

Louisiana Local Coastal Programs' Outlook

From the La. Department
of Natural Resources (DNR)



From Assistant Secretary Keith Lovell Office of Coastal Management



Local Coastal Management Program Managers, Parish Officials, Natural Resources Agency Personnel and Louisiana Coastal Stakeholders:

In this issue of the Louisiana Local Coastal Programs' Outlook we are focusing on some Louisiana Coastal Parishes' and the Office of Coastal Management's, partnership projects to assist in Louisiana's coastal management, resiliency, safety and protection efforts.

We discuss my office's utilization of the NOAA federal grant program enhancement's five-year assessment and strategy process to improve coastal resources regulation – specifically, two Louisiana success story projects where our office partnered with Louisiana Parish Local Coastal Management Programs to improve the safety and quality of life for Louisiana citizens. We also offer information on Gulf of Mexico Coastal Training Program opportunities, National Flood Insurance Program support, introduce our NOAA/Louisiana Coastal Management Liaison, and more.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact the OCM staff with any questions, concerns or requests for assistance or to discuss future topics you would like to see covered in this [your](#) Louisiana coastal parish newsletter.

Sincerely,

Keith Lovell, Assistant Secretary
Louisiana Department of Natural Resources

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St. Tammany Parish Creates Subdivision Ordinance to Enhance Resilience to Flooding Events with Assistance from the Louisiana Office of Coastal Management

Submitted by Marian Hanisko, NOAA Office for Coastal Management

Floodwaters resulting from heavy rain or tropical storm events have often trapped St. Tammany Parish residents in their homes and prevented emergency vehicle access to provide critical services. The St. Tammany Parish Local Coastal Management Program (LCMP) sought to make its coastal area more resilient to flooding events and help mitigate this public safety issue. Staff members from St. Tammany Parish LCMP and the Louisiana Office of Coastal Management partnered together to develop a solution utilizing the NOAA Office for Coastal Management's Coastal Zone Enhancement Program's (Section 309 of the Coastal Zone Management Act) assessment and strategy process to identify a resolution to address this need.

The first step involved building a project team of local planning staff members and engineers, state and local coastal programs staff members, legal experts and local department heads. The various parish agencies partnered with the Louisiana Office of Coastal Management and the Louisiana Sea Grant's Law and Policy Program to conduct an inventory of existing state and local policies, ordinances, and rules and regulations that address hazard risk reduction, and determine any gaps that could be corrected with new or improved policies. The team decided that a change to the parish subdivision regulation in the coastal area would increase the resilience of new development, improve emergency response capabilities, and also reduce transportation infrastructure maintenance costs long term. The team also convinced the parish council members that environmental and public safety benefits outweighed any potential detrimental impacts to parish economic development.

The project team looked at historical surge information from Hurricane Gustav, which made landfall in 2008, to determine the new road elevation requirement. Most roads at or above six feet of elevation did not flood during Gustav. The team also looked at ADvanced CIRCulation Model, (ADCIRC), applications that model tides and wind-driven circulation and provide analysis of hurricane storm surge and flooding. The six-foot road elevation was equivalent to the ADCIRC water surface elevation from a 10-year storm event. A road elevation of six feet would leave three inches on the crown of the road, which is passable by most vehicles.

Tools used in the model ordinance's scientific analysis process included:

- Inventory of existing resilience policies and regulations,
- Gap analysis to determine where new policies could be implemented or existing policies revised to enhance resilience, and
- ADCIRC Modeling.

This project resulted in the following new regulatory language in the St. Tammany Parish Coastal Zone Management Ordinance:

"In order to increase resiliency of development in the coastal zone, the minimum elevation for any street as measured at the lowest point of the travel lanes shall be at least 6.0' NAVD'88GEOID 03. No Local Coastal Use Permit in St. Tammany Parish shall be issued for application with roads below this elevation. However, where building roads to at least 6.0' NAVD'88GEOID 03 is infeasible, such as but not limited to transitions to existing roads, the Department of Engineering may waive this requirement."

For more information on the model ordinance development process:

Contact: David Brunet, St. Tammany Parish Coastal Management Program Administrator.

dpbrunet@stpgov.org

In addition, the team conducted outreach for this project focusing on assisting other parishes in the Louisiana coastal zone to help increase their resilience and hazard mitigation efforts. St. Tammany Parish staff continues to consult with the permitting department to determine whether developers have to alter plans because of the new ordinance. The Louisiana Office of Coastal Management and other Louisiana parish coastal management programs are currently exploring a new opportunity utilizing the 309 assessment and strategy process to assist the Louisiana coastal parishes in developing a checklist to help speed up reviews and assist with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community Rating System process.

St. Tammany Parish Creates a Model Subdivision Ordinance, Continued

For more information on the 309 assessments and strategies process or for information on current 309 projects: Contact Jon Truxillo, Coastal Resources Scientist with the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources (jon.truxillo@la.gov)

Lessons Learned from the Model Ordinance Project:

Enlist the Help of an Expert - Involving a drainage engineer at the beginning of the project was essential in developing a defensible elevation for the ordinance. The engineer used historical data from flooding events to arrive at a practical elevation.

Involve Decision-Makers Early - Engaging the St. Tammany Parish Council with the proposed ordinance changes earlier in the process would have increased efficiency, since it took multiple meetings between the council and the planning and zoning commission before the ordinance was approved.

Partnerships Pay Dividends - Having good working relationships with parish partners (e.g., planning and permit office staff, engineers, coastal staff and department heads) helped the team both identify realistic goals for the project and accomplish them.

Partner Agencies that assisted St. Tammany Parish on the Coastal Community Resilience Project:

[Louisiana Department of Natural Resources, Office of Coastal Management](#)
[Louisiana Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management](#)
[Louisiana Sea Grant](#)
[Louisiana State University Coastal Sustainability Studio](#)
[Center for Planning Excellence](#)
[Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program](#)
[NOAA Office for Coastal Management](#)

Flooded Louisiana Roadway



Louisiana Chenier Protection Success Story

Protection of a Coastal Protective Land Form Utilizing Improved Local Parish Coastal Management Regulation

Submitted by Jon Truxillo, LDMR/OCM

The chenier ridges of southwest coastal Louisiana in Cameron Parish are unique perched sandy ridges, which rest on top of clay foundations along a marshy seaward facing tidal shoreline. Cheniers were created during the Pleistocene Era by river sediments being pushed westward by shoreline currents of the Gulf of Mexico. These unique chenier ridges of southwestern Louisiana are the region's first, best and in many cases only, line of defense from storm surge and flooding in a region that is wholly devoid of hurricane protection levees.

The word chenier comes from the French word for oak tree because the higher elevation ridges above the low surrounding marshes allowed for the colonization of live oak forests. The chenier ridges are an unusual and distinctive habitat and play important environmental, structural protection and cultural roles as they serve to provide: important wildlife habitat not available in the adjacent marsh, as well as hazard mitigation and storm surge protection. They often serve as the solitary land form suitable for urbanization and other activities that sustain the unique communities and the culture of the region.

After the devastation of 2005's Hurricane Rita and 2008's Hurricane Ike, the Cameron Parish Local Coastal Management Program (LCMP) became concerned when it recognized that there were insufficient enforceable legal polices available to require broad based coastal permit review, conditional approval or outright denial of some of the potentially destructive practices, e.g. sand or clay mining, historically being allowed on the parish's chenier ridges. In response to these deficiencies the Cameron LCMP asked Louisiana's Office of Coastal Management (OCM) to assist in the development of a multi-tasked coastal management enhancement program assessment and strategy designed to scientifically assess the situation and offer remediation and relief options.

The initial portions of strategy were assessment of current conditions and the cheniers protective resiliency functions, as well as determination of the appropriate coastal activities that should, or should not, be allowed on the Chenier ridges via an examination of the cheniers geological functions and the anthropogenic activities historically and currently being permitted and occurring on the ridges: e.g. grazing, forestry, farming, roads, urbanization, oil and gas exploration and production, and mining. The OCM also prepared an analysis of various policy actions and procedures that could provide assistance to the Cameron LCMP in their efforts to protect this important natural landform. In addition, OCM assisted in concerted education efforts to the public and to the Cameron Parish Police Jury regarding the important storm protection and resilience utility of the chenier ridges.

One of the regulatory solutions OCM identified and provided to the Cameron LCMP was technical assistance in drafting a new parish ordinance that requires a rigorous review and thorough justification of any activities that may impact the cheniers' integrity. In 2012 Cameron Parish passed a new ordinance that called for detailed and specific justification, alternatives, and mitigation for activities that may negatively impact cheniers. This new, more restrictive, ordinance prohibits known destructive practices and calls for the remediation of any lesser damaging impacts. This ordinance has successfully stopped the destructive practice of sand and clay mining on the parish's protective chenier ridges and provides for mitigation and restoration policy to address non-destructive chenier uses.



Northerly aerial view of a mined sand pit on a Cameron Parish Chenier taken after Hurricane Ike

Note section of washed-out highway

Gulf of Mexico Coastal Training Program: Building Regional Capacity to Improve the Health of the Gulf Coast Communities

Submitted by Jacqueline Rose, Gulf of Mexico Coastal Training Program

If you have the need for training programs that connect coastal professionals in your area with leading scientists, experts, and tools that help make more informed decisions to protect both ecosystems and the economy, the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Training Program (Gulf CTP) has funding and coordination resources available to assist with planning and hosting training programs relevant to coastal communities' local training needs.

In 2014, 71 percent of wetlands loss in the United States occurred in the Gulf of Mexico. From our own rivers, lakes, bays, and beyond, the Gulf of Mexico drains over 60 percent of the contiguous United States landmass and comprises a unique assortment of coastal habitats and cultures that decorate the 1,600+ mile Gulf Coast. Water is fluid; it connects people and disregards boundary lines drawn on political maps. While the demands upon the Gulf's resources are massive, the Gulf CTP is leading an enthusiastic effort to extend training programs and science-based alternatives and solutions to coastal professionals responsible for making decisions about how we manage Gulf Coast communities to help meet these demands.

The Gulf CTP works with local communities to identify scientists and experts to address locally-relevant alternatives and solutions related to topics like community resilience, ecosystem services, and disaster response so coastal managers and practitioners can address the priority issues affecting the Gulf region. These priority issues include: habitat restoration, land conservation, water quality and conservation, low impact development, and climate change adaptation and mitigation. Workshops are tailored to meet the local needs and interests of coastal communities and account for the vast diversity of ecosystems along the Gulf Coast. Dozens of workshops are hosted across all five Gulf States to engage a larger network of coastal professionals and communities working together locally and regionally to improve the health of the entire Gulf of Mexico

Since 2007, Weeks Bay Foundation has been the basecamp and fiscal sponsor for the Gulf CTP, providing professional training programs with funding from multiple entities including the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, NOAA's Coastal Storms Program and the Environmental Protection Agency's Gulf of Mexico Program. Through the years, [the Gulf CTP team](#) expanded partnerships with Sea Grant, National Estuary Programs, and many NGOs, universities, municipalities, state coastal programs, and community organizations passionate about providing up-to-date scientific and technical training so coastal professionals can make more informed decisions to safeguard the coastal communities we call home.

The Gulf CTP sponsors trainings and skills-building workshops to serve coastal professionals who manage and make decisions that affect our beaches, marshes, mud flats, mangroves, cypress swamps, coastal forests, rivers, and estuaries where land meets the sea – those delicate, captivating edges of the Earth that we rely on for healthy seafood and wildlife nurseries, ground water recharge, protection from storms, cultural belonging, natural beauty, and serenity. These wetland nurseries also support employment and economic interests derived from recreation, tourism, energy production, and transportation and port industries.

For a list of past and future workshops, including PDFs of speaker presentations, please visit <http://gulfocealtraining.org/>.



Communicating your Science Workshops
Mission-Aransas Reserve, Texas

Gulf of Mexico Coastal Training Program, Continued

If you are interested in hosting one of these trainings opportunities in your area, or for more information, please contact Jacqueline Rose at jacqueline@weeksbay.org or 251-929-8466. Gulf CTP would also love to hear your comments and suggestions about new trainings that may be useful for your community! For information on scheduled workshops and to download materials and presentations from past workshops, please visit: <http://gulfalliancetraining.com/>.

For assistance or information on scheduling Louisiana coastal training or workshops, you can also contact Jon Truxillo at: jon.truxillo@la.gov or 225-342-3394.



Texas Coastal Marsh



Coastal Health and Resource Management (CHARM) Training in Apalachicola, Florida



Jacqueline Rose, Regional Coordinator, Gulf of Mexico Coastal Training Program

Jacqueline is the Regional Coordinator for the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Training Program, working closely with the Gulf CTP Team and other partners to provide Gulf-wide trainings that address common issues, as well as local needs. Her duties include conducting needs assessments with coastal resource managers and decision-makers to identify training needs and working with the Gulf CTP Team to develop additional workshops and training programs that help address those needs.

Jacqueline has 18 years of project management experience. She worked on the California Marine Protected Area Education & Outreach Initiative and was a TogetherGreen Fellow and a marine and watershed educator working on water quality issues in Monterey Bay. Prior to coming to the Gulf, she worked at Smithsonian Marine Station and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary Foundation. Jacqueline earned a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies & Latino Studies from University of California, Santa Cruz. She conducted research on the relationship between marine protection and tourism at Lincoln University in New Zealand and is the Founder of SeaVibe Foundation. As a native of North Carolina, she is excited to return to the South to serve the Gulf Region

Meet NOAA's Office for Coastal Management Liaison for Louisiana: Kristin Ransom

Submitted by Jon Truxillo, LDNR/OCM

Kristin Ransom is the NOAA liaison to the Louisiana Coastal Zone Management program. Being a NOAA liaison means a couple of different things; Kristin works with Louisiana on grant and administrative tasks, as well as specific issue-related technical assistance. For example, Kristin is responsible for working with Louisiana DNR to put together the annual coastal zone management grant award. She is also responsible for managing the federal money and any necessary changes to the award. This grant goes to Louisiana DNR to implement the state's Louisiana Coastal Resources Program (LCRP), which also includes financial and technical assistance to the LCRP's parish local coastal management programs. Kristin is also responsible for reviewing any changes to the LCRP for NOAA, including reviewing new local coastal parish management programs being developed by additional Louisiana parish partners.

As a member of the Gulf of Mexico Office for NOAA's Office for Coastal Management, Kristin is responsible for connecting partners, which includes the Louisiana DNR Office of Coastal Management, to resources or activities they need. She is involved in technical assistance on programs and projects like coastal resiliency and the community rating system, blue carbon and ecosystem services, and meeting facilitation.

Kristin joined NOAA's Gulf Coast Office for Coastal Management in July of 2014 as a Coastal Management Specialist with The Baldwin Group. Kristin also serves as the NOAA Office for Coastal Management liaison to the Coastal Zone Management programs of Texas and Mississippi.

Kristin has experience addressing coastal management issues related to coastal access, public trust, and coastal resilience. Kristin came to the Office for Coastal Management from the Mission-Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve in Port Aransas, Texas where she served as a Coastal Training Program Coordinator. During her time as Coordinator, the focus of much of the Coastal Training Program was on coastal community resilience and planning. Kristin has a Master of Science in Marine Policy from the University of Delaware, and a Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology from the University of North Carolina – Wilmington.

The Louisiana Department of Natural Resources' Office of Coastal Management and our Louisiana Parish Local Coastal Management Program Partners have voiced repeated kudos for Kristin and just how pleasing it is to have such a friendly, charming and dedicated coastal professional in our corner. If you should have questions, need assistance or need any connections to NOAA, please contact Kristin at kristin.ransom@noaa.gov

Kristin Ransom, Louisiana NOAA Liaison



Fort St. Phillip, Louisiana

Maximize National Flood Insurance Program/Community Rating System Points with a Program for Public Information

Submitted by Melissa Daigle, Louisiana Sea Grant

Many coastal communities utilize the Community Rating System (CRS) to lower the cost of flood insurance for residents and business owners. By earning points, communities can move through ten “class” rankings, each with a slightly larger discount on flood insurance rates. Communities enrolled in the program earn points by engaging in action that is above and beyond the base requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program. Eligible activities are outlined in the 2013 Coordinator’s Manual and are divided into four broad categories: public information activities, mapping and regulations, flood damage reduction activities, and warning and response. This article will discuss how to earn points using the Program for Public Information, which is classified as a public information activity.

There are seven classifications of activities found under the public information category: elevation certificates, map information services, outreach projects, hazard disclosure, flood protection information, flood protection assistance, and flood insurance promotion. The Program for Public Information (PPI) falls under activity outreach projects. The PPI is a document created by a committee, which, while not earning points as a stand-alone activity, provides a 40 percent multiplier on outreach projects included in it. It is a great way for communities to maximize the points earned on projects that area already being implemented.

There are several steps to creating a PPI. First, the community must set up a committee, membership requirements of which are set out in the CRS Coordinator’s Manual. The committee will meet regularly during the document drafting period in order to ensure that the PPI is tailored to the needs of their community. Another way the committee will tailor the document to the community is by conducting an assessment of the community’s outreach needs. The priority messages will be identified, along with outreach projects to convey those messages to target audiences; these outreach projects can be completed by the local government or an outside organization or business entity. Once the community completes a thorough assessment, the PPI is drafted, adopted by the community’s governing body, and then implemented. The committee will continue to meet at least annually to evaluate the program and make modifications, as necessary.

While a PPI does take an investment of time on the part of the local government and other stakeholders, it allows communities to get the most points possible for their outreach projects. If an outreach project is listed in a PPI, it receives a 40 percent multiplier. Additionally, if the outreach project is delivered by someone other than the local government, an additional 30 percent multiplier can be applied. These multipliers can add up to a substantial increase in CRS points. Most importantly, a more informed community is a more resilient community; creating a well thought out outreach plan will make sure that the information needs of the community are being met in the most impactful way possible. For more information on CRS/PPI contact Melissa Daigle at mtrosc2@lsu.edu

Information for this article comes from the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System Coordinator’s Manual: FIA-15/2013. This document expires on December 31, 2016.



Louisiana Alligator



Great Egret

DNR Co-Ed Softball Start 2016 Season Drilling the Opposition

Submitted by Jon Truxillo LDNR/OCM

The emergence of summer means pool parties, barbeques, sunscreen, vacations, and for many at the Louisiana DNR office softball! For over a decade, DNR employees have been able to enjoy an “after-work stress reliever” by playing and watching co-ed softball in the Louisiana Capital Complex Softball League (CCSL) for State Employees. The formulation of this league brought coworkers together to take part in a fun filled environment that builds rapport among co-workers and healthy competition with other state agencies. DNR players represent almost every division of the department; with Office of Conservation, Office of Coastal Management, Office of Mineral Resources, and even the Office of the Secretary participating.

For many years within the CCSL, under the leadership of OCM’s veteran Karl Morgan, the DNR softball teams have been tough opponents in the league. Recently, Coach Morgan passed the torch of the team’s management to OCM’s extraordinary, all-around, athlete, Cornelius Williams and a passionate excitement was rekindled all over again in the office. In year one under the new coaching management, the DNR Drillers had an exceptional year by finishing the regular season with a 6-3 record. In post season play, the Drillers surged in the playoffs and won three straight games, ultimately defeating the Governor’s Capital (GC) team by the final score of 17-9 to be crowned the **2014 CCSL Champions**. The Drillers had won their first championship in the team’s history. In year two under Coach Williams, with a championship to defend, the Drillers had yet another banner year and tallied enough regular season wins (6-2 record) to be crowned the CCSL Legends Division Champions and earned a #2 seeding in the playoffs. Unfortunately, the Drillers’ playoff run was cut short after a first round loss to the Department of Child and Family Services, who went on to win the 2015 CCSL Championship.

Entering into the third season under the management of Coach Williams, the Drillers have proven to be a dominating force in the CCSL and have started the year off with fireworks. In the first four games, the Drillers have scored an impressive 72 runs while allowing only 22. Chasing another championship, the Drillers currently own a 5-0 record and currently hold the seat of 1st place in the league. Over the past three years, the Drillers hold an overall record of 20-6, and are looking forward to adding more “W’s” to the win column. The Drillers have undoubtedly brought great pride to the Department of Natural Resources, and have been responsible for generating sparks of energy and excitement all around the office. We wish the team well and hope that they continue their winning tradition in bringing the championship trophy back home. Interested in learning more about Louisiana State Employee Softball contact - cornelius.williams@la.gov



The 2014 DNR Drillers defeated Governor’s Capitol by a final score of 17-9 to be crowned the 2014 CCSL Champions)

2016 DNR DRILLERS ROSTER

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Louisiana Department of Natural Resources

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