

TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy
February 25, 2013

A Tale of Two Eras: The Value of and Prospects for Water Spending

Starting with the truth that some water projects have been boondoggles and some have been lifesavers, we note with interest two recent items about the civil works programs of the Army Corps of Engineers. The first pegs the savings produced by the Corp's Mississippi River and tributaries levees at \$234 billion flood loss prevention during the floods of 2011. The second notes how the current rules against funding earmarks may jeopardize.

["End of Earmarks Caused Area Water Projects to Dry Up"](#)
["MR&T Post Flood Report"](#)

Say it Ain't So: Expect 4-5 Feet of Sea Level Rise in S.E. Louisiana Says New NOAA Data.

New Orleans and coastal Louisiana will have to plan for and live with much higher rates of sea level rise than previously thought according to new information from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The combination of actual sea level rise and subsidence rates—the rate at which land sinks—could mean sea levels 4-5 feet higher than present over the next 100 years. Though rising seas are not news here, the new information poses new challenges to coastal restoration planners and emphasizes that the window to act to save lower Mississippi River delta is closing faster than previously thought. ["New Research: Louisiana Coast Faces Highest Rate of Sea-Level Rise Worldwide"](#)

Use of RESTORE Dollars Subject to Interpretation and Growing Interest

As the reality of dollars from the Deepwater Horizon spill flowing through the RESTORE Act gets closer the plans and processes for channeling and spending those dollars are getting more attention. The expansion of the goals toward which some RESTORE dollars may be used to include economic development has continued to generate criticism and cautions. Those concerns were raised at public meetings held by the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council last week and a letter from 120 business leaders urged the Council to use RESTORE dollars for ecosystem restoration. The Council will continue refining its plans and programs in the coming months but its work could be hampered if the funding sequestration becomes reality.

["Coastians Share Visions of Gulf at Meeting on RESTORE Act Oil Spill-relief Fund"](#)

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:

March 1, 2013

Great Lakes Natural Resource Governance
Robert H. McKinney School of Law
Indiana University
Indianapolis, IN

March 7-9, 2013

"Building Resiliency Workshop IV: Adapting to Uncertainty"
New Orleans, LA

March 24-26, 2013

Center for Natural Resources and Economic Policy (CNREP)
"CNREP 2013: Challenges of Natural Resources and Economic Policy"
New Orleans, LA

April 15, 2013

America's Wetland Foundation
"Big River Moves"
Chicago, IL

May 10, 2013

Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana's Coastal Stewardship Award Banquet
Baton Rouge, LA

June 6-7, 2013

American Bar Association's
31st Annual Water Law Conference
Las Vegas, NV

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New Orleans Sewerage and Water Revamp Moves Forward

The ongoing saga of revamping New Orleans's water utility moved another step forward with the New Orleans Sewerage and Water Board voted to accept the recommendations of Mayor Mitch Landrieu (and a Citizens Task Force that included Institute Director Mark Davis) to reduce the number of Sewerage and Water Board members from 13 to 9 and to change the appointments process and the qualifications that future board members will have to have. Needless to say, not everyone agreed.

["Mayor Mitch Landrieu Wins Next Phase of Sewerage and Water Board Governance Debate"](#)

Building Resilience Workshop IV to be Held At UNO--Registration Now Open

Anyone interested in the hows, whys, and whos of creating resilient sustainable communities should check out the Building Resilience Workshop IV that will be held at the University of New Orleans March 7-9. Workshop and registration information is available at the Workshop [website](#). We honestly don't know how this workshop is pulled off each year but it is always worth it.

Everybody (but Louisiana) is Doing It (Part 1): Arkansas Moving Ahead with State Water Plan Update:

The next phase of Arkansas's updating of its State Water Plan will take place later this spring with an assessment of future water uses and needs. The current aim is to have this update finished and ready for adoption by November 2014. For more on this and to track developments you can go to ["Arkansas Water Plan Update"](#)

Everybody's Doing It (Part 2): Texas Water Plan Moves Ahead

As Texas moves into what is anticipated to be another drought year it also is moving ahead with the 9th installment of the Texas Water Plan. At its core, the plan anticipates nearly a doubling of the state's population over the next 50 years and the need to conserve and develop water resources. How many of those plans actually come fruition remains an open question but given the dynamics of growth, climate, and dollars and the lack of clear priorities in the plan implementing the plan will be a tall order.

["The Never-Ending Drought and What Texas Plans to Do About It"](#)

["As Water Plan Moves Toward Reality, Who Benefits?"](#)

Goodbye to Paul McIlhenny

The world is a blander place today following the untimely death of Paul McIlhenny, the CEO of Tabasco. Tabasco is not only a major coastal landowner in Louisiana but a long-time practitioner of what has come to be known as integrated sustainable land management. Paul himself had become an important voice for a smarter and more decisive approach to living in coastal areas through his role on the Louisiana Governor's Advisory Commission for Coastal Restoration and Protection and through the America's Wetland Foundation of which he was Vice-Chairperson. He will be very much missed.

