

Technical Plenary Address

Restoring the Natural Functions of the Mississippi River To Restore Coastal Louisiana: Policy, Stakeholder, Economic and Scientific Challenges

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Abstract

This paper will explore the complex policy, stakeholder, economic and scientific challenges confronted by those dedicated to restoring coastal Louisiana's natural systems as a first line of defense to storm surge. It will examine interactions between federal and state policy; the challenges of accommodating various multiple, high dollar stakeholder interests in design and implementation of large-scale restoration projects; the possibilities and challenges of employing innovative mechanisms, such as carbon offset and ecosystem service markets, to help finance restoration and how to address large-scale scientific unknowns in a situation where urgent action is required. These issues will be examined from the perspective of a national conservation organization acting in partnership with other national and local organizations to jump-start restoration of one of the world's most threatened delta ecosystems.