

Campus-Community Resilience: Preparing Our Home for the Future

Kevin M. Dobson, Alexander R. Duffy, Jacob P. Moore, Athena M. Valkanos

Sustainability Dual Major, University of New Hampshire

Mentors: Jennifer Andrews, Cameron Wake

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Background

- Research component of a two-year UNH Campus-Community Resilience Assessment [1]
- Five weather events: extreme heat, extreme cold, ice and snow, drought, flooding [2]
- *Resilience*: ability of an area to absorb shocks or changes to the environment after a disruption in normal weather variances
- *Adaptation*: forming a plan of action to address the present, or rapidly approaching, impacts of climate change [3]
- Analyzing strengths and weaknesses in community resilience based on preparedness for weather events
- Smaller piece of larger project: collected data will be used to complete official assessment

Research Questions

- How resilient are certain UNH/Durham entities to extreme weather events?
- What level of knowledge and concern do UNH student leaders have of extreme weather events?

Methods

- Interviews: 24 people total
 - UNH Departments and Durham Offices
 - UNH Student Organization Leaders
- Content analysis: key themes

Results

- Stakeholders feel confident that UNH is prepared for extreme weather
- Emergency alert system in place for snow storms is efficient and successful model
- Primary concerns include safety of students and UNH faculty, along with health of town infrastructure
- Student's main priorities: marginalized groups, learning more about UNH resilience plan



Figure 1: The five extreme weather events threatening Durham, NH in order from greatest stakeholder awareness (left) to least awareness (right).

Discussion

- Perception that UNH/Durham is relatively resilient commonplace among both students and departments/offices
 - **“UNH has good measures in place to protect us and help us in the case of some sort of natural disaster.”**
 - – Student Leader, interview, March 2018
- Further analysis needed to distinguish perception from reality
- Snow storm alert system good structure to replicate for other extreme weather events
- Future work:
 - Address infrastructure gaps
 - Creative outreach campaign for students
 - Emphasize focus on marginalized groups
- Research will be included in the UNH Campus Community Resilience Assessment, May 2019

References

1. Maley, L. & L'Heureux, M. A. (2017) Initial Campus-Community Resilience Assessment.
2. Wake, C. P., Burakowski, E. A., Wilkinson, P., Hayhoe, K., Stoner, A., Keeley, C., & LaBranche, J. (2014). Climate change in southern New Hampshire: Past, present and future.
3. Biesbroek, Robbert G. et al. 2010. “Europe adapts to climate change: Comparing National Adaptation Strategies.” *Global Environmental Change* 20(3):440–50.