

ONGOING EFFORTS TO DEVELOP STANDARDIZED SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND ECOLOGICAL PERFORMANCE METRICS FOR NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

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In the aftermath of recent coastal storms, there has been anecdotal evidence that coastal communities with natural or natural based features and open spaces were provided some degree of protection; however, quantitative evidence is lacking across the board. These coastal resilience approaches are being explored and rapidly implemented by many federal, local, and state agencies (e.g., through research agendas, policy guidance, state grants, and site-specific projects), with the dual goals of protecting communities and providing ecosystem goods and services. In order to evaluate the efficacy of such efforts and guide implementation, there is a need for metrics that assess how these natural and nature-based features perform and their cost effectiveness. Additionally, because of the uncertainty that exists regarding their long-term performance, there is a need to develop and share a suite of standardized, measurable metrics that can be used across agencies, institutions, and stakeholders to evaluate baseline conditions and track outcomes. This presentation will provide an overview of several working groups focused on developing metrics for natural infrastructure, including objectives, status, results, and plan for implementation. This implementation is geared towards all stakeholders contributing to and having access to understanding the benefits of natural infrastructure and best approaches for sites based on hazards and needed services. We will present on the socio-economic metrics developed for the Department of Interior Sandy resilience projects, as well as several other efforts focused on ecological metrics for coastal resilience.