



FELLOW NEWS

News for and about the NOAA Fellows

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FAREWELL TO OUR 2020-2022 FELLOWS

We salute these amazing Coastal Zone Management and Digital Coast Fellows



Brian DeSanti worked with the Texas Coastal Management Program, part of the state's General Land Office, on two initiatives: the [Texas Beach Watch](#), which updates state residents and visitors on water quality and safety conditions at recreational beaches; and [Clean Coast](#)

[Texas](#), a new incentive-based, nonregulatory program that helps communities protect coastal water quality. Brian's quality assurance recommendations for Texas Beach Watch now include new sites to monitor, new equipment for field measurements, a more intuitive field sampling form, and language and process updates. All of these suggestions have been accepted and are awaiting approval from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Brian has helped Clean Coast Texas partners come together through monthly webinars, where attendees were able to ask questions of water quality experts. His efforts also helped Clean Coast Texas partners strengthen their message and brand identity.



Anna Jane Jones is a Digital Coast Fellow who worked with The Nature Conservancy on projects in two regions, both of which are recovering from hurricanes. With [Scaling Up Nature-based Solutions](#), a collaborative planning process and site, Anna Jane put together a portfolio of

nature-based resilience projects across the Florida Panhandle, an area that was particularly affected by 2018's Hurricane Michael. This portfolio is helping to guide resilience planning investments to advance hazard mitigation, climate adaptation, and conservation. For the second project, she produced a case study of regional planning barriers and needs in South Carolina's largely rural Winyah Bay watershed, which has been affected by Hurricanes Matthew, Michael, Dorian, and Florence.

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She also completed a needs assessment, recommendations, and a networking mechanism that communities across the Winyah Bay watershed can use to improve flood resilience. In the process, Anna Jane has learned a lot about encouraging equitable community engagement and working to surmount its common challenges.



Nicole Marks worked with the Delaware Coastal Program to develop the Individual Adaptation Decision and Planning Tool (I-ADAPT), which features spatial data and user-sourced information to help Delawareans adapt to more frequent and intense flooding events caused by climate change. The tool, which takes physical and personal factors into account, offers tailored recommendations users can put in place right now on their properties, plus recommended actions that will likely lessen property flooding risks through 2050. Moreover, Nicole has assisted scientists and planners in the Delaware Coastal Program with horseshoe crab studies, environmental justice projects, and other resilience-related initiatives. She has presented at national conferences and has broadened her skill sets in spatial analysis, project management, and outreach.



Meghan Martinez worked with the California State Coastal Conservancy to strengthen the [Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project](#) by evaluating restoration objectives, prioritizing potential projects, and advancing wetlands monitoring mechanisms. Meghan's re-envisioned [Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program](#) effectively supports a greater range of community-based projects. She also secured U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

funding to enhance a wetland monitoring program for the Southern California region, and she contributed to data-driven visualizations through [EcoAtlas](#). Most gratifying to Meghan was her ability to integrate principles of justice, equity, and diversity into all of her fellowship projects.



Eleanor Rappolee worked with the Association of State Floodplain Managers and Coastal States Organization to reduce repetitive flood losses to residential and commercial properties, and thereby enhance community flood resilience. With help from Digital Coast partners and other subject matter experts, Eleanor led an effort to establish relationships with local and state floodplain managers and identify community resilience needs and obstacles related to mitigating repetitive losses. As a result of their combined outreach efforts, Eleanor received information on more than 3,000 flood-prone communities. She leveraged this information to develop technical training and compile resources geared towards mapping, risk communication, and funding assistance that are featured on an ArcGIS site, [Community Resilience Guide for Repetitive Flood Loss](#). This work is ongoing so stay tuned for additional updates on the training and resources.



Mary Schoel worked with the National Estuarine Research Reserve Association at the Narragansett Bay Research Reserve to uncover—and communicate—how the Reserve System can have a stronger impact on protecting upland habitat so that coastal wetlands can better migrate and survive as sea level rises. Mary built relationships with coastal managers, land trust representatives, planners, and other decision makers, so that she could identify their

mapping, information, and communication needs, and developed reports that synthesized this information. Her work also assessed the ways that the Reserve System and other stakeholders are currently working on the topic of coastal wetland migration and how they are protecting migration pathways. Based on these findings, she developed a set of recommendations for the Reserve System to advance this resilience strategy through mapping, monitoring, stewardship, and community planning and engagement.



Kerrin Toner worked with the U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Planning and Natural Resources Division of Coastal Zone Management to update the management

plan for the St. Thomas East End Reserves, a locally managed marine protected area in the territory. Her responsibilities included conducting interviews, aiding a workshop series, and building out a reserve management council. The updated plan is transparent and inclusive, containing prioritized action plans that protect the social and ecological communities of St Thomas. The local governing agency, researchers, and public and private stakeholders will use this plan to guide them in making decisions about, and visiting, the area. Kerrin has enjoyed getting the word out about this ecological treasure. She also is gratified by local appreciation for her efforts from project partners and community members. Finally, the fellowship has allowed Kerrin to build an impressive professional network, both on the U.S. Virgin Islands and nationwide.



Kate Vogel worked with the Maryland Chesapeake and Coastal Service, part of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, to help identify and put in place new

technical guidance and climate adaptation best practices for state lands. These resources help land managers to increase public understanding of climate change impacts and ensure the long-term resilience of ecosystems, infrastructure, recreational uses, and public access on a number of state land sites. The climate change adaptation plans include recommendations on short-term and long-term actions. [Climate change adaptation graphics](#) were created in coordination with the University of Maryland's Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability (PALS) Program, which will be used by different state agencies to highlight adaptation opportunities across state lands. Finally, Kate is creating a website with climate change resources, including story maps for different state lands, which can be used as a climate change communication tool for the public. She also helped organize two conferences on Nature Play and on urban green spaces and opportunities.

WELCOME 2022-2024 COASTAL MANAGEMENT AND DIGITAL COAST FELLOWS



Liz Plascencia, from Yale University and nominated by Connecticut Sea Grant, was matched with the California Coastal Commission to create resources, training materials, and policy guidance critical for the California Coastal Commission's long-term implementation of its environmental justice and tribal consultation policies.



Amanda Small, from the University of North Florida and nominated by Florida Sea Grant, was matched with Maryland's Chesapeake and Coastal Service to work with them and the Fishing and Boating Services unit to advance work on climate adaptation priorities related to fisheries management and natural resources-based economies.



Maravilla Clemens, from Rutgers University and nominated by New Jersey Sea Grant, was matched with the California Coastal Conservancy to improve wetland health and coastal resilience in Southern California by developing a regional wetland monitoring program, funding and managing community-based restoration projects, and coordinating multiple state and federal agencies.



Lexie Neffinger, from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and nominated by Texas Sea Grant, was matched with the Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management to engage with three environmental justice communities in Massachusetts to increase awareness of shoreline restoration opportunities and support the application of at least one project for State Coastal Resilience Grant Program funding.



Jordana Cutajar, from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and nominated by Texas Sea Grant, was matched with the Delaware Coastal Programs to support underserved communities in Delaware by providing resources and tools to adapt to climate change impacts.



Lucy Perkins, from Tufts University and nominated by Woods Hole Sea Grant, was matched with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Coastal Program to build the capacity of the New Hampshire Coastal Adaptation Workgroup to advance emerging priorities, empower local climate adaptation champions and practitioners, and enhance engagement opportunities.



Kristi Kimura, from the University of Hawaii at Manoa and nominated by Hawaii Sea Grant, was matched with the Hawaii Coastal Management Program to develop knowledge and resources for Hawaii to have a better understanding of who and where the vulnerable communities are that require the most support to adapt to coastal hazards.



Elizabeth Mogus Garcia, from the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley and nominated by Texas Sea Grant, was matched with the New York State Coastal Management Program to identify tangible approaches that

are good examples of strategic managed retreat, and develop policies and implementation approaches that achieve a balance between coastal processes and climate change adaptation, with particular attention to socioeconomic sustainability and concerns at the municipal level.



Carl Hendrickson, from San Francisco State University and nominated by California Sea Grant, was matched with the Oregon Coastal Management Program to provide capacity to advance sea level rise adaptation planning at the local level using existing and emerging data and resources on the northern Oregon coast.

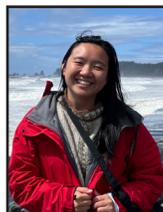


Annika Tomson, from the University of Michigan and nominated by Michigan Sea Grant, was matched with the Coastal States Organization (in partnership with the Association of State Floodplain Managers) to develop technical guidance resources to support local communities in planning for and managing residential coastal properties acquired or vacated due to erosion, inundation, and flooding worsened by climate change.



Nadine Doiron, from the University of Southern Mississippi and nominated by Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant, was matched with the National States Geographic

Information Council at the Alaska Department of Natural Resources Division of Geological and Geophysical Surveys to bolster communication networks with Alaskan stakeholders to map 66,000 miles of rugged coastline, seeking engagement, inclusion, and equity among growing local, tribal, state, federal, and private partnerships that enhance data sharing and access.



Sabine Bailey, from Auburn University and nominated by Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant, was matched with The Nature Conservancy in partnership with the Maryland

Department of Natural Resources to reform marsh protection activities and promote marsh migration and community resilience in Maryland.

CREDITS AND INFORMATION

Fellow News is published by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office for Coastal Management to relay information about the fellowship program and provide a forum for information exchange among fellows, mentors, Sea Grant, and the office.

Please send your questions and suggestions for future editions to ocm.fellowships@noaa.gov

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