

Sarah Watson

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Education

Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

May, 2017

Edward J. Bloustein School for Planning and Public Policy

Master of Public Policy: Climate Adaptation Policy

Master of City and Regional Planning: Coastal Resilience Planning

Certificate: Human Dimensions of Environmental Change

Temple University – School of Communications and Theater

May, 2006

Bachelor of Arts – Journalism

Relevant Experience

S.C. Sea Grant Consortium/Carolinas Integrated Sciences and Assessments

October, 2017 – Current

Coastal Climate and Resilience Specialist

The Baldwin Group at National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Sept., 2015 – Sept., 2017

Risk Communication Consultant for the **Office for Coastal Management, Learning Services Division**

- Conceptualized and developed risk communication training and educational materials for floodplain managers and local officials, helping them improve public outreach and engagement.
- Developed coastal resilience public education materials that apply risk communication best practices and meet FEMA Community Rating System outreach guidelines.
- Provided coastal hazards-related risk communication consultation, education, and training to local and state government officials, outreach professionals, engineers, and other flood-preparedness practitioners.
- Assisted with development and delivery of a new one-day risk communication training, which was piloted in June, 2017 and will be delivered nationally.
- Assisted New Jersey-based research teams with developing effective communication strategies about climate change and sea level rise projections and impacts.
- Facilitated dialogue between boundary organizations, local, state, and federal officials, and research scientists about hazard mitigation outreach and public education.

New Jersey Future

June, 2015 – August, 2015

Communication and Community Engagement Intern

- Developed and wrote a series of fact sheet templates designed to engage key constituents and decision-makers about aging urban sewer infrastructure and water quality problems.
- Collaborated with boundary organizations, and local and state officials to identify specific problems and potential solutions that could be incorporated into outreach strategies..

Environmental Analysis and Communications Group

January, 2014 – May, 2015

Graduate Research Assistant

- Researched, wrote, and helped prepare white papers and reports about climate change impacts on various sectors, climate adaptation processes, coastal resilience, and climate change communication.
- Co-researched and wrote a white paper on stakeholder perspectives about public health and climate impacts.
- Evaluated the Getting to Resilience (GTR) decision-support tool, and identified communication and process improvements, which were implemented in 2016.
- Developed and wrote a communication and engagement training module for the GTR decision-support tool.
- Collaborated with scientists from multiple disciplines to translate applicable research to practitioners.

The Press of Atlantic City

April, 2010 – January, 2014

Environment and News Staff Writer

- Conceived and developed complex story-telling projects about coastal hazards, which required collaboration and project management with multiple departments on tight deadlines.
- Acted as an informal community liaison following Hurricane Sandy, providing individual-level explanations of fast-changing state and federal flood policy to residents and local officials.
- Wrote extensively about FEMA Region 2 Coastal RiskMap development process and changing NFIP policies, including Biggert-Waters Act implementation and the release of 2012 advisory base flood maps.

The (Lynchburg) News & Advance

October, 2006 – April, 2010

Government and Environment Staff Writer

- Reported on general news for multiple local governments and local, regional, and state environmental issues, including local comprehensive planning, regional infrastructure planning, and water resources.

Selected Skills

- Facilitation and training, which incorporates instructional design, adult learning theory, and social science research related to risk perception and communication.
- Community-Based Social Marketing as a method to identify and target behavior change.
- Qualitative and quantitative research design, execution, and analysis, with a specialty in interviewing, focus groups, and survey research design.
- Proficient with ArcGIS, Microsoft Office, and Adobe Creative Suite, including InDesign and Premier Pro.
- Extensive experience with SPSS, NVivo, content management systems including Wordpress and Drupal, and instant polling systems including Poll Everywhere and Turning Point.

Selected Publications

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office for Coastal Management (2016.) [*Social Science Tools for Coastal Programs: Risk Communication Basics*](#). Charleston, S.C.

New Jersey Climate Adaptation Alliance. (2014.) [*Stakeholder Engagement Report: Public Health. Climate Change Preparedness in New Jersey*](#). Edited by George T. DiFerdinando, Jr., Sarah Watson and Marjorie B. Kaplan. New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University.

Selected Presentations and Training Sessions

2017 National Adaptation Forum, St. Paul, Minn.

May 9, 2017

Poster: Tough Question! Using Real World Scenarios to Teach Effective Climate and Risk Communication Techniques

2017 Pinelands Short Course, Stockton University, Galloway, N.J.

March 12, 2017

Presentation: Is Anyone Listening? Why people may not hear you when you talk about climate change

American Shore and Beach Preservation Society Annual Conference, Long Branch, N.J.

October 27, 2016

Presentation: Challenging Questions: Using Real World Scenarios to Teach Effective Climate and Risk Communication Methods In New Jersey

Barnegat Bay Partnership Education Summit, Toms River, N.J.

April 6, 2016

Presentation: Talking Climate isn't Easy

Training Session: Role-play for informal science educators about coastal risk communication

NOAA Social Coast Forum, Charleston, S.C.

February 10, 2016

Presentation: Crafting The Climate Talk: A new card game to teach professionals effective climate and sea level rise risk communication techniques

New Jersey Floodplain Managers Association Annual Conference, Atlantic City, N.J.

October 22, 2015

Presentation and facilitated panel: Communicating Flood and Climate Risks

Mid-Atlantic Regional Climate Symposium, New Brunswick, N.J.

November 21, 2014

Poster: Stakeholder Views of Public Health Climate Change Preparedness in New Jersey

Selected Awards and Honors

James J. Gallagher Family Fellowship

2014

Provide research funding for an internal New Jersey Climate Adaptation Alliance study about urban coastal climate adaptation practices.

Media Award - New Jersey Association of Floodplain Managers

2013

State floodplain management organization's annual media award for "providing resources and information to the public involving Hurricane Sandy recovery and changes to national and state-level flood policy."

Fellow - Metcalf Institute for Marine and Environmental Reporting

2013

Competitively selected to attend a week-long science immersion program at the University of Rhode Island.

New Jersey Press Association

2011 – 2013

Multiple journalism awards for coverage, including 1st place for environmental reporting in 2012.

Virginia Press Association

2007 – 2010

Multiple journalism awards for coverage involving environmental issues, government, and agriculture

Selected Service and Memberships

- Member: American Society of Adaptation Professionals 2017 to current
- Member: American Shore and Beach Preservation Association 2016 - current
- Editor: Rutgers Association for Planning and Policy Students 2015-2016
- Journal referee - Urban Climate 2015