

Laura Elaine Daza  
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Assignment Week 1 - Article Summary

The article titled *How Climate Migration Will Reshape America* by Abrahm Lustgarten details the multifold climate change threats that the US faces, and which would likely induce a massive inner migration in the next 60 years of about 4 million Americans. Lustgarten states that the intense consequences of a changing climate will have an almost ubiquitous effect in the country. Yet, northern states are most likely to receive the biggest migrant influx who are escaping from high exposure to mega fires, increased average temperatures, extreme hurricane events, sea-level rise, drought, and a significant decline in crop yields. Lustgarten also points out that counties and neighborhoods with less tax payer revenue continue to disproportionately bear the burden of climate change given that they have received less investment in mitigating infrastructure. Last but not least, the author explains that some states have issued policies to ensure that insurance companies continue insuring homeowners in high-risk areas. In the case of Florida, insurers have left, thus transferring liability to local and federal governments who have absorbed a risk too high to sustain. In conclusion, the South of the US will be nearly uninhabitable by the end of the century, economic loss will be rampant in that region, as well as the number of deaths due to weather related events.

One quote that stuck with me from this article says: '*It will soon prove too expensive to maintain the status quo.*' Not often do we think of changing the current state of affairs because **not** doing so is tremendously costly. Even more, the later we do it, the worse it can be. We have lived for many years of climate denial and negligence, thinking that it will never be our turn to move away. Yet, that moment is here. I think it is human to fear change, especially when it means being uncomfortable, but the earlier we start thinking about the possibilities, the better off we will be. We can't rebuild some of these areas, and it is my job as a planner to start foreseeing the possibilities of that change and evaluating the equity implications. My initial assumption when I read the title of this article was that people living in low-income areas and who have less housing stability would be more likely to have to migrate; however, this article illuminated the fact that even high income earners and homeowners who live in areas affected by extreme climate conditions are also vulnerable to inevitable relocation. This article got me to further reflect on my role as an agent of change and planner to ensure that people will have a safe place to shelter away from these extreme conditions because I acknowledge that governments have systematically failed to provide safe housing alternatives for all. I see spatial visualization as a powerful projection tool to get me thinking about where we can build a future in harmony with the environment, while also avoiding an exacerbation of the current homeless crisis.