

Best Practices for Communicating Coastal Flood Risk

ELI Webinar

April 23, 2025

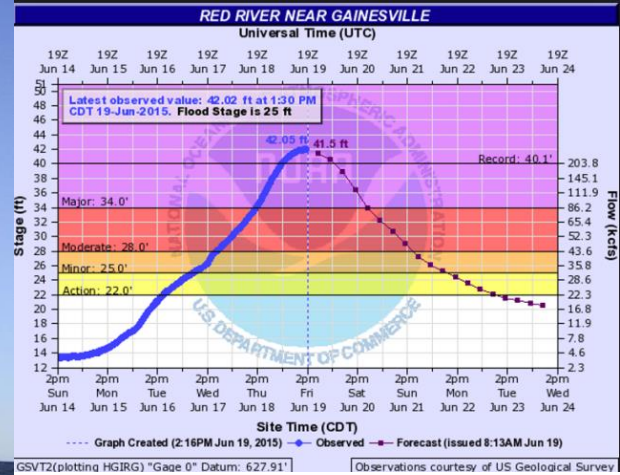


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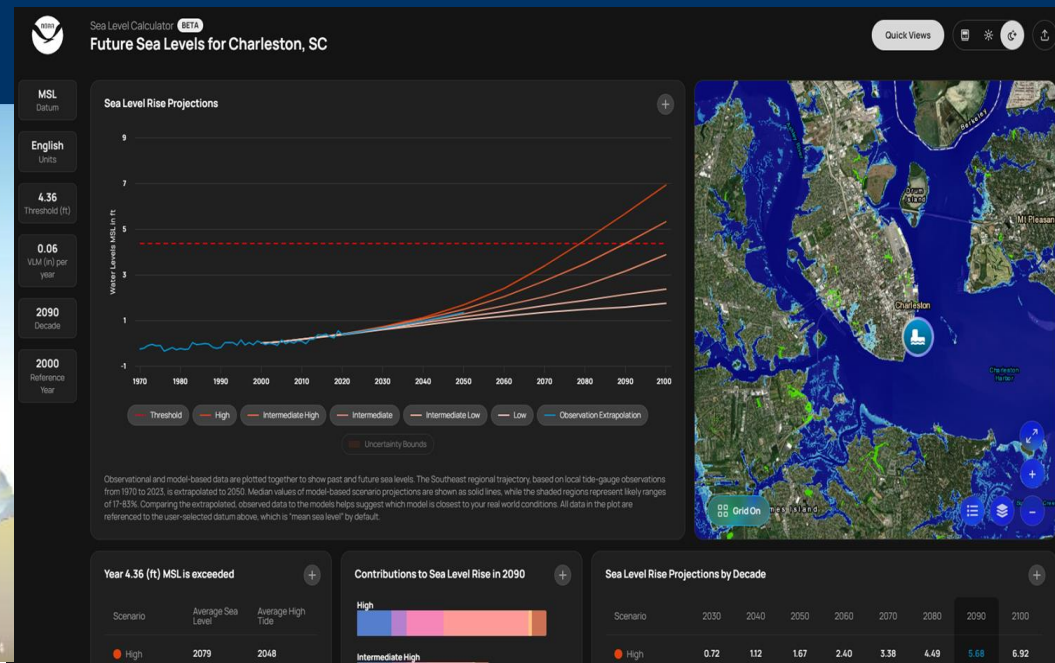
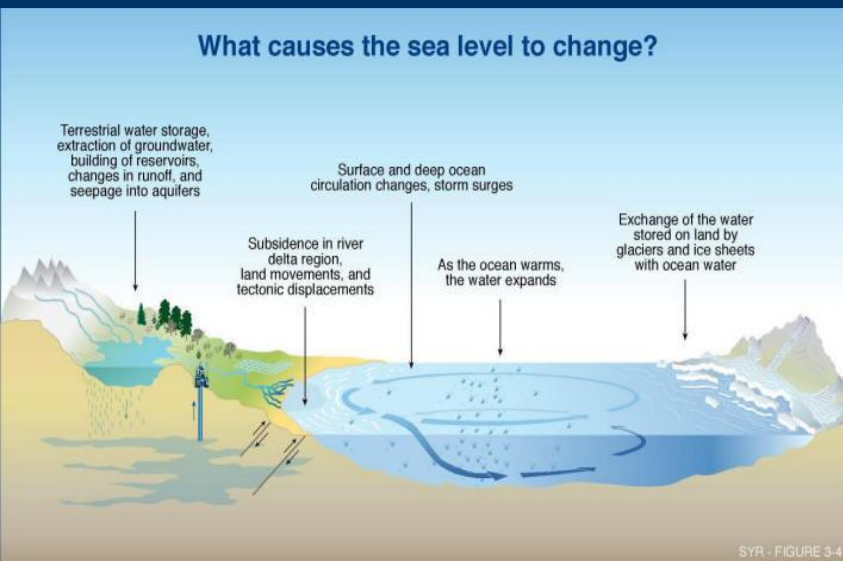


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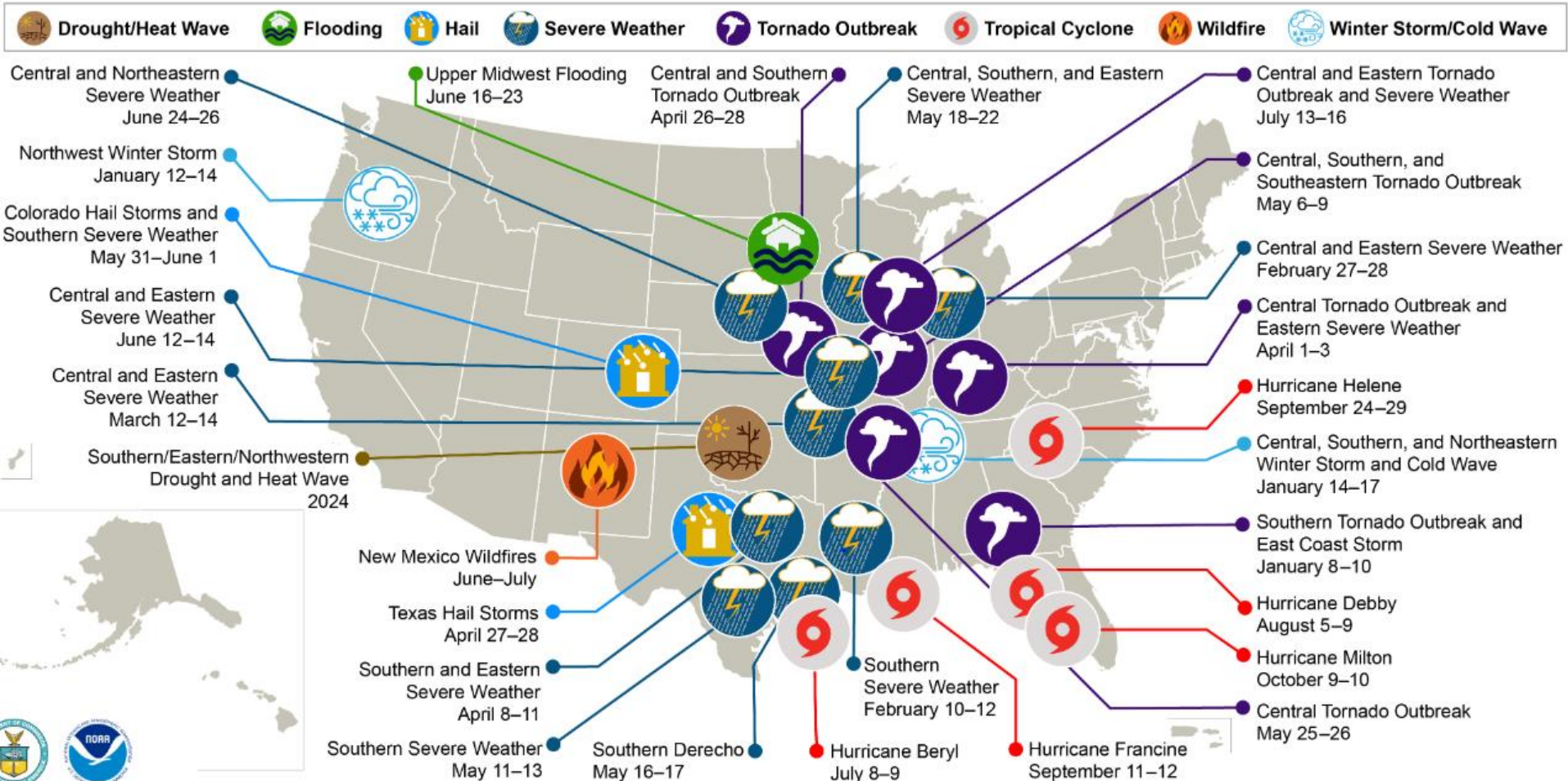
... and future risk

Immediate risk...



Billion Dollar Disasters On The Rise

U.S. 2024 Billion-Dollar Weather and Climate Disasters



This map denotes the approximate location for each of the 27 separate billion-dollar weather and climate disasters that impacted the United States in 2024.



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Multiple Sources of Coastal Flood Risk

Physical Factors Directly Contributing to Coastal Flood Exposure





Typical risk communication efforts

Seven Best Practices for Risk Communication

1. Have an informed plan
2. Get to know your audience
3. Establish partnerships
4. Explain the risk
5. Explore options to reduce risk
6. Tailor your messaging
7. Use multiple ways to communicate

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Define your audience and outcome: Get specific



Example

Broad Audience: Residents

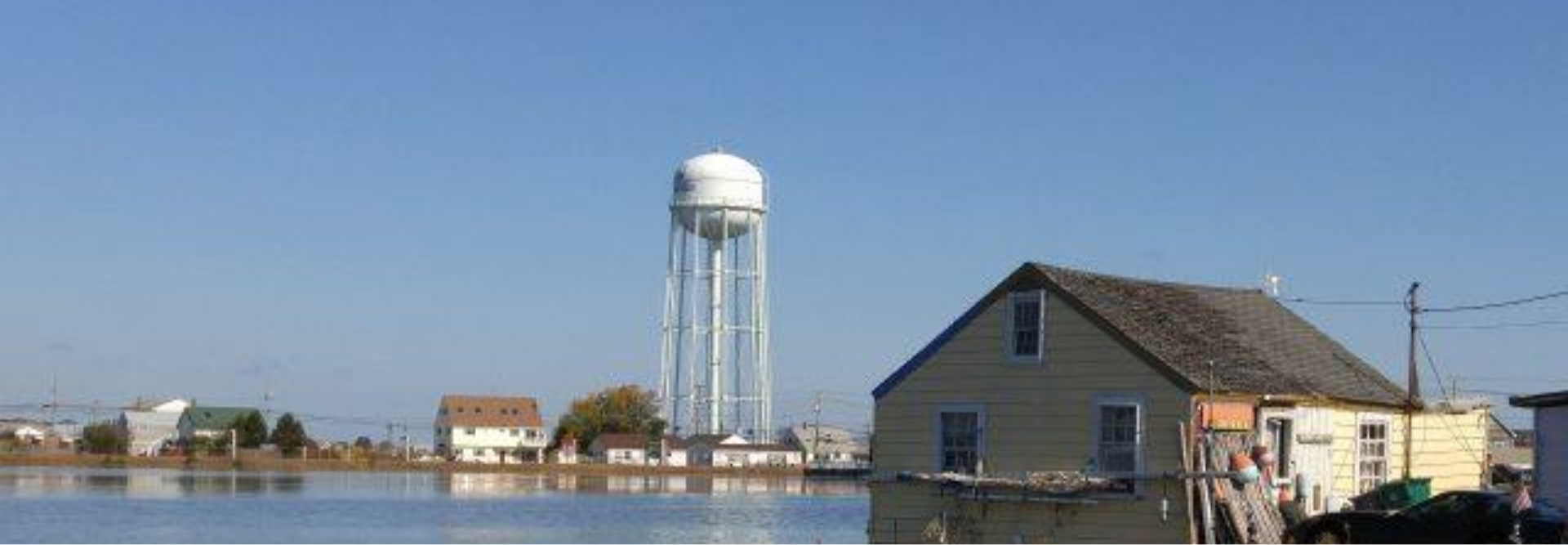
Audience Segment: Residents outside the FEMA flood zone that still face flood risk

Broad Outcome: Prepare for flooding from an extreme rain event

Actionable Outcome: understand the potential impacts from extreme rain events, *and*
purchase flood insurance **and/or**
have sandbags on hand to block doorways.

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communicate



Past experience with the hazard

A photograph of a man with a beard and mustache, smiling broadly, carrying a young girl with curly hair on his shoulders. The girl is holding a yellow snack bag. They are at an outdoor event with tents and other people in the background. A semi-transparent blue banner is overlaid across the middle of the image.

What is important to them

Get to know your audience

Barriers to action



Get to know your audience



**Go to your audience.
Don't expect them to come to you.**

**Foster trust through relationship
building**

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Connect with trusted community leaders

Establish partnerships

**Identify groups
already working
with your
audience.**

**Work together
to create and
share consistent
information**

Establish partnerships



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A photograph of three women laughing together outdoors. The woman in the foreground on the right is seen from the side, wearing a dark and light patterned sweater. Behind her, two other women are laughing; one is wearing a black hat and a dark top, and the other is wearing glasses and a dark top. The background is bright and out of focus, suggesting an outdoor setting with trees and a building. A semi-transparent dark blue horizontal band is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text.

Stories are powerful



Photos

Explain the risk



Mapping Tools

Explain the risk

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Create a way to discuss solutions

Explore options to reduce risk





**Share examples of what is helping
to reduce risk**

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7. Use multiple ways to communicate

There is no magic message or slogan that will get your audience to take action!



**Select an
appropriate
frame**

Use Plain Language

Communication that your audience or readers can understand the **first time** they hear or read it.

Identify Actions People Can Take and the Benefits (or Losses Avoided)



Test your message or product

Test with your actual audience

Use focus groups, surveys, conversations

Ask open ended questions

Incorporate what you learned

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Use a method that will reach your audience



Use multiple ways to communicate

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Digital Coast

Risk Communication Topics Page



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Risk Communication

Meaningful Engagement for More Effective Hazards Planning

When it comes to storm preparation and other planning efforts, **community participation is important**. Use these products and services to improve your ability to engage the communities you serve.

Have questions? We are available to discuss your risk communication challenges.

Reach out to our
team!

Jump to Section

- [Begin Here](#)
- [Best Practices](#)
- [Engage Your Audience](#)
- [Full Catalog of Resources](#)

<https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/topics/risk-communication.html>



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Digital Coast Coastal Inundation Topics Page

Re: [EXTERNAL] Re: NPS-NOAA V x | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration x | My Drive - Google Drive x | Coastal Inundation x

coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/topics/coastal-inundation.html


NOAA Office for Coastal Management
DIGITALCOAST

ABOUT DATA TOOLS TRAINING TOPICS STORIES

Coastal Inundation

Our nation's coasts are increasingly at risk from rising seas, changing water levels in the Great Lakes, and more frequent and intense storms. These changes are forcing communities to plan for and adapt to coastal flooding using time scales associated with both weather (hourly, daily, and weekly) and climate (seasonally, annually, by decade, and beyond).

Communities can benefit from the resources provided below as they work to increase community resilience.



Get Started

Access the most current information about climate change, its impacts, and future flooding.

Access Key Data

Use these data to develop a comprehensive understanding of your community's water levels.

Visualize the Information

"Seeing" potential flooding impacts is an important step in understanding risks and vulnerabilities and where communities can improve their resilience.

Communicate the Issue

Increase your skills when it comes to communicating with your stakeholders.

Take Action

Find resources to help fund research and other resilience implementation plans.

<https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/topics/coastal-inundation.html>



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