



# SERPPAS Coastal Resilience and Regional Adaptation Work Group Call Summary

**April 10, 2022; 2pm ET**

## Theme and Speakers

*Theme: OLDCC Installation Resilience Projects Series*

Welcome & Speaker Introduction – Michelle Covi, Coastal Resilience DoD Liaison, GA Sea Grant (CRRAWG Work Group Lead)

Tom Herrington, Nick Ginther, Harriet Honigfeld – NWS Earle/Monmouth County Resilience Planning and Projects: Lessons Learned

SERPPAS Updates- Addie Thornton

## Materials

[Meeting Recording](#)

[Presentation: Supporting the Mission of NWS Earle](#)

[Presentation: Building Partnerships and Capacity for the Successful Implementation of DoD Coastal Resilience Projects at Naval Weapons Station Earle](#)

[Planning Board Joint Land Use Study NWS Earle](#)

## Discussion

- Welcome & Speaker Introduction – Michelle Covi, Coastal Resilience DoD Liaison/Work Group Lead
- Supporting the Mission of NWS Earle – Harriet Honigfeld, Supervising Planner, Monmouth County Division of Planning
  - Monmouth County is in Central New Jersey, includes Sandy Hook, close to New York City and is home to NWS Earle
  - Naval Weapons Station Earle (NWS Earle) covers 12,000 acres, is very important to the Navy's ammunition supply capabilities, has an ordnance storage area in the middle of the County and has a road and rail network to a 2.9 mile long trident pier.
  - The issues and concerns for the area relate to climate and coastal resilience, storm surge and storm water capacity, incompatible land use, water supply, encroachment, and wildfires. Superstorm Sandy impacted the area a decade ago and caused \$50 million damage to the pier and associated infrastructure.
  - Leveraging Grants
    - They started with one initial grant from OLDCC and then received two subsequent grants from OLDCC. All three grants required a 10% in-kind match (used County salaries).
    - After the first study was published in 2017, an additional \$10 million in grants has been received from various federal agencies (REPI, NFWF, NDAA, and the Navy itself) to the base and its partners.



- 2017 NWS Earle Joint Land Use Study (JLUS)
  - Identified threats to the sustainable operation of the base, described tactics to improve post-storm resilience, and analyzed compatible and incompatible land use in the 13 towns with the closest proximity.
- REPI Land Preservation Grant
  - The grant was obtained after the 2017 study was published. It took several tries, but eventually was awarded over \$2 million to do agricultural and conservation easements. It is a multi-year agreement between Monmouth County, Monmouth Conservation foundation, and the Navy. Closing on a 19-acre piece very soon. They had to craft their own conservation easement, which took longer than expected.
  - Preserved over \$12 million of agricultural easements and \$23 million of open space.
- JLUS II
  - The second OLDCC grant was focused more on coastal resilience and environmental restoration projects. Potential projects were evaluated using a weighted GIS model looking at particular criteria based on stakeholder input.
  - 11 sites were selected and many of them have active restoration projects taking place at this time that are being led by a number of other local, state, and federal agencies.
- JLUS III- Bayshore Coastal Resilience Design Study
  - This study included a more in-depth field research and more detailed designs from 2 of the 11 sites from JLUS II. The two sites were chosen partly because they included public lands and because they complemented other projects already occurring in the area.
  - Tidal monitoring wells were installed for a number of months to produce real data to better understand if there were any constrictions to the flow of water and ground truth models. They also looked at future conditions, sea level rise and other potential flood issues.
  - The second part of JLUS III was titled Next Steps to Compatibility Planning Study which was a further analysis of the 5 closest municipalities to the base. Particular attention was paid to high-density development and land uses that draw large numbers of people close to the base. The focus was on compatible use and affordable housing.
- Future Plans
  - Extend REPI multi-year agreement, supporting partners supporting JLUS studies, consider applying to become a Sentinel Landscape, and strengthen the bridge between JLUS work and FEMA CRS (Community Rating System) support program.
- Building Partnerships and Capacity for the Successful Implementation of DoD Coastal Resilience Projects at Naval Weapons Station Earle
  - Tom Herrington, Associate Director, Urban Coast Institute at Monmouth University & Resilient communities and Economies Specialist, New Jersey Sea Grant Consortium
  - Nick Ginther – Community Planning and Liaison Officer – Naval Weapons Station Earle
  - Meredith Comi, Director, NY/NJ Bay Keeper Coastal Restoration Program (not present)
  - Facility Resilience
    - Issues: Increased frequency and severity of coastal storm events and sea level rise and all the associated disruptions in normal base functionalities and operations. In Sandy saw storm surge of 7 feet of inundation where pier hits land and non-operable for a



- week. They do not have mapped flood zones for the pier and have been challenged to assess the risk to the pier.
- Response: Increased awareness of increasing extreme weather events and the need to adapt to climate change and sea level rise, identification of nature-based solutions, and conduct 4 JLUS studies with Monmouth County.
  - There is a need look out into the surrounding Bayshore communities due to Highway 36 being where the utility lines come through so that emergency response vehicles can be sent out to the correct locations.
- Building Capacity to Compete for External Funds
    - Planning studies came at the perfect time since it was before 2022 when there became additional funds available for ecosystem restoration and coastal resilience.
    - There are several federal programs from NFWF, REPI, EPA & Restore America's Estuaries, OLDCC, USACE, NOAA, and USFWS.
    - A commonality between these programs is that there is a strong stakeholder and partnership engagement element that is required. JLUS II included this strong stakeholder engagement in the study.
  - Benefits of Community Capacity Building and Planning
    - The planning document created a shared vision for developing community and ecosystem resilience in an area or region. This allows partners and stakeholders to work collaboratively or independently to achieve a shared vision.
    - Monmouth University has a cooperative agreement with NWS Earle to advance community resilience projects over 5 years through REPI.
    - Congressional through DOD budget to support Monmouth University, NJ Sea Grant, NY/NJ Baykeeper partnership to aid communities in developing community resilience project proposals.
  - Location map in slide deck shows the projects relative to each other.
  - NY/NJ Baykeeper's Coastal Restoration Project – ANCHOR PROJECT
    - An oyster reef was established within the footprint of the pier at NWs Earle. This project includes oyster restoration, an aquaculture facility, a nursery/test/aquaculture area, shell collection and curing area, and living shoreline projects. To date over 9 million oysters have been restored to the NY-NJ waters and they are thriving.
    - The project is also a research project that includes reef monitoring, biodiversity studies, and sediment studies.
    - The Shoreline Stabilization Project is meant to restore the eroding shoreline and the marshes behind the shoreline. These two projects combined are designed to protect the facility itself, but also the surrounding community.
    - REPI project will build a beach and dune area and also a maritime forest that is very rare in the area. Both of those will protect the shoreline, installation, and community.
    - Another project is Highlands – an area significantly impacted by Superstorm Sandy. This project will pull back a bulkhead and replace with a terraced intertidal zone and a submerged breakwater. This design will protect community and restore ecosystem benefits.
    - The office of Naval Research will fund a project that will protect a coastal bluff that is the highest point of land along the eastern seaboard south of New York City. This will



protect the toe of the bluff which is county parkland. They will include a strong research component which will collect data on the waves, physical components, ecosystem and water quality in order to build and refine a model that will predict shoreline change over time. Then they will evaluate the effectiveness of natural and hybrid infrastructure stabilization techniques.

- Questions
  - How were the partnership connections made to start this project?
    - NWS Earle got a new CPLO who determined that the time was right to do this type of project in Monmouth and the timing was right for it to work out that way. Additionally, other organizations, like Sea Grant, were invited to see the process and then people from those organizations became involved.
  - What are the factors that contributed to starting that planning activity besides having a staff member who was championing the project?
    - Other staff and local partners all saw the need as well. Hurricane Sandy was such a traumatic climate event that there was widespread realization that there was a need to look deeper into protecting this asset.
  - Is there any insight into the regulatory process for getting permits for these types of projects?
    - Due to under-asking for funds and because of COVID, we did not actually get to the permitting stage, but there were many permit pre-meetings with the DEP, and they were helpful in getting people from each sub-office to provide feedback. Additionally, different streams of funding have different durations of availability. Making sure that you have everything ready to go, including permitting, before being funded is key so that you can complete your goals within the proper timeline.
- SERPPAS Updates – Addie Thornton, SERPPAS Coordinator
  - SERPPAS Steering Committee meeting was held on March 8-9, 2023, at which Dr. Covi gave a CRRAWG update.
  - SERPPAS Principals Meeting – May 17-19 in Jacksonville, FL.
  - The summary report from the SERPPAS Sentinel Landscapes Climate Resilience Summit has been distributed.

***The next work group meeting will be Monday, May 8th, at 2pm EST.***