

Standing Committee on Gulf Legacy Offshore Oil and Gas Infrastructure

Committee

Walter S. Guidroz

Chair

Walter Guidroz is a research scientist emeritus with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Before retirement in 2021, he led the USGS Energy Resources Program by providing strategic direction to energy-related research and assessments that helped underpin U.S. energy policy and ensure U.S. energy security. He has over 40 years' experience in the energy industry, having worked at Amoco, Enron, and BP in multiple geoscience and management roles before joining the USGS. He has broad experience as a geoscientist not only in the United States but also internationally, such as in Russia's West Siberian Basin and in offshore Brazil's Campos and Santos Basins. While at the USGS, and in partnership with the U.S. State Department, he provided government-to-government advising in Uzbekistan, Greenland, Romania, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. He received a B.S. in geology from Nicholls State University, an M.S. in geology from the University of Mississippi, an M.B.A. from the University of Texas at Austin, and a Ph.D. in marine geology from Louisiana State University (LSU). While at LSU, Dr. Guidroz carried out research on submarine shelf failures along the Mississippi River Delta Front offshore Louisiana and their impact on Gulf infrastructure such as platforms and pipelines. He presently teaches classes on energy resources and coastal geology as an adjunct faculty member at the University of Mississippi, George Washington University in Washington, DC, and Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, LA.

Bessie Daschbach

Member

Bessie Daschbach is the Executive Director for the Center for Asset Retirement Accountability (CARA). Prior to Bessie's work with CARA, she accumulated more than twenty years of litigation experience, more than a decade of which was spent assisting landowners in Louisiana in resolving claims for land contamination, land loss, and equipment removal. In her work with CARA and its database tracking the location, ownership, and production status of oil and gas wells and related facilities onshore, Bessie has acquired specialized insight into how to aggregate such information for use across various sectors, disciplines, and objectives. Bessie is an adjunct professor at Tulane University Law School where she teaches a course on coastal law and policy and where she received her JD in 2001. Bessie also has an LLM from Columbia University Law School and a BA from Duke University.

Cynthia Ebinger

Member

Cynthia Ebinger is a geophysicist in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Tulane University who previously held positions at the University of Rochester, University of London, and Leeds University. She has more than 40 years' experience collecting and utilizing geophysical data and models to determine the structure and stress state of Earth's subsurface for applications to plate tectonics and planetary evolution, earthquake and volcanic hazards, and mineral and energy resource assessment. Ebinger has conducted shipboard and land-based data acquisition projects in North and South America, Africa, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. She was Editor-in-Chief of Geophysical Journal International, and later Basin Research. Ebinger was a Jefferson Science Fellow in 2022-23, and she continues to serve as a science advisor to Department of State. She is a Fellow of the National Academies of Science, American Academy of Arts and Sciences, American Geophysical Union, American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Geological Society of America. She was awarded the Woollard Award from the Geological Society of America in 2021, the Addis Ababa Geophysical Observatory Career Service Award in 2007, and the Bullerwell Lecturer (British Geophysical Association) in 2004. Ebinger launched her career in geophysics at Duke University and completed a PhD in the MIT/Woods Hole Joint Program in marine geophysics. After completing a National Research Council post-doctoral fellowship at Goddard Space Flight Center, she was awarded a NATO fellowship to Leeds University. Ebinger served on the NAS Committee for Solid Earth Geophysics between 2014 and 2020.

Scott Hickman

Member

Scott Hickman is a 37-year USCG licensed captain, federally permitted charter boat and commercial reef fish harvester in Galveston Texas. Capt. Scott is a prior service United States marine and served in the Texas army national guard. Capt. Scott has spent 11 years on the flower garden banks sanctuary council and was chair during the sanctuaries boundary expansion. Capt. Scott was sanctuary volunteer of the year for the United States in 2016, also received the Gladding conservation award from the gulf and Caribbean fisheries institute in 2017 and still serves on the GCFI conservation committee. Capt. Scott is currently the chairman of the Texas sea grant advisory committee and has served on many gulf council advisory panels and currently still serves on the coral and data collection APs, he is the vice chair of the coral AP. Capt. Scott Hickman served on the National Academies offshore wind and fisheries committee until it was disbanded last year. Captain Scot is a founding and current board member of the Charter Fisherman's Association which is the largest federally permitted charter association in the Gulf. Capt. Scott has given testimony on sustainable oceans and fisheries in from of the US senate and been on many panel discussions on the house and senate side.

Susan Nash

Member

Susan Nash is Director of Innovation & Emerging Science and Technology at the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG), where she leads programming on energy transition, emerging technologies, and geoscience workforce development; she has broad upstream oil and gas experience across domestic and international basins. Her expertise includes petroleum geology, legacy oil and gas asset remediation, orphan well plugging and abandonment, environmental liability assessment, and the repurposing of conventional infrastructure for CCUS and geothermal applications. Nash is a Certified Professional Geologist (CPG), serves on subcommittees for the Offshore Technology Conference (OTC), and is an active member of AAPG; she has an extensive publication record spanning peer-reviewed journals, trade publications, and organizes technical programming on legacy infrastructure and energy transition at major conferences including NAPE and IMAGE. She holds a B.S., M.A., and Ph.D. from the University of Oklahoma.

Lori L. Summa

Member

Lori L. Summa is a geologist with 40 years of experience in geoscience, basin formation research, and petroleum-systems analysis. She retired as a senior technical consultant with ExxonMobil Upstream Research Company in 2016. In this position, she advised corporate management on strategic geoscience issues to ensure appropriate research was performed in support of business objectives. She is currently an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Geosciences at Rice University. Her background is in basin analysis and numerical modeling, but she has done significant applied research in oil and gas exploration. She has chaired committees for American Association of Petroleum Geologists and Geological Society of America (GSA) and has led numerous student short courses for the GSA, for which she received a 2016 Distinguished Service Award. She currently serves on the boards of the UC Davis Foundation and the New Hampshire chapter of The Nature Conservancy. Dr. Summa earned a B.S. in geology from the University of Rochester in 1979 and a Ph.D. in geology from the University of California, Davis in 1986. She participated in NASEM's COSA Committee from 2023-2025, as well as the 2016 Committee on Future Directions for the U.S. Geological Survey's Energy Resources Program, and NRC's 2011 Committee on Scientific Ocean Drilling: Accomplishments and Challenges.

Chao Sun

Member

Chao Sun, Ph.D., P.E., is a Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Louisiana State University. He currently holds the Mike N. Dooley Professorship at LSU. Dr. Sun's research expertise primarily lies in creating resilient offshore energy infrastructure systems, including oil & gas platforms, pipelines, offshore wind farms, and wave energy converters. His research background in CFD-based computational modeling of coastal hazards (hurricane winds, storm surge, waves and flooding) and complex fluid-structure interactions offer innovative solutions to achieve resilient offshore energy infrastructure in the Gulf Region. His background in structural dynamics and structural health monitoring helps enhance the safety and performance of offshore energy infrastructure suffering from aging issues and various hazards. Dr. Sun received the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) Early Career Research Fellow in 2022, the Louisiana State University Rainmaker Mid-Career Scholar Award in 2025, and the CEE Department Research Achievement Award in 2025. He earned his Ph.D. degree in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Rice University in Houston, Texas.

Donald C. Winter

Member

Donald Winter is currently a Professor of Engineering Practice at the Univ of Michigan (2010 to present, part time) and an independent consultant. He has an extensive background in maritime matters, serving as the 74th Secretary of Navy (2006-09) and later as an advisor to the Prime Minister of Australia and President of Ukraine. He has delivered numerous international lectures addressing the safety of offshore oil and gas operations. His academic training was in Physics, with earned degrees from the University of Rochester (BS with Highest Distinction - 1969), and the University of Michigan (MS - 1970, PhD - 1972) He was elected to the NAE in 2002 and served as the Council chairman (2020-24). He also served as the chairman for the NRC committee that investigated the Deepwater Horizon Explosion and Oil Spill for Secretary Salazar (2012).

Jeffrey B. Kast

Staff Officer