

CZMA CLIMATE CHANGE AND COASTAL HAZARDS E-NEWS UPDATE #5

The Coastal Programs Division of NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management distributes the CZMA Climate Change and Coastal Hazards E-News Update to keep state and territory coastal program managers and climate change/coastal hazards staff informed about climate change (as it pertains to coastal hazards) and coastal hazards activities. If you would like to receive the Climate Change and Coastal Hazards E-News Update, please e-mail christa.rabenold@noaa.gov. For previous issues, see the E-News Update archive at <http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/news/climateneWSletter.html>.

In this Issue:

NOAA UPDATES

- NOAA Web Site Centralizes Resources for Climate Change Adaptation Planning
- StormSmart Coasts Network Launches Pilot Web Site for Mississippi

OTHER FEDERAL UPDATES

- FEMA Counts Down to Hurricane Season
- DHS Publishes Inventory of Federal Disaster Assistance Programs
- New Report Confirms Levees and Floodwalls Not Sole Answer for New Orleans
- USFWS Makes Sea Level Rise Simulations Available Online
- EPA Answers Common Questions about Climate Change Science

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

- Florida Coastal Management Program to Include Resilient Communities Focus
- Delaware Holds Stakeholder Workshop to Launch Development of Plan to Adapt to Sea Level Rise
- Maryland Launches Coast-Smart Communities Initiative through Interactive Summit
- New Hampshire Releases Climate Action Plan
- Study Examines Potential Effects of Climate Change in Washington State
- Reports Project Economic Costs of Failing to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Oregon and Washington
- Blueprint Proposes Steps to Reduce Coastal Risks and Losses

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

- Coastal Zone 2009
- 3rd Annual HAZUS Conference - Connecting the Pieces for Mitigation

NOAA UPDATES

NOAA Web Site Centralizes Resources for Climate Change Adaptation Planning

<http://community.csc.noaa.gov/climateadaptation/>

The NOAA Coastal Services Center has released the Coastal Climate Adaptation Web site, which focuses on adaptation-related resources, such as local and state plans, new policies, case studies, risk and vulnerability assessments, and decision-support tools. The Web site provides one location for access to numerous resources for states and communities to address climate change impacts and develop their own plans. The site is also building a community of practice on coastal climate adaptation via a forum where users can suggest new resources, engage in dialog on the issues, and submit comments and questions, providing a mechanism for climate and coastal management communities to engage on the topic.

StormSmart Coasts Network Launches Pilot Web Site for Mississippi

<http://stormsmartcoasts.org/>

In mid-May, Mississippi joined Massachusetts as a pilot state for the new StormSmart Coasts Network. The StormSmart Coasts Network, a partnership between the NOAA Coastal Storms Program, NOAA RiskWise Partnership, the Gulf of Mexico Alliance Coastal Community Resilience Team, and others, is a Web resource dedicated to helping coastal decision makers address the challenges of storms, flooding, sea level rise, and climate change. This network of state and local sites serves as a definitive place to find and share the best resilience-related resources and tools available. Sites for the remaining states of the Gulf of Mexico and New

England will follow this summer. The StormSmart Coasts sites include six main sections: Before the Storm, During the Storm, After the Storm, Funding, Your Community, and an interactive forum.

OTHER FEDERAL UPDATES

FEMA Counts Down to Hurricane Season

http://www.fema.gov/help/widgets/countdown_index.shtml

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers a free Web “widget” to place on your Web site that counts down the number of days until hurricane season.

DHS Publishes Inventory of Federal Disaster Assistance Programs

http://www.dhs.gov/xoig/assets/mgmttrpts/OIG_09-49_Apr09.pdf

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Office of Inspector General has released a “Compendium of Disaster Assistance Programs” (56 pp.), an inventory of federal programs that provide assistance (financial and nonfinancial) to individuals, states, localities, nonprofit organizations, and businesses impacted by a disaster.

New Report Confirms Levees and Floodwalls Not Sole Answer for New Orleans

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12647

According to a new report by the National Academy of Engineering and the National Research Council, levees and floodwalls cannot provide absolute protection for New Orleans against overtopping or failure in extreme events. “The New Orleans Hurricane Protection System: Assessing Pre-Katrina Vulnerability and Improving Mitigation and Preparedness” (68 pp.) reviews the Interagency Performance Evaluation Task Force (IPET) draft final report, reflects on the lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, and offers advice for how to improve the hurricane-protection system in the New Orleans area. (IPET was formed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to examine why New Orleans’ hurricane-protection system failed during Hurricane Katrina and how it can be strengthened.) The report concludes that comprehensive flood planning and risk management is needed and should be based on a combination of structural and nonstructural measures, including the option of voluntary relocations, floodproofing and elevation of structures, and evacuation and suggests that the 100-year flood level is inadequate for flood protection structures in heavily populated areas such as New Orleans, where the failure of the system would be catastrophic.

USFWS Makes Sea Level Rise Simulations Available Online

<http://www.slamview.org/>

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has released an Internet tool that allows the public to view simulations of sea level rise, helping them to understand the potential impacts of climate change on sea levels. The Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM)-View is a Web browser-based application that displays map pairs of the same area, each at different sea levels. In addition to inundation patterns, SLAMM also looks at sediment and organic matter accumulation on the marshes as well as erosion from tides and storms. It also predicts changes in coastal wetlands and shorelines. Users can select different scenarios based on time and severity. Regional simulations are currently available for a number of areas, including coastal South Carolina, coastal Georgia, Puget Sound, and Chesapeake Bay. As data becomes available, more map layers and simulations will be made available.

EPA Answers Common Questions about Climate Change Science

http://epa.gov/climatechange/downloads/Climate_Basics.pdf

The U.S. Environmental Agency (EPA) has released a new document, “Frequently Asked Questions about Climate Change: Back to Basics” (8 pp.), that addresses some of the most common questions about the science of global warming and climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s Fourth Assessment Report (2007) serves as the key reference for the document, which answers questions in the categories of Greenhouse Effect; Climate Change, Global Warming, and Global Change Defined; and Present and Future Climate Change.

ADDITIONAL UPDATES

Florida Coastal Management Program to Include Resilient Communities Focus

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/cmp/grants/fcpmgrants.htm>

The Florida Coastal Management Program has added a Resilient Communities component to its Coastal Partnership Initiative competitive grant program. The new category will be included in the fiscal year 2010-2011 cycle to help coastal communities prepare for and respond to the effects of climate change, natural hazard events, and disasters. Project examples include conducting

vulnerability analyses and risk assessments; developing postdisaster redevelopment plans and business continuity plans; developing climate change adaptation strategies for incorporation in local comprehensive plans or ordinances; developing policies, guidance, and best management practices; restoring and preserving coastal wetlands and shorelines; and developing energy efficiency and alternative energy strategies. Eligible applicants will include Florida's coastal governments, National Estuary Programs (NEP), and National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERR). Public and private colleges, universities, regional planning councils, and nonprofit groups may also apply if an eligible local government, NEP, or NERR agrees to participate as a partner.

New Hampshire Releases Climate Action Plan

http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/air/tsb/tps/climate/action_plan/nh_climate_action_plan.htm

"The New Hampshire Climate Action Plan: A Plan for New Hampshire's Energy, Environmental and Economic Development Future" (82 pp.) focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions while providing the greatest possible long-term economic benefits to the citizens of the state, but also includes a brief chapter (6 pp.) on adaptation. An overarching strategy of the plan includes seven actions to plan for addressing existing and potential climate change impacts. Among the actions is development of an adaptation plan, strengthening protection of the state's natural systems, and increasing resilience to extreme weather events.

Delaware Holds Stakeholder Workshop to Launch Development of Plan to Adapt to Sea Level Rise

<http://www.swc.dnrec.delaware.gov/coastal/Pages/SeaLevelRiseAdaptation.aspx>

Over the next several years, Delaware will be developing a Statewide Sea Level Rise Adaptation Plan. To kickoff the planning process, the state held an issue identification workshop in March that attracted approximately 100 stakeholders, including representatives from all levels of government, nonprofit organizations, academia, and business interests. The goals of the workshop were to raise awareness about how sea level rise may impact Delaware and to initiate a dialog about these impacts among stakeholders. Workshop participants identified and described sea level rise issues that will be used in establishing the priority issues for the adaptation plan. Results from the workshop will also be used as the basis for the formation of a coordination committee, technical working groups, and research and monitoring projects. Many more opportunities for stakeholder engagement will be provided during plan development. For more information, contact Susan Love at (302) 739-9283 or Susan.Love@state.de.us.

Maryland Launches Coast-Smart Communities Initiative through Interactive Summit

<http://maryland.coastsmart.org/>

In April, Maryland launched the Coast-Smart Communities Initiative, a new state program committed to providing technical and financial assistance to coastal communities to help address their vulnerability to the impacts of climate change. The initiative was kicked off with an interactive summit, "Building Coast-Smart Communities: How will Maryland Adapt to Climate Change?" which was jointly created by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the Consensus Building Institute, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology-U.S. Geological Survey Science Impact Collaborative. Over 170 participants, including state and local elected officials, city planners, emergency managers, and other community stakeholders, gathered to work through a simulated consensus-building exercise. Climate change adaptation measures were debated using a scorecard based on real-world actions that Maryland's coastal communities can take to protect their people, infrastructure, and investments from future risk. The DNR encourages communities in Maryland and across the country to use the simulation to raise awareness about the challenges local governments face from a changing climate and to demonstrate the value of a facilitated negotiation. Materials are available free online. For more information, contact Gwen Shaughnessy at (410) 260-8743 or gshaughnessy@dnr.state.md.us.

Study Examines Potential Effects of Climate Change in Washington State

http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/scientific_forecast2009.htm

<http://cses.washington.edu/cig/res/ia/waccia.shtml>

"The Washington Climate Change Impacts Assessment: Evaluating Washington's Future in a Changing Climate" (742 pp.) is a comprehensive assessment of potential climate change impacts led by the University of Washington Climate Impacts Group as mandated by the Washington State Legislature in 2007. Using global climate models scaled to the Pacific Northwest, the report projects climate change impacts at different levels of emissions and provides information deemed critical to planning for climate change in the next 50 years. Findings suggest that with moderate reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, Washington can expect to see higher temperatures, changes in precipitation patterns, and lower water supplies and hydropower production in the summer. Along the coast, medium projections of sea level rise, which will shift beaches inland, increase bluff erosion, and endanger coastal structures, are 2 to 13 inches (depending on location) by 2100.

Reports Project Economic Costs of Failing to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Oregon and Washington

http://climlead.uoregon.edu/programs/climate_economics.html

"An Overview of Potential Economic Costs to Oregon of a Business-As-Usual Approach to Climate Change" (55 pp.) and the

similarly titled “An Overview of Potential Economic Costs to Washington of a Business-As-Usual Approach to Climate Change” (55 pp.) illustrate the potential costs to families, businesses, and communities in Oregon and Washington if nothing more is done to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. According to the reports from the Climate Leadership Initiative at the University of Oregon, by 2020, Oregon is likely to experience some \$3.3 billion in associated annual costs, including \$64 million in increased coastal and storm damage, and Washington can anticipate annual costs around \$3.8 billion, with \$72 million in increased coastal and storm damage.

Blueprint Proposes Steps to Reduce Coastal Risks and Losses

http://www.heinzcenter.org/publications/PDF/Resilient_Coasts_Blueprint_Final.pdf

“Resilient Coasts Blueprint” (9 pp.), from the Heinz Center and Ceres, provides a framework of policy changes and actions that could reduce economic losses from future storms and rising sea levels along U.S. coastlines. It was developed to advise the new administration, Congress, state and local leaders, and their counterparts in the private sector as they confront climate change. The blueprint identifies seven basic principles fundamental to coastal resiliency in the face of intensifying hazards: 1) identify and fill critical gaps in scientific understanding and develop the tools and methodologies necessary for incorporating climate change into risk assessments and risk mitigation decisions, 2) require risk-based land use planning, 3) design adaptable infrastructure and building code standards to meet future risk, 4) strengthen ecosystems as part of a risk mitigation strategy, 5) develop flexible adaptation plans, 6) maintain a viable private property and casualty insurance market, and 7) integrate climate change impacts into due diligence for investment and lending.

CONFERENCES AND MEETINGS

Coastal Zone 2009

Boston, Massachusetts

July 19-23, 2009

<http://www.csc.noaa.gov/cz/>

3rd Annual HAZUS Conference - Connecting the Pieces for Mitigation

Raleigh, North Carolina

August 10-12, 2009

http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/hazus/hz_conf.shtm

Share Your Thoughts

If you have news that you would like to include in future updates or suggestions about the type of information you would like to see here, please e-mail christa.rabenold@noaa.gov.