

TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy
August 19, 2014

Financing the Future: Institute White Paper Looks at the Cost of Saving Coastal Louisiana

Years of activism and planning have produced a substantial consensus that bold action is necessary to keep the natural systems and communities of coastal Louisiana sustainably functional in the face of rising seas and disappearing lands. Big and often controversial plans have been drawn up to give the coast a fighting chance. These plans include the [2012 State Coastal Master Plan](#), a comprehensive [Urban Water Plan](#) for much of metro New Orleans, and beefed up [levee protection](#) for coastal communities. When it comes to implementing public works projects at this scale, the link between planning and doing often comes down to money—money that has to be planned for. To better explain that need and encourage public discussion of how much things will cost and where the funds might come from, this Institute is initiating a “Financing the Future” series of white papers. The first [paper](#), which is being released today, looks at the projected cost of saving the coast and protecting its communities. Among its conclusions is that it will take more than \$100 billion dollars for all of the relevant federal, state, and local actors to be able to handle their respective shares. It is important to note that the white paper’s focus on cost is aimed at framing the question of how these big plans might be financed and not at questioning the value of the investment itself. The projected benefits of the projects still justify action, even when costs and benefits are adjusted for inflation. Future papers will analyze the projected sources of available funding and potential funding sources.

Pack Up the Babies and Grab the Old Ladies Cause Everyone Goes ...to the Public Forum on Finding \$50 Billion for Louisiana’s Coastal Master Plan

If the Institute’s Financing the Future report (above) weren’t enough for you, the Lens, a nonpartisan public-interest newsroom, and the Mississippi River Delta Coalition will be holding a public forum that addresses the issue of just where the \$50 billion “budget” called for in the 2012 Louisiana Coastal Master Plan might be coming from. The Forum will be held from 6:00-8:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 20 at Loyola University (New Orleans) in Miller Hall, Room 114. Among the speakers will be Mr. Kyle Graham from the Louisiana Office on Coastal Protection and Restoration and Tulane Water Institute white paper coauthors Mark Davis and John Driscoll.

The **Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy** is a program of the Tulane University Law School.

The Institute is dedicated to fostering a greater appreciation and understanding of the vital role that water plays in our society and of the importance of the legal and policy framework that shapes the uses and stewardship of water.

Coming up:

[A Coastal Conservation Conversation](#)

August 20, 2014

Loyola University’s Miller Hall

[WEFTEC 2014](#)

September 27-October 1, 2014

Morial Convention Center

New Orleans, LA

[Restore America’s Estuaries and Coastal Society Summit on Coastal and Estuarine Restoration](#)

November 1-6, 2014

Washington, DC

Water jobs:

[Water Resources Manager](#)

National Wildlife Federation

Water Protection Network & MS River Network

Washington, DC

[Communications Director](#)

Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana

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Water Technology Clusters—Coming to City Near You?

Economic development loves clusters. From the biotech and biomedical sectors to computers and software, clusters are a big thing. The idea is that synergist businesses develop around some key economic activity to produce ever increasing business and job growth. The next “in” cluster just might be water technology and according to [Water on Line](#) there are twelve hot water clusters in the U.S. Scattered across the country, these cities are committed to promoting water technology. Given the transcendent importance of water, one might wonder why there are only twelve hot spots, but that is question we don't have the space to take on here. Suffice it to say, this is likely a harbinger of things to come as more cities, such as New Orleans (see below) seek to join the ranks.

Treasury Releases Interim Final RESTORE Act Rules

The long awaited and much anticipated [rules](#) explain how Clean Water Act fines and penalties, stemming from the 2010 explosion of BP's Deep Water Horizon oil rig, will be handled under the RESTORE Act. The RESTORE Act redirects 80% of those fines and penalties to states in the Gulf coast and to a new federal entity called the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council. The unprecedented nature of the RESTORE Act, plus the unsurprising desire for some state and local governments to be [extremely creative](#) in the use of those windfall dollars, has made the Treasury's oversight role all the more important. The new rules, which reflect earlier public comments, are subject to additional public comment until September 15, 2014. The rules are slated to become effective October 14, 2014. Comments may be sent to <http://www.regulations.gov>.

New Orleans Water Challenge Application Deadline, October 5

Five years ago, the Greater New Orleans Foundation and the Idea Village, a local business incubator, set out to make the New Orleans region a hub for water technology development by initiating an entrepreneurial “Water Challenge”. That challenge has evolved into a competition for matching people, ideas, and mentors in a way that can spark the development of a water technology and service sector. Applications for the 5th annual [Water Challenge](#) are now being accepted through October 5. For more information, interested folks can contact [Propeller](#), the challenge coordinator.

Acid Rain Update—Things May Actually be Getting Better

Good news on the acid rain front comes from a study done by two scientists in Maine. Not so long ago the lakes, streams, and forests of the Northeast were in steep decline due to the acidification of the region's water, acidification linked to sulfur emissions from coal-burning power plants and other sources. Efforts to reduce sulfur emissions, including through a then novel cap and trade program, dramatically reduced those emissions, but questions remained as to just how long (and if) the ecosystems would recover. According to [news reports](#) out of Maine (based on a study published on line in the journal [Environmental Science and Technology](#)), the lands and waters rebounded faster than expected/feared.

World Water Week in Stockholm, Sweden. Where You Can Wash Down the Meatballs with a Big Glass of Water Management

With the World Cup a fading memory, the world's eyes will be turning to Stockholm for [World Water Week](#) starting August 31. WWW has gained increasing prominence as a platform for highlighting and discussing the ever more important challenges facing water managers and others who care about how and by whom the world's waters are used. Advance materials such the World Water Week [Report on Energy and Water](#) are already available.