



THE WATER  
INSTITUTE



## UPDATES FROM THE WATER INSTITUTE

# DECISIONS BASED ON SCIENCE

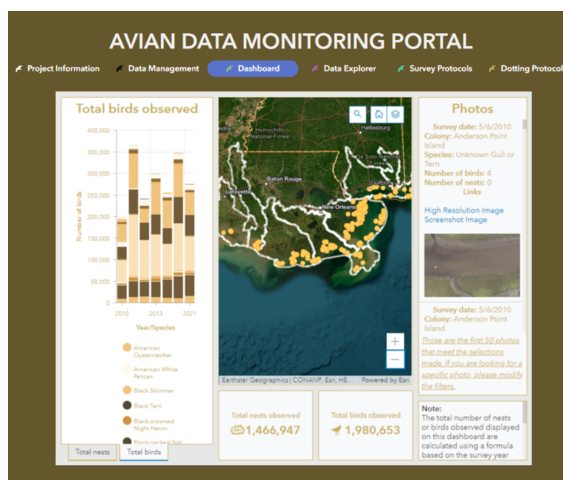
The Water Institute is an independent, non-profit, applied research institution advancing science and developing integrated methods to solve complex environmental and societal challenges. We believe in, and strive for, more resilient and equitable communities, sustainable environments, and thriving economies.

Here are a few updates on the work The Water Institute is doing to advance science, planning, policy, and technology towards a more sustainable future.

## Avian Data Monitoring Portal Creates Easy-to-use Resource for Researchers and Public

A newly released Avian Data Monitoring Portal brings together more than a decade of aerial survey photos along the northern Gulf of Mexico to provide an easily searchable database for researchers, natural resource managers, and the public. Found at [avianmonitoring.com](http://avianmonitoring.com), the portal is helping coastal managers, coastal restoration engineers, researchers, and others not only see coastal nesting bird distributions, but also inform future restoration efforts.

Learn more about our avian work [here](#).



## Mobile Resilience Assessment Presents Progress



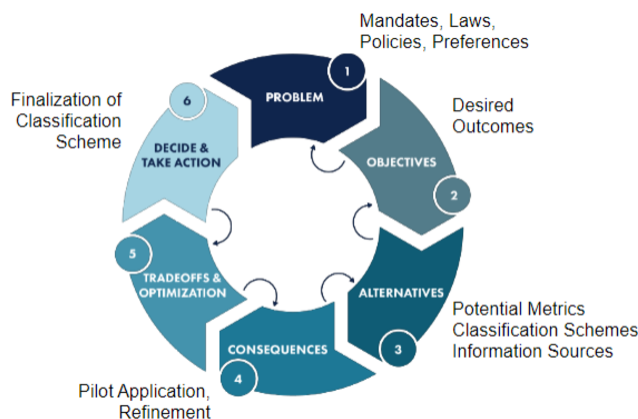
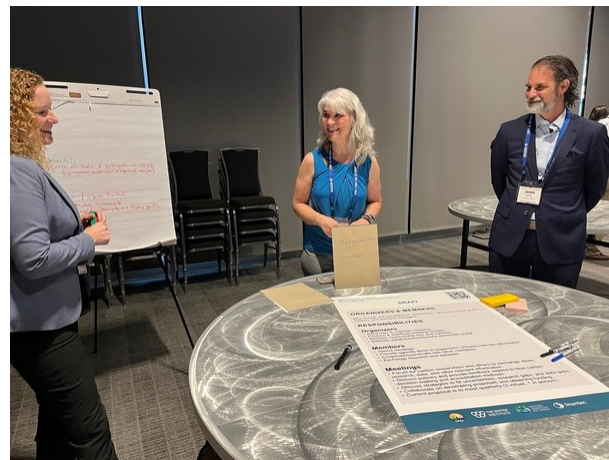
## and Needs

Like other coastal cities, Mobile, Alabama is facing unprecedented change from sea-level rise and more frequent and more extreme weather events. To ensure Mobile is prepared to meet these and other infrastructural, societal, and economic challenges, The Water Institute is working with the City of

Mobile to develop a City-Wide Resilience Assessment and Plan. The Resilience Assessment, released on Jan. 8, examines Mobile's existing systems and assets that are foundational to the city's resilience: infrastructure, economy, health and wellbeing, communities, and natural resources. The data collected shows where Mobile has improved over the years and where there is still work to be done. The Resilience Assessment provides the foundation for developing a Resilience Plan of actionable steps Mobile can take to improve its resilience – a process that the Water Institute, the City, and local stakeholders are working through now. Read the assessment [here](#).

## Advancing Blue Carbon Research for the Gulf Coast

Restoration of coastal wetlands and natural carbon sequestration are global priorities, however there are currently no carbon credits being generated by coastal wetlands blue carbon offset projects in the United States. The Water Institute and partners are working together to quantify the potential Louisiana has to be a leader in this field. A recent publication in the [Sea Grant Law & Policy Journal](#) outlines current legal and policy challenges as well as opportunities. This work follows several Institute-led Gulf of Mexico Coastal Carbon Working Group meetings in 2023 and 2024 that brought together multiple stakeholders to discuss the potential to not only sequester carbon through restoration work already being done, but potentially raise a steady stream of funding through a carbon market for future restoration work. More information is available [here](#).



## Developing an Offshore Sediment Inventory for Better Resource Management

Sand and sediment are critical for maintaining coastal landscapes and ecosystems in the face of storms, sea level rise, and other drivers of erosion and land loss. However, these resources are limited

and resources managers such as the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) Marine Minerals Program (MMP) require effective tools for inventorying, characterizing, and understanding future needs for sediment in the face of growing demand and increasing use conflicts. To make the effective use of that information, BOEM has developed a National Offshore Sediment Inventory (NOSI) to help manage these resources, facilitate communication and coordination with other federal and state agencies, and proactively prepare the nation for growing future sediment needs. The Water Institute is partnering with BOEM and APTIM to apply a structured decision-making approach for developing an improved framework to assess and track borrow areas for future needs. More [here](#).

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## Evaluating Beneficial Use of Dredged Material to Better Capture Benefits



Storms, sea level rise, subsidence, disruptions to sediment supply, and other natural and anthropogenic disturbances are driving coastal erosion, habitat loss, and risk to communities throughout the Gulf of Mexico. Green or hybrid infrastructure solutions, including sediment placement to restore marsh, beach, and other habitats, have been increasingly recognized as an important tool for reducing or mitigating these losses. The Water Institute is working to define and demonstrate the positive outcomes associated with regional sediment management (RSM) and beneficial use of dredged material to support the efficient and effective use of sediment resources. More [here](#).

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## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- Biden-Harris Administration awards \$6.7 million for sea level rise and coastal resilience research
  - Update on the Smart Port, crowd-sourcing bathymetry data, WWNO
  - Climate impacts in the U.S. are ‘far-reaching and worsening,’ federal report finds
  - HPC pioneers pave the way for a flood of arm supercomputers
  - Louisiana marshes bury carbon in the muck. Could they help fight climate change?
  - On Our Watch: Jessica Henkel
  - On Our Watch: Beaux Jones
  - On Our Watch: Renee Collini
  - Residents say the Chauvin, Montegut, and Bourg communities are being uprooted
  - Louisiana marshes bury carbon in the muck. Could they help fight climate change?
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