

Recurrent Coastal Flooding Sub Panel Update - November 1, 2013

I'm thrilled to announce, with much thanks to Mike Landefeld and Suzanne Trachy of Veterans Affairs and Homeland Security, our Sub-Panel now has a web presence at <http://www.vahs.virginia.gov/Agencies/SCP/RecurrentCoastalFloodingSub-Panel/>. This will help in the documentation / transparency / sharing of information! Partners, please feel free to link to this site from your own; likewise, please share with me your own flood-related sites and we will add a section referring folks to that information as well.

I feel comfortable speaking on behalf of those Sub-Panel members who were able to attend Old Dominion University's October 30-31 workshop: "Moving Beyond the Threat: Transatlantic Solutions to Sea Level Rise Adaptation." Congratulations to Dr. Larry Atkinson and his team at ODU's Climate Change and Sea Level Rise Initiative ([CCSLRI](#)) for pulling off a very successful event where experts from the community, region and overseas convened to discuss the threat, potential solutions, and opportunities for collaboration. One panelist, Ms. Kelly Burks-Copes from the US Army Engineering Research and Development Center – who was instrumental in the outstanding study of sea level rise impacts at Naval Station Norfolk and other installations - is on tap to present during the next Sub-Panel meeting. Another speaker of note (and there were several...) was Dr. David W. Titley, RADM USN (Ret.), Director for the Center for Solutions to Weather and Climate Risk at Penn State University. For a glimpse of his perspective from the ranks of DOD meteorology, as a survivor of Hurricane Katrina and now in academia, a terrific interview by Cathy Lewis during her October 29 radio program, "Hearsay With Cathy Lewis", is available at <http://www.hearsay.org/2013/10/29/default.aspx>. All presentations from the ODU event will soon be made available at http://ccslri.ccpo.odu.edu/workshops/2013_ACCESS-EU/. Likewise, those who were able to attend the equally successful symposium offered by William and Mary Law School's [Virginia Coastal Policy Clinic's](#) on September 13, 2013, those materials are available at <http://law.wm.edu/academics/programs/jd/electives/clinics/vacoastal/conferences/adaptiveplanning/index.php>. Both events – not to mention the Virginia Institute of Marine Science's Recurrent Flooding Study - have served to not only provide incredible insight into the critical issues for which we face, they prove our very capable and renown higher education institutions have not only accepted the challenge, but lead the way with much data and information which greatly enhance our planning efforts.

With regards to the legal aspects of recurrent flooding and sea level rise (Recommendation #4 of the VIMS Recurrent Flooding Study), work has already begun! Along with the fantastic work already completed by William and Mary Law School's Virginia Coastal Policy Clinic, I'm happy to report a kick-off (phone) meeting occurred between Cathie Hutchins of the Attorney General's Office (and member of the Secure Commonwealth Panel), Shana Jones, Director of the Policy Clinic, a local Deputy City Attorney and myself. Ms. Jones and her team are currently working on a policy document identifying legal authorities at all levels and will be ready to present their findings during our November Sub-Panel meeting. From there, Ms. Hutchins has graciously agreed to assist in the development of a compendium. More to come!

Lastly, I want to thank you all again for your interest and partnership in this initiative. The event at ODU served as a reminder the issue of recurrent sea level rise / recurrent flooding is one that will not go

away, but will instead grow more severe with time. It also showed that while it's not only a unique challenge, it's an opportunity. We're challenged to find in recent memory an issue requiring such a high level of awareness, engagement and collaboration, and with such urgency. We're fortunate to have an all-star team – inclusive of not only public, private, not-for-profit, higher education and military – multiple sectors and levels of government here in the Virginia and the States, but we also enjoy partnerships with our friends across the pond, particularly our Dutch friends (i.e. the engineering firm, Fugro (who also sponsored the ODU event), the Dutch Embassy, Amsterdam and Rotterdam), and new friends we met from other nations who also have decades of experience and lessons learned. It's not only critical we share information, leverage resources and work together in a unified manner; it's exciting to see the results of our collaboration, ingenuity and innovation. The relationships, processes and products we develop as a true team will not only be invaluable in addressing recurrent flooding, but all other hazards for which we face.

Thank you again for your partnership, engagement and the value you bring to the table. Have a great weekend!

Sincerely,

Jim

Jim Redick
Co-Chair, Recurrent Flooding Sub-Panel