

LIVING SHORELINES FROM BARRIERS TO OPPORTUNITIES



NOVEMBER 3, 2014

RESTORE AMERICA'S ESTUARIES



Committee Members

- Todd Miller (Committee Chair) - N.C. Coastal Federation
- Tim Dillingham - American Littoral Society
- Niki Pace - Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant
- Tom Ries - Scheda Ecological Associates
- Bill Cary - Brooks Pierce Law Firm



Living Shoreline Definition

A living shoreline is any erosion control management system that does not introduce a fixed interruption of a natural water/land continuum and that is designed to protect or restore natural shoreline ecosystem services; it includes natural elements and may incorporate manmade elements.



Background

- Importance of Shoreline Ecosystems and Estuaries
- Shoreline Type and Location
- Types of Shoreline Management Systems
- Impact of Shoreline Management System on Estuarine System



Background

- Potential Impact of Sea Level Rise
- Economics of Shoreline Management Systems
- Regulatory Overview
- Trends in Shoreline Management



Institutional Obstacles

- Inertia
- Lack of broader planning context
- Shoreline variability
- Lack of an advocate

Inertia

- Familiarity with “traditional” methods
- Lack of knowledge
 - Efficacy
 - Impacts
- Federal regulatory system



Lack of a broader planning context

- Site specific decisions
 - Understate negative cumulative impacts of hardening
 - Overlook system values of living shorelines
 - Impose entire cost on only one beneficiary--site owner



Shoreline variability

- Individualized analysis is necessary for a successful living shoreline
- No routine solutions



Lack of an advocate

- Many beneficiaries of living shorelines
- Do not recognize their common interest
- Have not coalesced into an effective force



Strategies

- Education and Outreach
- Regulatory Reform
- Improving Institutional Capacity
- Government Agencies as Role Models



Education and Outreach

Targets

- Owners
- Designers
- Contractors and suppliers
- Regulatory
- Political bodies
- Public



Education and Outreach

Subjects

- Efficacy
- Impacts
- Costs
- Values
- Sea level rise
- Directory of professionals
- Demonstration sites



Education and Outreach

Methods

- Web presence - data
- Web-based interactive training
- Demonstration projects
- Targeted professional outreach
- Public information campaign and branding



Education and Outreach

Recommendations

- Establish centralized reliable database
- Develop manual of best practices and decision guides
- Establish Living Shoreline Academy



Regulatory Reform

- Permitting of hardened structures does not adequately address current science
- Living shorelines are usually the least damaging alternative and are generally practicable in most estuarine settings
- Current state/federal system is confusing and inefficient



Regulatory Reform

Recommendations

- Develop coordinated permitting system that
 - considers current science
 - considers system beyond the site
 - ranks hardened structures as last resort
 - considers other mandates
 - uses estuary based planning



Regulatory Reform

Recommendations

- Reevaluate NWP 13
- States should consider limiting availability of NWP 13
- Provide incentives and disincentives



Improving Institutional Capacity

Recommendations - Private sector

- Education: techniques; efficacy; impacts; economics
- Certifications – “Living Shoreline Professionals”
- Volunteers -- cost and public education benefits



Improving Institutional Capacity

Recommendations - Public sector

- Education: techniques; efficacy; impacts; economics
- Specialization within permitting staff
- Encourage private sector expertise and partnerships



Improving Institutional Capacity

Recommendation - funding

- Public and private funding of living shoreline initiatives should give high priority to increasing institutional capacity



Government Agencies as Role Models

Recommendations

- Use public lands for living shoreline demonstrations
- Adopt policies and guidance that promote and support living shorelines
- Political units at all levels plus collaborations
 - GSAA, GOMA, SERPPAS , and others
- NGOs assist in developing policies, practices, and guidance



Next Steps

- RAE: Establish Living Shoreline Academy and database
- RAE and other NGOs:
 - Support and encourage innovative state regulatory programs
 - Provide leadership in moving other states away from business-as-usual
 - Provide leadership in focusing funding, education, and reform efforts on the Strategies
 - Provide leadership in identifying incentive systems and cost-shifting mechanisms

Next Steps

- All funding sources: Focus on living shoreline projects and initiatives that advance the Strategies
- Corps:
 - Re-exam permitting process and use of NWP 13
 - Work with constituencies to develop coordinated system



Next Steps

- State agencies:
 - Continue living shoreline initiatives
 - Act as role model with demonstration projects, education, and policies promoting living shorelines
 - Reassess impacts of business-as-usual
 - Cooperate with other jurisdictions in developing system-wide planning/permitting methods



Next Steps

- Other agencies (DoD; GSAA; GOMA; SERPPAS; etc.):
 - Continue living shoreline initiatives
 - Act as role model with demonstration projects, education, and policies promoting living shorelines
- Cooperate with other jurisdictions in developing system-wide planning/permitting methods

Draft Report available at www.estuaries.org

Additional information at Living Shorelines Initiative tab -
www.estuaries.org/living-shorelines

Deadline for written comments on draft: **December 5, 2014**

Please submit written comments to:

livingshorelines@estuaries.org

Final Report Release: January 5, 2015



Discussion

