



Presenter

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North Coast Resilience - Nature Based Flood Projects in Horry and Georgetown Counties

The SC Chapter of the Nature Conservancy and partners convened the North Coast communities (Horry and Georgetown Counties) and stakeholders, leading to a multi-year plan to address local flooding. The next phase will implement elements of this plan including 1) an assessment of the spatial extent of flooding, 2) explicit identification of features that need to be protected or restored to reduce, or not worsen, future flooding, 3) inclusion of resilience results into county and city comprehensive plans, and 4) identification of restoration projects that communities can implement to reduce flooding.

This effort is being led by a Steering Committee comprised of staff from Clemson University, Horry County, North Inlet-Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control, US Fish & Wildlife Service and the Waccamaw Council of Governments. We are currently completing a GIS analysis to identify routinely flooded areas and the landscape areas that absorb flood waters. Stakeholders with on-the-ground knowledge of extreme weather events will provide input into the flood models. Once the flooded areas are identified, we will work with focus groups of community members and local staff to identify and rank implementation projects using a scoring matrix to identify the highest needs for restoration. We will produce detailed descriptions on cost and other resources needed for each project to provide the communities with shovel-ready project plans that can be implemented when funding becomes available.

Incorporating the resilience results into county and municipal plans is a vital outcome for future adaptation and planning. Through education and outreach with county and municipal planning directors, we will seek opportunities for both the individual restoration projects and the resiliency analysis to be adopted into their Comprehensive Plans, which are currently being updated.

As of March 2018, projects have been identified for Horry County, and Clemson is initializing the cost analysis. The Georgetown County flood analysis will be wrapped up soon with a Focus Group meeting planned for the summer. Join TNC's Marine Program Manager, Joy Brown, to hear more about how the project started at a regional scale and the process to define parcel level nature-based projects to reduce flooding impacts in the North Coast.