JEFF HICKS
Director of Product Strategy

COMPANY ROLE

Director of Product Strategy

PROJECT ROLE / FOCUS AREAS

Climate Resilience

Software Development

GIS and Data Visualization

Decision Support

Entrepreneurship

EDUCATION

BS Environmental Studies, University of North Carolina at Asheville, 2008

Jeff Hicks, Director of Product Strategy at The Water Institute, has more than 15 years of experience scaling environmental applied research into robust data-driven decision support applications.

Through his work on Climate.gov, the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit, and the National Climate Assessment, Hicks helped to develop many foundational climate change indicators and decision support tools used nationally for decisions in government and beyond. Hicks has also led development of several high-profile environmental planning and assessment applications for the NOAA, NASA, the U.S. Forest Service, and Los Alamos National Laboratory; and for a global set of companies including ExxonMobil, Dow Chemical, DuPont, Intel, Kodak, and more.

Prior to joining The Water Institute, Hicks co-founded Fernleaf in 2014 as a private company spinoff of the National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center (NEMAC) at the University of North Carolina Asheville; Fernleaf continues to expand the reach of the NEMAC's applied research in community climate resilience by advising dozens of local and regional governments nationwide. Hicks was previously a software engineer with Locus Technologies and a geospatial software engineer with NEMAC. He received his bachelor's degree in environmental studies from the University of North Carolina at Asheville.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2022-Present: Director of Product Strategy, The Water Institute

2014-2022: Co-founder, Fernleaf

2011-2014: Software Engineer, Locus Technologies

2006-2011: Geospatial Software Engineer, National Environmental Modeling and Analysis Center

SELECTED PROJECTS

EnDMC technical development. *The Water Institute. 2022-present. Product Owner.* Jeff is leading the technology development strategy for the Environmental Data and Model Catalog (EnDMC) which increases discoverability and preserves data provenance for complex environmental modeling tasks. EnDMC will assist in organizing modeling efforts at the Institute, and work produced by a wide range of consultants supporting the Louisiana Watershed Initiative, the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, and the Texas General Land Office.

Defense climate advisory support. *The Water Institute. 2022-present. Senior Advisor.* Jeff has advised a range of military stakeholders in using data to plan for an uncertain future, including helping the US Air Force develop its climate projection capability strategy to serve the DoD, US Intelligence Community, and NATO, including supporting briefings to OSD, the Pentagon, and international allies; and serving on the Technical Advisory Committee for the Military Installation Resilience Review of NAVSTA Newport and the Naval Undersea Warfare Center.

Equitable climate resilience planning. *Fernleaf. 2014-2022. Principal.* Support for dozens of local and regional governments including Charleston, SC; Tallahassee, Jacksonville, Alachua County, Palm Beach County, West Palm Beach, Lake Worth Beach, Lantana, Ocean Ridge, Briny Breezes, Boynton Beach, Delray Beach, Highland Beach, Boca Raton, Fort Lauderdale, Broward County, Hollywood, Hallandale Beach, North Miami, and Tampa International Airport, FL; New Bern, New Hanover County, the 24 jurisdictions of the Land of Sky Regional Council of Governments, Orange County, Durham City and County, Chapel Hill, Raleigh, and Cary, NC; Houston, TX; the greater Detroit region, MI; and the Hampton Roads region of VA.

NOAA's Climate Explorer. *Fernleaf. 2014-2022. Technical Lead.* Jeff served as the lead data analyst and overall technical lead for the Climate Explorer, the featured resilience tool that supports the US Climate Resilience Toolkit's Steps to Resilience framework. As part of that effort, Jeff supported the development of an interactive county-scale CMIP5 projection time series tool that makes it possible for users to interact with terabytes of climate projection data. Jeff has supported conducing workshops for a wide range of stakeholders in use of projection data to inform localized decisions.

National Climate Assessment state summary analyses and indicator development. *NEMAC. 2015-2016. Technical Analyst.* Expanding on the 3rd National Climate Assessment, a series of state and regional supplements were added to better contextualize climate changes at a local level. Jeff led the spatial climate data processing and visualization efforts for national, regional, and state map products within these supplements in collaboration with the National Centers of Environmental Information (NCEI) and the North Carolina Institute for Climate Studies (NCICS). Additionally, Jeff supported development of several climate change indicators in support of the National Climate Assessment and associated supplements in collaboration with efforts at the US Global Change Research Program and University of Maryland.