SNA Project / NOAA Community Leader Interview Questions

Hello [Interviewee name],

My name is [name] and, along with my colleagues from Abt Associates and Greene Street Communications, we will be conducting the interview today. Thank you so much for taking time out of your busy schedule and agreeing to participate in this interview.

We are conducting a Social Network Analysis Study for the National Weather Service to examine how stakeholders understand water information. We are interested in the way water products are created, distributed, and disseminated. We are also interested in clarifying how these water products affect the decisions of emergency and water resource managers, first responders, community partners, and the general public as they prepare for, respond to, and recover from flooding events.

The questions we will ask today focus on how information is received from the National Weather Service and how it passed through the different levels of the community.

The data and results from this study will inform a social network analysis, a key in understanding how information travels across the NWS to their partners, and how communities receive and utilize the communications from the NWS.

For this study, we are examining two areas: Roanoke, Virginia and Greenbrier County, West Virginia. The information gathered from this study will inform a model the NWS is creating to better understand inland flooding events.

The interview will take no more than an hour, and you are welcome to skip or decide not to answer specific questions, and please know that you may stop the interview at any time. I would like to ask your permission to record this interview for note taking purposes only. We will delete the recording once we have analyzed the data. Are you ok with us recording this conversation?

Before we begin, do you have any questions for me?

Thank you again for your time and cooperation.

This interview is broken into two sections. The first section consists of a set of questions about your role as a community Leader. The second section consists of questions about your experience as a community member.

ROLE AS A COMMUNITY LEADER

1. As a community leader, what community/communities do you serve? How would you describe this community/these communities? What are distinctive characteristics about this community/geographic location (rural, historic, urban, campgrounds, etc.)? What are unique characteristics about the individuals who live in this particular community (age, race, gender, etc.)?

2. Is the community that you serve located near a body of water? If so, which one(s)? Does this community have a history of experiencing flooding? If so, what is unique about this community's history relative to flooding?

3. Are you aware of flooding protections for this community? If so, what are they? Are you aware of any flooding protections that might have been in place in the past but have changed over time?

4. Are there unique characteristics that make this community particularly resilient or vulnerable to flooding events? If so, what are they?

5. As a community leader, how were you prepared to deal with and respond to flooding for the community/communities that you serve? What have you specifically done to assist in the preparation and recovery of a flooding event?

6. During a flooding event,

    ● How does the community receive notifications about flooding in their community (phone, news, radio, social media, website, word of mouth, etc.)?

    ● How far in advance did the community members receive notifications, and what information was provided to them?

    ● Are there certain sources of information that the community members trust and/or don't trust?

     ● How do/did the community that you serve stay informed of the flooding status?

7. How could the lines of communication increase and improve between the community and Emergency Management, the weather offices, etc.?
   - Currently, what weather information do you communicate to those you serve?
   - How do you decide what information you communicate to your community? What is your decision-making process, and what questions are you asking yourself? What past experiences (both good or bad) have shaped your current thinking and behavior regarding flooding events?
   - What modes of communication are currently used? How do you receive the information?

8. Have the communities that you serve identified the most beneficial amount of time to receive flooding notifications? If so, what have they suggested? And why?

9. Does advance notice of flooding…
   - Help the community members that you serve? If so, in what ways?
   - What types of decisions are community members able to make with advance notice? What decisions do you need to make regarding a flooding event, and how does advance notice help or not help you make those decisions?
   - Are you aware of any decisions that the community members were able to make in the past with advance notice? Were the outcomes of those decisions good or bad? And what may be the impact of these past experiences (both good and bad) on the next flood event?

10. As a community leader, do you and/or the community members that you serve receive alerts from sources other than the National Weather Service? If so, who are the other sources? What type of alerts do they provide? Who do you share the additional information with and why?

11. After a flooding incident, in or around the community that you serve, have you been included in the discussions about what the community needs to restore itself?
    - If so, what has been discussed?
    - Who has been involved? Were NWS staff involved?
    - When and where did these discussions take place?

12. After a flooding incident,
    - Are there certain areas in the community that seem to receive less support and/or services?

- Are there certain groups of people that seem to receive less support and/or services?
- Are there certain groups of people that need to be taken into consideration (i.e. hikers, campers, bikers, etc.)?
- Are there certain groups of people that often get overlooked and/or not considered prior to, during, and following a flooding event (i.e. transient communities, differently abled, socio-economic levels, etc.)?

13. In your capacity as an organizational leader, how do you interact with other organizations, Emergency Managers, your local government, etc.? In what ways do you utilize them for help and support for the community/communities that you serve?

14. During, preceding, or after an inland flooding event,
    - Who do you depend on as a community leader? What individuals, organizations, agencies, resources etc. do you consider vital to you/as your support system?
    - What support do you solicit and/or receive from other organizations, Emergency Mangers, local government, etc. to assist your community?
    - What specific actions do you take to support your community and its members?
    - Have you learned "what to do and what not to do" from other organizations following such incidents? Please Explain

15. As a community leader, are there evacuation plans you refer to and share in the case of a weather event? If so, what are the spatial limits of the plan? For the communities that you serve, do you know if the community members have evacuation plans? If so, have you helped them develop these plans?

16. What, if any, additional information would be beneficial for us to know? Is there another community leader you think we should talk to?

ROLE AS A COMMUNITY MEMBER

17. Tell me about your home community. What are unique characteristics about your home community (rural, historic, urban, etc.)? What are unique characteristics about the individuals who live in your home community (age, race, gender, etc.)?

18. How have you personally experienced flooding in your home community? If so, what information, services and support did you receive that you found helpful (i.e. translator, interpreter, multi-media, etc.)? What wasn't helpful? What would have been helpful?

19. As a community member, regarding evacuation,

- Do you and your household have an evacuation plan? If so, what does it consist of and who helped you develop it?
- Do you know if your loved ones, outside of your household, have an evacuation plan?
- Do you and your loved ones know the community evacuation route?

20. If given advance notice of a flooding event, what steps do you take (i.e. shopping, packing, gas, etc.)?

21. During a flooding event,
     - How did you receive notifications about flooding in your home community (phone, news, radio, social media, website, word of mouth, etc.)?
     - How far in advance did you receive the notifications? Was this amount of time beneficial? What types of decisions were you able to make?
     - What information was provided?
     - Which source of information did you trust/not trust?
     - How do/did you stay aware of the current flooding status?
     - Do/did you receive alerts from sources other than the National Weather Service? If so, what sources provided you with information? What did you do with this information?

22. In instances where a flooding event has been predicted, how often did that event occur in your home community? Have you ever received any false alarms? If so, can you provide an estimate for how many false alarms you have experienced in a given period, such as a year? How have these false alarms, if any, impacted your trust in the warning system?

23. After a flooding incident, in or around your community, how have you been included in the discussions about what you and/or your community needs to restore itself? If so, where, how, and when did these discussions take place? [Probe to see if NWS staff were involved in these discussions]

24. As a community member, what individuals, organizations, agencies, and/or resources do you turn to and consider vital aspects/members of your support system?

25. What, if any, additional information would be beneficial for us to know?