

I. Project Information*

Project Director	Kimberly Reyher
Project Title	Community Art Living Shorelines (C.A.L.S.)
Project Location	<p>The focus area for this project will be south Louisiana. Outreach activities where oyster art will be produced will take place in the city of New Orleans and in nearby coastal parishes. CRCL will leverage existing and new partnerships to identify popular events that could serve as outreach points, such as open-mic nights in New Orleans, the Meraux Foundation Cook Off for the Coast in Violet, the Thibodaux Firemen's Fair, Chitimacha, Coushatta, and Tunica-Biloxi Powwows, the Festival International de Louisiane in Lafayette, the Louisiana Shrimp and Petroleum Festival in Morgan City, the Blessing of the Fleet in Grand Isle, the Bayou Classic annual football game between Southern University and Grambling State, Coastal Day at the Legislature in Baton Rouge, and others. These areas are heavily influenced by climate issues such as increased temperatures, increased intensity and frequency of precipitation events and associated flooding, tropical storms and hurricanes and associated storm surge, sea-level rise, and other environmental stressors. The above events can serve as fun, interactive engagement points where CRCL staff can discuss climate resilience with residents in a local setting. The art produced through the project will be incorporated into oyster reef living shorelines designed to protect cultural sites threatened by rising sea levels, such as Indigenous mound in St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Lafourche, Terrebonne, and Iberia Parishes that are near oyster seed grounds and leases. Project site selection and design will be informed by the science of changing salinities linked to ecological conditions and planned large-scale restoration projects, such as sediment diversions. The sensitive nature of project sites will be respected by working collaboratively with coastal Tribes and landowners to respect the sacred traditions of these heritage landmarks. CRCL has a strong track record of advancing environmental justice through direct partnerships with local Tribes to protect coastal landmarks. Potential project sites based on oyster</p>

seed/lease grounds and location of cultural heritage sites:• St. Bernard Parisho San Malo Community Siteso Magnolia Mound• Plaquemines Parisho Buras Moundso Bayou Grand Cheniere Moundso Lemon Tree Mound (Phase II)• Lafourche Parisho Grand Bayou Blue Ridge• Terrebonne Parisho Pointe-au-Chien (Phase II, Phase III)o Grand Caillou Mound• Iberia Parisho Bayou Cypremonto Morton Shell Mound

Project Summary

To engage coastal residents in nature-based climate solutions, CRCL proposes Community Art Living Shorelines (C.A.L.S.). This project will connect the art, food, and festival cultures of south Louisiana to broaden community engagement in coastal restoration and understanding of climate resilience. We will leverage CRCL's Oyster Shell Recycling Program (OSRP), through which we recycle oyster shells from New Orleans restaurants to build living shorelines. The OSRP diverts shell from landfills to build reefs that reduce shoreline erosion, support local fisheries, and provide critical wetland habitat. C.A.L.S. will foster diverse engagement spaces where coastal residents create art from recycled oyster shells that are then incorporated into living shorelines. We will bring clean recycled shells to outreach events, including festivals, powwows, conferences, children's museums, and Mardi Gras gatherings. Many, if not all, of these events will be held outside to minimize COVID transmission risks. Attendees will first be surveyed on their perceptions of climate change and community resilience, then CRCL staff will discuss climate change impacts, coastal restoration, and oyster reef living shorelines while inviting attendees to decorate clean oyster shells with environmentally friendly paint and markers. CRCL staff will photograph participants with their art and then bag shell to incorporate into living shorelines at coastal sites, such as Indigenous mounds that are near oyster seed grounds and leases. Shell art portraits will be made public on a digital archive that is linked to information on the reef project. We will survey participants throughout the project to assess learning and attitude changes.

II. Progress Report Questions

1. Please revisit your proposal and review your goals and the outcomes you were seeking to achieve through this grant. How successful were you in meeting your goals? Please assess your success against the criteria you set in your proposal and use any combination of anecdotes, stories, graphs, charts, visuals as well as data to explain your success. Upload supporting files if you choose.*

CRCL exceeded the number of events proposed as CALS proved to be a great tool to engage with residents. CRCL participated in 44 events, engaged well over 750 people through outreach and volunteer events, with 1,500+ shells returned to the water during the building of a oyster shell living shoreline protecting 400 linear feet of marsh at Bayou Pointe-au-Chien with our Indigenous partners. CRCL feels this project was a great success and continues to utilize the activity to engage audiences in conversation about coastal restoration and preservation.

Participants enjoyed taking a shelfie, viewing the photo archive and forwarding the photos to their friends and families, amplifying CRCL's messaging. The project has also been replicated in classrooms to discuss topics of recycling and coastal stewardship for all ages.

The only aspect of the effort that was not a success would be the engagement of participants in taking the post survey. In today's world, overwhelmed with digital media, it was difficult to get the attention of most participants to complete a post survey.

The uploaded file contains links to photos of the reef build and oyster shell deployment and the type of communication shared with the participants.

Optional File Upload

[Take this 5 Minute Survey and Win CRCL Swag.pdf](#)

Filename: Take this 5 Minute Survey and Win CRCL Swag.pdf **Size:** 609.3 kB

2. How has your work benefited your organization, professional field, community, or other stakeholders?*

This project has allowed CRCL to engage stakeholders by connecting art, food and festival cultures of south Louisiana to broaden community engagement in coastal restoration and understanding of climate resilience.

Of the post surveys that were returned, when asked “As a result of engaging with CRCL, has your understanding of climate change and surrounding issues changed?” the average answer was 5.1 out of 7 – where 0 is has not changed and 7 is “significantly increased”

In the post survey, when asked “As a result of engaging with CRCL, has your understanding of the use of nature-based climate solutions, like restoring living shoreline oyster reefs, changed?” The average answer was 5.6 out of 7 – where 0 is “no change” and 7 is “significantly increased”

3. Are there any other successes related more broadly to this project that you would like to share with us?*

CRCL has developed a Future Coastal Leaders program in which high school and post secondary students are engaged in a leadership and career development initiative highlighting the plentiful careers and degrees that exist in the coastal space. These students assisted with the CALs program at community events. Providing an art-based learning activity provided a more comfortable atmosphere for our Future Coastal Leaders to share their knowledge with residents and near peers.

4. What did you learn (positive or negative) as a result of this grant? What lessons would you share with other organizations or the field at large?*

The innovative program is easily executed and leverages an existing nature-based climate solution program (CRCL's Oyster Shell Recycling Program) to create an interactive, artistic method for educating and engaging coastal residents on climate change issues and community resilience. The effort is well received and enjoyed by participants. Art-based learning activities are a direct draw for younger audiences and families.

Having discussion while participating in an activity allows for conversation around topics which can at times can be difficult, like river diversions. In a less formal atmosphere people seemed more willing to listen and engage in conversation.

5. How do you characterize your relationship with the GRP and what suggestions do you have for improvement?*

CRCL enjoyed working with GRP and found the team easy to work with as we executed a no cost extension.

6. Please provide any other feedback or comments you have for the GRP.*

n/a

7. If applicable, please identify and describe the ways you or your organization leveraged GRP's grant (e.g., other funders, volunteers who worked on the program, in-kind donations etc.) Please specify the value and/or number/hours of volunteers if possible.

CRCL identified this grant as a matching source for the Pointe-au-Chien reef construction this past fall, which was primarily funded by EPA.



Hello!

Thank you for participating in the first phase of CRCL's Community Arts Living Shoreline (CALS) project. You visited CRCL at an event in the past year, completed a survey, maybe even painted an oyster shell and took a "shelfie." The survey responses help our understanding of community members' perceptions around climate change and resilience.

In late September, your painted shell went back into the water to become part of our community reef along the shores on Bayou Pointe-au-Chien. See photos from the deployment here and here. Now that the shell is a permanent part of our coast, we want your feedback!

We are asking you to complete a follow-up survey. When you have completed it, you will be entered into a drawing to win a special CRCL swag package! To show you our appreciation, one lucky winner will receive a CRCL beanie and a shucking knife to enjoy.

TAKE SURVEY



The CALS project connects the art, food and festival cultures of south Louisiana to broaden community engagement in coastal restoration and understanding of climate resilience, using a unique artistic medium: oyster shell. CALS fosters diverse engagement spaces in which coastal residents create art from the shell that is eventually used to build living shorelines along Louisiana's coast. We bring the CALS project to festivals, conferences, schools gatherings and other events. You can view the Facebook album with all our CALS shelfies here.



Want to continue supporting oyster shell recycling?

- Visit one of our [Oyster Shell Recycling Program restaurant partners](#) and eat some delicious oysters to generate more shell!
- [Volunteer](#) at one of our bagging events!
- [Donate](#) to support our program!

[Learn More](#)

Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana

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