Coastal Flood Resilience News

October 8, 2025

This newsletter provides a summary of news and research journal articles related to coastal storms and rising sea levels. It is a product of the Coastal Flood Resilience Project, a network of nonprofit organizations working for stronger programs to prepare for coastal storm flooding and rising sea levels along the coast of the United States. Prior issues of the CFRP News can be found here.

Science

1. **Antarctic Sea Ice Loss Approaches Tipping Point:** This notice from The Royal Society describes a recent meeting of scientists in London to evaluate the loss of sea ice in the Antarctic over the past ten years. This article in *New Scientist* quotes a participant:

    > "The sudden decline in ice formation has all the hallmarks of a tipping point…What we are seeing now is the entire Antarctic sea ice responding as a whole."

2. **Stability of Greenland and Atlantic Current Tipping Points Declined:** This new study published in the journal *Nature Geoscience*, reports that several global tipping points, including the Greenland Ice Sheet and the Atlantic current, have become less stable in the last several decades:

    > "suggesting that they have moved towards their critical thresholds, which may be crossed within the range of unmitigated anthropogenic warming."

3. **Clams Point to Decline of Atlantic Current**: New research published in *Science Advances* evaluated growth rings in clams to map changing water conditions and the destabilization of a subpolar gyre in the North Atlantic that weakens the transport of water in the Atlantic Meridional Overturing Circulation (AMOC). The article notes that:

    > "destabilization began around 1950 and continues to the present, supporting evidence of recent stability loss and suggesting that the region is moving toward a tipping point."

    This article in *Inside Climate News* provides more information.

4. **Warmer Ocean Water Drives Larger Storms:** This new research published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS) reports that hurricane size expands substantially faster over relatively warmer water across the major Northern Hemisphere ocean basins and concludes:

    > "Hence, ocean regions that warm more quickly are more likely to support storms that expand more rapidly, potentially increasing their potential to cause damage and make forecasting the area of their impacts more difficult."

    This article in *euronews* points out that the study pointed to "hotspots" in the ocean as a key contributor to larger storms, rather than warmer waters more generally.

National Policy

5. **Army Corps Reconsiders Use of Elevation and Related Practices for Flood Management:** This article in *Politico* describes how the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works told the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works Corps that the Corps is pausing work on "nonstructural" projects. Nonstructural projects include elevating the foundation of homes, sealing the walls of buildings, relocating properties and voluntary home buyouts. The Assistant Secretary said nonstructural projects are not:

    > "in keeping with the corps' long tradition of building infrastructure that protects entire communities…".

    Here is the video of the hearing with the discussion of nonstructural solutions led by Senator Whitehouse starting at 1:08.

6. **Trump Administration Cuts Funding for Climate Adaptation Science Centers:** This article in the *Washington Post* describes how the Trump administration is planning to cut funding for one third of the regional Climate Adaptation Science Centers sponsored by the U.S. Geological Survey at major universities. Centers serving the Northeast, South Central, and Pacific Islands regions are at risk.

7. **Viability of NFIP Questioned:** This article in VOX points out the many problems of the National Flood Insurance Program, including growing debt, declining numbers of homeowners with policies, and growing percentage of uninsured flood losses and concludes that significant changes are needed to adapt to the more severe flood risks of a changing climate.

8. **Insurance Company Profit Schemes Add to Climate Driven Risks:** This interesting article in *The New Republic* describes how the consulting firm McKinsey advised property insurance companies to build profits by reducing loss payments to as low as 60 percent of the amount promised in a policy. McKinsey advised that most people would accept the low-ball offer and that the insurer should then litigate to delay any final payment in the correct amount for anyone not accepting the lower amount.

9. **Insurance for Coastal Public Infrastructure:** This notice from the Middlebury Center for the Blue Economy explains that the Center is working with the State of Maine to investigate the feasibility of a "public insurance facility" that would apply an insurance model to public infrastructure assets, including many along the coast.

   > "But with climate change the frequency and severity of storms increasing…the demands on the taxpayer would become a massive strain. The question was whether it was possible to save for the response to future disasters. This is the purpose of insurance which allows saving but also for sharing the risk.

10. **State Wetland Managers Defunded by EPA:** EPA has informed the Association of State Wetland Managers (ASWM) that EPA grant funding of almost $900,000 per year will be terminated. Executive Director Marle Stelk called the decision "devastating" and announced that she and several other staff will resign. This *Politico* article has more information.

11. **Hurricanes Contribute to Substance Abuse:** This article in the Progressive notes that coastal storms disrupt health and related social services:

    > "Katrina was not only a climate catastrophe. It was also a mental health emergency. In its wake, studies revealed spikes in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and substance use among evacuees. The disaster helped accelerate the overdose epidemic, a public health crisis that rages on to this day.

12. **Hospitals Face Flood Risks:** This article in *Grist* reports on an assessment of flood risks to hospitals nationwide that concluded that 170 hospitals were are risk of flooding and that:

    > "Flooding threatens dozens of hospitals in coastal areas, including in Florida, Louisiana, Texas, and New York."

State and Local

13. **Isle de Jean Charles Relocation Failure:** This article in *floodlight* reports on the many problems that have plagued the $47 million relocation of the community on Isle de Jean Charles to higher ground, including bad infrastructure and poorly constructed homes.

    > "What was supposed to be a model for how the government could get people out of harm's way along the country's steadily eroding coastlines has instead become a cautionary tale for the estimated 2.5 million Americans who could be forced to relocate away from the coast over the next 25 years."

14. **North Carolina Homes Lost to Rising Seas:** This video from ABC news shows the loss of five homes around Hatteras Island in North Carolina, pointing to the high level of debris and household items, including refrigerators, water heaters, couches, and much more.

15. **Terminal Groin Causes Erosion Threatening Homes Down the Beach:** This article in *Coastal Review* describes how a new groin in Ocean Isle Beach, North Carolina is causing erosion that threatens homes down the beach and requires placement of sandbags to protect the structures. The saga includes developing lawsuits while the Army Corps, who build the original groin, considers action to replenish sand or rebuild the groin, and broken dreams:

    > "I would have never developed the property if I had known this was going to happen," said Doc Dunlap, a developer with Pointe OIB, LLC. "It's just devastating to tell you the truth. I even had plans myself to build there, have a summer home."

16. **Charleston Declines to Appeal Loss in Lawsuit Against Big Oil:** This article in the Charleston *Post and Courier* describes how a judge has dismissed the city's lawsuit against 24 big oil companies for damages due to a changing climate including severe flooding. The city is planning major spending including a $1.3 billion seawall for which the city expects its share to be $455 million. The head of the Charleston Climate Coalition noted:

    > "When you're dealing with a crisis like this, where it is a question of how do we find billions and billions of dollars to adapt and to deal with what's coming — we have to look around every corner…".