

## Session: State Updates on 2004/2005 Hurricane Seasons

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### Florida: (Danny Clayton)

- No matter how prepared you think you are, it can still surprise you – ongoing need for better preparation and response ability
- Not just a coastal issue, many inland communities affected
- National Coastal Management Performance Measure System has highlighted lack of post disaster redevelopment planning in FL
- Even with the state's extensive experience with hurricanes, there is *always a need to re-focus and be prepared to think in new ways.*

### Alabama: (Carl Ferraro)

- No part of gulf coastline untouched by major hurricane in past 2 years
- Amazing skyrocketing in property values following storm
- Buildings that have stood since 1800s destroyed in recent storms – signifying greater intensity or at least knowing what is possible in strength of storms
- *What do you do with gas and oil tanks to get them to withstand such a storm surge?*
- Dauphin Island conundrum: franchise agreements of utilities would allow just one homeowner who wants to rebuild to cause all utilities and roads to go back in, spurring unwise redevelopment. *This is an example of problems with large scale retreat...need changes in laws, agreements, and \$\$ to buy waterfront property*
- *Recent beach nourishment project protected many homes and structures – money spent probably saved more money in potential damage*
- Opportunity to help local communities to decide where to go, how to deal with aftermath; may be a trigger to get folks to get thinking about comprehensive and long range planning

### Mississippi: (Jan Boyd)

- Debris fields – often in marshes, several feet deep
- Difficulty reaching these sites - remote, sensitive habitat
- *Miss DMR established “e-team” of officials from state and fed agencies to visit debris sites together and jointly develop plans for removal.*
- Extensive damage to coastal forests and forested wetlands, loss of soil and vegetation in barrier islands
- *How does addition of soil change the habitat - for example, are jurisdictional wetlands now uplands (and visa versa)?*

### Louisiana: (Jim Rives)

- How did this affect us as people?
- Debris field is 10 miles away
- Staff showed National Guard and medical teams around (*most coastal mgt staff not trained in emergency response - and would you want them out there anyway?*)

### Texas: (Sam Webb)

- If you're prepared and know the plan, you'll react smoother –a plug for disaster planning...
- *Katrina experience in LA and MS helped TX prepare for Rita.*
- Army, Red Cross, etc set up in a local park (Ford Park) w/out permission or communication, *yet the presence in a central location was essential.*
- *Energy Companies have experience and they are capable. They are good to look to for assistance with state efforts, and the military efforts.*
- People in Houston did not know evacuation routes.
- *Looking to develop hazard mitigation plans for local communities w/ CZM funds. 309 will look at coastal vulnerability.*
- E. Texas hit hard by Rita, but not the big tourist areas like Galveston. Corps task force cleared roads for safety. *In deciding which roads were impassible and needed clearing, they went to local post offices to find out where mail could not be delivered.*

### Georgia (Brad Gane and Jill Andrews):

- State has not seen hurricane in many years, not since 1964 (Dora). Just lucky. *Level of awareness is very low. People can't relate until they go through it themselves.*
- FEMA standards for defining flood zone, etc. is often inadequate.
- GA coast is extremely low (7.5 foot tide range); *storm surge would do tremendous damage. Katrina level storm surge would be devastating.*
- Much of St. Simons Island waterfront development is “tear down and rebuild,” much larger structures than what was there before. Many of the homes have closed in the first floor below the FEMA-required elevation, to make the first level of the structure habitable..
- Lots of permit actions.
- What is GA doing now to prepare for a major storm? Guess is that what state is doing is not nearly enough....
- Not much perspective on human impacts of coastal storms; no recent experience.
- Overview of tech assistance initiatives – development scenarios; passage of local ordinances (wetland protection, groundwater protection, etc.)

- Lack of community planning on GA coast; *some counties/towns are “savvy” but many are not.*
- Counties are completely unprepared for the rapid growth rates currently occurring.
- *Not much local hazard mitigation planning – should be enhanced.* Worked with Brantley Co. to show repetitive flood loss areas, development areas, vulnerable areas and facilities.
- Marsh die off areas: there was study on water quality and habitat impacts; *focus is also shifting to protective features of salt marshes.*

### South Carolina (Barbara Neale):

- New Deputy Director is here, just arrived in August.
- Major rework of Hurricane Plan after Hugo, not much since then; now *another look after 9/11, tsunami, and gulf hurricanes.*

### New Initiatives in South Carolina:

- marine debris program (not storm related); interagency state and fed group established list of criteria for removal, began in Charleston Harbor area; some cleared voluntarily
- compliance initiative: looking back at how permit conditions were addressed; level of permit compliance. Needed to hire temp staff to look at permit backlog and bring them to staff’s attention.
- access to coastal islands (not barrier islands): pgm had to develop new guidelines to replace state regs that had been struck down. Consensus driven process identified new ideas/recommendations. Recs approved by DHEC board and will be sent to state gen’l assembly. CSC provided GIS support to inventory location of islands.
- Charleston port redevelopment: big project with lots of wetland impacts. Part of larger revitalization of old navy yard area, where OCRM and CSC have their offices.
- Dock construction brochure: answers most common questions that homeowners/developers have on dock building.
- Pet waste poster

### North Carolina (Ted Tyndall):

- Overview of Hurricane Ophelia damage – slow moving hurricane that caused a lot of erosion. 48 hrs sitting off Cape Hatteras, affecting areas that hadn’t been hit for several years.
- Damage mostly limited to waterfront buildings, docks, piers, etc.

### Preparedness and Response:

- Expedited major permit based on imminent danger to health/safety
- Emergency permitting allows for replacement of storm damage structures. (45-70 permits issued after Ophelia)
- Looked at Disaster Response Plan and Procedures Manual – revision needed? Manual provides for admin procedures, staff roles, permitting issues, post-storm procedures

### **Puerto Rico (Francisco “Tito” Quintana):**

- Overview of PR CZMP
- Summary of hazards goals and objectives “break the cycle of destruction and reconstruction.”