Assisted Resettlement and Community Viability on Louisiana's Gulf Coast: Proceedings of a Workshop (2023)

MASGP-23-026

DETAILS

102 pages | 6 x 9 | PAPERBACK

ISBN 978-0-309-69579-4 | DOI 10.17226/26774

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SUGGESTED CITATION

National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2023. *Assisted Resettlement and Community Viability on Louisiana's Gulf Coast: Proceedings of a Workshop*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/26774.

NATIONAL ACADEMIES *Sciences Engineering Medicine*

NATIONAL ACADEMIES PRESS
Washington, DC

Assisted Resettlement and Community Viability on Louisiana's Gulf Coast

Heather Kreidler, *Rapporteur*

Board on Environmental Change and Society

Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education

Proceedings of a Workshop

NATIONAL ACADEMIES PRESS 500 Fifth Street, NW Washington, DC 20001

This activity was supported by the Gulf Research Program of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of any organization or agency that provided support for the project.

International Standard Book Number-13: 978-0-309- 69579-4
International Standard Book Number-10: 0-309- 69579-1
Digital Object Identifier: https://doi.org/10.17226/26774

This publication is available from the National Academies Press, 500 Fifth Street, NW, Keck 360, Washington, DC 20001; (800) 624-6242 or (202) 334-3313; http://www.nap.edu.

Printed in the United States of America.

Suggested citation: National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2023. *Assisted Resettlement and Community Viability on Louisiana's Gulf Coast: Proceedings of a Workshop*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. https://doi.org/10.17226/26774.

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We thank the following individual for their review of this proceedings: Lori Hunter, University of Colorado at Boulder. We also thank staff member Maryann Terrana for reading and providing helpful comments on this manuscript.

Although the reviewers listed above provided many constructive comments and suggestions, they were not asked to endorse the content of the proceedings nor did they see the final draft before its release. The review of this proceedings was overseen Stephen H. Linder, University of Texas, Houston. He was responsible for making certain that an independent examination of this proceedings was carried out in accordance with standards of the National Academies and that all review comments were carefully considered. Responsibility for the final content rests entirely with the rapporteur and the National Academies.

Preface

Strategically moving communities away from environmentally high-risk areas, such as vulnerable coasts, has been referred to as "managed retreat."[1] Of all the ways humans respond to climate-related disasters, managed retreat has been one of the most controversial due to the difficulty inherent in identifying how, when, where, and by whom such movement should take place.

Managed retreat is a complex and controversial concept that has proven difficult to assess or implement as a collective response to environmental change. The phrase conjures disparate ideas: a well-organized top-down relocation strategy on the one hand and a desperate defeat by "retreating" communities on the other. Communities considering relocation feel this dissonance, leading many to search for alternate ways of discussing the possibility, including not using the term "managed retreat" at all. Another difficulty in discussing managed retreat is the variability of its definition. In some contexts, it describes passive retreat measures, such as creating barriers to continued growth by changing zoning laws or providing disincentives (e.g., actuarially fair insurance rates).[2] In other cases, it describes active measures, such as moving physical structures.[3] One result of these difficulties is that other solutions to mitigating climate impacts

[1] Spidalieri, K., and Bennett, A. (n.d.). Georgetown Climate Center's Managed Retreat Toolkit. https://www.georgetownclimate.org/adaptation/toolkits/managed-retreat-toolkit/introduction.html

[2] Cheong, S.-M. (2010). Policy solutions in the U.S. Climatic Change, *106*(1), 57–70.

[3] Pinter, N. (2021). True stories of managed retreat from rising waters. *Issues in Science and Technology, 37*(4), 64–73.

on residential areas—like erecting floodwalls or raising structures—are considered and often implemented before discussing relocation as an adaptive strategy. Additionally, many areas requiring a retreat are of significant socio-economic disadvantage,[4] raising questions of how the nation's historical and ongoing social and economic inequities[5] might be considered in the context of managed retreat.

Population growth, coupled with the rapid onset of climate change over the last century, means that a retreat could potentially involve coordinating the relocation of major cities, as well as smaller communities. In both cases, relocation would take enormous resources over the course of many years, making it an unenviable prospect for politicians and policy makers. However, given the increasing prevalence and severity of climate-related impacts on many coastal communities, consideration of managed retreat as an option for communities to reduce their exposure is a timely challenge. The drivers of climate displacement and relocation are well documented (e.g., floods). However, less understood are the financial, policy, and decision-making mechanisms that facilitate or occlude relocation, on the one hand, and the perspectives of frontline communities that must navigate these mechanisms when faced with the reality of relocation, on the other. Advancing this discussion by including the voices of communities faced with the difficult consideration of managed retreat as an adaptive strategy to coastal change may support equitable and effective decision making.

[4] Martinich, J., Neumann, J., Ludwig, L., and Jantarasami, L. (2013). Risks of sea level rise to disadvantaged communities in the United States. *Mitigation and Adaptation Strategies for Global Change, 18*(2), 169–185.

[5] Siders, A.R., and Ajibade, I. (2021). Introduction: Managed retreat and environmental justice in a changing climate. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences, 11*(3), 287–293.

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1

Introduction and Background

In 2021, the Gulf Research Program (GRP)[6] of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine sponsored a two-year consensus study, *Managed Retreat in the U.S. Gulf Coast Region*, to examine and make findings and recommendations regarding the unique challenges associated with managed retreat among vulnerable coastal communities in the region. The Board on Environmental Change and Society in the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Education convened a committee of experts to provide in-depth analysis and identify short- and long-term steps for Gulf Coast communities that may need to relocate. This study is part of the GRP's interest in developing a research agenda for their future programming and relevant fields of study, such as those that address the complexities inherent in relocation as an adaptive strategy to climate change within and beyond the Gulf coast.

The committee convened a series of three public workshops in the Gulf Coast region to gather information for the consensus report. The workshops were held in June and July of 2022. Each workshop focused on policy and practice considerations, research and data needs, and community engagement strategies. One of the workshops' principal objectives was to elevate the voices of communities and individuals contemplating, resist-

[6] The GRP was established in 2013 from criminal settlement funds from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and is intended to "advance and apply science, engineering, and public health knowledge to reduce risks from offshore oil spills and will enable the communities of the Gulf to better anticipate, mitigate, and recover from future disasters." For more information on the Gulf Research program see: https://www.nationalacademies.org/gulf/about

ing, undertaking, or facing barriers to relocation (including systemic issues such as structural racism), as well as individuals who have resettled and communities that have received such individuals. Each workshop included community testimonials and panels of local decision makers and experts discussing processes and obstacles communities encounter with respect to the study's Statement of Task (See Box 1-1).

The consensus committee selected three locations across the Gulf region. Collectively, these locations represent diverse issues associated with managed retreat and diversity in demographics, including population size. The first workshop was held in two parts in Houston and Port Arthur, Texas; the second workshop was held St. Petersburg, Florida. The third workshop was held in two parts in Thibodaux and Houma, Louisiana. This proceedings recounts the third workshop in Thibodaux and Houma, Louisiana.[7]

PURPOSE OF THE WORKSHOP

On July 26 and July 28, 2022, the study committee convened a two-part workshop in the Bayou Region of Southeastern Louisiana. The first part of the workshop, "Community Viability and Environmental Change in Coastal Louisiana," was held at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, Louisiana on July 26. During the workshop the committee heard from Indigenous representatives from The First Peoples' Conservation Council of Louisiana and other local leaders from region.

The second part of the workshop, "Assisted Resettlement and Receiving Communities in Louisiana," was held in Houma, Louisiana on July 28. During this part of the workshop, perspectives were shared by community members who are contemplating resettlement, have experienced displacement or relocation, or have experience in communities that have received people displaced or resettled from environmentally high-risk areas. The committee selected community members who could speak to the challenges and needs of strategic climate adaptation. Additionally, other local leaders and experts were chosen to discuss the implications of housing, health, and planning in the context of resettlement and receiving communities. The workshop included a hybrid component so that the committee could hear from residents and experts from other regions of the Louisiana Gulf Coast.

To address the study's Statement of Task, the committee enlisted the assistance of the local non-profit organizations, identified through their experiences in the region: the Lowlander Center for the Thibodaux portion and the South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center for the Houma

[7] Additional details about the workshops are available at: https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/managed-retreat-in-the-us-gulf-coast-region

BOX 1-1
Statement of Task

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine will convene an ad hoc committee to conduct a study on the movement and relocation of people, infrastructure, and communities away from environmentally high-risk areas, sometimes referred to as managed retreat, in the Gulf Coast region of the United States. In particular, the study will focus on understanding and responding to the unique challenges in the face of a changing climate along the Gulf Coast (e.g., coastal flooding due to sea level rise, subsidence, land loss). The study will make findings and recommendations based on information gathered about the challenges, needs, and opportunities associated with managed retreat in the Gulf Coast region.

As a way to gather information for the report, three public workshops will be held in the Gulf Coast region. The public workshops will focus on policy/practice considerations, research/data needs, and community engagement strategies. Elevating community voices will be a centerpiece of the workshops. Topics to be addressed across the workshops may include:

- Identifying considerations and best practices for engaging with communities about managed retreat, including effective communication and engagement methods, equity, co-production of knowledge, development of strategies, and involvement in planning and decisionmaking;
- Understanding managed retreat efforts taking place within the Gulf Coast region, including promising practices to preserve social cohesion and protect traditional and cultural practices as part of managed retreat planning, and what community stakeholders in the Gulf Coast region can learn from them;
- Identifying policy and practical barriers to managed retreat, including issues relating to equity (e.g., who is able to claim access to various public benefits and services, how displaced peoples are received by and integrated into another community);
- Highlighting key information and data needs and necessary timeframe(s) to plan effectively; and
- Identifying research and information gaps, particularly in the social and behavioral sciences, which inhibit effective and equitable planning, communication, and implementation of managed retreat programs.

A publication will be produced by a rapporteur and in accordance with institutional guidelines following each workshop.

Following the completion of the workshop series, the committee will produce a report that:

- Synthesizes common themes identified through the public workshop series (e.g., policy and practical challenges, information needs, best practices);

continued

BOX 1-1 Continued

- Incorporates evidence from the literature in areas such as public participation, communication, governance, and decisionmaking; and
- Identifies short- and long-term steps necessary for community stakeholders to plan and implement the movement of people away from high-hazard areas in ways that are equitable, culturally-appropriate, adaptive, and resilient to future regional climate conditions.

portion. Enlisting the help of these organizations enabled the committee to hear from tribal and non-tribal residents of the region.

Furthermore, the committee felt strongly about fully understanding the complex and variable array of perspectives in affected communities. Participants were invited based on planning discussions among committee members and informational calls in which participants and staff members of the study identified areas of expertise and experiences that would be particularly relevant for the workshop and the broader study.

ORGANIZATION OF THE WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS

This proceedings has been prepared by the workshop rapporteur as a factual summary of what occurred at the workshop. The study committee's role was limited to planning and convening the workshop. The views contained in the proceedings are those of individual workshop participants and do not necessarily represent the views of all workshop participants, the study committee, or the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

The first day of the workshop is summarized in Chapter 2, which contains community perspectives from coastal Louisiana, and Chapter 3, which discusses equity, community viability, and environmental change. The second day of the workshop is summarized in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, with community perspectives on displacement, assisted resettlement, and receiving communities in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 contains discussions on resettling and receiving. Lastly, Chapter 6 describes the implications of housing, community development, and planning in the context of resettlement and receiving communities. The workshop agenda and biographies of participants and moderators are presented in Appendixes A and B, respectively.

2

Community Perspectives on Issues, Challenges, and Opportunities for Coastal Louisiana

> "Part of the reason why we're here today is because we understand the sacredness of our land, and unfortunately, our lands are eroding very rapidly. So, in honor of our sacred lands, and all sacred lands, I ask you to just give thanks, say a prayer, be appreciative, and think about the ways that you can contribute to protecting and preserving your space on these lands that we hold so dear."
>
> Native Land Acknowledgement
> Chief Shirell Parfait-Dardar, Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw and Chair, Louisiana Governor's Commission on Native Americans

During the workshop's opening remarks on July 26, 2022, John Ben Soileau, the Study Co-Director and Program Officer at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, acknowledged the critical importance of environmental preservation and cultural continuity amidst a rapidly changing environment. Jay Clune, the President of Nicholls State University, highlighted that Nicholls is only 24 miles from the coast, but when it was founded in 1948, it was 50 miles from the coast. Clune has seen land loss firsthand and emphasized that it was "forcing a managed retreat" from the coastlines and the lower part of the parishes.

Jessica Simms, an Associate Program Officer for the Gulf Research Program at the National Academies, spoke about the Gulf Coast being home to many people who can trace their family history back a number of generations. Many more people have been drawn to the communities

for their natural beauty, deep cultural heritage, and new opportunities. Simms said, "Together, the people of the Gulf share a unique sense of place, and it's the people who, in turn, make the Gulf Coast such a desirable place to live and work. However, for many, that sense of place—that place called home—is increasingly under threat." Rising seas and loss of land are redefining coastal landscapes. Flooding is becoming more widespread throughout urban, rural, and coastal communities. Simms pointed out that these changes and events are affecting people's lives, and the trend is accelerating. As a result, she said, "homes are damaged, communities are losing connectivity with each other and to critical lifelines and services, neighborhoods are becoming fragmented, and properties are being bought out or abandoned."

Simms explained that steps must be taken throughout the relocation or resettlement process, including both "ends of the migration equation"—from frontline communities to receiving communities—to guide and assist those in harm's way. Simms noted that, in addition to the directly affected communities, the roles of receiving communities that work on behalf of those who have been displaced need to be considered. "It's important for the region and the nation to get this right," Simms stated, saying that this will require elevating the perspective of those directly affected as well as fostering collaboration among community members, governments, and nonprofit organizations. She concluded by saying that hearing workshop participants' lived experience, expertise, voices, and stories is critical to informing the national dialogue on what is needed to help communities transition and will help inform Gulf Research Program activities.

COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES FROM LOUISIANA'S BAYOU REGION

The facilitator Alessandra Jerolleman, a Community Resilience Specialist and Applied Researcher from the Lowlander Center, opened the panel by asking everyone to keep in mind that coastal Louisiana is a place with history, people, and culture. She emphasized in her context-setting remarks that these are "people's lives that are being talked about. Many of these people are in situations and circumstances that are a product of processes that have occurred over time, and these stories are the embodiment of their lived experiences."

Elder Rosina Philippe, Atakapa-Ishak/Chawasha Tribe and President of the First Peoples' Conservation Council of Louisiana

Elder Philippe lives in Grand Bayou Indian Village, located off Louisiana's mainland in South Plaquemines Parish. She stated that the

members of the Atakapa-Ishak/Chawasha Tribe have been inhabitants of coastal Louisiana for centuries. She remarked that the term "managed retreat" seems neat and organized, but she pointed out that moving can be chaotic. She also noted that managed retreat is not just about moving one person or one family; it involves taking into consideration the movement of entire communities. For tribal and Indigenous communities, their culture, ceremonies, and traditions are all connected to place. Elder Philippe noted that, therefore, considerations need to include how a move could affect future generations, especially in regard to how traditions are carried out and passed to the next generation. She passionately stressed that "there is no such thing as management of that process unless the people that need to relocate to another area have come to that determination and are in charge of the entire process." Elder Philippe also emphasized that there should be consideration and resources for people who want to remain. Additionally, she pointed out that many challenges these communities face are not a result of their own actions. The extraction of resources from the environment by outsiders is detrimental to their way of living, and she would like this to be taken into consideration.

John Doucet, Dean of Sciences and Technology, Nicholls State University

Doucet talked about the history of Bayou Lafourche in southeastern Louisiana in the context of community retreat. In the later part of the 1700s, mass settlements established the population and culture of Bayou Lafourche. He mentioned the 1785 settlement of approximately 1,600 Acadian refugees in Spanish Louisiana, most of whom settled along Bayou Lafourche and eventually migrated to the Gulf Coast over the next century. One site of this migration was the coastal community of Cheniere Caminada, which attracted people from around the world. Many came to engage in the fishing industry there—including the Acadians as well as people from Croatia, the Philippines, and China. In the communities along the lower Bayou Lafourche, particularly Golden Meadow, shrimping was the predominant industry from the 1920s through the 1940s. Then in the late 1930s oil was discovered, bringing in an influx of Texans and others from around the country. Doucet said his hometown of Golden Meadow, LA, became an oil boomtown. Eventually, with the discovery of oil offshore, the town developed into a mecca for boat building and offshore services.[8]

[8] Doucet explained that these services began with locals using their shrimp boats to deliver supplies to drilling operations in the marshes and eventually offshore, later developing into a "large supply industry of specialized boats and ships, pipeline supply companies, and food providers."

At the turn of the 20th century, three of the most severe hurricanes to ever hit the Gulf Coast devastated the area and led to a retreat from the coast. The Hurricane of 1893 killed almost 2,000 people; with approximately half of the 1,500 residents of Cheniere Caminada perished. The survivors never returned. Two more major hurricanes followed in 1909 and 1915 that caused further retreat to communities up the bayou—an adaptation strategy that continues today. Doucet discussed culture and history that may become lost as communities move and coastal land disappears. To give an example, he spoke about the Golden Meadow Historical Center, which collected artifacts of town history and culture, among which were stories of historical storms and hurricanes suffered by the town folk. He discussed how, ironically, Hurricane Ida destroyed the Historical Center's roof and many of those artifacts. Doucet concluded by sharing that Nicholls—where 87 percent of students, faculty, and staff call a coastal parish their home—is building a coastal center[9] that will focus not only on community preserving solutions such as levees and water systems mitigation of coastal land loss, but also on preserving culture.

Chief Shirell Parfait-Dardar, Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw and Chair, Louisiana Governor's Commission on Native Americans

Chief Parfait-Dardar explained that her people understand that to survive, they will have to adapt and be resilient, and there will necessarily be some tough choices. They intend to protect and preserve the lands they have left. She described how the tribe's future chief, Devon Parfait,[10] took a map from the 1800s showing large tracts of land that sustained their people and environment. He then overlaid a current map to determine the extent to which they overlapped. His doing this helped to visually show how much land had been lost and explain why they had to move over time. Now her people face resettlement to another area, which is very challenging to confront and plan for. She stressed that not everyone would leave, which must be respected.

Chief Parfait-Dardar emphasized that everyone needs to be included in managed retreat discussions, especially those who are being impacted. The ways this process has been conducted previously are not suitable for her community. Previous efforts did not involve the affected community from

[9] More information about the Center for Bayou Studies at Nicholls State University is available at: https://www.nicholls.edu/center-bayou-studies/

[10] At the time of this workshop, Young Chief Devon Parfait was the future chief of the Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw but in August of 2022, he transitioned to the role of chief. The titles used in this report reflect the titles used at the workshop.

the start of the process to its completion. While she thinks this is changing and more inclusion is occurring, she went on to say that it is not enough. She pointed out, "if you have a group of people that are making decisions about another group of people, and none of those people were in the room, then you're not helping; you're simply causing harm." Her people are undertaking this effort on their own to ensure that they maintain the integrity of the community, their voices are heard, and their needs are met. She hopes they can share their experience with other communities facing similar situations.

Gary LaFleur, President, Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Foundation and Professor, Biological Sciences, Nicholls State University

Gary LaFleur discussed how the Center for Bayou Studies (the Center) at Nicholls State University examines the coast's biological, physical, and geological components. LaFleur stressed the importance of adding socio-cultural dimensions to these three components and explained that the Center intends to include "the people of the coast" as one of its priority areas of study. He noted that there is not currently a textbook on the human dimensions in the context of Bayou Studies, but there are some academic resources[11] that could be used. He also shared two strategies that he uses with students. One is to take students to the Chauvin Sculpture Garden[12] on Bayou Petit Caillou. He has found it is easy for students living inland to overlook people living on the coast. When he takes students there, they inevitably talk about the people who live there, providing a living lesson. The other strategy he mentioned is to introduce students to coastal region songs and culture through the Cajun Music Preservation Society.[13]

[11] For examples of resources, see: Simms, J.R.Z., Waller, H.L., Brunet, C., and Jenkins, P. (2021). The long goodbye on a disappearing, ancestral island: A just retreat from Isle de Jean Charles. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences, 11*(3), 316–328. Simms, J.R.Z. (2021). Solastalgic landscapes: Prospects of relocation in coastal Louisiana. *Frontiers in Environmental Science, 9*. Colten, C.E., Simms, J.R.Z., Grismore, A.A., and Hemmerling, S.A. (2018). Social justice and mobility in coastal Louisiana, USA. *Regional Environmental Change, 18*(2), 371–383. Simms, J.R.Z. (2017). "Why would I live anyplace else?": Resilience, sense of place, and possibilities of migration in coastal Louisiana. *Journal of Coastal Research, 33*(2), 408–420, 413. Colten, C.E., Kates, R.W., and Laska, S.B. (2008). Three years after Katrina: Lessons for community resilience. *Environment: Science and Policy for Sustainable Development, 50*(5), 36–47.

[12] More information about the Chauvin Sculpture Garden is available at: https://www.nicholls.edu/center-bayou-studies/chauvin-sculpture-garden/

[13] More information about the Cajun Music Preservation Society is available at: https://bayouarts.org/portfolio_page/cajun-music-preservation-society/

Chief Albert Naquin, Jean Charles Choctaw Nation

For approximately twenty years, Chief Naquin has been working to resettle members of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Tribe, which included people living on Isle de Jean Charles (IDJC). The IDJC is a community in South Terrebonne Parish, off the coast of Louisiana, that is surrounded by water and connected to the mainland by a road that can become impassable during heavy rain events (see Figure 2-1).

In 2002, the tribal council decided to resettle inland after finding out that the Morganza to the Gulf of Mexico project[14] did not include protection for IDJC. An opportunity to relocate was offered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers but was unsuccessful since it required 100 percent of the population of IDJC to agree to participate and that level of consent could not be reached. After Hurricanes Gustav and Ike devastated IDJC in 2008, resettlement efforts restarted, but failed due to resistance by non-Indigenous people who lived next to where the resettlement was to take place.

In 2016, Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery funds were awarded to the State of Louisiana Office of Community Development-Disaster Recovery Unit through the National Disaster Resilience Competition,[15] which included funds to implement LA SAFE[16] and to develop The New Isle[17]—a planned community forty miles north—for the resettlement of IDJC residents. Chief Naquin stated that he is trying to get the resettlement process back into the hands of the community members. Overall, he does not think the resettlement of the Isle de Jean Charles has been a success.

Windell Curole, General Manager, South Lafourche Levee District

An event that shaped Curole's life was a 1973 meeting with a geologist who explained how the geology—and specifically the delta—in coastal Louisiana differs entirely from anywhere else in the United States. The Mississippi River's basin drains water from 41 percent of the contiguous

[14] The Morganza to the Gulf of Mexico project will include levees, floodgates, and water control structures in parts of Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes that "aims to protect people and property as well as the remaining fragile marsh from hurricane storm surge." More information is available at: https://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/About/ Projects/Morganza-to-the-Gulf/

[15] The State of Louisiana received 92.6 million dollars, 48.3 million dollars of which was allocated to the Isle de Jean Charles resettlement. Louisiana Division of Administration. (n.d.). *Recovery programs*. National Disaster Resilience Competition. (2016). from https://www.doa.la.gov/doa/ocd/recovery-programs/

[16] LA SAFE. (2019). *Our land and water: A regional approach to adaptation: Louisiana's Strategic Adaptations for Future Environments (LA SAFE)*. Available: https://lasafe.la.gov/

[17] More information about The New Isle is available at: https://isledejeancharles.la.gov/new-isle

FIGURE 2-1 A photo of "Island Road," a low-lying causeway across open water that connects Isle de Jean Charles to inland communities and is subject to periodic flooding.
SOURCE: Betts, G. (2022), *Island Road*, photograph. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.

United States. Therefore, the soil in coastal Louisiana comes from other places—from Western New York to Montana and up to Canada. According to Curole, if time-lapse photography over the last 5,000 years were done,[18] it would show the Mississippi River moving back and forth, and instead of spewing just water, it moves mud. People have settled on top of the sediment of the Mississippi River basin. There has been a history of relocation, for many reasons, in coastal Louisiana. According to Curole, "south Louisiana's controlling factor is not climate, right now. It is subsidence and continues to be subsidence." One example Curole provided is the community of Leeville, which is lower than it was in 1915, due to a combination of subsidence and sea level rise.

The Swamp Land Act of 1850 (9 Stat. 519, Chapter 84) allowed Louisiana to work to "reclaim the Swamp Lands" by controlling the Mississippi River using levees and ditches for flood protection and navigation. Curole pointed out that when big things are done, the result is usually not entirely good or bad. He added that the negative impacts of the levee system can now be seen; over the last 50 years the Gulf of Mexico "has gotten 30 miles closer to everybody." On the other hand, his community would be gone if a levee system had not been built. Some people want to avoid future risks, but for many people, the place they grew up "is like a family member" and the levee system is changing that place. His closing point was that local knowledge could be mixed with technical expertise to create an understanding of Louisiana's geology to deal with issues and move forward intelligently as a community.

Chief Romes Antoine, Avoyel-Taensa Tribe

Chief Antoine explained that the Avoyel-Taensa Tribe, located in the central part of Louisiana, is much smaller than it previously was. Chief Antoine cited conflicting claims over who the descendants of Avoyel's first tribe actually are as a possible reason they have not yet been recognized by the state or federal government as a Native American tribe. He noted they are trying to reclaim land that they previously possessed in the area—but it has been a fight on which he did not wish to comment further. Even though they have problems, he said they are doing their best to live among other tribes and other peoples. He went on to say they are also proud of their affiliation with the coastal tribes and try to work together with them when possible.

[18] A visual representation of the meandering of the Mississippi River over time is available at: https://www.nps.gov/vick/learn/nature/river-course-changes.htm

Nicole Cooper, Director of Administration, Town of Jean Lafitte

Cooper shared that the communities of Lafitte, Barataria, and Crown Point in southern Louisiana have endured 25 named storms in the last 30 years. Of these, Hurricane Ida was the most catastrophic. Following Hurricane Ida, the federal government provided Louisiana with 2.6 billion dollars for supplemental disaster relief, primarily for flood protection projects. The communities of Lafitte, Barataria, and Crown Point, although some of the hardest hit, did not receive any funding. Cooper said this was not the first time the area was not included in the distribution of flood protection funding. For example, the 14.45 billion dollar Hurricane and Storm Risk Reduction System[19] that was built following Hurricane Katrina included 1.1 billion dollars to build the largest pump station in the world.[20] Its purpose was to reduce the risk of flooding for residents and businesses in three parishes, including Orleans, Jefferson, and Plaquemines, on the west bank of the Mississippi River. She said the pumps move 150 gallons of water a second—about 15 Olympic-sized pools every minute—to the south, with the communities of Lafitte, Barataria, and Crown Point south of the pumps.

Cooper explained that the state of Louisiana has committed to funding 300 million dollars in tidal protection projects in the area,[21] despite its not receiving any federal funding for flood protection. In addition, she went on to say, over the last 20 years, federal, state, and local funds have been used to make numerous capital improvements, including: 35 million dollars to elevate 200 homes in the area; 25 million dollars for town buildings; one million dollars for a waterline; two million dollars for sidewalks; 16.5 million dollars for sewer improvements; 65 million dollars for bridges; and 17 million dollars for drainage. Currently, there are 20 drainage projects in the design stage. Cooper stated that with all of the investment and associated improvements in the area "the idea of relocation is not really an option." She went on to point out that, furthermore, the area is rich in heritage and culture. It is known for hunting, trapping, and fishing and contains the largest shellfish-producing community in the United States. It is also home to the first Filipino settlement in the United States. She concluded by emphasizing that the cost of relocating the Town of Jean Lafitte would far exceed the cost of providing adequate protection.

[19] More information about the West Closure Complex is available at: https://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/Portals/56/docs/PAO/FactSheets/WCC.pdf

[20] Shaw, A. (2015). 5,000-horsepower engines fire up world's largest pump station. *nola.com.* https://www.nola.com/news/environment/article_69051ee5-6a30-5171-a3f0-ccf26d842913.html

[21] More information about the funding commitment is available at: https://gov.louisiana.gov/index.cfm/newsroom/detail/2648

Elder Theresa Dardar, Pointe-au-Chien Tribe, Lafourche/Terrebonne Parish

Elder Dardar's ancestors have lived for centuries along the Bayou Pointe-au-Chien in the southern part of Terrebonne and Lafourche Parishes. They are "bayou people" with a unique tribal cultural heritage in a place where they can cross the road to get to work and catch shrimp for dinner. Elder Dardar compared the prospect of moving to "taking a fish out of water." She went on to say that when her great aunt was moved in her nineties to St. Bernard, it "was like taking the tree and ruining it and not replanting it, because she died not long after she made the trip to St. Bernard, and she was healthy when she left."

Most of the tribal area was excluded from the Morganza to the Gulf project, but flooding has also occurred in areas that will be protected when the project is completed. She acknowledged that maybe one day they will have to consider relocation—but for now, relocation is not something her community is ready to talk about or do. She went on to point out that they are trying to save the community where they live and the lands around their cultural sites, such as sacred cemeteries and mounds. She also noted small efforts such as a "living shoreline" project that uses oyster shells to protect against erosion. Estimating that it would probably cost more to move everyone than to protect them, she suggested, "why not protect the same place and keep us there? We don't want to move."

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION: NUANCES OF RESETTLEMENT

The moderator, Alessandra Jerolleman, started the roundtable discussion by emphasizing that places are more than just points on a map, and resettlement cannot be reduced to "simply grabbing a suitcase and moving on." She then went on to share some themes she heard the panelists raise in their presentations:

- Community-led relocation efforts have been difficult and challenging because of current regulations and requirements, so several participants suggested that managed retreat should not be the only option considered;
- Several panelists noted long histories of dispossession and genocide and want it to be taken into consideration that there is a risk of these practices continuing when discussions occur without everyone at the table;
- Participants addressed the importance of partnerships and of having stakeholders support one another; and

- "Everything is in relationship with the land, with the ecosystem, [and] with each other." Multiple participants noted that topics that are at the forefront of conversation in one area often do not carry the same cultural distinctiveness and context in a different area (e.g., further inland).

Natural Processes and Resources

Elder Philippe stated that an essential part of the conversation should be about the possibility of sheltering in place, which is to say the right of people to self-determination—especially for coastal Louisiana Indigenous populations that have lived on these lands for thousands of years. They survived flooding in the past by elevating structures and homes to let natural processes work around them. Newcomers came into the floodplain area, removed resources from the coastal environment, and have tried to control the natural processes. She went on to say that due to this, her community lacks some of the protections they once had. Instead of trying to control and manipulate the environment, she suggested looking at processes and projects that can work in conjunction with the natural way things happen in order to protect and preserve the environment.

Harriet Festing, a committee member, asked about the resources extracted from the region and possible ways to repair the land and ensure people feel protected. Elder Philippe explained that the oil and gas industry created thousands of canals that have contributed to coastal erosion, saltwater intrusion, and subsidence. She went on to point out that when extraction activities are close to coastal lands, the extraction process destabilizes the coast. Permission was given for these extractive activities, but the canals were supposed to be backfilled when the work was finished. Elder Philippe stated that there has to be responsibility taken and accountability administered to correct the damage done not only to the coastal tribes, but also for the state as a whole.

Curole spoke about the history of oil and gas development and efforts to maintain environmental protection in Louisiana.[22] He said the state of Louisiana has only received a small amount of taxes that the offshore oil and gas industry has paid the federal government since 1995. Efforts by former Louisiana Governor Kathleen Blanco led to the U.S. Senate passing the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act, under which Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi, and Alabama will share 37.5 percent of revenues from new

[22] For a detailed history of oil and gas development and environmental protection, Curole suggested: Theriot, J. (2014). *American Energy, Imperiled Coast: Oil and Gas Development in Louisiana's Wetlands*. Louisiana State University Press.

production in federal waters.[23] Still, it has been a continual battle to get a fair share. He pointed out that, at the same time, some companies are doing positive work. An example he noted was ConocoPhillips and its assistance in facilitating the establishment of terraces around the levee system in Lafourche.

Low-cost and Low-tech Restoration Work

An audience member asked if there were other examples of restoration work that, like the living shoreline project, were low-cost and low-tech. Elder Dardar responded that work is underway to backfill canals; however, permissions and additional funding sources are needed. She noted it would save the land and cost less to backfill canals[24] than to build a diversion that could flood nearby parishes. Since oil and gas companies were supposed to leave the land more or less in its original condition, as they found it when they arrived, LaFleur noted that Elder Dardar was "trying to do work that someone else should have done a long time ago." He said Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan[25] has always included information relating to human dimensions and nonstructural restoration strategies (e.g., floodproofing, voluntary acquisition).[26] He added that, at the same time, progress is still needed on how communities can work through coastal changes. Curole pointed out that when living in an area with extreme weather, "you gotta expect it, plan for it, and learn to build smartly."

Pathways to Engagement and Collaboration

In Jerolleman's experience working with communities, people have not always been invited to participate in community engagement processes. Plus, when they are invited, they are not always heard, and this can lead to adverse outcomes. She asked what could be done to provide community-led discussions that account "for the cost of participation." She went on to say that "the cost of participation" can include time and the "trauma

[23] For additional information about Blanco v. Burton, the lawsuit that resulted in this revenue sharing, see: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/235288964.pdf

[24] According to the Lowlander Center, "Over the past century, extractive energy industries have dug more than 35,000 canals in southeast Louisiana, resulting in 10,000 miles of disrupted wetlands. More than three-fourths of these canals are no longer in use; however, they were not filled back in." More information is available at: https://www.lowlandercenter.org/canal-backfilling

[25] More information about Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan is available at: https://coastal.la.gov/our-plan/

[26] More information about the Coastal Master Plan's nonstructural restoration strategies is available at: https://mississippiriverdelta.org/handbook/cpras-nonstructural-program/

of spinning your wheels, saying the same things to the same people who don't necessarily do more than make up a note on a piece of paper or on a computer." Jerolleman also noted that community engagement processes can sometimes lead to negative outcomes.

Curole responded that some tradeoffs take place in coastal zone management. Pointing out that every community needs three things—a good environment, an economy, and an infrastructure—he emphasized that often a compromise, one element in relation to the other two, is necessary. He added that different methods may be needed at various times to do what is best for the community, but if the community takes the lead, the best solution can often be determined. Curole went on to say the action that ends up being taken might be very helpful to some people, but not to everyone, so it is essential to be honest about this fact and try to be fair. His community would not exist if the levees had not been built—but he realizes at the same time that some people were negatively impacted, and he is trying to make up for that by "mak[ing] the attempt to be as fair as possible."

Elder Dardar stressed that her community members know their landscape and associated subtleties better than any outsider can, so it is vital that they be present to discuss anything involving their community. Elder Philippe pointed out that some strides have been made towards establishing a collaborative effort to find the solutions for issues that people are facing—but there is still a long way to go. She emphasized that, furthermore, the survival of people who have lived in a certain place for centuries depends on recognizing and chronicling subtle environmental nuances. In the past, contributions to the discussion made by local community members were often viewed as anecdotal or non-scientific. That has improved, but there is "still a long road to go," Elder Philippe emphasized, for there to be true collaborative efforts based on mutual respect and a shared objective.

Craig Colten, a committee member, asked what the first steps might be in order to assure a respectful and adequate discussion about two possibilities: (1) the process of remaining safely in place for those who choose to do so and (2) a safe way to resettle for those who want to move. He suggested one possible way to address the need for community representation from start to finish could be by providing funding to communities so they can hire their own experts. Jerolleman acknowledged that existing models of engagement and participation designed to include community groups and tribes in discussions, such as providing them with resources to attend, do not resolve the challenge faced when processes and meetings are happening almost simultaneously and in different places (e.g., Baton Rouge, LA, and Washington, DC). The scheduling, time, and energy it takes to meaningfully participate is very difficult for people. This challenge can be an ongoing problem even when there is a paid position for a community representative.

Elder Dardar replied that a member of each tribe or the president of the First People's Conservation Council (FPCC)[27] should be invited to participate in any discussions involving coastal communities because "we've worked together" and "we help each other in any way we can." Curole pointed out that because of "where [coastal Louisiana residents] live, the way we think, and what we do is in the minority," the seat at the table needs a heightened level of power and influence tied to it for when negotiations are made. Chief Antoine remarked that getting a seat at the table is good, but if no one listens or is willing to help, it does not make a difference. Elder Philippe suggested policy changes be made through collaboration and conversations with people facing critical, life-changing issues—such as relocation—so that the result will be based on informed decisions. Elder Dardar responded that it is important to remember these communities are the buffer for the inland communities—so "by saving us, you save yourself for future years to come."

Displacement Impacts on Community Well-being and Individual Health

Gary Belkin, a committee member, asked about emotional burdens and challenges related to displacement. Elder Philippe replied that since her community can only be accessed by water, water is part of everyday life. She emphasized that, for this reason, from an Indigenous coastal perspective, relocating to another area would change who she and her people are by taking away the connection to the place they have thrived for centuries. She noted that beyond just the physical movement of people and associated geographical displacement, there are related issues to be considered. For example, relocating to another area would create turmoil for many people, and she wonders whether or not this experienced turmoil might be passed on to future generations. Elder Philippe recalled the impact on her father of a hurricane evacuation which caused him "a lot of physical and mental stress—and his spirit was troubled."

Doucet stated it is important to address mental and emotional burdens among the current generation because stress can alter traits parents pass to their children—a phenomenon called epigenetic modifications of the stress axis. He recalled watching an interview where a question was asked about what community members did to help one another after returning to a town devastated by a tsunami in Japan. A man replied, "mostly, we don't talk about it. The emotional turmoil is so severe, we just go about our business and don't talk about it." Doucet related this recollection to what happened in Cheniere Caminada after the 1893 hurricane. He commented that it is

[27] More information about the First People's Conservation Council of Louisiana is available at: https://fpcclouisiana.org/

remarkable how people around the world behave similarly with regard to natural disasters and the consequent displacement from their homes.

Receiving Communities

The last question for the panel was from Jerolleman about how those who live in inland areas can be partners in conversations about receiving communities. Chief Antoine, who lives in an inland area, noted that their land is very different from the coast, and for this reason they survive differently. However, he went on to say, all members of Louisiana tribes try to work together even though they are in different areas. His tribe has been working towards receiving federal funding to build shelters for people in the lower-lying areas so his community can have a safe place for native and non-native people to stay during or after a hurricane.

3

Equity in Community Viability and Environmental Change

The next workshop session, built on the preceding panel's conversations, was a conversation-guided roundtable discussion on equity, community viability, and environmental change. The panel for this roundtable included several of the presenters from the previous session: Gary LaFleur, Elder Rosina Phillipe, and Windell Curole. Young Chief Devon Parfait also joined the panel.

OPENING COMMENTS: REFLECTIONS ON THE ROUNDTABLE SESSION

Alessandra Jerolleman, the panel moderator, started the discussion by asking panelists to reflect upon the previous session's conversations. She went first, remarking on earlier comments about the importance of having a seat at the table and the suggested alternatives to managed retreat that were discussed. She highlighted the following ideas:

- Land loss has been exacerbated as a result of old oil and gas canals that were supposed to be filled once they were no longer in use *not* being backfilled;
- Adaptation in place needs to be supported, whether through funding, policies, or other mechanisms;
- Accountability for environmental damages from individuals, corporations, and others who might be responsible may need to be sought;
- Funding may be necessary to support community representation in policy discussions;

- Current policies can be examined and updated; and
- Community-led efforts allowing community members to speak for themselves and determine how to move forward could be encouraged.

Jerolleman closed her remarks by emphasizing the importance of listening to those who have been living in these areas for centuries.

Young Chief Devon Parfait,
Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw

In his opening comments, Parfait emphasized that in his experience, one of the most significant issues for coastal planning is that communities are often considered as an afterthought. He emphasized a fundamental change is needed to make sure communities are included. Additionally, when talking about coastal resilience, he went on to say it is important to talk about, and prioritize protection for, coastal communities experiencing negative impacts from flooding, erosion, and subsidence. He shared his story about growing up and living off the land near a bayou until Hurricane Rita's storm surge caused his family to lose almost everything. After growing up in different parts of southern Louisiana, he decided to leave to get an education that would allow him to come back and work on the problems in Louisiana—especially those experienced by coastal communities.

Gary LaFleur,
President, Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Foundation and
Professor, Biological Sciences, Nicholls State University

LaFleur has been present at coastal meetings with local, state, and federal agencies where some suggestions and recommendations from community members were incorporated into the decision-making process. However, more or less, the agency is still in charge. He suggested that it would be best to consider community members as more than just a minority opinion when making decisions. LaFleur noted that some places in Louisiana are beginning to talk about receiving communities and are considering the possible benefits of receiving people that might be relocating from the coasts. He suggested that potential receiving communities need to start having conversations about this prospect so people can get used to the idea. If people have enough time to think about it, he said, "they'll make the right decision, because you do not want to be a place that says no, we're not gonna welcome other Louisiana natives."

Elder Rosina Philippe, Atakapa-Ishak/Chawasha Tribe, and President, First Peoples' Conservation Council

Elder Philippe emphasized the need to show greater respect for Indigenous populations that occupy traditionally held Indigenous land, given the fact that manipulation of the environment by outsiders has caused an increased risk for coastal Indigenous communities, imperiling their culture. As an Indigenous person from an Indigenous community, she said she is tired of people saying "things must be sacrificed—because the sacrifice is always us." Elder Philippe went on to say that there is a long way to go, but if the contributions and knowledge of Indigenous communities are respected, and projects and processes occur after robust discussions and information is gathered from all stakeholders, the hope is that the end product will benefit everyone. She said that if a decision is made to relocate, it is important to remember that the decision has not come easily.

Windell Curole, General Manager, South Lafourche Levee District

Curole shared his experience working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the Corps) on a levee system. His priority was to protect as many people as possible. According to Curole, the Corps made decisions based primarily on cost-benefit ratios and regulations. For example, the levee was supposed to stop at the Golden Meadow corporate limits, which would have left many people outside the levee system. However, the investment of a Tabby Cats Food plant south of Golden Meadow put the cost-benefit ratio high enough that the Corps could extend the levee another two miles. The extension protected more people, including a number of Native Americans, but Curole said there was no consideration of that fact by the decision makers. The bottom line, from his perspective, was to include as many people as possible inside the levee system. He emphasized that they are still trying to help those who live outside the levee system—people who, because of their location, are unable to benefit from its protection.

COMMUNITY VIABILITY

Jerolleman began the roundtable discussion by asking what makes a community viable—for the community at its current site and for a resettlement—and how viability can be strengthened. Curole noted that coastal Louisiana communities are unique, distinct from other places, and "would not be the same somewhere else." In Elder Philippe's opinion, what makes a community viable is "the ability to be self-sufficient to provide for the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of yourself, your family, and your community." She said this includes preserving and protecting not only

resources, culture, and traditions for future generations, but also other life forms and the environment. Parfait echoed Elder Philippe's point by saying that community viability depends on thinking ahead and into the future. He pointed out that, for existing communities and future generations to survive and thrive, living sustainably with the environment "is the most technologically advanced thing that you can do."

LaFleur said he has seen firsthand that isolated and impoverished communities are often where language and music are preserved, so for him "authenticity" is part of community viability. He discussed two problems that can arise in a community in Louisiana: (1) that a whole community can disappear, like Cheniere Caminada, and (2) that a community can change when new people with more economic means move in while the people that made it authentic move out.

GENTRIFICATION ALONG COASTAL LOUISIANA

Jerolleman mentioned that as gentrification is occurring along the coast, areas left behind after resettlement and retreat can be returned to nature or used for other purposes. She probed the panelists about what can be done from a policy perspective to protect access to traditional lands, ensuring that the resettlement of a community does not open the possibility of a different population coming in and subsequently receiving protection? Parfait responded that one of the best ways to avoid coastal gentrification is to keep communities together where they are and, by so doing, protect them by allowing their culture to thrive. He said protection is "needed now, not after new populations move in." LaFleur suggested there is a need to teach people to value the environment, their communities, and their cultures. One way he does that with his students is by discussing the value of the area. One example of this is how he discusses with them the fact that the only Cheniere forest existing on an inhabited barrier island in Louisiana is on Grand Isle. Elder Philippe mentioned that coastal communities that are not protected are still subject to the same tax base and cost of living. She believes residents are more concerned with industrialization in the coastal region than gentrification. Another issue she raised concerns an increase in the number of delays people have experienced in receiving resources earmarked for recovery and rebuilding after storm events. To Curole, other people coming in is not a big threat. If a community is unable to get funding or have a tax base to maintain what already exists, it is at risk of disappearing. He concluded that "the most discouraging thing of all is thinking that you might outlast your community."

INFORMATION AND DATA GAPS FOR EQUITABLE AND EFFECTIVE RELOCATION PROJECTS

Jerolleman inquired about the data and information needed for communities, on a collective basis, to pursue conversations and, in so doing, decide how to protect in place or look for alternatives. Curole replied that the fundamental question he asks is: "are we doing the best thing?" If we are, he went on to say, then we should continue. Otherwise, he said, there is a need to reexamine what has been done and consider other possibilities. Elder Philippe agreed and further noted that decisions about ways to protect communities should include stakeholders throughout the entire decision-making process. She suggested that technological advances can be used in more robust and aggressive ways. Elder Philippe concluded by saying that having meaningful conversations and collaborations is vital; otherwise, it is a "disservice not only to who you are and the entity that you represent but to the people who you're supposed to be advocating for."

LaFleur suggested that when considering alternatives to migration, community members should be able to determine independently, for themselves, if they want to stay where they are. He suggested changing the cost-benefit analysis criteria so that culture and communities would be weighed as heavily as, for example, the economic value of a strategic oil reserve. Parfait highlighted a significant disparity in funding for scientific projects in coastal Louisiana—and then went on to emphasize the fact that communities with fewer resources and less access to education are often not funded. He stressed the importance of respecting and valuing traditional [i.e., Indigenous] ecological knowledge and embedding changes into policies, so the "systematic exclusion of communities is fixed and addressed."

BARRIERS TO RESETTLEMENT AND OTHER FORMS OF ADAPTATION

Natalie Snider, a committee member, acknowledged that there are people who will self-determine to stay. She asked what could be done to help people who do not want to remain in high-risk areas but may not be able to move on their own. Parfait explained that since there are many people in coastal areas without the means to move, outside financial support could enable them to relocate. Financial means can also be a factor when considering whether to evacuate during a hurricane, Parfait went on to say. Elder Philippe pointed out that moving requires resources—but staying also requires resources. She added that getting people out of harm's way is essential. Next, Elder Philippe proceeded to pose the following questions about resettlement that have not been fully considered:

- What would a safe place look like, and where would it be located?
- What would life look like in the future?
- Where would people live, and what would their environment be like?
- Where would they work, and how would they sustain themselves—not just the people moving, but future generations?
- How would people who want to leave support themselves before, during, and after a move?
- How would cultural practices be maintained for future generations?

Elder Philippe emphasized there are many unknowns, and moving elsewhere may just trade one set of problems for another set. She stated it is less costly to support someone where they are than to move them elsewhere.

POTENTIAL INEQUITIES OF RELOCATION PROGRAMS

Craig Colten, a committee member, discussed Louisiana's Master Plan component that addresses the type of relocation called voluntary acquisition.[28] There are about 2,400 households that might be eligible if they were to choose to make their property available for state acquisition. Colten pointed out that in many cases, the people who are more than likely to take advantage of this kind of program can in fact afford to move on their own. He went on to ask how to address potential inequities in the support provided for relocation programs—including the emotional costs that are not currently accounted for. LaFleur acknowledged that some of the people in the greatest need of relocation might be excluded, which is a problem he is unsure how to fix. Parfait suggested examining existing disparities and inequities in communities to consider how to offer support and resources to people who could benefit from an acquisition program. Regarding what types of programs work best, Curole suggested that looking at previous efforts to gain information about who moved and who could not move could help determine what type of programs work best. Elder Philippe remarked that she does not want relocation and retreat to be the only possible solutions considered for coastal communities. She advised including upfront in all discussions the concept that there are other ways to support communities in place if resources are dedicated to environmental recovery and protection.

[28] More details on voluntary acquisitions are included in the current draft of the 2023 Louisiana Coastal Master Plan,available at: https://coastal.la.gov/our-plan/2023-coastal-master-plan/

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

An audience member remarked that project timelines and planning processes often change and may end up taking decades, especially when the Corps is involved. Given this context, he asked panelists how to go about making sure there is authentic community involvement and participation. Elder Philippe promoted exploring and implementing smaller projects to address land loss—as well as the putting in place of coastal protections instead of waiting for big multi-billion-dollar projects that could take decades to implement. From conversations she has had about the Mid-Barataria sediment diversion project, her understanding is it could take approximately 40 years to see tangible benefits from sediment accumulation.[29] She went on to suggest that while waiting to see positive impacts from that project, multiple other projects could be implemented in the area to provide additional benefits. She mentioned marsh creation, ridge restoration, closing canals, pipeline sediment delivery, and diversions. Elder Philippe stressed that there is no time to wait—restoration and protection approaches must be aggressive since the communities on the frontlines are losing land every day. Parfait echoed Elder Philippe's point that these communities deserve protection in order to be viable in the future. He suggested one way to do this would be to allow and include more community members in open conversations with decision makers.

MANAGED RETREAT TERMINOLOGY

Lynn Goldman, a committee member, reflected that the term "managed retreat" may not accurately encompass the entire process, and asked the panelists for other applicable terms. Curole responded that when an individual or community takes the lead by saying they want to move, someone should respond and assist them. In this instance, it becomes "assisted retreat" with conversations and dialogues taking place between and among multiple entities instead of a single entity managing the process. Parfait liked Curole's definition of assisted retreat—but since retreat is not the only option, he proposed "assisted resilience." He suggested that resilience—embodied not just by individuals but also entire communities, cultures, and livelihoods—is essential.

[29] The Mid-Barataria sediment diversion project is intended to "build and maintain 17,300 acres of wetlands within 30 years of the project's initial operations, deliver 310 million cubic yards of sediment into Barataria Basin within 50 years of operation, and increase elevation of land near the outfall area by 3.6 feet within 50 years." More information on the project is available at: https://mississippiriverdelta.org/restoration-solutions/sediment-diversions/mid-barataria-sediment-diversion-this-is-our-best-shot/

BARRIERS TO BENEFICIAL COASTAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIVITIES

Lori Hunter, a member of the Board on Environmental Change and Society (BECS), asked about considering actions to benefit the coastal region that were previously mentioned, such as backfilling canals dug for extractive purposes or implementing living shorelines, and what the barriers to these actions were. Elder Philippe said low-tech and low-budget projects are not typically of interest to elected officials, so organizations and communities have undertaken projects on their own. One example is Lafitte, which closed some canals where the habitat is now flourishing. The next step, she said, is getting the attention and involvement of decision makers. A barrier Curole highlighted is the expensive and time-consuming permit process, given the fact that environmental projects are treated the same way as development projects.

LaFleur pointed out that, given how results can be hard to measure, it can be challenging for some decision makers to see the value of an ecosystem project. "As academics, we imagine that there is a lot of funding to restore places, but those funding sources are not as obvious as they could be," LaFleur went on to say—which he thinks has slowed down environmental projects. Parfait echoed that it is all about what is valued, adding that projects that are funded often place more emphasis on economic interests than on the people involved. He noted that terms like the "working coast" may suggest that Louisiana's economy is the element worth saving. He said that when projects are undertaken in response to what is perceived to be a convincing economics-centered argument, communities are systematically left out of that conversation and left out of those projects.

BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY AND COMMUNITY RECOGNITION

Gavin Smith, a committee member, asked what can be done to empower communities to obtain and play a role in developing resources that better address local needs and conditions. LaFleur replied that it is helpful to have familiarity with the paperwork and processes required to obtain resources. He mentioned that the Lowlander Center[30] has helped increase familiarity with paperwork and processes in southern Louisiana, so there is a movement towards that, but it is in the early stages. Elder Philippe also mentioned the benefits of widely disseminating information on available resources in different formats and languages.

[30] More information about the Lowlander Center is available at: https://www.lowlandercenter.org/

An audience member asked if there were examples of times when government agencies, scientists, or other technical advisors injured or sidetracked a community's plan for adaptation. Parfait noted that one of the issues tribes deal with is the issue of formal recognition. There are two types of "recognition," state and federal, and each offers its own level of funding and support. In Louisiana, there is no funding or support for state-recognized tribes—even for state-level issues—which Parfait said "is a barrier that consistently pervades working with state agencies, state government and also broader." Elder Philippe and Chief Naquin emphasized that neither cultural and racial identity, nor the recognition process should be involved in the consideration for accessing resources. LaFleur suggested there may be a problem with the recognition criteria since none of the tribes represented at the workshop are federally recognized. In other words, he said, if Native Americans that have understood their identity as Native Americans for many centuries cannot be recognized as Native Americans by the federal government, then the government's criteria for recognition must be flawed, rather than any purported "problem" with the tribal unit that does not reach a designated level of validity. If that could be resolved, LaFleur said, "some hard problems may get solved."

Another audience member pointed out that many people "don't or can't talk about" specific topics due to their official or institutional positions. This audience member stated that many communities already have the capacity to work collaboratively—but what they lack is trust, respect, and recognition. He pointed out that there are narrowly defined criteria for a successful relocation process. He went on to say that community members are often included in meetings but not listened to. Elder Philippe expressed that work must be done to build community capacity, the lack of capacity being due primarily to the negative impacts of previous eminent domain claims for coastal communities. Parfait concluded the discussion by saying that even though coastal Louisiana has dealt with many injustices in the past, "there is an opportunity for change."

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Panelists shared their key takeaways from the roundtable conversation:

- Jerolleman wondered how community capacity could be accepted—as opposed to community efforts being shut down or excluded—and how to ensure agencies and partners do not overlook the work that communities are already undertaking.
- LaFleur noted that the Isle de Jean Charles relocation was an imperfect process, but that it can be used as a benchmark for future projects to do better with gaining increased community input.

- Elder Philippe said in order to make a difference for today and tomorrow, it is important to understand that gaining respect goes two ways, involving both learning how to communicate and listening to gain an understanding of what is being said.
- Curole mentioned it is important to acknowledge that projects often take a long time and conditions can change, but cautioned that the project, or changes to it, should not override the original purpose. "Be sure you're hitting the target and not just doing something to do something."
- Parfait encouraged people to "think about ways that you can be an agent of change," since future generations and the environment will be affected by current actions or inaction.

CLOSING REMARKS

E. Barrett Ristroph, a committee member, closed the workshop by revisiting some themes discussed by several of the panelists:

- There is a history of resettlement along the coast, so the concept is not something new.
- The importance of place is a fundamental basis for culture and identity.
- The Louisiana coast is a special place shaped by the Mississippi River and the delta and is one of the few places people can live off the land.
- Coastal Louisiana is vulnerable not just to hurricanes but also to the effects of industry.
- Subsidence and other impacts are as much of an issue in coastal Louisiana as climate change.
- People understand the environmental threats and the resulting possibility of a need to leave—in some cases—and their survival has traditionally depended on this valuable knowledge.
- For many, displacement poses parallel threats: the loss of their culture *and* their identity.
- There is a history of dispossession by outsiders coming in and making decisions for local people—and, at the same time, profiting from the land without returning anything. This experience has led to emotional turmoil and may have consequences for future generations.

- Some tribal communities were effectively "sacrifice zones"[31] for climate change, just as they were for oil and gas development, while more affluent communities have not been asked to make such sacrifices and are not expected to move. There was a strong justice component present in the day's conversations.
- Not everyone will consider relocation, and there are various reasons for this.
- Low-tech projects, in addition to longer-term projects, could help address environmental changes.
- Policy changes and federal tribal recognition could enable more access to resources.
- Indigenous people's self-determination and community self-determination, and protection in place, are often not considered.

The recurring theme discussed by all panelists, Ristroph noted, was the need for improved communication, accountability, and community involvement from start to finish.

> "It's only through true collaboration that we get to have these types of meaningful discourse, where communities that are seemingly isolated in these coastal regions . . . get to share not only a piece of our lives and who we are, but to share the wider issues that concern so many other peoples and communities."
>
> Closing with Tribal Community Protocols
> Elder Philippe

[31] "Sacrifice zones" is a term used to describe the places where underserved communities live in close proximity to polluting industries that expose them to environmental threats. An example of a sacrifice zone for climate change is an area subject to the immediate effects of climate change (i.e., increased flooding, drought) which is not protected to the same extent as surrounding communities. More information about "sacrifice zones," is available at: https://www.climaterealityproject.org/sacrifice-zones

4

Community Perspectives on Displacement, Assisted Resettlement, and Receiving Communities in Louisiana

> "Indigenous people have called this land home for literally thousands of years. And I want you to understand how special this place is. There is human-made architecture in coastal Louisiana that is older than the Pyramids of Giza. And there are so few places in the entire world that monumental architecture of that scale predates agriculture. Coastal Louisiana, as you may already know, was built by the Mississippi River and as long as the land has been there, so have the Indigenous people."
>
> Native Land Acknowledgement
> Genie Ardoin

During the second day of the workshop, on July 28, 2022, in Houma, Louisiana, stories were shared by community members who have contemplated resettlement, have experienced displacement or relocation, or have experience in a community that has received people displaced or resettled from environmentally high-risk areas. The facilitator, Jonathan Foret, Executive Director of the South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center, opened the panel by noting that Louisiana, more than any other state, has the highest number of residents that were born in the state and still reside in the state—what Foret referred to as "native-born residents."[32] Furthermore, Foret said, Lafourche and Terrebonne parishes have some of the highest numbers of native-born residents compared to

[32] A map of nationwide migration patterns since 1900 in the United States is available at: https://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/16/upshot/mapping-migration-in-the-united-states-since-1900.html?abt=0002&abg=0&_r=0

other parishes in Louisiana. Historically, many people migrated north within the same watershed, which is often locally referred to as moving "up the bayou." As migration to other areas occurs, many community connections have been lost as people have moved away from the resources and places with which they are most familiar. Foret suggested finding ways to reignite community connections to strengthen communities and make them more resilient.

COMMUNITY STORIES OF DISPLACEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT

Genie Ardoin, Bayou Regional Arts Council, and Board Member of the Helio Foundation

Ardoin said she did not realize until later how growing up in Chauvin, Louisiana would affect her. After living elsewhere, she moved back twenty-five years ago so her children could grow up with the same culture and sense of community that she had. After Hurricane Ike destroyed their home in 2008, they migrated two miles north on the same bayou. Later, they moved another mile north—and eventually, they moved to Houma. She noted that in past hurricanes, most residents knew how to fix their homes if they were damaged from flooding, and the community members helped one another to recover. During Hurricane Ida in 2021, the levee system protected some areas from flooding, but strong winds damaged so many homes that many residents could not participate in community efforts to help one another. She added that many residents were not able to fix their roofs, and this inability to repair their homes led to their ultimately choosing to leave.

Ardoin acknowledged that communities are becoming more fragmented, and it is "hard for other people to understand why we don't just move away." However, people are working to keep traditions alive so that culture is not lost as more people move. Ardoin agreed with Foret's comment that in the past, it took little effort for grandparents and other adults to pass along traditions to children when spending time with them—but now, the passing along of traditions has to be done more intentionally. Ardoin noted that she would like to see schools teaching about culture and traditions such as trolling and fishing.

Cherry Wilmore, Case Manager, Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office, and Sherry Wilmore, Department of Corrections Community Coordinator for Reentry through Goodwill Industry of Southeast Louisiana

Cherry and Sherry Wilmore are known on social media as Everybody's Favorite Twins.[33] They were brought to Houma through the Louisiana foster care system when they were ten years old. According to Cherry Wilmore, it was traumatic because they were separated in Houma for a year. They were then adopted together and raised by a "grandmother mama" from Houma. They lived in Mechanicville, a majority Black community in Houma, where the whole community helped take care of them.

They emphasized that vital to understanding the area is understanding that Black people lived in America before slavery. Sherry Wilmore explained: "Black people do not consider themselves Cajun, and older generations did not have a choice but to live together, so it is a community, but in a different sense." Sherry explained that the vernacular of place names and referring to bayou directions (i.e., up or down the bayou) is not how Black people refer to places. "We have to understand that when you talk about this area as being particularly Terrebonne or Lafourche, and you refer to [a] place like Chauvin, Black people are going to refer to Smith Ridge . . . When you speak about Houma, you may speak about 'up the bayous'. . . [but] African Americans are going to ask you, 'Are you from the Mechanicville area, are you from the Alley, are you from Deweyville, are you from Gibson?' because that is how they represent themselves." In another example, many older Black people refer to places by the name of the plantation on which they lived. Sherry went on to underscore that other groups who also have strong communities—including Asians and Hispanics—are often not recognized and are left out of the conversation when we characterize the people that live here. Cherry and Sherry Wilmore would like to see increased understanding and openness for everyone. Sherry mentioned that she saw their community recover after Hurricane Katrina, but over time businesses and people have left for numerous reasons, such as better opportunities or for lower taxes. Additionally, Cherry noted that "being a Black person in Houma is not always easy," and sometimes people with forward-thinking and progressive minds feel the need to leave this area so that they can face less discrimination and become more successful, "because sometimes you get tired of fighting the same battles over and over, and not feeling like you're not getting anything accomplished."

Cherry said their community was prepared for flooding, but no one was ready for Hurricane Ida's damaging winds, destruction from which acceler-

[33] More information on Everybody's Favorite Twins is available at: https://www.facebook.com/Everybodyfavoritetwins

ated people leaving the area. Sherry said many residents went four to six weeks without electricity, gas, water, cable, and internet. There was little access to information, and for many with limited income and resources, their ability to rebound and recover was diminished. Sherry said that a large percentage of the homes were damaged, so there are now campers and tent cities. Cherry commented that many people wanted to come back, but rising insurance rates and difficulties obtaining reimbursement have contributed to people choosing to relocate. Due to limited access to resources since Hurricane Ida, she has seen increased environmental, mental health, and substance abuse issues. Cherry concluded by saying that people need to do a better job of getting to know their neighbors and checking on them.

Bette Billiot, Administrative Assistant, United Houma Nation

Billiot has been involved with the United Houma Nation tribal population that was relocated to Terrebonne and Lafourche "due to forced migration from northern Louisiana, on down."[34] Raised by neighbors and other family members with a "unique one-of-a-kind culture," she grew up closely connected to the bayou in the small community of Dulac, just south of Houma. As an adult, she has lived in many places but wanted her children to grow up as she did. She now lives on the east side of Houma—where not only is the land subsiding, but also, the cost of living is higher. Many businesses are leaving and rebuilding on the west side of town. She commented, "To save the west side, we have to save the east side," pointing out that if people have to relocate, many will move one town over, which in this case will be the west side of Houma.

Hurricanes, flooding, and recovery are a part of their culture. She recalled telling her children, "If you want to live in Louisiana, you need to learn how to tarp a roof for a hurricane." Her community knows how to rebuild after a hurricane and does not wait for help or governmental assistance. She went on to point out that, at the same time, many of those who are part of the younger generation are leaving since it is not feasible for them to stay and keep rebuilding. The majority of people who do remain are elders who are not interested in starting over somewhere else; they stay "because this is home, because of what they're going to be losing." She acknowledged that Dulac is no longer the same; the younger generations are not experiencing the culture she did, and traditions are fading. She recalled

[34] Following the arrival of both French and Spanish colonial powers to Louisiana in the late 1600s and 1700s, the Houma tribe moved south to the coastal Louisiana marshlands by the early 1800s. As a result, they avoided the mass forced relocation that occurred in the Trail of Tears in the following decades. Gannon, B. (n.d.). The Houma's migration. *Garde Voir Ci.* https://gardevoirci.nicholls.edu/2021/the-peoples-migration/

a conversation with a younger fourth-generation fisherman who wanted a different life for his children because making a living by fishing was such a struggle for him.

Thaddeus (Mike) Pellegrin, Local Resident

Pellegrin has lived most of his life in Chauvin, Louisiana, and worked in the shrimping industry, just like his father and grandfather did. Every year when they went to the shrimp drying platforms, they would see less and less land. He noted that Louisiana has been shrinking as far back as anyone can remember, but in the past, the Mississippi River had replenished and rebuilt the land. That is no longer the case, which is one of the reasons he was able to purchase property from the South Coast Corporation in 1973. Pellegrin said his father heard they wanted to sell low-lying areas of the parish in response to a study that showed loss of land occurring at alarming rates. The property he bought is where he raised his family.

His grandson loves the area and purchased Pellegrin's home from him. Unfortunately, two months later, Hurricane Ida hit and caused considerable damage to the house. Due to his grandson's love for the area, his grandson decided to stay and rebuild. Further, because of land loss, subsidence, and sea level rise impact communities such as Chauvin, Pellegrin has witnessed people moving further north to get out of harm's way. Other changes are also occurring, such as more people building camps instead of homes. He expressed hopes that projects such as the Morganza to the Gulf system will allow his grandson to be able to raise his family in Chauvin.

Bonnie Theriot, Local Resident

After living six decades along the bayou in Chauvin and Houma, Theriot moved to Tennessee. After two years, she missed her family and felt it was time to come home to Louisiana. Two months before Hurricane Ida, she purchased a home and moved back to Chauvin. Her home was severely damaged during Ida and is still not completely repaired. Her 94-year-old mother and 91-year-old aunt both lost their homes, and two of her sisters' homes and her son's business were damaged. Due to the scale of the damage—she estimated that the vast majority of the structures in her community were damaged—her family and her community could not help one another since they all experienced damage at the same time. Instead of being the unifying event that previous hurricanes had been, Hurricane Ida increased the number of people who chose to permanently relocate out of the area.

IMPLICATIONS OF DISPLACEMENT AND RESETTLEMENT ON MENTAL HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELL-BEING

A roundtable discussion with the above panelists followed the individual presentations. Foret began the session by stating that, due to the pandemic, Hurricane Ida, and inflation, "as a community, our mental health is really suffering right now." He asked participants to share their perspectives on mental health-related issues and their community's sense of well-being as it relates to displacement or resettlement. Ardoin replied that she has seen many people referred for counseling. However, at the same time, she feels many people are carrying untreated trauma, and she suggested yearly mental health checks could be helpful. Billiot commented that even before the storm there were many mental health issues due to land loss. Losing homes and land is "like losing a family member," Billiot said, and many people suffer from grief as a result of losing a home or land. In her community, even rain can cause flooding, which also affects mental health. Billiot noted that mental health problems are evident but not always discussed—and overall, mental health problems are undertreated in Houma. Sherry Wilmore chimed in to say that though many mental health resources are available, they are often underutilized. She emphasized the value of making and keeping connections with neighbors and remembering that "resilience has a breaking point."

CULTURAL AWARENESS IN EDUCATION AND POLICIES

An audience member asked how to include local culture and local knowledge in policies and education. Foret said he is working on efforts to bring different ethnic groups and cultures together. One way he is doing this is by intentionally sharing stories on a narrative stage through Houma's upcoming Rougarou Fest,[35] which celebrates Southeast Louisiana's bayou culture. Sherry Wilmore mentioned a traveling artist event[36] that used storytelling to connect to the past and build cultural awareness. Cherry Wilmore noted that as segregated as some communities may appear, there are many commonalities, such as everyone valuing family and food.

Gary LaFleur, an audience member, has seen land restoration occurring, but not many efforts to save a community's culture. LaFleur suggested that since state policy makers have put so much effort into saving the land, the next step could be to devise plans and strategies to preserve local culture. Billiot noted that people, businesses, schools, and resources, which used to bring people together, are leaving her community. She also commented that

[35] More information about the Rougarou Fest is available at: https://rougaroufest.org/

[36] More information about the traveling artist event is available at: https://houmatravel.com/blog/post/white-boot-storytelling

the people who have remained are not communicating as much as they have in the past, contributing to a growing sense of disconnection. Foret said that if these places are lost—which he is not completely sure will happen—resources need to be developed to give people a place to mourn.

In response to a question from Craig Colten, a committee member, about whether people are encouraging their children to stay or leave, Billiot replied that she is aware of children being encouraged to leave in order to receive an education so that they can find ways to help the community. The fisherman she spoke about earlier wanted his children to keep the tradition of fishing alive but not become dependent on fishing for making a living.

IMPACT OF COASTAL RESTORATION EFFORTS ON DECISION MAKING

Colten asked if Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan[37] and state efforts to restore and protect the coast have influenced people's decisions to stay or leave. Pellegrin replied that Louisiana needs a national-scale effort to preserve the wetlands. Billiot remarked that in all projected tidal surge scenarios contained in the Master Plan, Terrebonne and Lafourche parish would no longer be there in fifty years. She noted that while she understands the severity of the situation and knows what the future looks like, she feels many in her community will stay as long as possible because "my people are water people." According to Ardoin, some people in her community have decided to stay as a result of increased protection, but more protection is needed.

Several panelists highlighted how the majority of people do not know that a Master Plan even exists. These panelists feel, for this reason, it is unlikely that there would be many people who will make the decision to stay or go based on it. Sherry Wilmore pointed out that it is difficult for people to understand not only the academic language used in the plan but also its implications for the general public. She went on to say, "we are aware that we have a coast that needs to be saved, and most people want to stay here because there is no way of life like living here." Billiot added that not all the projects listed in the Master Plan will be funded. Foret suggested there is a need to go beyond the Master Plan to help people make the decision to either continue living in coastal Louisiana or relocate.

INSURANCE IN THE CONTEXT OF DISPLACEMENT

Foret, Ardoin, and Cherry Wilmore pointed out that insurance companies—whether by design or chance—are incentivizing people to

[37] More details about Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan are available at: https://coastal.la.gov/our-plan/

move away from coastal threats by increasing the cost to buy and insure homes. According to Cherry Wilmore, the area has always dealt with land loss—approximately the equivalent of a football field being lost each hour[38]—but most people want to stay. She went on to say, however, that if a home cannot be insured and residents cannot afford to pay out of pocket to repair their homes, it will likely become unrealistic for many people to stay. Ardoin pointed out that after Hurricane Ida, the Helio Foundation could not help the families with insurance because there were so many families without any assistance from insurance that needed help. She added that "none of them could afford the insurance; it's not affordable." Audience member Jenny Schexnayder pointed out that many people, for various reasons—including a lack of insurance or proof of home ownership—could not get assistance from the federal government after Hurricane Ida. She also noted that many businesses are not eligible to receive assistance because they have not been properly legally established, either due to a lack of resources or ability, or because they were intended as informal businesses.

WELCOMING RECEIVING COMMUNITIES

Foret commented that it is vital to figure out what a welcoming receiving community looks like. He suggested important elements are educational opportunities as well as opportunities to meet and build relationships. These elements can help to alleviate tensions that may arise from community differences. Foret described a local example of whether storing crab traps in residential front yards—as some communities "down the bayou" are allowed to do—is acceptable. Foret noted that while regulations allow this in some communities, in others that might be receiving communities, residents do not store crab traps on their lawns because zoning regulations prevent it. Community events, like festivals, can help to reduce these conflicts because "it's harder to hate someone when you've become friends." Foret said being displaced is already a traumatic process, so finding a way to view "people as resources instead of drains on resources" could help reduce conflict. Cherry Wilmore mentioned that an example of a way to be more welcoming is the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program®,[39] which

[38] According to Couvillion and colleagues (2011), "trend analyses from 1985 to 2010 show a wetland loss rate of 16.57 mi^2 per year. If this loss were to occur at a constant rate, it would equate to Louisiana losing an area the size of one football field per hour." Couvillion, B.R., Barras, J.A., Steyer, G.D., Sleavin, W., Fischer, M., Beck, H., Trahan, N., Griffin, B., and Heckman, D. (2011). *Land area change in coastal Louisiana from 1932 to 2010*. U.S. Department of the Interior and U.S. Geological Survey. https://biotech.law.lsu.edu/blog/SIM3164_Pamphlet.pdf

[39] More information about the Inside-Out Prison Exchange Program® is available at: https://www.insideoutcenter.org/

brings together two groups of people: students in higher education and incarcerated individuals. The program aims to allow participants to recognize their similarities and common ground. Sherry Wilmore added that "when we are intentional . . . that's when we truly are the welcoming community that we want to be."

GAPS IN KNOWLEDGE FOR RESIDENTS AND DECISION MAKERS

Michael Esealuka, an audience member, pointed out that the Master Plan and managed retreat "have both been criticized as happening *to* communities and not *by* them." Esealuka asked if coastal planning and any associated conversations relating to relocation and retreat do in fact reflect the local knowledge, ingenuity, and solutions generated by the people living in coastal communities. Along these same lines, she wondered how to bridge the divide between state planning and community-driven solutions. Foret replied that he had seen efforts made to include community members in the process of the Master Plan, but he acknowledged there is still a disconnect between translating the plan to community members and including enough of [Indigenous people's] traditional ecological knowledge. Pellegrin suggested that decision makers should consider these three questions: "Where do I go? How do I get there? What the heck do I do once I get there?"

Cherry Wilmore explained that in the past, knowledge passed from one generation to another, but there is now a generation of people who do not know how to prepare for a hurricane. Since there had not been a hurricane the magnitude of Hurricane Ida in a long time, she believes this led many people to get comfortable and not evacuate. Cherry said that since it takes a lot less rain for flooding and damage to occur than it used to, there is a need to teach the basics on how to survive in this area.

SENSE OF PLACE AND MULTI-LOCAL CONSIDERATIONS

Thomas Thornton, Director for the Board on Environmental Change and Society, asked if consideration should be given to help people to become multi-local so they do not lose the values and sense of place that might be associated with a geographic location. Thornton explained "multi-local" as the idea that people might move up the bayou to join another community but have a desire or ways to visit and stay connected to their previous communities, perhaps by utilizing a camp or motor home, visiting, or fishing. Thornton asked if helping people become multi-local might be a strategy to retain "the values that might be associated with a geographic place . . . including the networks, the social capital, and other assets that support regional identity." Theriot responded by stating that "family" is

what drew her back to Louisiana, so she emphasized finding ways to bring communities back together. Pellegrin talked about his love of the place where he grew up and how he feels fortunate that his grandson feels the same way. He questions whether these communities can remain in the same physical place, but believes they can survive emotionally and culturally in a new geographical location. Ardoin noted that out of 1,000 people she spoke with, 998 did not want to leave. She added that many people cannot move on their own anyway due to their financial situation. Financial considerations, Foret pointed out, are a challenge to becoming multi-local. Sherry Wilmore made the last point, commenting on the loss of many "connectors," such as grandparents, who used to bring people together.

CLOSING REMARKS

To close the morning activity, Debra Butler, a committee member, shared some themes she heard throughout the panel:

- Over time, the migration of people seeking to find safe places—which can involve moving away from their family and culture—has occurred both into and out of coastal Louisiana.
- Coastal Louisiana is unique in the variety and difference found in the individual communities that comprise it; but at the same time, many similarities exist across these communities.
- Indigenous knowledge and knowledge of place is a legacy for these communities. Communities and people are embedded in "the assemblage of the land and water."
- Structural barriers can prevent the passing on of culture, language, skills, customs, rituals, and traditions to the next generation. Being resilient and trying "to stay in place" involves assessing how we can remove those structural barriers.
- Instead of waiting for government involvement, many individuals and communities have undertaken efforts on their own.
- Many elders are the "glue that kind of holds the community together," and they want to stay in place.
- Decisions can be made at the national level to contribute resources towards protecting coastal Louisiana.
- There are structural challenges to recovery after hurricanes and flooding. When a community is distressed, recovery is not limited to rebuilding homes and physical infrastructure, but can also involve restoring jobs, energy, power, food access, communication, schools, and community connections.
- Many people in the area have experienced multiple traumas and often cannot mourn for what was lost.

- Due to the destruction caused by Hurricane Ida, many places were damaged that would typically have been used for shelter.
- Lack of proof of property ownership can hinder federal and state assistance.
- The academic language used in Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan can be difficult for coastal residents to understand.

5

Resettling and Receiving Stories from Across Louisiana

The second activity during the workshop in Houma began with individual stories by panelists, followed by a roundtable discussion on what it means to resettle, what actions a community can take to move forward to a new place, and what it means to be a receiving community.

Mark VanLandingham, Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Studies of Displaced Populations, Tulane University

VanLandingham discussed some best practices and lessons from the recent settlement of Vietnamese Americans along the Gulf Coast. As he watched the Vietnamese community bounce back from heavy flooding, wind damage, and long-term displacement after Hurricane Katrina, his takeaway was that the Vietnamese community—with regard to standard disaster recovery measures, compared to other communities that suffered similar amounts of flooding, damage, and displacement—did quite well. For example, even though the Vietnamese community had measurable mental and physical health declines after Katrina, they bounced back fairly quickly, compared to everyone else. They also had a higher percentage of returning residents and lower unemployment rates than other areas. Since the Vietnamese community was not positioned in any obvious way to do better than other communities, VanLandingham explained that he used this as an opportunity to investigate resilience. In addition to standard components of resilience such as financial resources, social connections, skills, and human capital, he has been investigating cultural features to help explain why they did better than other communities and what lessons can be learned.

VanLandingham said, in general terms, part of what distinguishes the Vietnamese community from many other communities is its unique history and culture. One example he provided was their displacement from South Vietnam in 1975, when they had to reestablish themselves in a new place that was different from where they came from. Another point he made was that East Asian societies, particularly the Vietnamese, as a matter of tradition, embrace hierarchy as a core feature of their view of how the world works. In contrast, many American families and communities are against hierarchy, wanting children to be independent thinkers and find their own way, which he said many Vietnamese find puzzling. VanLandingham said that this comfort with hierarchy helps to explain why, in the wake of Katrina, a plan emerged from the Vietnamese community with a dedicated spokesperson—the head priest at a major church—as they worked to recover. In contrast, he explained, it was hard for many communities throughout the rest of New Orleans to make decisions because they could not agree on a plan or even a leader. He noted that many members of these other communities focused more on individual—or their family's—self-interest at the expense of the broader community's wellbeing.

Cyndi Nguyen, Executive Director, Vietnamese Initiatives in Economic Training

Nguyen grew up in a rural area in Vietnam. She was five years old when her family experienced the stressful journey to the United States. When her family arrived in the United States, no one spoke English, and they had no governmental assistance. So, when her family lost their home and all their possessions during Hurricane Katrina, and when the BP Oil Spill[40] negatively impacted the fishing industry, which her community relied upon, she was grateful for her parents and the Vietnamese community's courage and commitment to work together and rebuild. She noted that Hurricane Katrina hit thirty years after the Vietnamese community migrated to the United States, so they were still adjusting to new and different systems, cultures, and languages. Every family and community experienced challenges after Katrina, but Nguyen echoed VanLandingham's observation that part of the culture of the Vietnamese community involves taking action and moving forward as a community. She noted that the community was able to work together and quickly tackle many issues facing residents after Katrina thanks

[40] "The BP Oil Spill," also known as the "Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill," began when an oil rig called "Deepwater Horizon" exploded in the Gulf of Mexico, approximately 41 miles off the coast of Louisiana, on April 20 2010. Approximately 210 million gallons were spilled, making it the world's largest accidental oil spill in history. More information is available at: https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/deepwater-horizon-bp-gulf-mexico-oil-spill#settlement

to the leadership in the Vietnamese church and nonprofit organizations already established within the community, such as Vietnamese Initiatives in Economic Training (VIET)[41] and the Vietnamese American Young Leaders Association.[42] Nguyen concluded by saying that "it takes a village to raise a child, and we definitely will continue to enhance that village for everybody" through collaboration and engagement of everyone in the community.

The Vietnamese community has managed to sustain its cultural and historical knowledge and preserve traditions for future generations. Examples Nguyen mentioned were the Tet festival[43] and the Vietnamese Farmers Market, from which many people benefit. To help sustain their native language, a church has started a Vietnamese language class for children. She highlighted that these efforts have not been easy, but it is something the community continues to invest in.

Beth Butler, Executive Director, A Community Voice–Louisiana

Butler explained that Houma, compared to some other communities, stood out as a welcoming community for Hurricane Katrina survivors from the New Orleans area. Butler has worked with the Lower Ninth Ward in New Orleans for over forty years and has seen many challenges as well as many shared values from across the different communities she has worked with. She said that before Katrina severely flooded the Lower Ninth Ward, there was a sense of collaboration within the community and a commitment to social justice. She referenced a study conducted after Hurricane Katrina that found that residents displaced from the Lower Ninth Ward who were members of Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)[44] were more resilient than nonmembers.[45] Butler notes that findings from qualitative studies indicate the importance of social support in resilience. Members of ACORN organized and planned where they would go if they were to be displaced; discussed their problems, issues, and emotions. They also implemented a phone and texting bank to connect members to available housing.

[41] More information about VIET is available at: https://www.vietno.org/

[42] More information about the Vietnamese American Young Leaders Association is available at: https://vayla-no.org/

[43] More information about the Tet festival and the Vietnamese Lunar New Year is available at: https://www.louisianafolklife.org/LT/Articles_Essays/VietnameseNewYear.html

[44] ACORN is "a nation-wide grassroots organization whose mission is to promote the housing rights of low and moderate-income individuals and families across the USA and in several other countries." Glandon, D.M., Muller, J., and Almedom, A.M. (2008). Resilience in post-Katrina New Orleans, Louisiana: A preliminary study. *African Health Sciences, 8*(Suppl 1), S21–S27.

[45] Glandon, D.M., Muller, J., and Almedom, A.M. (2008). Resilience in post-Katrina New Orleans, Louisiana: A preliminary study. *African Health Sciences, 8*(Suppl 1), S21–S27.

After Hurricane Katrina, there was a concerted effort by the city, especially in the Lower Ninth Ward, to identify homes that were deemed unsafe. These homes were not allowed to be rebuilt, and city services such as water were denied to residents. While this caused conflict in Ninth Ward communities, residents' commitment to each other—born of long-standing, deeply intertwined relationships and strong sense of community and culture—overcame such conflict, facilitating the recovery of the community. As Butler noted, "Though typically described as poor, the community was a rich amalgam of middle class, a few rich, and many working poor families who shared resources and support for each other and their children."

Butler noted that some people still suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder and mental health issues related to Hurricane Katrina and the loss of community. Hurricane Ida also negatively impacted New Orleans. When Ida hit, many people did not have flood insurance, and Butler went on to observe that rising insurance rates would more than likely increase the number of people who could not afford flood insurance. With hurricane frequency and intensity increasing, some want to leave, but others want to stay. Butler noted that one of the biggest issues of disaster evacuations is "the devil you know versus the devil you don't know." Following Hurricane Ida, a small group of people migrated to Natchez, MS, which, she noted, worked out well since Natchez is in some ways similar to where they previously lived. Since this successful move, members of A Community Voice (a non-profit community organization and affiliate of ACORN) have been discussing a "model that would set a staging area for evacuations but that would also have long-term housing and become the future for displaced communities." She suggested that creating an alternative site, like Natchez, for people to evacuate to during future hurricanes would be relatively affordable for the government to build, in comparison with the cost of repeatedly evacuating people to temporary shelters. Such alternate sites could allow people to experience what it is like to live together in a small community away from home and reduce the fear of the unknown that accompanies disaster evacuation.

Butler also described that the town of Jackson in East Feliciana Parish, Louisiana, is an area currently being discussed by community members as a possible destination to retreat to, due to its "common Louisiana culture, lovely terrain, and proximity to the southern part of the state." Yet, she emphasized, it is far enough from the coast to miss the brunt of the large hurricanes, with high enough elevations to prevent flooding. She noted the importance of considerations such as "similar land, affordable housing stock, and cultural similarities, such as being near a waterway." She noted that there might be ongoing issues that would need to be addressed such as the stress associated with the loss of community, but that providing housing on similar land and within close proximity to family and friends may help to reduce negative experiences.

Cindy Robertson, Director, micah 6:8 mission, and Dee Knowles, Community Member

Dee Knowles, a former addict who has experienced homelessness, shared her story. Due to flooding in 2016, she lost everything and could not get governmental assistance. She was still recovering from this experience, followed by the loss of her husband in June 2021, when in September of 2021, Hurricane Ida hit Baton Rouge. At the time, she had a camper and two vehicles, which were all destroyed, and she ended up with nowhere to go. She made seven appointments with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to complete the inspection required as part of the application for funding to restore her home, but no one ever showed up. She stated also that she was unable to get approved for a hotel stay. The only thing she got was $500 after the storm first hit. Knowles said she never had an opportunity to make decisions about resettlement or relocation options. Through the assistance of Cindy Robertson (a fellow participant on the panel) and the micah 6:8 mission[46] (Robertson's faith-inspired nonprofit organization), Knowles came to Sulphur, Louisiana. Sulphur had also been devastated and many residents lost everything—however, "that very town took a complete stranger in and nursed her back to health." She went on to explain that she is now working with micah 6:8 mission and hopes to help others.

Knowles reflected on what she considers to be the necessary components of a welcoming community: some components are financial, but she also emphasized love and kindness. One priority of a welcoming community, she noted, would be to help repair homes. The second would be, for those who are displaced or homeless, to create a place where they could get a shower, a meal, gain access to resources, and learn to start living again.

Cindy Robertson, shared that there is an extensive network of communication between homeless people in Louisiana that also assists one another. However, during Hurricane Laura (2020), many homeless people were transported to other cities. When they returned, they were dropped off at Burton Coliseum in Lake Charles without any further transportation being provided and, as a result, "no way to get back to their normal neighborhood of homelessness." Also, they could not get assistance to replace their tents, cooking materials, and other possessions "because FEMA doesn't respond to you if you don't have a home." Knowles noted that in her case, thanks to individuals like Robertson and the Sulphur community, she is fortunate to no longer be one of the people who are still struggling.

[46] More information on the micah 6:8 mission is available at: https://micah68mission.org/

Sam Oliver, Executive Director, Acadiana Center for the Arts

Oliver reflected on national news stories after Hurricane Laura[47] when a local government official in Lafayette, Louisiana, made a statement that was not intended as it was received. The individual was trying to communicate that Lafayette could not and should not host a major shelter due to the potential risk of hurricane damage. Still, the reported message was that Lake Charles residents were not welcome in Lafayette. Lafayette's city government learned a lesson about the appropriate response to others dealing with a traumatic situation. Afterward, local officials in Lafayette course-corrected and began sharing available resources to help those coming to Lafayette. For example, a spreadsheet was created and updated hourly with information about hotel room availability—and a hotline was created to disseminate this information. Oliver emphasized that certain actions in response to a catastrophe might seem to be simple and limited, but it is essential to share in a positive way information about what can be done and not focus on what cannot be done and who cannot be helped. Otherwise, he said, "it is easy to have the message be received that you can't do anything."

Oliver expressed hopes that government agencies and decision makers, especially in potential receiving communities, will prepare for not only the slow migration that may happen over decades, but also the quick migration that occurs following a storm or a major political event, such as the evacuations form South Vietnam that Nguyen mentioned. Instead of relying exclusively on resilient communities that people have created on their own, he hopes governments and institutions can be more welcoming and willing to act to receive and help those in need, especially following major events.

PERSON-TO-PERSON EXPERIENCES AND COMMUNITY RESPONSES

The panel moderator, Shana Walton, Toups Professor of Cultural Studies, Department of English, Modern Languages, and Cultural Studies at Nicholls State University, and a member of the Louisiana Folklore Society, started the roundtable discussion by highlighting that all participants had pointed out institutional failures or gaps. She said institutional responses are sometimes easier to diagnose, because there are systematic ways to test what works. However, in addition, there are person-to-person and community responses on which she asked participants to comment. Knowles replied that the community in Sulphur found a way to connect and serve people. Robertson noted that help did not come from the government

[47] Armus, T. (2020). One Louisiana city refuses to take hurricane evacuees. Officials blame racial justice protesters. *The Washington Post*. https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/08/31/lafayette-hurricane-laura-shelter-protests/

but from local organizations such as the Open Door Biker Church,[48] the Sulphur Christian Community Coalition,[49] and the ROC Church.[50] Nguyen's community recognized and addressed some gaps instead of waiting for governmental assistance. She stated that preparation based on empowered citizen involvement is key, especially in an area where hurricanes cannot be avoided. She went on to say that for underserved and vulnerable communities, there has to be a plan for everyone to survive disasters and continue to be a strong community. Oliver reflected that the experiences of the community in New Orleans East probably forced them to become closer, enabling them to take collective action for future planning. He went on to say that he feels it is a very different situation for potential receiving communities since there is not an existential threat for which they are preparing. Yet, the days and hours that follow a storm or other disaster are critical, and communities like Lafayette that might potentially receive people need to "look at [themselves] and say, 'When we are called to act actively, do we know what we're going to say?'" Oliver also stated, "If a receiving community is not being intentional, then the resettled populations are likely to be shunted to the side, and that needs to be considered and dealt with." Walton noted that the experience of populations and communities changing could be unsettling and disruptive to some people.

Nguyen said that her community would likely continue to receive new immigrants. Efforts have been made to embrace immigrants and provide education and services—such as helping them gain citizenship. She also talked about her efforts to support other residents on an ongoing basis. When Katrina hit, she knew navigating the FEMA process would be difficult, especially for non-English-speaking residents. So, she secured a position in community relations with FEMA in order to help people in her community. Then when the Road Home Program[51] began rebuilding homes, she took on a role in the program so she could help homeowners. Nguyen believes the key is preparing people before a disaster so they can respond in a positive way.

RESETTLING IN A NEW LOCATION

Natalie Snider, a committee member, asked for data about the quality of life attained by resettled people. One study that VanLandingham has

[48] More information on the Open Door Biker Church is available at: https://www.odbcsulphur.com/

[49] More information on the Sulphur Christian Community Coalition is available at: https://sulphurccc.org/

[50] More information on the ROC Church is available at: https https://therocchurch.com/

[51] More information on the Road Home Program is available at: https https://www.road2la.org/HAP/Default.aspx

been involved in is the Katrina@10 study.[52] Many people, including himself, were focused on getting people displaced from Katrina back home to New Orleans—but what surprised him was that many people did not want to come back, especially parents of school-aged children. They found that the education was better, and crime was lower, in the new location. He emphasized that, at the same time, many people who wanted to come back did not have the wherewithal to do so.

TRANSFERABLE LESSONS FROM SHORT-TERM DISASTER DISPLACEMENTS

Regarding short-term disaster displacement, committee member Craig Colten inquired about possible intersection points and transferable lessons that might help prepare for longer-term responses, such as resettlement, to climate change and coastal land loss. Butler responded that a key component is affordable housing. VanLandingham added that he was moved by Knowles's story about finding a group of people who, as Knowles put it, "love and care about [her]" and the importance of connecting with nongovernmental organizations in the communities to which people are displaced.

Nguyen gave an example of a lesson learned in New Orleans. Seven senior apartments in her district were not evacuated during Hurricane Ida, and subsequently were without power for days. Sadly, some of the senior citizens in those apartments died as a result of the heat. Afterward, Nguyen helped pass an ordinance requiring an evacuation plan for residents living in senior apartments. She hopes the ordinance will save lives in the future, and she went on to point out that the legislation was created with input from community members who would be impacted by it.

BUILDING COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Walton asked if it is possible to build connections to become receiving communities. She noted that Sulphur was an interesting place to become a receiving community because it had its own outmigration due to envi-

[52] More information about the Katrina@10 study is available in the following references: Pendley, S.C., VanLandingham, M.J., Pham, N.N., and Do, M. (2021). Resilience within communities of forced migrants: Updates and the path forward. *Journal on Migration and Human Security, 9*(3), 154–164. VanLandingham, M.J. (2018). Resilience among vulnerable populations: The neglected role of culture. *Creating Katrina, rebuilding resilience: Lessons from New Orleans on vulnerability and resiliency,* 257–266. Oxford, United Kingdom: Butterworth-Heinemann. VanLandingham, M.J. (2015). Post-Katrina, Vietnamese success. *New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/16/opinion/sunday/post-katrina-vietnamese-success.html

ronmental issues. Robertson replied by saying that she considers the Lake Charles region an environmental "sacrifice area."[53] Looking ahead to what a receiving community might look like, Oliver said he hopes "we're really realistic about places like Sulphur" that have endured their own trauma. What he wants to avoid is taking people who are living in low-income areas and moving them to other low-income areas that are also prone to flooding and have other issues, such as pollution.

Walton noted that after Hurricane Ida, people could not serve as community resources for their neighbors as they had in the past. Unlike Nguyen's community in New Orleans East, which was able to take steps to help residents, many areas struggled to recover. Robertson pointed out that in efforts to unite communities, it is difficult to organize around the homeless community where people neither vote nor have addresses. With regard to relocation and resettlement, she said it is vital to consider the needs of the homeless population during disasters of any sort. Walton shared that trauma was a theme she noticed—whether it is trauma associated with homelessness, a hurricane, or being resettled. Communities, she added, can find ways to help people who have gone through these traumatic experiences.

Shared Experiences and Events

Lori Hunter (BECS) noted the role of cultural events as potential places for resettlement discussions. Walton mentioned that Lafayette made the Festival International de Louisiane[54] larger and more welcoming, while Knowles noted that a program with a festival called "Taking it to the Streets" aimed at helping homeless people.[55] Nguyen gave two examples of events in New Orleans East—Jingle on the Boulevard Parade[56] and bringing back Mardi Gras. She also mentioned that the Lower Ninth Ward was launching their first Lower 9 Fest in 2022.

MUTUAL AID STRATEGIES

Gary LaFleur, an audience member, commented that it seems that it would be easy for cities to have a mutual aid strategy. On the other hand, cities are already dealing with their own challenges, so it is difficult for him

[53] Supra note 31.

[54] More information about the Festival International de Louisiane is available at: https://www.festivalinternational.org/about-festival

[55] More information about the Taking it to the Streets Festival is available at: https://www.takingittothestreets.net/

[56] More information on the Jingle on the Boulevard Parade is available at: https://jingleontheboulevard.com/

to imagine a city planning strategy aimed at non-residents at some point in the future. He asked Oliver how Lafayette had shifted gears quickly to put plans in place to help non-residents. Oliver responded that it was easier to do at the local government level, but he thinks it would be more difficult at the state or federal government levels. Oliver, adapting the popular concept of "sister cities," suggested the idea of creating "cousin cities" in closer proximity to one another that could mutually assist each other in times of need. Butler mentioned that something similar happened after Hurricane Laura in New Orleans where thousands of people from the Lake Charles area were able to stay in downtown hotels. Walton closed the panel by noting she supported the idea of "cousin cities."

CLOSING REMARKS

Colten closed the session by highlighting several points made by the panelists:

- Space and support may be essential to sustain the cultures and traditions of communities, both in places where communities are dis-assembling as well as where they are re-assembling;
- Housing stock—for people relocating into an area, or even just seeking temporary shelter—can be helpful for those people hoping to find a place to live. There has been a short supply of housing stock in some instances;
- Basic services such as showers, shelter, and food are often crucial for disaster evacuees;
- In the wake of disasters, when communication services are disrupted and people are not necessarily in their regular place of operation, it is important for local, state, and federal agencies to provide adequate and agile responses to situations as they unfold; and
- It is helpful to disseminate clear messages and information indicating where assistance and resources are available.

6

Housing, Health, and Planning in the Context of Resettlement and Receiving Communities

For the third and final session of the Houma workshop, the committee selected local leaders and experts from the private sector and government agencies to discuss the implications of housing, health, and planning in the context of resettlement and receiving communities. Panelists gave individual presentations and then elaborated on these themes in a roundtable discussion moderated by Craig Colten, a committee member.

COMMUNITY STORIES FROM TERREBONNE PARISH

Kelli Cunningham, Director,
Terrebonne Parish Housing and Human Services

Cunningham helps people who are homeless or who have been displaced due to a natural disaster such as Hurricane Ida. For category one through category three hurricanes, Terrebonne Parish typically shelters in place and opens as a shelter the Terrebonne Parish Municipal Auditorium. Cunningham went on to say if that facility is unavailable, they have a list of other facilities to use that have already been inspected and approved by the fire marshal. Due to damage from Hurricane Ida, about 500 residents were evacuated from Terrebonne Parish. Thanks to an agreement established beforehand by their Emergency Operations Center Director, some residents could go to Monroe in northern Louisiana. St. Mary Parish, just north of Terrebonne, also agreed to open some shelters, which the Red Cross man-

aged, so that some residents could be closer to their homes.[57] In addition, the governor's office set up some base camps until the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) could provide campers for homeowners.

According to Cunningham, public housing was a big issue in Terrebonne Parish before Hurricane Ida. Then, during the hurricane, an eleven-story 300-unit complex for the elderly was destroyed, and the public housing facility for families was substantially damaged. Cunningham added that 240 housing vouchers were issued for elderly residents, but due to the lack of housing in Terrebonne Parish, they have only been able to rehouse 19 voucher holders. The parish has plans to create additional housing, but she said they are awaiting disaster recovery funding. Therefore, no planning has been undertaken to consider options for longer-term housing for people migrating from farther down the bayou who might want to stay in Terrebonne. Cunningham stated that most existing residents do not want to move outside of Terrebonne.

Jessica Domangue, Terrebonne Parish Councilwoman, Houma District 5

Domangue explained that her run for office was spurred by the problems and shortfall of resources she saw in her work as a licensed clinical social worker even before Hurricane Ida. After recently being introduced to the idea of climate migration and the related idea of receiving communities, she now sees a need to start putting federal funding into the creation of receiving communities. Terrebonne Parish has already seen its first wave of migrants. She went on to add that, thanks to state and federal support and funding, creating a plan to prepare to become a receiving community could now be feasible and viable. Investments have already been made towards the development of levees, pumps, and drainage systems. Still, before Terrebonne Parish can consider receiving more people, basic water, sewage, natural gas, and transportation infrastructure improvements are needed. Domangue also mentioned she is working on creating a Crisis Recovery Center, which would also serve as a homeless shelter, neither of which Terrebonne Parish currently has. Once they receive federal disaster funding from Hurricane Ida, she hopes parish residents' quality of life will improve.

Chris Pulaski, Director of Planning and Zoning, Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government

Pulaski explained that the first task after Hurricane Ida was setting up migration and resettlement base camps—basically emergency shelters—as

[57] While moderating this roundtable discussion, Craig Colten noted that Monroe has also done this for other communities and may be trying to position itself to be a destination for people that are temporarily or longer-term displaced.

quickly as possible for Terrebonne Parish residents. Louisiana's GOHSEP took the lead. The next task was to prepare temporary housing, done through a sheltering program that GOHSEP created and a FEMA direct housing program. Receiving communities for temporary site locations—ranging from 36 to 240 units in size—raised some concerns. Pulaski said these concerns were similar to concerns the planning commission gets for major residential subdivision applications. Therefore, they were able to address many of them. Some group sites are open, others are nearing completion, and others are still in the design stage.

The 2012 Terrebone Parish Comprehensive Master Plan[58] projected land-use and housing needs thirty years into the future, and revealed a shortage of affordable housing—including housing for the elderly, especially as the population ages. Knowing this now has allowed parish leaders to begin developing strategies and goals that address these issues. Pulaski emphasized that planning is not about building or funding, but about looking for opportunities to meet goals. For example, as The New Isle resettlement gets underway, parish officials are starting to get questions from residents who have never had to deal with matters such as property zoning, subdivision covenants, and permits. They are also hearing concerns from other residents about what will happen to land as populations relocate. For example, currently, there are no regulations in Terrebonne Parish relating to recreational vehicle parks, but Pulaski noted that this issue will likely have to be considered in future planning efforts.

Mark Goodson, Principal, Planning and Resilience Practice Lead, CSRS

Goodson spoke about voluntary resettlement and stated that planning as early as possible for implementation is critical, no matter whether it is a project like Isle de Jean Charles in Terrebonne Parish, or a more traditional buyout program. While the need to resettle may seem obvious to outsiders, he emphasized it as a deeply personal decision for people who ultimately have to decide if they will stay or if they will go. He stated that planning for resettlement "is going to take resources, and it's going to take conversations at kitchen tables to help give folks in those resettling communities the information that they need to get them comfortable with a yes or no decision." Regarding resettlement projects, Goodson shared several key considerations from his experiences working on voluntary relocation and resettlement efforts in the private sector and from his collaborations with the public sector:

[58] More information is available in the Terrebonne Parish Comprehensive Master Plan, available at: http://www.tpcg.org/index.php?f=vision2030&p=plan2030

- Consider how the use of federal funding can add complications, time, and cost;
- Provide access to data about the population that is considering resettlement, such as the number of people or households involved as well as the type of population;
- Understand the parameters of the new community, for example, whether it will be a planned site or if the community will be encouraged and incentivized to move in a distributed manner; and
- Recognize the expectations of the residents that are being resettled and the other entities involved (e.g., government agencies) relative to the level of involvement that residents will actually have in the resettlement process.

Goodson emphasized that he does not think the involvement of residents should be limited to any extent—but, at the same time, everyone does need to be on the same page from the beginning. He also noted the importance of preparing potential receiving communities. Policy and practical barriers exist, especially for community-scale resettlement like The New Isle for Isle de Jean Charles. For example, if Isle de Jean Charles residents had been required to give up their property, most would not have left. It took discussions with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and others to develop a new solution that allowed former island residents to have continued but limited use of their island properties, which could just no longer serve as primary residences. He said policy consideration is needed for land-use planning and so could be leveraged to encourage and steer development patterns away from low-lying or high-risk areas into lower-risk areas. He also noted the role the private sector could play in facilitating, in an equitable way, land-use planning.

Pat Forbes, Executive Director, Louisiana Office of Community Development

Forbes explained that the Louisiana Office of Community Development (LA-OCD) was created after Hurricane Katrina and Rita. Since then, there has been an evolution in the distribution of federal funding away from *replacing* what existed before a disaster—which involved prohibiting the use of funds for mitigation projects—towards providing funds to be used specifically to *mitigate* damage and *reduce* future risk. Due to the growing recognition of mitigation at the federal level, LA-OCD has been able to work on projects like the resettlement of Isle de Jean Charles. Forbes stressed that resettlement is devastating to consider for most people, especially for an Indigenous community or community whose ancestors have lived in a specific area for generations. The single biggest challenge he has

seen is that no one wants to leave their home, even when it means that in doing so, they will be more protected.

Forbes said to get people to a safer place, "we will be assisting those people who couldn't do it on their own." There are complications to doing this through the government, such as scale and cost. He went on to say that "spending 48 million dollars to move 40 families is not helping us a lot in learning how Miami is going to move." He suggested involving the private sector to drive down costs. Additionally, he noted, it is essential to remember that support may also be needed beyond the move itself. For example, moving low to moderate-income people with low monthly expenses into a $300,000 home will result in higher living expenses. In a situation such as this, he cautioned that considerations might need to be taken into account so people are not set up for failure.

The state of Louisiana and other governmental and non-governmental entities have invested in science, data-collection, and engineering, which have provided the ability to better understand and plan for future risks, Forbes remarked. One example he discussed was Louisiana's Strategic Adaptations for Future Environments (LA-SAFE) project, which looked at low, moderate, and high categories of storm surge flood risk.[59] He said that at the same time, uncertainty remains as to some potential impacts from more intense storms, which might include sea level rise, heavier precipitation events, and increased or more frequent flooding. See Figure 6-1. Seemingly less urgent is finding the political will to invest in infrastructure in communities where people are relocating, but Forbes stressed that supporting these communities is just as important as aiding those relocating. He noted that after Hurricane Katrina, 97 percent of St. Bernard Parish, which lies east of New Orleans, was depopulated and many residents moved to the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain. Those receiving communities lacked adequate infrastructure, housing, and schools, and were unprepared to receive additional residents.

BALANCING SAFE DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Colten began a roundtable discussion after the presentations by inquiring about how to balance the tension that often occurs between development—oriented to keeping the community safe—and economic development, which is oriented towards serving the desires of the development community. Colten then asked how to find a balance between these two types of development in a place like southern Louisiana, where there are changing environmental conditions. Pulaski replied that, to guide safe

[59] For additional details about the LA SAFE project, see: https://lasafe.la.gov/about-us/

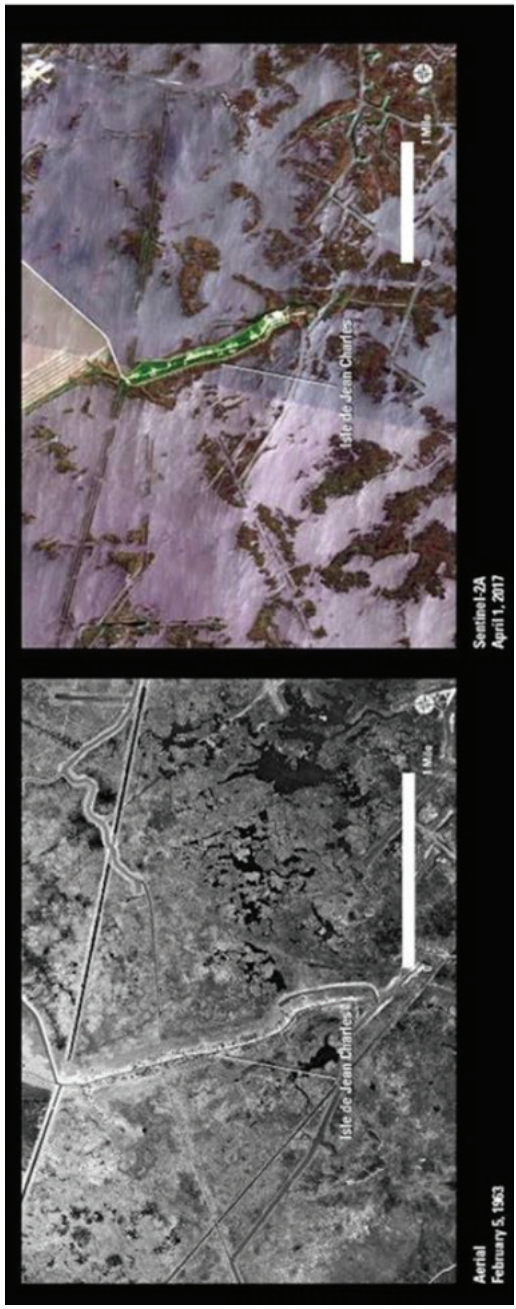

FIGURE 6-1 A photo of the Isle de Jean Charles, Louisiana, in 1963 (left) and 2017 (right). The 2017 photo shows the amount of land that has been lost.
SOURCE: Forbes, P. (2022). Assisted resettlement and receiving communities in Louisiana. Slide 2. Presented at the National Academies Workshop: Assisted Resettlement and Receiving Communities in Louisiana. Retrieved from: https://www.nationalacademies.org/event/07-28-2022/managed-retreat-in-the-us-gulf-coast-region-workshop-3-part-2

future development, economic development must be accounted for. He noted that the proximity of commercial areas, access to transportation, and nearby amenities all come into play for site development. In Terrebonne Parish, subdivision regulations drive the decisions of the planning commission. Pulaski added they are already looking at their subdivision regulations to find ways to improve the ongoing movement of populations in the region.

Goodson said decisions about infrastructure, investments, and development regulations must be based on an area's current and future risk. He pointed out that there is not usually a one-size-fits-all answer. Additionally, Goodson emphasized the need for two approaches: (1) sustainable development patterns for those who can pay for it themselves and (2) determining where the government or private sector can get involved for those who cannot. Forbes mentioned that land has been developed in high-risk areas, but with planning and zoning, that is changing. To him, a critical part of making places safer is not only improving scientific information and knowledge about future risks but also *applying* that knowledge to regulations.

The Certified Sites Program, run through Louisiana Economic Development, identifies sites around the state that may be ideally suited for industrial development.[60] This program undertakes an initial due diligence process on those sites so that an inventory will be available when a site selector is looking for a potential location. Goodson suggested that doing something similar with resilient community sites could help steer settlement patterns to lower-risk areas. Domangue replied that there is a mechanism in place through the Terrebonne Economic Development Association to do that, but more people need to engage and talk about the subject.

MODELING TOOLS FOR PLANNING

Colten asked the panelists if existing policies, procedures, and zoning regulations are flexible enough to adapt to the pace of climate change and the changing needs of people in high-risk areas. Pulaski replied that modeling tools could be used to examine the potential impacts a proposed large-scale development might have. Goodson said his organization and others are using such modeling tools to make data-driven decisions about whether or not to approve a project. Modeling tools like these make it possible to see how a proposed development project may perform. Forbes cautioned that some models may not be valid twenty years from now, so, "part of planning has to be the assumption about the things that can-

[60] More information about the Certified Sites Program is available at: https://www.opportunitylouisiana.com/info-for-partners-allies/certified-sites-programs/certified-industrial-sites

not be predicted." He suggested therefore incorporating uncertainty into planning—for example, by adding a buffer instead of going right to the edge of a 100-year floodplain.

Though Louisiana has models for land loss and associated changes, Colten emphasized it is also worth considering how to integrate community-level issues and concerns into codes, zoning, and modeling for future conditions. Cunningham's office has found that many resident concerns are not just about flooding, but also have to do with whether people will be close to places such as grocery stores or hospitals. Domangue's community lost all its basic infrastructure—such as the jail and hospital—during Hurricane Ida. They were prepared for flooding but not sustained strong winds. Therefore, they have an opportunity to rebuild stronger and better.

PLANNING AND INVESTMENTS FOR RECEIVING COMMUNITIES AND DECLINING COMMUNITIES

Colten asked how local and state planning efforts can take displaced people into consideration. He mentioned the Coastal Master Plan's component that deals with the relocation of people, called voluntary acquisition. It estimates there are about 2,700 households that might need to be purchased because either they are outside defenses, or because elevating them is not economically feasible. Domangue mentioned plans are underway to revitalize the downtown main street area and to create affordable housing opportunities in Terrebonne Parish; however, the parish is waiting on funding. Pulaski pointed out that revitalizing the downtown area will help create an attractive receiving community with access to transportation, grocery stores, and schools.

From a housing perspective, Forbes said investments are being made in affordable rental housing. None will be in a 100-year floodplain; any that are in a 500-year floodplain will be three feet above the natural ground; and all will be built to a 150-mile-an-hour-wind-fortified standard. Including infrastructure and amenities near safer locations may create an attractive model that will help persuade people who are trying to decide whether or not to relocate; it will also attract private developers looking for opportunities in places with infrastructure already in place.

Jonathan Foret asked how to plan for a declining community in such a way as to allow the people who remain to be successful if there is no longer a tax base to support the area. Replying that she does not see how some communities will survive on their own, Domangue suggested that consolidation may need to be considered. She said other viable options might exist, but conversations need to be started. Forbes added he does not know if official planning is underway, but in Plaquemines and Cameron Parish, discussions have been ongoing for years.

RELOCATION DIFFICULTIES

Pulaski mentioned that one of the Terrebonne Parish projects in the LA SAFE program was a voluntary buyout for all primary residence homeowners outside the Morganza to the Gulf system. Out of 16 homeowners, only one was interested. The others were not willing to relocate. Cunningham said she has also seen relocation-related difficulties. For example, after Hurricane Ida, the state of Wisconsin issued temporary housing vouchers for people in the family public housing facility. Housing counselors explained to everyone that they could come back in the future and would be assisted in finding housing. Cunningham pointed out that most people refused to consider moving outside of Terrebonne—even temporarily. Domangue suggested investing in Terrebonne Parish, where many people want to stay, and considering other places where people can go in case of an emergency.

LaFleur inquired about the overall outcome in the case of Isle de Jean Charles. Forbes responded that "one of the things we learned is the importance of engaging people, one-to-one, as opposed to through leadership, to come up with a plan that reflects the priorities of the people in the community." He went on to say they engaged with people on Isle de Jean Charles who were going to be moving and came up with a resettlement project that he thinks reflects, if not the priorities of the tribal leadership, nonetheless the priorities of the people who are going to be living in New Isle.

PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACTS OF DISPLACEMENT

A committee member, Lynn Goldman, asked about public health efforts for those who have been displaced and need resources that may not be available in the receiving community. Cunningham answered that their food banks had been overwhelmed, and Community Services Block Grant funding has been used to issue food vouchers for those meeting income requirements. With regard to mental health, though Domangue has seen an increase in depression and anxiety, she feels that the true psychological impact of Hurricane Ida may not be seen for quite some time since the area is still recovering. She stressed that those who have been displaced do not have access to adequate mental health services or homeless resources. Pulaski agreed that large-scale programs and funding are needed. He pointed out that, at the same time, smaller-level initiatives are also beneficial. He mentioned the Live Healthy Houma initiative[61] that has established community gardens and worked to ensure healthy food options are available.

[61] More information about Live Healthy Houma is available at: https://www.lsuagcenter.com/topics/food_health/healthy-communities/terrebonne-healthy-communities

LESSONS FROM THE RECOVERY PROCESS AFTER HURRICANE IDA

Foret noted that making decisions beforehand, even if they are small such as whether or not to install LED lightbulbs, can help speed up recovery. Domangue shared that the parish had bulk-ordered decorative streetlights to have them on standby because replacing them after Hurricane Ida had been a challenge. She went on to add that being an elected official can be confusing. For example, after Ida, she did not know who to call in certain situations. Pulaski suggested it is critical to have better information and data on assets and locations before the next disaster. He said they already have people working with public utilities, engineers, and elected officials, adding that identifying potential group site locations would also be helpful. Having, in addition, a list of parish properties could help identify possible staging areas and places to put debris.

Forbes commented that there are no plans to replicate the LA SAFE program; at the same time, disaster recovery planning engages people, like the LA SAFE program did, to learn the recovery priorities. In terms of funding, he thinks the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA; Public Law 117-58) may provide opportunities to do some of the projects identified in LA SAFE that were important to the community, including housing, infrastructure, and risk reduction. Forbes said efforts are underway to maximize the state's ability to draw down competitive funds from the IIJA. In addition, Pulaski said as the community recovery planning effort continues, lessons learned from LA SAFE and other initiatives will be used to update the hazard mitigation recovery plan.

An audience member asked if lessons learned, as well as models being developed for response, are being shared with other parishes, and if efforts are being made at the state level to establish partnerships to better plan for post-disaster displacement. Pulaski responded that, to his knowledge, conversations, follow-up, and after-action reporting were done but not in a formal way. He would like to see a concerted group effort to establish "cousin communities," which could help with consistency—meaning, for example, establishing throughout the region similar building inspection processes which could help to avoid confusion for contractors. Domangue noted that Terrebonne Parish has formed working relationships with other parishes that have gone through similar situations. Cunningham emphasized the importance of good relationships with others, such as the Office of Community Development and the Louisiana Housing Corporation, because they work with communities statewide and have learned lessons that can be shared.

CLOSING REMARKS

Colten closed the workshop by highlighting several points made by the session's panelists:

- Resettlement, relocation, movement, and migration have been, for the people of coastal Louisiana, a fundamental part of their culture and history;
- Panelists expressed agreement that there needs to be the ability to follow up on existing programs and ensure they are being carried out in ways that benefit impacted communities;
- Multiple panelists commented that in order to make resettlement part of the planning process, an effective effort needs to be undertaken to sell the idea of resettlement and make it appealing;
- Several panelists suggested that developments and spaces and places for shelter need to be located where there are services such as grocery stores and hospitals;
- Workshop panelists expressed agreement that plans and arrangements for accommodating people who are displaced either temporarily or long-term need to be made in advance. They also agreed that related information needs to be disseminated;
- Some panelists pointed out that development plans need to align with and take advantage of existing opportunities (e.g., where there is available land and services);
- Many panelists felt that community involvement and engagement can be essential from the start of planning to help strategize, conduct, and carry out any plans for resettlement; and
- On the topic of leadership engagement with community members, multiple participants voiced support for the idea of making sure leaders are not imposing their will on the community members.

Appendix A

Public Workshop Agendas

COMMUNITY VIABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE IN COASTAL LOUISIANA

Nicholls State University
Donald G. Bollinger Memorial Student Union Ballroom
906 E 1st Street
Thibodaux, LA 70301

JULY 26, 2022
ALL TIMES IN CST

Objectives

- Hear stories of people that have been relocated and people that are contemplating, resisting, or facing obstacles to relocation
- Learn from Indigenous and traditional communities undergoing displacement and resettlement and other local leaders and decision-makers
- Learn about community viability and environmental change in coastal Louisiana

10:00–10:05 Native Land Acknowledgement
Chief Shirell Parfait Dardar, Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw and Chair, Louisiana Governor's Commission on Native Americans

10:05–10:10 Welcome and Introduction to the Study
Dr. Chandra L. Middleton, Study Co-Director and Program Officer, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
John Ben Soileau, Study Co-Director and Program Officer, National Academies

10:10–10:15 Welcome from the Study Committee
Dr. E. Barrett Ristroph, Committee Member, Principal and Founder, Ristroph Law, Planning and Research

10:15–10:20 Welcome from the Sponsor: The Gulf Research Program
Dr. Jessica Simms, Associate Program Officer, The Gulf Research Program, National Academies

10:20–10:25 Welcoming Remarks from Nicholls State University
Dr. Jay Clune, President, Nicholls State University

COMMUNITY STORIES FROM LOUISIANA'S BAYOU REGION

10:25–1:00 Facilitated by Dr. Alessandra Jerolleman, Community Resilience Specialist and Applied Researcher, Lowlander Center
Community Participants
Elder Rosina Philippe, Atakapa-Ishak/Chawasha Tribe & President of the First Peoples' Conservation Council
Dr. John Doucet, Dean of Sciences and Technology, Nicholls State University
Chief Shirell Parfait-Dardar, Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw & Chair, Louisiana Governor's Commission on Native Americans
Dr. Gary LaFleur, President, Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Foundation and Professor, Biological Sciences, Nicholls State University
Chief Albert Naquin, Jean Charles Choctaw Nation
Mr. Windell Curole, General Manager, South Lafourche Levee District
Chief Romes Antoine, Avoyel-Taensa Tribe
Nicole Cooper, Town of Jean Lafitte
Elder Theresa Dardar, Pointe-au-Chien Indian Tribe, Lafourche/Terrebonne Parish

10:25–1:00 Lunch

ROUNDTABLE PANEL DISCUSSION: EQUITY IN COMMUNITY VIABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

1:50–3:40	Moderated by Dr. Alessandra Jerolleman Young Chief Devon Parfait, Grand Caillou Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Elder Rosina Philippe, Atakapa-Ishak/Chawasha Tribe & President, First Peoples' Conservation Council Dr. Gary LaFleur, President, Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Foundation & Professor, Biological Sciences, Nicholls State University Mr. Windell Curole, General Manager, South Lafourche Levee District
3:40–3:50	Summary and Closing Remarks Dr. E. Barrett Ristroph, Committee Member, Principal and Founder, Ristroph Law, Planning and Research
3:50–4:00	Closing with Tribal Community Protocols Elder Rosina Philippe Dr. Alessandra Jerolleman
4:00	Adjourn

ASSISTED RESETTLEMENT AND RECEIVING COMMUNITIES IN LOUISIANA

Courtyard by Marriott Houma
Versailles Meeting Room
142 Library Drive
Houma, LA 70360

JULY 28, 2022
ALL TIMES IN CST

Objectives

- Hear the stories, and learn from, community members who are contemplating resettlement or have experienced displacement, relocation, or the receiving end of the process.
- Learn about the challenges and needs of strategic climate adaptation.
- Learn from local leaders and experts about the implications of housing, health, and planning in the context of resettlement and receiving communities.

9:30–9:40 Welcome and Introduction to the Study
Dr. Chandra L. Middleton, Study Co-Director and Program Officer, National Academies
John Ben Soileau, Study Co-Director and Program Officer, National Academies

9:40–9:45 Native Land Acknowledgement
Welcome and Introduction to the Study
Dr. Chandra L. Middleton, Study Co-Director and Program Officer, National Academies
John Ben Soileau, Study Co-Director and Program Officer, National Academies

9:45–9:55 Welcome and Introduction from the Committee
Dr. Craig Colten, Committee Member, Professor Emeritus, Louisiana State University

9:55–10:00 Welcome from the Sponsor: The Gulf Research Program
Dr. Jessica Simms, Associate Program Officer, The Gulf Research Program, National Academies

COMMUNITY TESTIMONIALS: ASSISTED RESETTLEMENT AND RECEIVING COMMUNITIES IN LOUISIANA

10:00–12:00 Facilitated by Jonathan Foret, Executive Director, South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center
Community Participants:
Genie Ardoin, Bayou Regional Arts Council, and Board Member of the Helio Foundation
Bette Billiot, Administrative Assistant, United Houma Nation
Thaddeus (Mike) Pellegrin, Local Resident
Bonnie Theriot, Local Resident
Cherry Wilmore, Case Manager, Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office
Sherry Wilmore, Department of Corrections Community Coordinator for Reentry Goodwill Industry of Southeast Louisiana

12:00–12:10 Summation by Committee Member
Debra Butler, Mellon Foundation NAIS Fellow, A.W. Mellon Foundation Native American and Indigenous Studies-NAIS Five Colleges, Inc.

12:10–1:10 Lunch

RESETTLING AND RECEIVING STORIES FROM ACROSS LOUISIANA

1:10–2:50 Facilitator: Dr. Shana Walton, Toups Professor of Cultural Studies, Department of English, Modern Languages, and Cultural Studies at Nicholls State University
Mark VanLandingham, Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Studies of Displaced Populations, Tulane University
Cyndi Nguyen, Executive Director, Vietnamese Initiatives in Economic Training
Beth Butler, Executive Director, A Community Voice
Cindy Robertson, Director, micah 6:8 mission and Community Member, Dee Knowles
Sam Oliver, Executive Director, Acadiana Center for the Arts Resettling and Receiving in Lafayette Parish

2:50–3:00 Break

HOUSING, HEALTH, AND PLANNING IN THE CONTEXT OF RESETTLING AND RECEIVING COMMUNITITES

3:00–4:55	Moderator: Dr. Craig Colten, Professor Emeritus, Louisiana State University Panelists: Kelli Cunningham, Director, Terrebonne Parish Housing and Human Services Jessica Domangue, Terrebonne Parish Councilwoman, Houma District 5 Chris Pulaski, Director of Planning and Zoning, Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government Mark Goodson, Principal, Planning and Resilience Practice Lead, CSRS Pat Forbes, Executive Director, Louisiana Office of Community Development
4:55–5:00	Closing Remarks John Ben Soileau, Study Co-Director and Program Officer, National Academies Chandra L. Middleton, Study Co-Director and Program Officer, National Academies
5:00	Adjourn

Appendix B

Committee and Speaker Biographies

Chief Romes Antoine (Speaker) is Chief of the Avoyel-Taensa Tribe of Louisiana and Indigenous knowledge-holder and serves as the FPCC vice president. He is a board member on the Council of Aging and Treasurer for the Deacon at Pilgrim Rest Baptist Church. Chief Antoine previously worked for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as the head supervisor over workers and heavy equipment operator. He is developing partnerships with local entities to mitigate the encroachment of water and create protection for his tribal members and to save sacred, traditional plants.

Genie Ardoin (Speaker) was a resident of Chauvin, LA, but relocated north to Houma, LA. She is the Executive Director of the Bayou Regional Arts Council and has done hurricane relief work through the Helio Foundation.

Kayode O. Atoba (Committee Member) is an associate research scientist at the Institute for a Disaster Resilient Texas at Texas A&M University. His research draws on the broader theory of urban planning and hazard resiliency to propose best mitigation and adaptation strategies using quantitative and geospatial methodologies to identify the interactions between the built environment and natural hazards. Atoba's recent work addresses issues related to property acquisition and buyouts as non-structural mitigation strategies to reduce flood hazard impacts. He is a mentor and an alumnus of the William Averette Anderson Fund, focused on increasing the number of underrepresented persons in the field of disaster research and planning. Atoba has a Ph.D. in urban and regional science from Texas

A&M University, College Station, and an M.S. in geographic information systems from Sam Houston State University.

Janice Barnes (Committee Co-Chair) is the founding and managing partner of Climate Adaptation Partners, a NYC-based woman-owned business that focuses on planning, advocacy, and partnership-building for climate adaptation. She is an advisor to the Urban Land Institute Resilience team, the American Institute of Architects National Resilience Advisory Group, the U.S. Technical Advisory Group for ISO TC59 on Buildings and Civil Engineering Works, and the Florida Institute for Built Environment Resilience. Barnes holds a Ph.D. in architecture/organizational behavior and an M.S. in architecture from the University of Michigan, as well as a M.A. from Tulane University.

Gary S. Belkin (Committee Member) is a visiting scientist at Harvard University T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the founder and president of the Billion Minds Institute, which brings science and policy to bear on tackling the "social climate" crisis of the climate crisis. He works with municipalities—in the US and globally—to innovate methods for population community mental health and resilience in ways that advance other social and human capital aims and outcomes and that shift knowledge, skills, and implementation tools to community members. Belkin holds a Ph.D. in the history of medicine from Harvard University, and an M.D. from Brown University Alpert School of Medicine and completed a residency in psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School.

Bettie Billiot (Speaker) is a single mother of three sons. She is from Dulac, LA, currently residing in Houma, LA, both located within lower Terrebonne Parish. She is a member of the United Houma Nation and an advocate for her people against climate and economic injustices. She tries to be as active as she can be in meetings and discussions around the future of her people and their homelands. Billiot hosts the Kid's Culture Camp, which focuses on tribal youth from different areas coming together to learn cultural traditions, as well as first-hand exposure to the environmental impacts on the land around them. All lessons are taught from Elders and leaders from the communities they live in. Her passion is her family, community, tribe, the youth and being a voice for those now who were never asked the question, "how will this affect you?"

Beth Butler (Speaker) is a lifelong community organizer of low to moderate-income families. She has worked with the community-centered non-profit organization, ACORN, in several southern cities and has been based in New Orleans since 1980. Butler also works with "A Community Voice-

Louisiana/ACORN." She loves organizing working people for social and environmental justice, and loves family, friends, and life.

Debra M. Butler (Committee Member) is the Mellon Foundation curriculum development fellow at the Five College Consortium and has professional experience in financial markets and leadership development. Her primary research interests are climate displacement; migration and resettlement on the Gulf Coast; and how tribal as well as communities of color employ cultural resources and Indigenous knowledge to mitigate structural vulnerabilities as well as climate impacts. Her foci are communities in Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi and Sancti Spiritus, Cuba. She is a National Science Foundation Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship fellow, a National Academies of Sciences Gulf Research Science Policy fellow, and a Harte Research Institute Furgason fellow. She also holds certification from the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals and the National Disaster Preparedness Center. She has an Ed.M. from Harvard, has an M.B.A. from Brandeis University International Business School, and Ph.D. in environmental studies from the School for the Environment at the University of Massachusetts.

Jay Clune (Speaker) became president of Nicholls State University on January 1, 2018. Before he was named President, Clune served in multiple administrative posts at the University of West Florida. He has more than two decades of experience in higher education as a faculty member and administrator. A Houma native, he has degrees from Nicholls State University and Louisiana State University.

Craig Colten (Committee Member) is professor emeritus at Louisiana State University. His principal training is in historical geography, with foci on human adaptation to environmental conditions and settlement geography. His recent research has focused on hazards and community resilience in the Gulf Coast, adaptation to environmental change, and environmental migration as an adaptive strategy. Colten is senior advisor at Water Institute of the Gulf, a fellow of the American Association of Geographers, and a recipient of the association's 2022 Gilbert White Distinguished Public Service Honor. Colten served as the chair of the Isle de Jean Charles Resettlement Project Academic Advisory Committee. His most recent book is *State of Disaster: A Historical Geography of Louisiana's Land Loss Crisis*. Colten has a Ph.D. in geography from Syracuse University.

Nicole Cooper (Speaker) currently serves as the legislative assistant for Louisiana State Representative Timothy P. Kerner. She is also the Director of Administration for the Lafitte Area Independent Levee District. Cooper

first began working for the Town of Jean Lafitte in 2008 following Hurricane Ike, to help the town with the recovery process, and has been involved in the design and construction of several levee and drainage projects. As legislative assistant, she has worked hand in hand with Representative Kerner in his fight to provide adequate flood protection to his constituents. Born and raised in Lafitte, LA, Cooper understands the fight her hometown is facing, and she sees it as a cause worth fighting for.

Kelli Cunningham (Speaker) is the director of the Terrebonne Parish Consolidated Government Housing and Human Services Department. She has been instrumental in the implementation of various federally funded economic development, affordable housing, and public service projects in Terrebonne Parish that benefit underresourced communities. Cunningham is the designated Labor Enforcement and Environmental officer for HUD-funded activities within Terrebonne Parish. She is also the designated Emergency Support Function 6 Manager of the Terrebonne Parish Unified Command. This support function provides mass care, mass feeding, housing, and other related human services to disaster victims in the event of natural or technological disaster.

Windell Curole (Speaker) serves as General Manager/Executive Secretary for the South Lafourche Levee District. Curole's efforts in overseeing design, construction, improvements, and maintenance of the South Lafourche levee system for many decades has saved thousands of lives and hundreds of millions of dollars in flood damage and remediation. The success of the levee system, together with his life-long advocacy for coastal protection and community safety, is widely known to state and national organizations. Curole has been recognized twice by the National Hurricane Conference for his leadership in this arena. He was also the visionary of the 100-year memorial of the Great Cheniere Hurricane of 1893, which manifested as a regional festival that attracted nearly 10,000 visitors from around the world to South Lafourche communities; following the grassroots cultural organization that emerged—the Cheniere Hurricane Centennial—he has served as its only president for the past 28 years.

Katherine J. Curtis (Committee Member) is professor of Community and Environmental Sociology and associate director of the Center for Demography and Ecology at the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Her work is centered in demography and extends to spatial, environmental, rural, and applied demography, and focuses on two central themes: population-environment interactions, most centrally the relationship between demographic, economic, and environmental forces; and spatial and temporal dimensions of social and economic inequality, most centrally his-

torical and local forces perpetuating racial disparities. In her work, Curtis adopts place-based theoretical frameworks and employs advanced spatial and spatiotemporal statistical approaches to analyze questions about inequality, which has profound and far-reaching impacts on population well-being. She earned her Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Washington.

Elder Theresa Dardar (Speaker) is an active advocate for the Gulf of Mexico ecosystems and coastal Louisiana's tribal communities. A Pointe-au-Chien Indian tribal member, Elder Dardar is a powerful voice for her community, serving as a representative and spokesperson from local to international forums, like the U.N. Human Rights of Indigenous Peoples Conference. Dardar is a FPCC founding member and leader. She is the Diocesan American Indian liaison at the Catholic Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux and President of St. Charles the Roch, Kateri Circle, a branch of the Tekakwitha Conference. She was a board member of South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center and Go Fish, a multi-parish alliance of fisher families. She travels between political, professional, academic, and organizational realms to voice justice concerns for her tribe and greater native community.

Jessica Domangue (Speaker) Terrebonne Parish councilwoman, Houma District 5.

John Doucet (Speaker) was born and raised in Golden Meadow along Bayou Lafourche. He is dean of the College of Sciences and Technology, director of Coastal Initiatives, Alcee Fortier professor of Biological Sciences, and McIlhenny professor of Human and Environmental Genetics at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, LA. Outside of science, Doucet is an award-winning author of Cajun culture plays, books of poetry, and a monthly column on coastal culture and science for *Point of Vue* magazine (Houma). His recent article appearing in *Louisiana Folklore Miscellany,* Vol. 29 (2019), is a personal history of his hometown, Golden Meadow.

Harriet Festing (Committee Member) is co-founder and executive director of the Anthropocene Alliance (A2), a Florida-based nonprofit that combats climate change and environmental abuse by building grassroots coalitions in the communities most affected by flooding, toxic waste, wildfires, drought, and heat. Festing previously worked for the Center for Neighborhood Technology in Chicago where she undertook ground-breaking research on urban flooding in the United States. Her work with A2 advances community transformation by building grassroots coalitions in the communities most badly affected by climate change, including current work in Port Arthur, TX, helping community leaders to survey their residents to see what climate

migration might look like for this community. She has an M.Phil. in business economics from the University of London.

Patrick W. Forbes (Speaker) is the executive director of the Louisiana Office of Community Development. He oversees the state's Community Development Block Grant Disaster Recovery programs funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Forbes' oversight includes housing, economic development, infrastructure and planning programs for recovery from hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Ike, Isaac, Laura, Delta and the 2016 floods, as well as resilience planning activities. Previously, Forbes managed the Louisiana Recovery Authority's infrastructure section and before Hurricane Katrina, he served as an engineer in the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities. Prior to his state service, Forbes worked as a consulting environmental engineer, owned and operated his own company, and worked at a paper mill. He earned a B.S.ME. and a M.B.A. from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge.

Jonathan Foret (Speaker) a native of Chauvin, LA, grew up in a culture-rich environment from working on shrimp boats as a young boy to speaking Louisiana French with his grandmother. He received a B.A. in English from Nicholls State University and later studied at the American Musical and Dramatic Academy in New York City. He taught English at Grand Caillou Middle in Houma, LA and then in Brooklyn, NY, before he joined the United States Peace Corps. He is a founding member of the Bayou Regional Arts Council serving Louisiana State Region 3 and is board President of the Helio Foundation, which recently sponsored the creation of the Houma Heights Cultural District in Terrebonne Parish. Foret is proud to be working with the board of directors for the South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center as Executive Director to move the organization's vision forward. He has developed many innovative programs and cultural events including the Rougarou Fest, a family-friendly festival with a spooky flair that celebrates the rich folklore that exists along the bayous of Southeast Louisiana. The Rougarou Fest was ranked one of the Top 10 Costume Parties in the United States by USA Today, the 2015 New Event of the Year by the Louisiana Association of Fairs and Festivals, and the 2020 Festival of the Year by the Louisiana Travel Association. Upon completion of this work, he returned to the United States to receive his M.P.A. from the University of New Orleans.

Lynn Goldman (Committee Member) is a pediatrician and epidemiologist and is both the Michael and Lori Milken Dean and professor of environmental and occupational health at George Washington University. She was previously professor of environmental health sciences at the Johns Hopkins

University. She is a member of the National Academy of Medicine, a member of the NIH National Advisory Environmental Health Sciences Council, and a member of the National Academies Environmental Health Matters Initiative. Goldman is chair of the board for the Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health and a member of the CDC Advisory Committee to the Director. Goldman holds a M.D. from University of California, San Francisco, a M.PH. from Johns Hopkins University, as well as a B.S. and M.S. from University of California, Berkeley.

Mark Goodson (Speaker) has a career that spans over 17 years, and has been focused on resilience, urban planning and redevelopment, public finance, and program management. As the Principal and Resilience Practice lead at CSRS, a Louisiana-based design, planning, and program management firm, he leads a multi-disciplinary team that provides advisory services and delivers solutions to governmental and commercial clients who wish to adapt to thrive amidst ever-changing economic, natural, and socio-demographic environments. As such, Goodson and the CSRS resilience team help clients identify risks and vulnerabilities, develop strategic interventions, and design and implement resilience programs, as well as integrate resilience and sustainability into existing capital programs. He has served as Project or Program Manager for a number of initiatives, ranging from redevelopment and development finance projects during his time in local government, to major planning and resilience projects over the past five years including: LA SAFE, Isle de Jean Charles Community Resettlement Project, University Avenue Corridor Study, University Lakes Restoration Project, and Louisiana Watershed Initiative. Goodson draws from his work experience in the private, governmental and nonprofit sectors, as well as community service and education in landscape architecture and public administration from Louisiana State University to provide optimal service to clients, as well as create fun and productive work environments for his teams.

Alessandra Jerolleman (Speaker) is a community resilience specialist and applied researcher at the Lowlander Center and co-founder of Hazard Resilience, a U.S.-based consultancy providing leadership and expertise in disaster recovery, risk reduction, and hazard policy. She is an associate professor of Emergency Management at Jacksonville State University where she conducts applied research into hazard policy and practice with a focus on increasing justice and equity in disaster recovery. Jerolleman is an expert in climate adaptation, hazard mitigation, and resilience with a long history of working in the public, private, and nonprofit sectors, including as lead grant writer and emergency planner for the FPCC and serving in a lead role with the Lowlander Center on coastal community resettlement.

Dedra Knowles (Speaker) is a 44-year-old recovering addict. She has a passion for showing the world that there are people who love and care for others still left in the world; as well as that no matter how hard things may get, through God all things are possible. Prior to Knowles' addiction she held managerial positions and during her addiction she worked in construction. She has a wide variety of skills, but most important to her now is her faith in God.

Gary LaFleur, Jr. (Speaker) was born and raised in Eunice, LA among the music of prairie Cajuns and rice fields at the top of the Cajun Triangle. He has a B.S. at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, LA. He studied reproduction and fertilization in aquatic organisms throughout his post graduate years including an M.S. degree at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, a Ph.D. at the University of Florida College of Medicine, and post-doctoral employment at Brown University. While studying the reproduction of aquatic organisms, LaFleur became connected to the ecology of the habitats where he collected his model organisms, from the swamps, marshes, and barrier islands that line coastal shorelines. Eventually he also became interested in the livelihood of the human communities that are established in these same coastal habitats. He joined Nicholls faculty in 1998 and for 24 years has been escorting students into the majestic habitats of the LA coastal wetlands. LaFleur teaches comparative physiology, developmental biology, and pirogue biology. Besides conducting coastal research, he also serves as the director of the Center for Bayou Studies, the coordinator of the Chauvin Sculpture Garden, and president of the Barataria-Terrebonne Estuary Foundation.

Chief Albert Naquin (Speaker) is traditional Chief of the Jean Charles Choctaw Nation. He represents his Tribe from local to international levels, including the UN, as a State-level Tribal representative for education, and laid the groundwork for the Albuquerque 2000 and Marksville 2010 Census. He is retired from the Mineral Management Service (MMS) and was a former oil field safety inspector in the Gulf of Mexico for MMS and Bureau of Land Management in Colorado and New Mexico. Chief Naquin is a Vietnam veteran and ambassador for the Native Americans of the Louisiana Gulf Coast. A gourd dancer, keeper and drummer of the Miracle Drum, he works with numerous local and national advocacy groups for policy change that will bring progress for his Tribe and all Indigenous people.

Cyndi Nguyen (Speaker), Executive Director, Vietnamese Initiatives in Economic Training.

Samuel Oliver (Speaker) is a Louisiana-based non-profit executive with experience leading museums, performing arts centers, and cultural development agencies. Oliver has served as the executive director of the Acadiana Center for the Arts (AcA) where he heads the regional arts council's operations, fundraising, and programming. Prior to joining the AcA, Oliver served as the assistant director of the Contemporary Arts Center, New Orleans, and as an arts officer for the City of Edinburgh Council, UK Office of Cultural Development. In these roles, Oliver developed a professional practice as a researcher, advocate for data-driven decision making and cultural policy, and has managed large-scale grants and capital projects. He is a fellow of the Salzburg Global Seminar; a member of the New Orleans Young Cultural Innovators Hub, an alumnus of the Young Leadership Council's Leadership Development Series, an alumnus of Emerging Philanthropists of New Orleans, and a graduate of Leadership Lafayette Class XXXII. Oliver is the chairman of the Louisiana Partnership for the Arts and a member of Leadership Louisiana. He holds a B.A. from Louisiana State University, an M.A. in arts and cultural management from Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, and a certificate in cultural diplomacy from the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy, Berlin.

Chief Devon Parfait (Speaker) is the Chief of the Grand Caillou/Dulac band of Biloxi Chitimacha Choctaw. Throughout his undergraduate degree, he studied how coastal land loss is disproportionately affecting tribal communities in southeast Louisiana. Chief Parfait has had varied work experience ranging from developing media and GIS projects with the Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Sciences to conducting fieldwork on shoreline change in the Gulf Islands National Seashore with the National Park Service. He has also held several other leadership roles through the Native Youth Community Adaptation Leadership Congress and the Y Bold and Gold Advisory Council. Chief Parfait is currently working as a coastal resilience analyst for EDF and the MRD coalition, where he is working to support the science committee and to help advance justice for coastal communities. He is also a graduate of Williams College, where he majored in geoscience.

Chief Shirell Parfait-Dardar (Speaker) is the traditional tribal Chief of the Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw and a traditional dressmaker. She is an FPCC founding member and currently serves as the Secretary. Chief Parfait-Dardar was elected the first chairwoman of the Louisiana Office of Indian Affairs Native American Commission and also serves as the Indigenous representative of the Louisiana Governor's Climate Initiatives Task Force, bringing Traditional Ecological Knowledge and the perspective of living for the next generations into decision making.

She is an active advocate for cultural preservation, coastal restoration and preservation, community resiliency, education, environmental and human rights. She was also featured in the docuseries, National Geographic Presents: IMPACT with Gal Gadot, Episode 5 "Killer Red Fox," for her role as an environmental advocate and tribal Chief.

Thaddeus "Mike" Pellegrin (Speaker) is a retired past-resident of the community of Chauvin, LA who relocated to north Thibodaux, LA. His grandson bought their family home a few months before Ida hit and is currently repairing that house.

Elder Rosina Philippe (Speaker), a lifetime resident of coastal Louisiana, is an Atakapa-Ishak/Chawasha tribal Elder and FPCC president. Her work focuses on partnering/forging with leaders from other communities and organizations to address climate change, environmental justice, gentrification, and coastal restoration/preservation. As a guest lecturer, she speaks on recognizing accountability and identifying contributing factors to these issues. Elder Philippe is a firm believer that people facing similar problems, through informed education and information sharing, can affect positive long-term changes and, through collaboration, take charge of their own destinies, to build a more resilient, humane, and sustainable life.

Christopher M. Pulaski (Speaker) is originally from Houma, LA and after some time away, he returned to his hometown where he began working for the National Wildlife Federation advocating for coastal restoration and non-structural flood protection. Pulaski was senior planner for Terrebonne Parish until he was appointed to planning director. He lives in Downtown Houma with his family. He graduated with a B.LA from Louisiana State University.

E. Barrett Ristroph (Committee Member) is owner of Ristroph Law, Planning, and Research, which provides services to tribes, communities, and agencies related to natural resources, hazard mitigation, government, and climate change adaptation as well as relocation. She is a lawyer, planner, mediator, evaluator, and researcher based in south Louisiana and Alaska. Her work has included assisting Newtok Village, Alaska, with relocating to Mertarvik, AK; establishing a climate change program for an Alaskan inter-tribal organization; assisting tribes with hazard mitigation and adaption planning; working with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration on environmental review for Louisiana coastal restoration projects; and working on reports for international agreements related to environmental and human rights issues. She has a Ph.D in adaptation planning and a J.D.

Cynthia (Cindy) P. Robertson (Speaker) started as the executive director of a nonprofit focusing on sustainable agriculture and lifestyle, where she was leading a teaching and research staff as well as all the support staff for the teaching/research gardens, restaurant and gift store. She then started a nonprofit in TX, working with the elderly and adults with mental and emotional disabilities. Moving to Sulphur, LA to be with her mother as she aged, Robertson saw a great need in the low-income neighborhood known as Portie (pronounced Po-chay) Town and started micah 6:8 mission to feed the homeless, educate, and organize the community around social justice issues. micah 6:8 mission presently works with neighbors suffering from addiction and mental health issues and educating the community on the public health and disaster issues caused by the huge environmental impact the fossil fuel industry has on southwest Louisiana. She has a M.S.W. from the University of Houston.

Catherine L. Ross (Committee Member) is regents' professor and Harry West professor of city and regional planning and civil and environmental engineering and director of the Center for Quality Growth and Regional Development at the Georgia Institute of Technology. Her extensive regional resilience and sustainability research focuses on water resources, energy, transportation, economic development, and Mobility-as-a-Service. Her work includes a multidisciplinary focus on resilience, analytics, transportation impact assessment, and performance management. She currently serves as chairman of the board of directors of the Auto Club Group with the American Automobile Association. She recently joined the board of the Health Effects Institute, which focuses on the health effects of air pollution, including those caused by unconventional oil and gas development. She holds a Ph.D. in city and regional planning from Cornell University.

Tracie T. Sempier (Committee Co-Chair) is the coastal resilience engagement specialist for the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium. She works with local communities, state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, coastal managers, residents, and K-12 audiences to decrease the negative effects of disasters (natural, technological, and biological) on families, communities, and the environment. She is also the VORTEX-SE engagement coordinator, for which she is creating a model for regional extension programming focused on severe weather, synthesizing research findings to inform application at the local level, and working to create safe sheltering options for vulnerable populations. She is the lead for the Gulf of Mexico Climate and Resilience Community of Practice. She earned a Ph.D. in curriculum and instruction from Mississippi State University, an M.S. in science and mathematics education at Oregon State University, and a B.S. in marine science and biology from the University of Alabama.

Jessica Simms (Speaker) is an associate program officer in the Health and Resilience Unit in the Gulf Research Program with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. She works on both the Enhancing Community Resilience (EnCoRe) Initiative and a consensus study. For her dissertation she interviewed residents from coastal Louisiana parishes who have already or are currently facing possible relocation decisions or displacement. The research focused on understanding the links among the influence and mobility of three factors: social relations (i.e., faith-based networks, civic organizations, family, cultural and heritage identities, etc.), inherent resilient practices, and place, including sense of and attachment to it. Simms has a B.A. from the University of California, Santa Cruz in politics, an M.A. in geography from San Diego State University, and a Ph.D. in geography from Louisiana State University.

Gavin P. Smith (Committee Member) is a professor in the Department of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at North Carolina State University. His research focuses on hazard mitigation, disaster recovery, and climate change adaptation and the integration of research and practice through deep community engagement. His current research includes assessing the state of disaster resilient design education at U.S. universities, the analysis of a national survey assessing the role of states in building the capacity of local governments to implement hazard mitigation grants and a comparative assessment of hazard-prone housing acquisition programs in the United States, New Zealand, and Australia. He has developed a graduate certificate program in disaster resilient policy, engineering, and design and is helping to coordinate a university-wide effort focused on disaster resilience spanning research, teaching, and engagement-related activities. He holds a Ph.D. in urban and regional planning from Texas A&M University.

Natalie Snider (Committee Member) is the associate vice president for climate resilient coasts and watersheds for the Environmental Defense Fund. She works to ensure sound science and just decisionmaking is being utilized to plan, implement, and adaptively manage projects and policies, with a focus on system dynamics to meet the challenges of climate change to coastal and riverine ecosystems and communities. She previously worked at Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, leading efforts on the Louisiana Coastal Master Plan and as the Science Director at the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana. She is a Ph.D. candidate in marine and estuarine environmental sciences at the University of Maryland, holds an M.S. in oceanography and coastal sciences, and a B.S. in wildlife and fisheries management, both from Louisiana State University.

Bonnie Theriot (Speaker) currently lives in Chauvin but is interested in relocating from the hurricane prone area. She moved to Tennessee for a time, but she moved back because she missed her network of friends and family. Theriot bought a house a few months before Ida and it is still in disrepair.

Courtney S. Thomas Tobin (Committee Member) is an assistant professor in community health sciences at the Fielding School of Public Health and a faculty associate of the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles. As a medical sociologist, she integrates traditional sociological theories with perspectives from public health, social psychology, medicine, and the biological sciences to examine the social, psychological, and biological pathways that contribute to the health and longevity of Black Americans. Her research program makes conceptual and empirical contributions to three interrelated areas of inquiry: (1) psychosocial pathways to embodiment, including the interconnections between mental and physical health; (2) health risks and resources across the life course; and (3) racialized stress and coping processes among Black Americans. She was a U.C. President's postdoctoral fellow in public health and psychology prior to joining the faculty at University of California, Los Angeles. She holds a Ph.D. in sociology from Vanderbilt University and a B.S. in psychology from Xavier University of Louisiana.

Mark J. VanLandingham (Speaker) is the Thomas C. Keller Professor at Tulane University. He currently teaches *Population Mobility and Health* and *Health Problems of Developing Societies* (with Katherine Andrinopoulos). VanLandingham directs Tulane's Center for Studies of Displaced Populations and leads research teams focusing on rural-to-urban migration within Southeast Asia; long-term post-disaster recovery; and acculturation, health, and well-being among Vietnamese immigrants living in New Orleans. His recent book, *Weathering Katrina*, focuses on these two latter topics.

Shana Walton (Speaker) is an anthropologist who teaches at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, LA. She is the co-editor of *Languages in Louisiana: Community and Culture*, co-founder of the Bayou Culture Collaborative, as well as co-primary investigator and project manager of "Digital Curation;" a project funded by the U.S. Bureau of Ocean Energy Management to make a wide range of research about the Gulf Coast more easily accessible to both researchers and the public. Her book, co-authored with Helen Regis, *Bayou Harvest: Subsistence on Louisiana's Gulf Coast* is forthcoming in 2023.

Cherry Wilmore (Speaker) currently works as a case manager at the Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office. She is tasked with creating and maintain-

ing individualized service plans to reduce recidivism and return individuals back to their communities as productive citizens. While born in Lake Charles, LA, Wilmore's entry into the foster care system carried her to Oberlin, LA and later Houma, LA, where she has resided most of her life. Driven by a strong commitment to learning and empowering others, she is the co-founder of Everybody's Favorite Twins, a social media platform which educates, empowers, and engages her culture and community. Wilmore also co-founded Laptops of Love, a campaign to gift graduating foster youths with laptops. She also co-hosts a Women's Brunch to provide a space where women build and uplift one another. She has served as a panelist for Together We Can "Aging Out of Foster Care," and Fletcher's "Black Girls That Rock" Black History Program. Wilmore is a member of Foster Care Alumni of America and Fostering Change Network Alumni. In addition, she has been a keynote speaker for foster care, political, secondary and post-secondary education presentations. She is an active member of her church and rotary. She received her B.A. in government from Nicholls State University, later enrolling in the M.Ed program at the same university.

Sherry Wilmore (Speaker) currently serves as the community coordinator at Goodwill Industries of New Orleans, a non-profit focused on services and programs for justice-involved individuals in Southeast Louisiana. In her role, she identifies reentry needs, develops community partners, and collaborates with organizations to meet the needs of the individuals. Wilmore was born in Lake Charles, LA, and has resided in Houma, LA since she was a young child. Growing up in the foster care system helped to shape her strong belief in community service. Wilmore is the co-founder of Everybody's Favorite Twins, a social media platform which educates, empowers, and engages her community and she has co-founded Laptops of Love, a campaign to gift graduating foster youths. Wilmore also co-hosts a Women's Brunch to provide an outlet where women can empower one another. She has served as a panelist for Together We Can "Aging Out of Foster Care," and is a member of Foster Care Alumni of America, and Fostering Change Network Alumni. When she graduated from undergraduate with her bachelor's degree, she became one of the first foster children to successfully complete the Young Adult Program in the state of Louisiana. Wilmore then continued her education by enrolling in the M.Ed. program at the same university.