

GULF RESEARCH PROGRAM

Project Title: Supporting the Isle de Jean Charles Community Resettlement Through Cross-Boundary Networks and Knowledge Synthesis

Award Amount: \$200,120

Awardee: Lowlander Center

Award Start Date: 05/01/17

Award End Date: 10/31/19

NAS Grant ID: 200008164

Project Director: Dr. Alessandra Jerolleman

Affiliation: Lowlander Center

Project Key Personnel:

- Kristina Peterson, Lowlander Center
- Amy Lesen, Tulane University
- Joseph Kunkel, Sustainable Native Communities Collaborative
- Joe Evans, Evans + Lighter

I. PROJECT SUMMARY (from proposal)

This project will design and pilot a model for the engagement of Gulf Coast and national cross-boundary networks in support of the Isle de Jean Charles resettlement project. The Isle de Jean Charles Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw (IDJC) of Southeastern Louisiana has lost 98 percent of their land since 1955 due to a combination of threats including rising sea levels, coastal erosion, lack of soil and sediment renewal, and dredging for oil and gas pipelines. In response to these challenges, the Tribe and partners have developed a resettlement plan, one of the first of its kind in the world, to move families to less environmentally vulnerable land, along with program evaluation and outreach for teaching other coastal communities. To carry out this plan, tribal leaders and members must engage with professionals and experts, such as those on this team. It is essential for the IDJC to have a process in place for successful engagement that prioritizes the needs of the community and results in appropriate projects developed in partnership. The model created from this project will facilitate the synthesis of knowledge from scientific and professional partners with community knowledge. The model will be developed, and pilot tested, through engagement with design professionals and the scientific community in the development of site and building designs, and community education, outreach, and programming, focused on promoting human and environmental health and wellbeing. Creating a model for sustainable networks of professional and academic institutions to address human and environmental challenges will benefit all coastal communities.

II. PROJECT SUMMARY (from final report)

This project created a Cross-Boundary Network that supported the creation of a toolkit document intended for communities who are at high environmental risk and attempting adaptation. The case studies in this document are drawn from a small community with less formal organizational structure

and a long history of high demand planning, facing pressures from external groups and forces, all while very much in the public eye.

III. PROJECT RESULTS

Accomplishments

The grant allowed for the development and creation of a Cross-Boundary network in support of local community efforts. This network brought together activists, community members, researchers, design professionals, and others in support of the tribe's resettlement.

The Tribe led the collaborative project with its partners to create a Tool Kit for communities undergoing environmental and developmental pressures. The final product is titled: A Community Field Guide to Engagement, Resilience, and Resettlement: Community regeneration in the face of environmental and developmental pressures.

The toolkit can be found at:

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5672cfb1d82d5e366e753691/t/5dfc077ef8a68c27967cc40c/1576798088266/FINAL+FIELD+GUIDE+reduced.pdf>

Implications

The project team continues to work together and will do so into the future. Some of the components, which were carried forward throughout this process, will continue on as funding and other resources are identified. For example, the seed bank is a work in progress as is the effort to identify means of memorializing and accessing the current tribal lands after the resettlement.

Other communities might be able to replicate this model, with adjustments, in support of their own needs. The toolkit include models for participant agreements, as well as for the identification of needs.

Unexpected Results

N/A

Project Relevance

The following audiences would be most interested in the results of this project:

- Community Leaders

Other community leaders facing similar circumstances can benefit from the toolkit, as well as from the experiences of the Isle de Jean Charles Tribe.

Education and Training

Number of students, postdoctoral scholars, or educational components involved in the project:

- Undergraduate students: 0
- Graduate students: 2
- Postdoctoral scholars: 10
- Other educational components: 0

IV. DATA AND INFORMATION PRODUCTS

This project produced data and information products of the following types:

- Information Products
- Scholarly publications, reports or monographs, workshop summaries or conference proceedings

DATA

Data Management Report:

N/A

Relationships Between Data Sets:

N/A

Additional Documentation Produced to Describe Data:

N/A

Other Activities to Make Data Discoverable:

N/A

Sensitive, Confidential, or Proprietary Data:

N/A

INFORMATION PRODUCTS

Information Products Report:

See attached Information Products Report.

Citations for Project Publications, Reports and Monographs, and Workshop and Conference Proceedings:

Preserving Our Place: A Community Field Guide to Engagement, Resilience, and Resettlement: Community regeneration in the face of environmental and developmental pressures

Websites and Data Portals:

N/A

Additional Documentation Produced to Describe Information Products:

N/A

Other Activities to Make Information Products Accessible and Discoverable:

The Toolkit is available on the Tribe's website and has been shared with partners.

Confidential, Proprietary, Specially Licensed Information Products:

N/A

V. PUBLIC INTEREST AND COMMUNICATIONS

Most Unique or Innovative Aspect of the Project

The primary role of the Tribe, leading the effort and working in full partnership with the scholars, is the most innovative aspect.

Most Exciting or Surprising Thing Learned During the Project

We were surprised to see the ease with which the partners accepted the capacity of the Tribe and were willing to step out of the driver's seat.

Most Important Outcome or Benefit of Project

The Toolkit is a resource for many communities across the Gulf Coast.

Communications, Outreach, and Dissemination Activities of Project

The project results were disseminated by both the Tribe and the Lowlander Center.

Information Products Report

InfoProductType	DigitalResourceType	Title	FileName	Creators	PublicationYear	Publisher	RepositoryName	DOIorPersistentURL	DatasetReference
Workshop or Conference Proceeding	Text	Preserving Our Place: A Community Field Guide to Engagement, Resilience, and Resettlement: Community regeneration in the face of environmental and developmental pressures	FinalFieldGuide	Isle de Jean Charles Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Tribe, Tribal Chief Albert Naquin, Tribal Secretary Chantel Comardelle,Alessandra Jerolleman, Amy E. Lesen, Kristina Peterson, Joseph Evans, Erin Tooher, Jeffrey Mansfield, Nathaniel Corum, Nathan Jessee, Joseph Kunkel, Sierra Bainbridge, Amie Shao, Mayrah Udvardi, Tribal Deputy Chief Wenceslaus "Boyo" Billiot Jr., Tribal Councilman Tomy Dardar, Tribal Advisor Démé "J.R." Naquin	2019	Isle de Jean Charles Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Tribe and Lowlander Center	Preserving Our Place	http://www.isledejeancharies.com/our-resettlement	