



SERPPAS Coastal Resilience and Regional Adaptation Work Group Call Summary

Monday, September 12, 2022; 2pm ET

Theme and Speakers

Mississippi Coastal Resilience Efforts

- Michelle Covi (mcovi@uga.edu) – Coastal Resilience DoD Liaison/CRRA Work Group Lead
- Rhonda Price (rhonda.price@dmr.ms.gov) – Director of Office of Restoration and Resiliency for Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
- Eric Sparks (eric.sparks@msstate.edu) – Coastal Ecology Specialist for Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium

Materials

[Meeting Recording](#)

[Presentation: MS Department of Marine Resources](#)

[Presentation: MASGC](#)

Discussion

- Welcome & Speaker Introduction – Michelle Covi, Coastal Resilience DoD Liaison/Work Group Lead
 - Today's meeting features the final states of our deep dive into resilience efforts across the SERPPAS states. The group heard from Rhonda Price, Director of Office of Restoration and Resiliency for Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, and Eric Sparks, Coastal Ecology Specialist for Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium.
- [Mississippi Department of Marine Resources](#) – Rhonda Price, Director of Office of Restoration and Resiliency
 - The [Office of Coastal Restoration and Resiliency](#) (CRR) was established in 2014 with the purpose to develop long range multi-state strategies to help restore and create coastal features that protect and build a natural environment of coastal resources in Mississippi and to provide enhancements for coastal communities, ecosystems, and economies to become more resilient to coastal hazards.
 - CRR collaborates with local communities, state agencies around the coast, federal agencies, and nongovernmental organizations and universities. These partnerships establish and assist in planning, permitting, and implementation of major coastal restoration and resilience projects that are focused on habitat, fisheries, communities and structural or physically protective resilience projects.
 - CRR is unique as it is the only Department of Marine Resources office that works throughout the state, specifically the six coastal counties. Many projects are based on partnerships and collaboration. One current multiple state project is the structured decision making (SDM) to co-



produce an actionable science plan in support of LA, MS, AL Coastal System (LMACS) Water Quality Management

- The goal of this project is to create a new paradigm in management of the LMACS under which state and federal agencies collaborate on the identification and implementation of portfolios of restoration projects and management actions that improve water quality, increase habitat, reduce risk of harmful algal blooms, and enhance resiliency of coastal communities.
- This project was guided by the Governors Oyster plan, which set an ecological and production goal of 1 million sacks of oysters per year.
- Another project is the South Mississippi Coastal Map Revision project, with the goal to update the Mississippi Coastal flood analysis and mapping for the three counties of Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson. This update will ensure that these counties have maps which reflect the current flood risk based on modern ground elevation data, updated modeling, and inclusion of local resilient features.
- One of CRR's closest partnerships is with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA), a regional partnership that focuses on enhancing the environmental and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico. The network includes state agencies, federal agencies, universities, industries, and nonprofits. Over 1,000 people and 165 organizations make up GOMA. Ms. Price serves as the coastal resilience team chair for GOMA.
- Upcoming projects for the Coastal Resilience Team are a green design project implementation, a community resilience self-assessment and implementation, and a marina resilience assessment and implementation
- [Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium](#) – Eric Sparks, Coastal Ecology Specialist
 - Living shorelines are protected, stabilized coastal edges made from material such as plants, sand, or rocks, as opposed to a hardened shoreline, which could take form as a concrete wall or other hard structure. Benefits of having living shorelines include supporting robust root systems, water quality improvement, while hardened shorelines can lead to shoreline habitat loss and increasing erosion.
 - The Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium (MASGC) is not only working to learn and share new information about living shorelines, but outreach teams research related rules and regulations, analyze the cost to install them, and raise awareness so more property owners and managers know about erosion control options.
 - MASGC also participates in living shorelines restoration projects with volunteers, teachers, and students. One such project, the Keesler project, is a large-scale living shoreline in the Back Bay of Biloxi. Keesler AFB had identified wetlands management as a primary environmental goal, and MASGC had developed a draft plan based on previous living shoreline projects, and their impacts on birds.
- Q&A and Discussion
 - To Rhonda, are there any groups or organization that CRR has been trying to get in contact with or are interested in working with?
 - For local military installations, it can be difficult to know to whom to reach out until they contact you; CRR is also interested in working with tribal communities.
 - What were some of the challenges with getting started and working with a military installation?



- Because Keesler AFB reached out first, communication was easy in the beginning. However, as the project has gone on, finding the correct people to speak with has been difficult.
- Michelle has developed a best practices document for working with installations to assist with this challenge: https://gacoast.uga.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/Best-Practices-Report_DOD.pdf
- If a landowner decides to implement a living shoreline, but adjacent landowners do not, are there any potential impacts on the living shoreline?
 - This is something MASGC works into the design, upstream downstream management. As far as impacts, every single time they've done a project with adjacent hard shoreline, the neighbor ends up requesting a living shoreline project on their property.
- How involved dock and break wall construction companies in promoting or issuing living shorelines as an option?
 - MASGC has partnered with the Department of Marine Resources to provide contractor trainings throughout Mississippi, and MASGC often gets calls from contractors with questions regarding living shorelines.
- Other Updates – Michelle Covi
 - The Sea Grant/SERPPAS workshop, *Advancing Coastal Resilience in Southeast Defense Communities*, was successful. About 50 people attended, and we will be putting together a workshop report to share. Mississippi representatives were not able to attend so a Mississippi-specific workshop is being planned for early 2023.
 - Our meeting for next month will be a week delayed from our usual meeting time to October 17th, and we are hoping to have another report from the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC).

The next work group meeting will be Monday, October 17, 2022, at 2pm EST.