



Case Study: CLIMATE CHANGE

You are the police chief of a city with about a million inhabitants on the east coast of Florida. The changing climate and the resulting rise of the sea level, as well as recent weather events, have caused the local leaders and governmental officials to consider building dikes and sea walls along particular sections of the beach to prevent beach erosion and destruction of oceanfront property. Along with the sea wall and dikes, officials have considered plans to dredge an inlet presently used for recreational boating and fishing to build a major seaport for cruise ships and ocean-going freighters. Private investment will be sought to build hotels and other commercial properties within the new seaport. Sand from the dredging would be used to replenish the eroding beaches. The rising sea levels and building the sea wall, dikes, and commercial port would eliminate many current roads and require building new roads to accommodate the structural changes. To obtain property for the projects, the city will have to use the process of eminent domain. According to the plan, around 1,000 low-income homes will have to be razed to allow the building of the seaport. The residents of those homes will have to be relocated. To finance the major changes, property and sales taxes for city residents also would have to be raised.

In addition to eroding beaches and oceanfront property, rising sea levels also will contaminate local water tables. Hence, the supply of water for household and commercial use may be reduced. Water use for farms that surround the city also may become scarce. Also, the changing

climate will cause the winter dry season to be longer and more severe. The rainy season is predicted to be shorter, but it will have a higher number of severe rainstorms with high winds causing damage and possibly more severe local flooding.

The land contiguous to the city is owned by the local Seminole tribe and is part of their reservation. The tribe stated that they would build a casino if the city followed through with its plans to build the oceanport. But the tribe would only do this if the city promised to build a four-lane highway from the downtown area to the casino.

CASE STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Make two lists and identify the issues in the scenario that will affect the criminal justice system and the police directly and indirectly. Exhaust all possibilities.
2. Cross-check your answer to question one by making two more lists: How will the criminal justice system be affected by climate change and the planned changes?
3. What are the major threats and opportunities for the police department that will result from the changing climate and planned changes?
4. Given the effect the changes will have on the criminal justice system, what steps must your police department take to deal with the changes?



Think like an Administrator

For this exercise, take the role of the planner for the city police department of a large Midwestern city with a diminishing industrial base. Crime rates have remained stable for the last several years but the unemployment rate keeps creeping up. You recently read a report by a local prominent economist. The economist claims that the structure of the regional economy has changed and predicts that the national unemployment rate will fall to 6.5 percent in the near future, but the unemployment rate in the region for individuals under 30 will rise to 15 percent. Furthermore, the economist says the unemployment rate for young urban minorities will increase from the present 18 percent to as high as 30 percent by 2020. As the city planner, you need to predict within reasonable limits how your police department will be affected by the increase in unemployment rates