Coastal Hazards Synthesis Assignment
December 5, 2008

The purpose of this assignment is to serve as a conclusion for the coastal hazards module and to continue to develop Co-07 and Co-08 presentation skills. The assignment has two parts:

Blog Entries: Every student (07 and 08) must a) initiate one blog entry; and b) respond to at least one blog entry from another student. The blog entries must center on coastal hazards but can include any number of things such as responding to a speaker or sharing a paper/article/op-ed that was read outside of class (provided it is relevant to the original concept – simply posting another piece cannot stand alone as an entry of value). Blog entries must be reflective pieces and not just a summary of events. The written product of the blog entries must be well constructed and arguments well supported by literature read during (and outside) this module. Use the blog entries as an opportunity to improve upon the feedback you received from your previous ecosystem services writing assignment. The blog entry that you initiate (a) must be completed by December 5th. Responses (b) should be posted by December 10th.

Presentations: The Co-07 and Co-08 cohorts will work together to develop presentations for class on December 5th. Working in groups, students will discuss how they plan to respond to the scenario described below using the information we gained in this module.

Hurricane Joy
It is late August 2009. Hurricane Joy is a powerful Category 3 storm offshore of Florida and north of the Bahamas. The National Hurricane Center has predicted a storm track that closely resembles that of the 1938 New England hurricane. The eye is projected to make landfall in 36 hours, and the projected storm track has the eye passing 80 miles to the west of Montauk, NY. This will put the coastal communities along RI’s south shore in the forward, right quadrant of the storm.

Students will approach the scenario as if they are coastal managers from the RI CRMC. These are the experts who will be consulted by state emergency management officials on how to prepare for, mitigate the effects of, and recover from a major hurricane. Hurricane Joy is projected to make landfall during late August, which will present additional challenges due to the influx of out-of-state tourists and the number of RI residents who live in second homes in the high risk coastal zone during the summer season. As in the 1938 storm, the greatest amount of damage will likely occur along the state’s south facing coastline.

Each group (comprised of three students) will be responsible for presenting one of the three stages in hurricane preparedness: mitigation, preparedness, and recovery (there are actually four stages, but “response” is the most dependent upon specific details of the scenario and is therefore not included). Group presentations should discuss a plan of action for the south shore in either preparing for, mitigating the effects of, or
recovering from Hurricane Joy. The plan of action is not expected to be a specific set of
recommendations, rather it should outline various strategies, identify where more
information would be needed and how one might go about getting that information.
Each group should prepare a seamless presentation, with smooth transitions between
speakers. Each presentation should be prepared using PowerPoint, during which each
person should speak for at least 5 minutes.

Since Carrie will be absent from class on December 5th, she will contribute by emailing
the CIIP faculty and students a short overview of papers/chapters that outline the stages
of emergency preparedness. These materials will be available by Friday, November
28th and students may then review them in preparation of the class presentations.

**Group “Mitigation”: Trisha, Rob, Nate**
Mitigation deals with long-term risk reduction. RI is due for a large storm and one could
hit any year now. How do you address the possibility that a hurricane may hit during the
peak of the summer tourist season when the hotels and summer homes are fully
occupied?

**Group “Preparation”: Brita, Bogdan, Nicole**
Preparation deals with constructing a plan of action for a particular event. The Category
3 hurricane anticipated is now barreling toward RI. How does RI best soften the blow
and lessen the impacts of Hurricane Joy in the peak tourist season?

**Group “Recovery”: Julia, Donald, Kim**
Although emergency response was swift, Hurricane Joy caused more loss of human life
and property damage in RI than originally anticipated. While the evacuation of coastal
communities was an overall success, the extent of inland flooding was higher than
expected. Statewide, damage estimates are in the hundreds of billions primarily
because of the increased development along the south shore since the last major storm
(1954). Now that Joy has devastated much of the state, how does RI begin to recover?

**Agenda**

9:00   Announcements
9:15   Group presentation on “mitigation”
9:35   Group presentation on “preparation”
9:55   Group presentation on “recovery”
10:15  Break
10:30  Round-table discussion about hurricane scenario; wrap up thoughts on Coastal
       Hazards module
11:30  Preparation for Dec 12th reflection day