

Interactive comment on “Assessing the influence of an extended hurricane season on inland flooding potential in the Southeast United States” by Monica H. Stone and Sagy Cohen

Anonymous Referee #1

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The premise of this paper is simple and the methods are straightforward, and the topic is interesting. The authors quantify the change in flood risk in four southeastern U.S. drainage basins under the assumption that the Atlantic hurricane season would increase by one month at the beginning and one month at the end of the currently delineated tropical cyclone season. Such research is placed in the proper theoretical context, as the expected continued warming would leave ocean temperatures warm enough to sustain a tropical system for a larger number of months per year. Furthermore, the authors do a proper job, without getting too bogged down in tangential points, of introducing the reader to the somewhat conflicted literature on whether it would be the frequency and/or intensity of tropical cyclones that would increase under

C1

such warming. A minor point: I think that the wording is a bit strong on Page 3, Line 13, where the authors say, “This hypothesis was refuted by. . .” – at a minimum, a hypothesis can’t be refuted when one of the papers doing the refuting was written before the opposing papers, but more importantly, I think the jury is still out one which hypothesis is correct. That point notwithstanding, I like the theoretical set-up for the paper.

The primary theoretical/methodological weakness of the paper is the failure to account for synergistic effects of interactions between May or December tropical cyclones with extratropical systems. We all saw in 2012 (i.e., Sandy) how such interactions can cause greatly increased precipitation totals. At a bare minimum, the authors need to acknowledge this as a major weakness of the study.

The chief non-theoretical/methodological weakness is that the paper could have delivered the same message in perhaps 60% of the words. Even though I generally enjoyed reading the manuscript, I continually found myself a bit frustrated and thinking, “not again?!” when I read repetitious text or text that was unnecessary. If the text were tightened fairly significantly, I’m sure that I and many others would find the paper to be a nice contribution to the literature. I attach a marked-up version of the manuscript in the hope that this will assist the authors as they tighten the manuscript.

One other comment: Please insert the word “Atlantic” in the title and elsewhere in the text, to show that your study only considers one of the world’s tropical cyclone-vulnerable areas.

Please also note the supplement to this comment:

<http://www.nat-hazards-earth-syst-sci-discuss.net/nhess-2016-320/nhess-2016-320-RC1-supplement.pdf>

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C2