

Building Resilience Workshop V  
*Communities on the Edge*  
March 13-14, 2014  
Lindy C. Boggs Conference Center  
University of New Orleans  
New Orleans, Louisiana



The challenge of living with water is one shared by coastal communities around the world. In post-Katrina New Orleans and the Gulf Coast region, people live with a daily awareness of the threat *and* opportunities of water. The Building Resilience Workshop convenes diverse stakeholders to engage in addressing natural and man-made hazards affecting coastal communities. Since 2010, the mission of the annual Building Resilience Workshop has been to identify and promote the implementation of innovative and sustainable strategies that strengthen resilience in south Louisiana and globally.

The [Building Resilience Workshop IV](#), held in March of 2013, fostered peer learning with a focus on implementable solutions by placing high-stake participants with strong, sometimes differing, opinions, together on panels. In-depth discussions ensued that focused on the challenges of implementing forward-thinking strategies in the face of uncertainty, particularly as it applied to Louisiana's Coastal Master Plan and economic concerns. The Workshop focused on Louisiana's deep-rooted tradition, and future, of living with water. Participants identified the core elements of coastal community resilience and examined critical issues facing Terrebonne Parish, where 90% of the land is classified as "environmentally sensitive" because of the significant loss it endures due to erosion and subsidence.

The Building Resilience Workshop V will be held on March 13-14, 2014. The BRW V theme, "Communities on the Edge," will concentrate on the climate-related issues many coastal residents and communities face and time-sensitive decisions to be made—to try to *adapt and stay* in their existing community, or *relocate* and *rebuild*. Louisiana's coastal communities have been affected by repeated exposure to natural and manmade hazards, and continue to deal with an ever-growing exposure to the effects of coastal erosion and sea level rise, combined with an increased frequency of storms. These communities include vulnerable populations with limited resources to implement sizable adaptation measures and/or relocate an entire community to a lower risk area.

The Building Resilience Workshops are a unique forum to witness stakeholder debates and challenging discussions. Annually, the Building Resilience Workshop convenes a diverse group of knowledgeable experts to discuss coastal issues and engage in the topic of vulnerability reduction, specifically but not limited to: climate change, sea level rise, and coastal erosion, and also responds to the question of how to increase the resilience of the region through a variety of innovative and strategic measures and ideas. BRW has been highly successful in bringing together participants who are both experienced and devoted, to engage in animated discussion of pressing issues from a variety of angles. Our participants include, but are not limited to: technical experts, community grassroots activists, scientists, international flood management experts, regional flood management experts, state and local government officials, and academics and professionals.