



FELLOW NEWS

Quarterly Newsletter for NOAA Fellows and Friends

Fellows at Social Coast Forum



Join us in Charleston, South Carolina, from February 12 to 15, 2024, for the in-person return of the Social Coast Forum. Explore social science tools, hone skills, and discuss integrating social sciences into coastal decisions. [Registration](#) opens in November! Pictured: fellows Shanna Williamson, Sydney Fishman, Emma Cutler, Alexis Cunningham, Amber Anastacio-Roberts, Ellen Bartow-Gillies, and Sierra Davis at the 2020 Social Coast Forum.

Dates to Know

Program Timeline

- Friday, October 13, 2023: Proposals due from hosts
- Wednesday, November 29, 2023: Projects selected
- Friday, January 26, 2024: Applications due from candidates to their local Sea Grant
- Friday, February 23, 2024: Endorsements due from Sea Grant
- Friday, March 22, 2024: Finalists selected
- Late April to early May 2024: Matching workshop presentations (virtual)
- Late April to early May 2024: Matching workshop interviews in Charleston
- Thursday, August 1, 2024: Fellowship begins

Fellows Up Close

Class of 2022 to 2024



Lucy Perkins (she/her) – Coastal Management Fellow

Backstory. Lucy has a bachelor's degree from Bates College and Tufts University, and a Master of Arts in urban and environmental policy and planning. She is working with the New Hampshire Coastal Program. Her email address is lucy.l.perkins@des.nh.gov.

Project description. The goal of my fellowship is to build the capacity of the New Hampshire Coastal Adaptation Workgroup to evolve and address new, emerging priorities.

I have been able to contribute to and shape the office's work to assess and center diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility principles in programs, procedures, and community relationships. I have also served as a neighborhood liaison in the Flood Ready Neighborhoods Program, which takes a neighborhood scale and community-led approach to planning for and implementing flood risk reduction actions in low-wealth, climate-vulnerable neighborhoods. And finally, I have had the opportunity to participate in a collaborative effort to design and pilot a just and equitable home elevation and buyout program for the Town of Hampton.

Inspiration for pursuing the fellowship. I was inspired to pursue this fellowship out of a sense of connection to the coast. It is where I feel most at home and where I find a lot of meaning in the work. I wanted to use the skills, values, and worldview built in my graduate program (which was centered on urban planning and social justice) to have a meaningful impact in coastal areas and communities. This fellowship was an opportunity to bring this approach to a setting that I cared deeply about. I have been inspired to continue pursuing this journey through the relationships built with other fellows, partners in the field, and in the community.

Rewarding project experience. I redesigned a site visit, which traditionally situated state agency and university staff as experts available to answer resident questions and explain technical information. In its adapted form, the site visit centered on residents' experiences and encouraged staff to be present, begin by listening, pay attention to the small things, and focus on connection. The

use of participatory mapping and incorporation of experiential knowledge set a different and refreshing foundation for partnership with residents. This program and the process remain somewhat uncharted and challenging, but this reframing has been instrumental in building relationships and partnership with a neighborhood that is experiencing impacts already from chronic tidal flooding.

Lessons from the experience. As a provider of direct technical assistance, I have been challenged to not only communicate risk and science, but more importantly, challenge traditional roles and processes—making space to honor and uplift experiential and observational knowledge that communities carry.



Carl Hendrickson – Coastal Management Fellow

The scoop. Carl has a bachelor's degree from University of California, Berkeley, and is working on his masters at San Francisco State University. He is working with the Oregon Coastal Management Program. His email address is carl.hendrickson@dlcd.oregon.gov.

Project description. The project centers around sea level rise adaptation for communities along the Pacific Ocean and Columbia River in Clatsop County, Oregon. The Oregon Coastal Management Program developed a sea level rise adaptation tool kit that included an impact mapping explorer, an assessment and prioritization tool, and a planning and development guide. Using these resources, we

conducted community workshops in five locations around the county. The product for this project will be specific adaptation pathways for communities, including beach access and shoreline protection, community preparedness support, and grant writing assistance, among others.

Community benefits. Communities will receive personalized assessment and prioritization lists from their responses during the workshops. More importantly, they are receiving support to pursue adaptation pathways for projects identified in said prioritized lists. This includes being connected with academic researchers to study and design erosion control projects for beach access points in their community, assistance creating and supporting local community emergency response teams to address flooding from sea level rise, and support writing grants to fund adaptation and infrastructure projects. In particular, this project worked with county staff and partner organizations to submit a letter of intent for the NOAA Climate Resilience Regional Challenge. Other grant options are currently being pursued to take advantage of relevant funding opportunities.

Building relationships. Working with communities means meeting them where they are to see and understand issues from their point of view. To do so, I traveled to a small agricultural community along the Columbia River that is completely surrounded by dikes. They experience overtopping along the dikes during high tide events, as well as erosion issues in some locations. In order to see and understand these issues, I offered they show me the specific areas of concern and community in general. Little did I know I would be stuffed into the back middle seat of a Kubota 4x4 with four local leaders (I'm over six feet tall) and driven around the miles of dikes at about two miles per hour. Along the way, we saw locations that experience overtopping and erosion, and talked a little bit about the history of the site. But mostly, the guys talked about hunting, fishing, farming, and general gossip

from around the region. We now have a great relationship with the community.

Fellowship highlights. The community workshops have been the highlight experience of my fellowship so far. The preparation for the workshops was entirely outside of my professional experience, and presented a significant workload that was completely new to me. Tasks like securing venues, designing the presentation and workshop materials, consulting with a facilitator to help run the workshop, and leading the workshops were all new experiences. At times, it was challenging to keep everything progressing in an organized fashion, and there were definitely unexpected hiccups along the way. Despite all of that, the workshops were a total success for community members, as well as for our own objectives. It was extremely rewarding to see the hard work and preparation ahead of time play out in what can be an unpredictable environment of community engagement. The workshops are the central crux of this project, and their success has been very rewarding.

Challenging learning curves. I have never worked on a project that was part of such a large departmental effort. Learning how to coordinate with project partners, keep people informed, and organize generally was a steep learning curve. Also, my shortcomings in this area didn't just affect me, but larger project efforts as well. I am working to improve my organizational skills by committing more time specifically to organizing and reporting my work. I needed to change my view of organization being a destination to achieve, to realizing it is a journey that is about the process (and never really ends!).

Honing skills. I came into this fellowship excited about the community engagement aspect of the project. I enjoy science communication and was excited about the prospect of training those skills around more policy and management topics. Generally, my experiences had been focused on presenting my research and answering related questions. The workshops involved a much more nuanced approach to communication and engagement and responding to individual questions, as well as significantly more listening (obviously). I really enjoyed the process of getting involved with and listening to a community about issues important to them, and hope to do more of that type of work in the future. It's so important to get community support for adaptation projects for them to be successful, and a big part of that is making community members feel heard and involved in the process.

News You Can Use

Using Video to Assist Your Message

The more interested the audience, the more information you can successfully share with them. That means for new audiences, providing a minimal amount of information at first is best.

To get an audience engaged and interested, video may be the way to go. A short, upbeat message is a great way to introduce a topic. There are several you can use from NOAA's Office for Coastal Management. Titles include the [Margaret A. Davison Fellowship](#); [America's Coasts: Vital and Protected](#); [Defining Coastal Management](#); and [Econ:120-Externalities](#). If you have a suggestion for the office's video series, please contact donna.mccaskill@noaa.gov.

Trainings and Resources

Upcoming Offerings

The NOAA Office for Coastal Management has a training curriculum devoted to coastal resource management. Courses are scheduled throughout the year.

[Course Calendar](#)

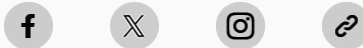
Additional Resources

You may also be interested in additional training resources from our Digital Coast partners and contributing partners.

[Training Resources](#)

About the Program

The NOAA Coastal Management and Digital Coast Fellowships were established to provide on-the-job education and training opportunities in coastal resource management and policy, and to provide project assistance to state coastal zone management programs and Digital Coast partners. The fellowship programs are administered by [NOAA's Office for Coastal Management](#). Fellowships are open to postgraduate students. For more information, visit [this webpage](#).



NOAA OFFICE FOR COASTAL MANAGEMENT

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