



Coastal Flood Resilience News

May 19, 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.

Science

1. **National Climate Assessment Authors Dismissed:** This [article](#) in the *New York Times* describes the Trump administration dismissal of all of the authors working on the update to the *National Climate Assessment*.

2. **AGU and AMS to Issue National Climate Assessment:** This news [report](#) describes the decision by the American Geophysical Union and the American Meteorological Society to cooperate to develop a document comparable to the National Climate Assessment, noting that the organizations felt it:

“was their duty to “maintain momentum” of research supporting the assessment and to ensure Americans are “protected and prepared” for the impacts of a rapidly changing climate.”

3. **Ocean Temperatures Drive Hurricanes:** This [article](#) in the *Washington Post* describes how recent cooling in waters of the eastern Pacific Ocean may lead to a more dangerous hurricane season in the Atlantic this season. At the same time, water temperatures in the Atlantic are cooler than normal, which could reduce storm risks.

“It’s possible the factors will balance each other out to some extent, resulting in an average season. It’s also possible that either element could win out, exerting more influence over hurricane season than the other.”

4. **Scientists Support NOAA:** The Union of Concerned Scientists released a [letter](#) in support of the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration signed by some 3,300 scientists.

“We call on the US Congress and the Trump administration to ensure that NOAA and its sub-agencies remain fully funded and staffed, and that the independent, trusted science the agency produces continues to be protected.”

5. **Trump Undermines Climate Science:** Here is a [blog post](#) from Union of Concerned Scientists Policy Director Rachel Cleetus describing how Trump administration is dismantling the science needed to understand climate change noting:

“Behind these individual instances of harm is a clear strategy: they want to bury the scientific evidence of the impacts and economic damages caused by climate change to avoid having to take any action to address them.

6. **Sinking Coastal Cities:** This [study](#) in the journal *nature cities* describes how major US coastal cities are sinking due to various factors including water withdrawals, thus making relative sea level rise greater. Eight of the 28 cities studied are on the coast. Here is the [study](#) in the journal *nature cities*.

National Policy

7. **Washington Post Editorial Objects to Trump Destruction of Disaster Programs:** This [editorial](#) from the *Washington Post* editorial board describes the ranges of steps the Trump administration is taking to weaken disaster response programs.

“Each of these decisions has been reckless. Taken together, they reveal a basic disregard for the scientific programs and government infrastructure that have kept Americans safe for decades. The president almost seems to be daring Mother Nature to strike while the country’s defenses are down.”

8. **NRDC Objects to FEMA Elimination and Proposes Needed Improvements:** This [blog post](#) from Rob Moore describes NRDC’s comments in response to FEMA’s request for input on FEMA operations and issues as well as NRDC’s summary of the public comments provided to FEMA.

Here are NRDC’s [comments](#). Here is the [summary of public comments](#) noting that:

“4,661 public comments had been posted as of the afternoon of May 12, with 98 percent expressing support for FEMA and urging the administration not to eliminate or diminish it.”

9. **Bipartisan Bill Proposes FEMA Overhaul:** This [story from ASFPM](#) describes a new, bipartisan bill that “would mark the most sweeping FEMA reform effort since Hurricane Katrina....” Including making FEMA a cabinet level agency.

Here is a [joint announcement](#) from Reps. Graves and Larsen. And here is the “[discussion draft](#)” of the bill. This *Politico* article provides [background information](#).

- 10. NOAA to Stop Tracking Cost of Disasters:** The *Washington Post* reports in this [article](#) that the Trump administration plans to stop updating the database tracking the costs of national disasters.

“Without updates to the database, it could become harder for the country to assess the ways climate change, building patterns and population trends are exposing Americans to weather hazards. The numbers of billion-dollar disasters have surged from just a handful per year in the 1980s to an average of 23 per year from 2020 through 2024.

- 11. CSO Urges Support for Coastal Zone Management:** The Coastal States Organization is circulating a [sign-on letter](#) urging Congress to sustain funding for the Coastal Zones Management grant programs with a closing date of May 23.

- 12. Hazard Mitigation Grant Program Funds Stalled:** The Trump administration has halted funding for the Flood Mitigation Grant program, as described in this [article](#).

“It’s an extremely important program for hazard mitigation,” said Anna Weber, senior policy analyst for climate adaptation at the Natural Resources Defense Council. “Instead of just rebuilding, we’re building resilience so we’re preventing future damages, deaths and injuries.”

- 13. Trump Administration Eliminates Social Cost of Carbon:** This [article](#) in the *New York Times* describes Trump Administration actions to set the “social cost of carbon” (SCC) at zero, rather than the \$190 per ton of carbon released adopted during the Biden administration. The article quotes Robert E. Kopp, a climate scientist at Rutgers University:

“By effectively saying the social cost of carbon should be treated as zero, this policy arbitrarily and capriciously ignores the science and economics of climate change.”

- 14. Report Describes Value of National Estuaries:** This new [report](#) from Restore America’s Estuaries describes the immense value of estuaries along the U.S. coast in terms of jobs, recreation, storm protection, and other benefits.

- 15. Report Calls for New Protection of Nearshore Ocean:** A new [report](#) from American Progress focuses on the importance of protecting the nearshore ocean calling for greater attention to opportunities at the state and local level.

“The United States needs a new ocean conservation strategy. Climate change is causing rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and increased storm damage, while habitat destruction and unsustainable fishing practices deplete fish stocks and harm marine ecosystems....Increasing focus on conservation opportunities at the

state and local levels can help more effectively protect vulnerable ecosystems, provide benefits for coastal communities, create jobs and support working waterfronts, and build popular support for ocean conservation.”

- 16. CERES Guidance for Bond Climate Disclosure:** CERES has published new [guidance](#) to help municipalities issuing bonds to make full and effective disclosures of climate risks, including those related to coastal storms and rising seas. For example, the report cites a recent bond issuance by the City of Boston:

“City of Boston: Boston's Series 2023 General Obligation bonds provide transparent disclosure about the city's exposure to rising sea levels and coastal flooding, along with detailed information on the Climate Ready Boston initiative that addresses these risks.”

- 17. Coastal Population Growth Multiplies Risks and Damages:** This [substack post](#) from Susan Crawford describes analysis from reinsurance company Swiss Re describing how dramatic population growth in coastal areas is increasing potential damages and driving up insurance rates, especially in Florida:

“The risk/insurance picture is truly alarming for Florida—a state whose population has nearly doubled over the last 50 years. Swiss Re researchers keep running computer models of old hurricanes through newly built-up Florida regions, and the outlook is grim: If Hurricane Andrew arrived today it would cause **three times** the insured losses it did in 1992 because so many more people now live in its path.”

- 18. Jainey Bavishi Podcast on Coastal Cities:** Former NOAA Deputy Administrator Jainey Bavishi talks about the climate change challenges faced by coastal cities in this [podcast](#) with Urban Ocean Lab co-founder Anaya Elizabeth Johnson.

- 19. Sea Level Rise Science and Solutions Podcast:** In this [podcast](#) from the Environmental Law Institute, CFRP co-facilitator Jeff Peterson discusses sea level rise science and the range of policy challenges that face coastal communities

State and Local

- 20. Mid-Atlantic Ghost Forests Increasing:** This [article](#) in the *Chesapeake Bay Journal* points to the growing problem of salt water intrusion due to rising sea levels killing trees along the coast in the mid-Atlantic region. Some 415,000 acres of forest are harmed by saltwater intrusion on the Delmarva Peninsula.

21. Mystic Seaport Faces Rising Seas: This [article](#) in the *New York Times* describes the risks that rising sea level pose for the museum and facilities around Mystic Seaport in Connecticut:

“Twenty years ago, there might have been an inundation a few times a year,” Chad Frost, principal of the landscape architecture firm Kent and Frost, which has been working with the museum for two decades, said in a video interview. “Now, we’re seeing degrees of flooding on a monthly, sometimes weekly, occurrence.”

22. Isle de Jean Charles Relocation: What Went Wrong: This [podcast](#) on Sea Change is part of a three episode series reviewing the \$48 million project to relocate the community of Isle de Jean Charles, Louisiana to higher ground and the difficult issues that developed.

23. Tangier Island Fights Rising Seas: This [news report](#) from WHRO describes a new film documentary on the challenges that residents of Tangier Island in Chesapeake Bay face as they cope with rising sea levels.

24. Charleston Residents Manage Climate Anxiety: This [article](#) in the *Charleston Post and Courier* describes the range of efforts by local organizations to offer residents concerned about flooding and related climate impacts positive activities:

“Being involved in local action is a place where you actually can make a difference...There’s a lot of overlap in your interests with people you live close to that can transcend political divides.”