

BECAUSE LIFE HAPPENS AT THE WATER'S EDGE

Institute's mission as Louisiana's Coastal Innovation and Collaboration Hub

Since the Institute was formed in 2012, our mission as an independent, non-profit, applied research organization has been to work across disciplines and bring the best available science to our most complex environmental and societal challenges. We reached an important moment on the journey to achieving this vision when Governor John Bel Edwards announced on Feb. 20 that the Institute would serve as the State of Louisiana's Coastal Innovation and Collaboration Hub.

In making the announcement, the Governor made clear that our state's strategy for addressing the coastal crisis has been driven by the best available science and that science would remain the force behind our Coastal Master Plan going forward. The Governor went on to say that, "Establishing the Coastal Innovation and Collaboration Hub at the Water Institute of the Gulf further cements the role of science and the open sharing of information and collaboration as crucial elements of our success into the future."

Our entire team is honored to serve the state in this important capacity – bringing together the vast knowledge and work being done by colleagues from universities, non-profits, private industry and government – to inform decision-making and help coastal communities become more resilient in the face of an uncertain future.

One of our first tasks as the Coastal Innovation and Collaboration Hub is to create a model repository to ensure that the coastal program and other planning initiatives most effectively utilize available resources to advance our collective knowledge. Essentially, this repository will be a virtual library through which all of our colleagues can access existing models and related data so that advancements can build over time to the benefit of our collective knowledge base. This move towards a more collaborative, open-source methodology is extremely exciting for the Institute and all of our partners.

Our second task is to focus on identifying and coordinating solutions for science needs of the Atchafalaya Basin Program and pursuing opportunities to more fully integrate it with the Coastal Master Plan. This is a perfect example of an area where tremendous work has been done for decades and through focused collaboration and innovation, we can continue to address a complex set of water, sediment, and ecosystem issues.

Our third initial area of focus will be the Lowermost Mississippi River Management Program – one of the most important applied research programs in our state. The Lowermost River program represents an opportunity to build on previous work and evaluate a holistic approach to managing the river for navigation, flood, protection, economic prosperity, and ecological restoration. We are excited to work with CPRA, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, universities, engineering firms, the navigation sector, and so many other stakeholders to facilitate a collaborative knowledge exchange and develop a "Mississippi River Science and Modeling Community of Practice."

By doing this together – collaborating, innovating and building on decades of research – we can successfully address our most pressing challenges. The result will be a more sustainable coast at home and continued opportunities to share our knowledge with coastal communities around the world.


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Featured Project

PLANNING FOR CHARLESTON, S.C.



Facing multiple and increasing flood risks, the city of Charleston engaged in a 15-month planning, flood risk assessment, design and community visioning effort entitled Dutch Dialogues (DD) Charleston, led by Dale Morris of The Water Institute of the Gulf and David Waggoner of Waggoner & Ball Architecture/Environment. Key partners included The Royal Netherlands Embassy, University of Notre Dame, Moffatt & Nichol, Arcadis, Deltares, and many Charleston-based academics, researchers, designers, engineers, and citizens.

DD Charleston explored pathways to mitigate local and regional flood risk, anchor and facilitate adaptation and enhance physical, natural, human, social and economic resilience in Charleston.

DD Charleston included extensive desk research, repeated site visits / field trips, regular stakeholder and community engagement, expert interviews, a two-day colloquium, a five-day design workshop and structured interaction with Charleston's political, planning, stormwater, business and community leaders. The DD Charleston final report posits a set of principles and design approaches for Charleston to adapt a resilient "Living with Water" approach. The recommendations are grounded in science, respectful of natural systems and processes, inspired by community, based in design and informed by humility about things not yet known or fully understood.

The four focal areas selected – Johns Island, Church Creek, Eastside Charleston, and the Charleston Medical District – represent distinct typologies found throughout the Lowcountry to ensure transferability and replicability of the recommendations to nearby communities. A high-level regional assessment and peninsula-wide approach was conducted to further inform landform and systems coherence to the overall report.

Integrated green and gray infrastructure approaches are needed including improved drainage system capacity, perimeter protection, flood plain, coastal marsh and creek restoration and protection, and place-specific bios-swales, complete streets, stormwater infiltration and detention in public spaces.

The full report is available [here](#).

In the News

The Institute has been making waves! Check out a few recent news highlights below. Topics include Baton Rouge groundwater, Institute named as Louisiana's Coastal Innovation and Collaboration Hub, and more.

For a full list of press releases and news article, please visit the Institute's [website](#).

- Institute Named Louisiana's Innovation and Collaboration Hub at Gov. John Bel Edwards Coastal Priorities Announcement
- Gov. Edwards announces coastal priorities for his second term
- Learning to be Resilient
- Foundation Grants to Rework Waterfront in Argentinian City
- Charleston homeowners address flooding concerns at panel discussion
- Organizations join forces to form Coastal-Hydrologic Consortium
- Water Institute out to protect the Baton Rouge water supply
- Historic Charleston Foundation, City of Charleston Kick Off Dutch Dialogues Charleston
- Charleston's flooding fixes could also be public amenities
- Louisiana's lessons for Virginia on building water economy
- NIGHTLY FILMS: Water's Edge
- Water Institute of the Gulf celebrates opening in UNO Research and Technology Park
- Editorial: Charleston must learn to love and live with its water
- University of Iowa, LSU flood experts take on Mississippi River flooding
- Baton Rouge Mayor Discusses How her City is Dealing With Urban Redevelopment
- Institute selected for five-year partnership with NOAA to work on Deepwater Horizon restoration efforts
- City Launches Dutch Dialogues Charleston To Solve Flood Concerns
- As flash flooding becomes more frequent, East Baton Rouge officials struggle to find affordable solutions
- Baton Rouge-area groundwater commission to mull problems, solutions for aquifer demand

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The Water Institute @TheH2OInstitute · Feb 20
Getting started at the Gov. press conference about his second term priorities for Louisiana coastal



jeff hebert @jeffhebert · Feb 12
Proud to support @marisaaho @HoustonTX in the development of #ResilientHouston. Now on to implementation. @Globe@RiceCenter @Hraadvisors @TheH2OInstitute @AsakuraRobinson @RiceKandertinst

Global Resilient Cities Network @GlobalResCities · Feb 12
It's official: #Houston, we have a #resiliencestrategy! Congratulations Mayor @SylvesterTurner, Chief Resilience Officer @marisaaho. We are so thrilled for @HoustonTX and its residents. Thanks to @Shell for the support to Houston to make this happen! #resilientcities #resilience



City of Charleston @CityCharleston · Jan 15
At last night's meeting, City Council voted unanimously to adopt the recommendations contained in the Dutch Dialogues Charleston Final Report, which will serve as an overarching guide & framework for the city's stormwater management strategy.
Learn more: [bit.ly/2zooqWV](#)

The Water Institute @TheH2OInstitute · Feb 11
Institute's Scott Hemmerling @essayhem and @tulanewaterlaw Mark Davis presented their work this morning to the Governor's advisory commission on "Finding the Means: Investment and Adaptation in Vulnerable Communities." Read more here [bit.ly/38kTHD](#)



Waggoner & Ball Architecture/Environment @Waggoner... · Jan 31
The #LivingWithWater Houston report is public! Download it: [bit.ly/37ND3ib](#)
Read Mayor @SylvesterTurner's statement: [bit.ly/2Rly2u0](#) @NLItheUSA @TheH2OInstitute @AsakuraRobinson @Janice_Barnes @ArcadisGlobal @SWWgroup @Sherwooding @kcaecolentinst @HoustonTX



The Water Institute @TheH2OInstitute · Feb 5
Water Institute welcomes three new board members – Dr. Gerry Galloway Jr., Christy Brown and Dr. Eli Fofoulo-Georgiou – and a new science and engineering advisory council member – Dr. Robert Twilley. Read more here [bit.ly/2v67yUn](#)



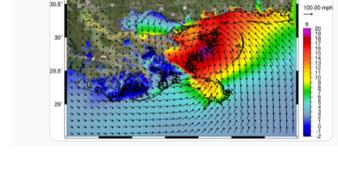
The Water Institute @TheH2OInstitute · Feb 5
Great discussion today at #NIMCES about RESTORE Act Centers of Excellence Research Grants Programs including from @mmbaustian from #LouisianaCEE



The Water Institute @TheH2OInstitute · Nov 18, 2019
NFWF announced this morning that The Water Institute will receive \$500,000 through the National Coastal Resilience Fund to support the Partnership for Our Working Coast. Read more here [bit.ly/37U64n](#)



The Water Institute @TheH2OInstitute · Feb 18
Join us for #ADCWeek hosted by @eabosecoastal. @suzcr @laseagrnt, and the Institute. The event includes 2-day users group meeting showcasing the latest advancements March 30 and 31, as well as a 3-day intensive #ADCRC training course April 1-3. [bit.ly/371511U](#)



The Water Institute @TheH2OInstitute · Feb 3
New paper from Dr. Rabalais and @mmbaustian "Historical Shifts in Benthic Infaunal Diversity in the Northern Gulf of Mexico since the Appearance of Seasonally Severe Hypoxia." Lays out the history of benthic infauna research in the Gulf "dead zone" [bit.ly/38Ljyvv](#)



Staff Spotlight

HUGH ROBERTS, VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENGINEERING

After hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Hugh Roberts made southern Louisiana his second home as he joined the massive response effort including work on the first 2007 Coastal Master Plan being developed by a newly formed Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority.

In March 2019, Roberts joined the Institute team as vice president for engineering, bringing with him more than 15 years of experience in numerical modeling and resilience planning.

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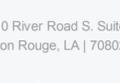
Roberts earned his bachelor's and master's degrees in civil engineering from The University of Notre Dame. Throughout his career, Roberts has led numerical modeling-based projects around Louisiana and the country in order to assess coastal and fluvial flood risks, support the design of ecosystem restoration and flood protection projects, and evaluate environmental impacts. He has played a leading role in recent studies in the Gulf of Mexico in support of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Emergency Management Agency, and the state of Louisiana's Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority including the development of the 2012, 2017, and now the 2023 Coastal Master Plans and analysis of the proposed Mississippi River sediment diversions.

Beyond the Gulf coast, Roberts has worked with cities and regions facing climate change-driven economic, societal, and environmental risks. Roberts has played leading roles in the development of New York City's Special Initiative for Rebuilding and Resiliency post Hurricane Sandy; Climates Ready Boston, a 2016 initiative to create a systematic and comprehensive framework for combating climate change; HUD funded Rebuild by Design and National Disaster Resilience Competitions projects in Bridgeport (CT) and New York City; and the San Francisco Seawall Earthquake Safety and Isosceles Prevention Program, planning for the city's seismic and coastal flooding challenges along its iconic waterfront.

"Following Hurricane Katrina, East Louisiana became my second home. I spent the better part of my first decade in the field working intimately with engineers, scientists, and leaders across the state. Louisiana is a place I continue to return to because of the fascinating work and the really great people I've had the opportunity to work with," Roberts said. "Joining the Institute provides a unique opportunity to focus on applying research to tackle issues that impact not only coastal Louisiana, but cities and regions across the U.S."

Roberts and his wife, Amy, have two children Hugh III, 4, and Caroline, 2.

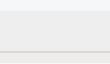
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