WAS\*ISers with already at least 2 hats
- Others to be determined!

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# Barriers WAS\*ISers confront & overcome

1. **POWERlessness: I want to do it but I don't know how**
2. **Social science methods are a mystery: (E.g., surveys are not encouraged)**
3. **Disciplinary blinders: "I'm not a meteorologist, I'm an emergency manager"**

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# Barriers WAS\*ISers confront & overcome

4. I can't do it right so I won't do it at all --  
**Need for "Satisficing"! And learn from our experiences!**
5. It's not in my job description

**Perceive yourself as a  
*charismatic policy entrepreneur***

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# WAS\*IS Ground Rules ...

- **NEW boundaries & vocabularies**
- **ACTIVE & RESPECTFUL** listening & talking
- **No acronyms**
- All ideas are welcome
- **Attend all sessions**

**BE BRAVE**

**AGENDA open to allow WAS\*IS identities to emerge & develop for sustainable activities after our week together ends**

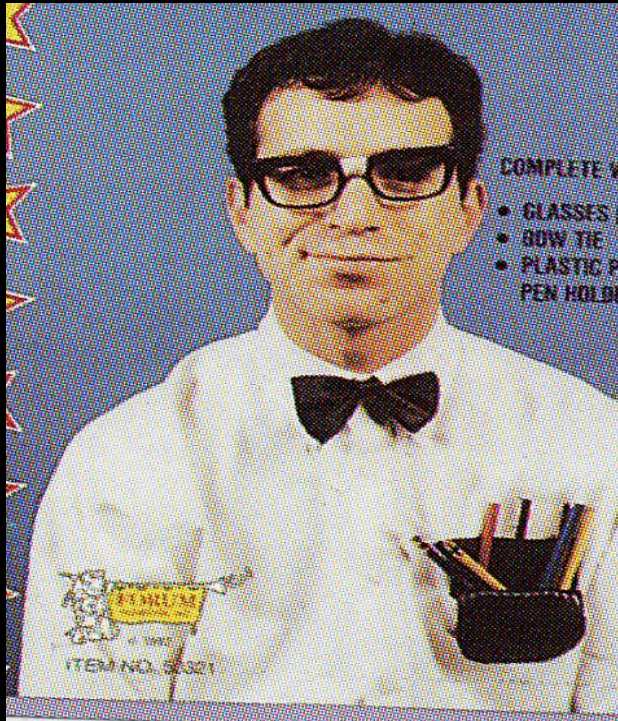
We have idealistic positive outlooks

We are not defensive

We pay attention to **substance & STYLE**

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# WAS\*IS means changing from WAS to IS



WAS physical scientist  
goes to WAS \* IS workshop



Becomes WAS social scientist!

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**Moving from WAS to IS...is not an instant transition!  
MOVE *REQUIRES* CONNECTIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS**

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# Important things to keep in mind

- We're only scratching the surface this week
- We have many goals and paths
- We have great ideas, passion, & energy ... but we don't necessarily have the answers!
- This work can be very hard and takes time to do well ... we are addressing very hard questions!
- **WAS\*ISers** are in it for the long haul

**We must understand & appreciate the complexities!**

# Some SUMMER WAS\*IS measures of success -- Toward culture change

1. A new community of scholars & practitioners -  
**use each other's materials!** - ideas for  
presentations, publications, proposals
2. Examples of new alliances/removed barriers
3. Practical new & tried methods

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# Summer 2008 WAS\*IS launch - RECAP

- One-week workshop
- Commitment to Change!
- The ELITE, BEST & the BRIGHTEST

**MODEST GOAL –**  
***CHANGING the culture from WAS to IS***

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# Remember Margaret Mead's words:

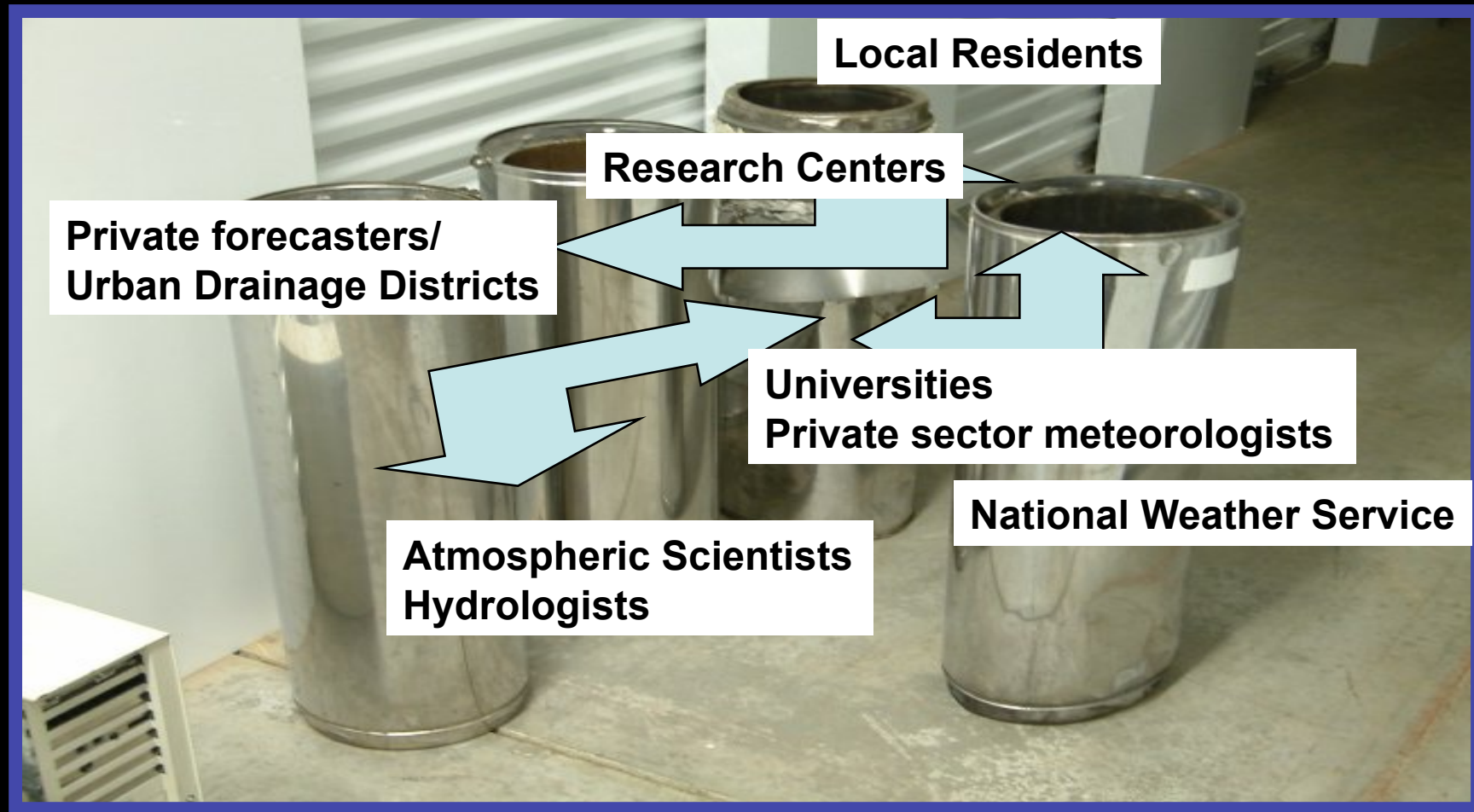
Never doubt that a small, group of thoughtful, committed people\* can change the world.

Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

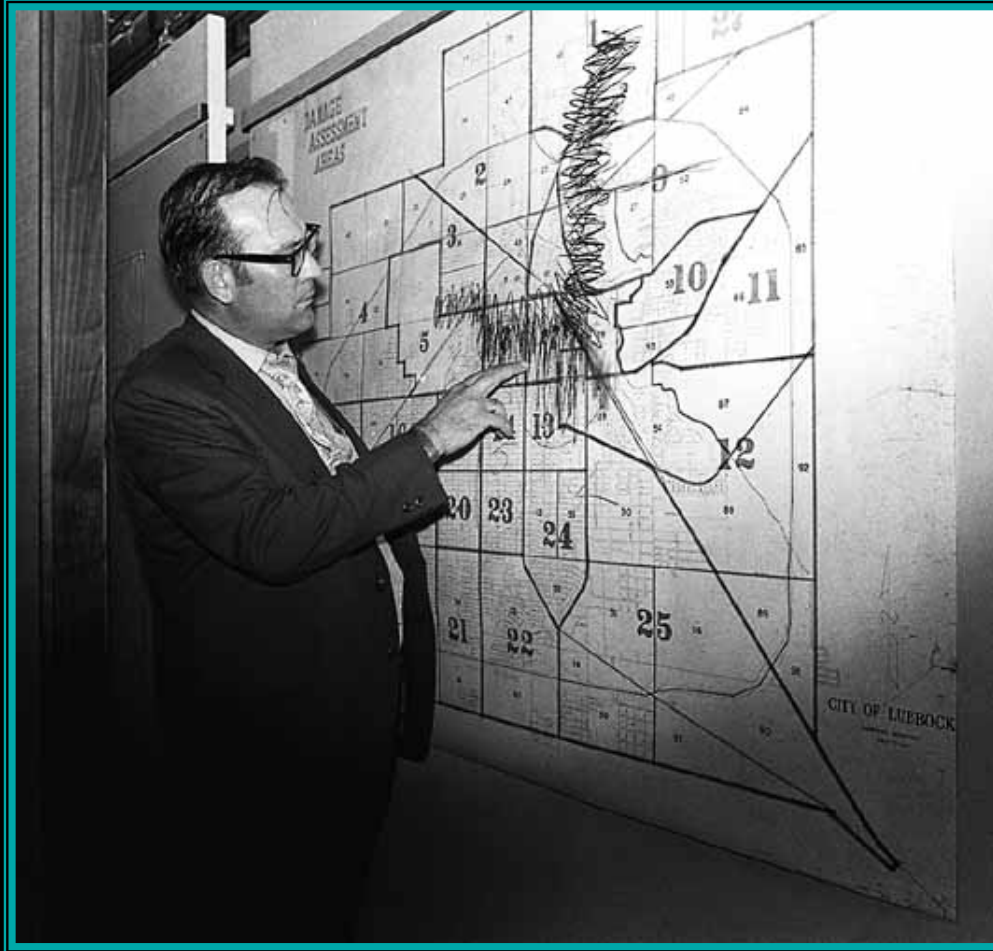
(\* of **WAS\*ISers**)

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**WAS\*IS** succeeds when stovepipes are not the model -  
Bring social science into existing programs & research  
efforts in sustainable ways - NOW



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What did the most influential players  
look like in meteorology prior to 2005  
**WAS\*IS?**

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**WAS \* ISers are NOT the same people with new technologies!**



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# The new fiesta - 2008 SUMMER WAS \* ISers!



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# WAS\*IS

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Now let's get to work!

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