



Coastal Flood Resilience News

June 20, 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 coalition 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. **New Research Supports High End Sea Level Rise Projections:** New [research](#) published in *Science Advances* finds that global mean sea level rise is likely to fall at the higher end of the current projections by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

“Put simply, peak GMSL during the LIG [last interglacial] may only represent a lower bound estimate of total future sea level rise under global warming conditions given that both poles will be contributing simultaneously.”

This [article](#) in Inside Climate provides background information.

2. **Recent Heat Waves in Greenland and Iceland:** This [article](#) in *EuroNews* describes a [new study](#) from the World Weather Attribution (WWA) group finding that record-breaking heatwave in Iceland and Greenland last month was made around 3°C hotter due to human-caused climate change.

“To some, an increase of 3°C might not sound like much, but it contributed to a massive loss of ice in Greenland,” adds Dr Kew, one of 18 global researchers behind the new WWA study. The climate change-driven heat from 15-21 May corresponded with around 17 times higher than average [Greenland ice sheet](#) melting, according to preliminary [analysis](#) from the National Snow and Ice Data Center in the US.”

3. **Near-Term AMOC Weakening Questioned:** This [new study](#) in *Nature Geoscience* reviews recent research raising concern for significant weakening of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation finding:

“we conclude that the AMOC will experience limited weakening of about 3–6 Sv (about 18–43%) by the end of this century, regardless of emissions scenario. These results indicate that the uncertainty in twenty-first-century AMOC

weakening and the propensity to predict substantial AMOC weakening can be attributed primarily to climate model biases in accurately simulating the present-day ocean stratification.”

This [Grist article](#) provide more background information.

National Policy

4. **Trump Administration Plans FEMA Termination:** This [article](#) in the New York Times outlines Trump administration plans to terminate FEMA as we know it, likely after the coming 2025 hurricane season, leaving some funding and disaster aid decisions in the hands of the White House.

“There’s the potential for more suffering for disaster survivors, and that more people will die,” said Michael Coen, chief of staff at FEMA during the Obama and Biden administrations.

5. **FEMA Staff Resignations:** This *New York Times* [article](#) describes recent resignations of several high-ranking FEMA officials in response to Trump administration plans to abolish the agency, including Jeremy Goldberg, head of FEMA’s National Response Coordination Center.

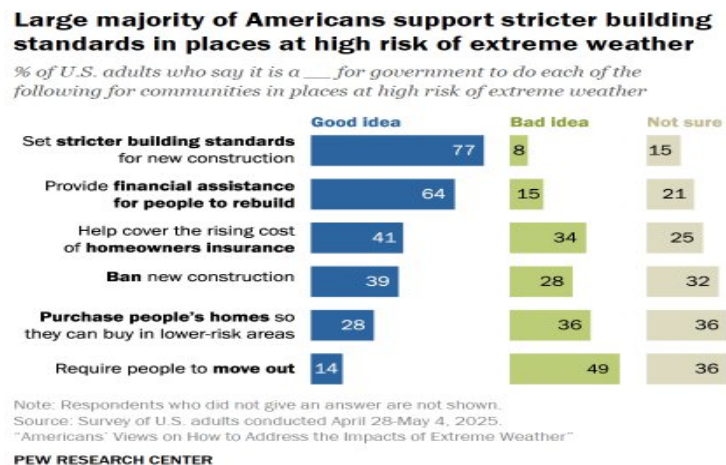
“Since the start of the Trump administration, FEMA has [lost about a quarter of its full-time staff](#), according to a former senior official. Last month, the head of FEMA was dismissed, and several senior officials have left, including MaryAnn Tierney, who was second-in-command. “I will not be complicit in the dismantling of this agency, and while I would implement change — even radical change — the current approach lacks a clear end state or plan, and has been done recklessly without regard to our current statutory or moral obligations to the American people,” Ms. Tierney [wrote in a recent message to agency staff](#) that was shared with The New York Times.”

6. **State Bond Banks Have Potential to Offset FEMA Funds Declines:** In this [substack post](#), Susan Crawford reviews the important role that bond banks in fourteen states play in financing of municipal projects. In the event of declining FEMA funds for climate adaptation, state bond banks could be an alternative source of funds. Although the state banks are not currently evaluating climate risks to loans, they will have an incentive to improve risk assessment and also encourage state and local resilience planning.
7. **Assessment of State Managed Property Insurance Programs:** In this [journal article](#), Carolyn Kousky, Environmental Defense Fund, and Hannah K. Friedrich, University of

Arizona and Cornell University, explain the various state-created disaster insurance programs and discuss their future role in an era of increasing risk.

“Focusing on lowering losses through climate adaptation can stabilise insurance and keep people safer. In addition, a broader conversation about when and how to socialise insurance costs is needed in the United States to guide reform of our residual insurance programmes.”

8. **Pew Trusts Poll Finds Public Support for Stronger Building Codes:** A [new poll](#) by the Pew Charitable Trusts finds public support for stronger building codes in response to more extreme weather, including coastal storms. A plurality of those polled also supported financial assistance for rebuilding, financial help with insurance, and a ban on new construction.



9. **NOAA Managed Climate Website Faces Termination:** This [article](#) in *The Guardian* describes the likely termination of [Climate.gov](#) a NOAA managed website providing a range of climate data and information and a key tool for informing the public about climate change impacts and risks, including coastal flood risk.
10. **Buyout Costs to Municipalities:** This [article](#) in the *Washington Post* describes how limited flood risk buyout funds and the financial costs to municipalities limit the number of buyouts proceeding. Some people interested in buyouts are not being offered the option.

State and Local

11. **New York City Finds Flooding to be Highest Health Risk:** In a new [report](#), the City of New York evaluated a range of risk to public health, including detailed mapping of places at risk from storm surge and sea level rise.

“Based on this year’s methodology, flooding emerged as the most pressing public health threat for NYC. Rising sea levels and intensifying storms could make

flooding a more frequent occurrence and a significant risk to NYC's infrastructure and communities."

This new [article](#) in *The City* provides more background information.

- 12. Maine Allows Higher Seawalls:** This [article](#) from Maine Public Radio describes how the State of Maine is adapting to the flood risks posed by more severe storms and rising seas, including passing a new law to allow adding up to 2 feet to the height of seawalls. Maine environmentalists opposed the bill and promoted nature-based solutions:

"Maine Audubon Director of Advocacy Francesca Gundrum said that even with restrictions, the organization would prefer landowners consider natural, less intrusive methods of shoreline buffers. We want to help incentivize and promote nature-based solutions instead of solutions that are hardening the coast, which we think we need to start getting away from," Gundrum said."

- 13. New Jersey Prepares Package of Policies to Manage Sea Level Rise:** This [article](#) in Inside Climate News describes work underway in New Jersey to finalize a [comprehensive set of measures to address rising seas](#) in the face of opposition from some municipalities and others.

"The state is now poised to advance a slew of new rules aimed at increasing its resilience to climate change and sea level rise. These regulations, known as Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) regulations, are set to be finalized by the fall, in the waning months of Gov. Phil Murphy's administration."

- 14. South Carolina Town Limits Coastal Growth in Face of Rising Seas:** This [article](#) in the *Charleston Post and Courier* describes how the coastal Town of Bluffton in South Carolina is protecting navigable wetlands by creating a setback, buffer requirement for development. The size of the buffer varies and a developer can seek a waiver from the town administrator. Developers oppose the buffer requirement and are threatening to sue the town.