

# TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy  
November 3, 2015

## All Hail the Horrible Tyrant

The Southeast has been feeling the wrath of the annual King Tides. What are [king tides](#)? Well they are not as kind, nor conflicted, as that [Prince of Tides](#). No, they are decidedly indifferent to the suffering of others, specifically the neighborhoods they have been flooding up and down the Southeast coast. Last week we told you about the inches that are wreaking havoc in Miami, but it wasn't the only city to be inundated by the supermoon-driven tides. Charleston, Savannah, and other coastal cities in the Southeast generally experience severe flooding from king tides when they coincide with hurricanes. This year, however, the tides alone pushed the gauges well past what was predicted. A station in Georgia recorded [10.43 feet](#), the highest in the area since two hurricanes battered the Georgia coast in the 1940s. Charleston is bracing itself for regular flooding if predictions are correct and tidal flooding inundates the city up to two dozen times per year. A Florida Keys resident wants the government to know that he didn't plan to live in the [United States of Venice](#).

But the Southeast coast is not the only place feeling the pressure of the king tides. The Bikini Islanders, relocated by the U.S. from their native atoll in the Marshall Islands to another island in the archipelago in the 1940s when the military tested the atomic bomb, are once again in need of relocation. Their current home on Kili has been pounded by increasingly frequent storms and king tides, and salt water is threatening their drinking water and agriculture. They are asking the U.S. government to [consider changing the terms](#) of their original resettlement trust fund (the one you get when a foreign government blows up your island), so that they may relocate to the mainland of the U.S. where there is arguably less chance of being blown up or washed away. As climate change marches on, sea levels rise, and King tides, ugh, [roll](#), more and more island nations will face this challenge, but likely with less receptive neighbors welcoming them to move in.

## The Fog

Though there are no zombies from a leper colony lurking in Florida Bay, there is a [yellow fog](#). It's a fog of sulfur from beds of dead and dying seagrass, and it worries scientists that the bay itself could be dying. The last time the bay looked like this, the fog brought with it a massive die-off of seagrass and was followed by a prolonged algal bloom, all of which fishermen

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:

[State of the Coast: Call for Abstracts and Session Proposals](#)

Open until Nov. 30, 2015

[Online Here](#)

[Groundswell Happy Hour](#) (Fundraiser)

November 5, 2015

Courtyard Brewery

1020 Erato Street

New Orleans, LA

## Water jobs:

[Clean Water Advocate](#)

Environment America

[Restoration Programs Director, Habitat Restoration Program Coordinator, Science/Technical Director](#)

Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana

Baton Rouge, LA

[Virginia Energy Attorney](#)

Southern Environmental Law Center

Charlottesville, VA

[MRD & Natural Infrastructure Economist](#)

(Two Year Postdoc Position)

Environmental Defense Fund

Washington, DC, New York City, or Boston, MA

# Tulane Institute

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and scientists alike considered a turning point for the bay. Some fear that the conditions are ripe for another such catastrophe. The hot summer months this year, amplified by drought and man-made flood control, made the bay far saltier than normal, which in turn killed seagrass and fish and perpetuated a vicious cycle. No rain means hotter and saltier water, which is heavier, creating a sort of lid, trapping sulfur in the mud, and keeping oxygen out, which in turns kills the grass, which then decomposes, using more oxygen and releasing more nutrients. The fight for fresh water in south Florida between the U.S. Army Corps, agriculture, and environmentalists, and an ill-fated canal built to ship rocket engines, has completely altered the hydrologic system around the bay. All of this, severely compounded by that [thing-that-must-not-be-named](#) (no not him, [this](#)), means Florida is living with the consequences. And as far as Florida Bay goes, there may not be much it can do about it.

### **Mmmm, Delicious, Pure...Tap Water**

Aquafina is now labeling its water bottles with something that may come as a shock to some (or, more likely, no one), that two dollar beverage is in fact, from a Public. Water. Source. You read that right, it is your (or somebody's) tap water. Don't let those mountains on the label fool you. But [Aquafina is begging](#) people to remember that it isn't the water source that makes their bottled tap water so special, rather it is their seven step, admittedly complex, filtration system that makes it worth those two dollars and another plastic bottle in a landfill. Unfortunately for Aquafina, studies have [suggested that despite a fancy filtration](#) system, bottled water still might not be any safer than your run of the mill tap water. But if you still insist on drinking your water from a bottle, be chic with the [Toms](#) of [water bottles](#).

### **It's, Like, Totally Resilient, Man**

The ocean-side city of Norfolk, VA, much like Miami, has recently become a poster child for the damaging effects of sea level rise. As such, City leaders are trying to be resilient daredevils and face the [gnarly wave](#) of climate change. Last week, officials [released an ambitious strategy](#) to embrace that notoriety and become a leader in sea level rise adaptation. Norfolk now joins New Orleans and New York as one of the [Rockefeller Foundation's 100 Resilient Cities](#). Its strategy [sets forth three goals](#), the first being to design the coastal community of the future. It hopes to create an entire industry around engineers and other experts that will come up with unique and effective ways to adapt to the encroaching oceans, and then export that expertise worldwide. Perhaps Norfolk's new resilient vernacular could sound something like [this](#), you know, to connect with the youths. Norfolk likely won't be the only one trying to create such an industry. As climate change and sea level rise begin to take their toll on major coastal cities, many of them will have to re-think their economic bases, moving away from fossil fuels, military support, and industry, and towards more sustainable, climate friendly activity.