

**USACE/NOAA Collaboration Workshop on Natural and Nature-Based Features
Charleston, SC; March 1-3, 2016**

Bottom Line Upfront: USACE and NOAA conducted a national meeting on Natural and Nature-Based Features (NNBF) to strengthen collaboration, understanding and application of NNBF; facilitate appropriate implementation of these solutions for increased resilience; and seek opportunities to leverage resources. Participants defined clear, prioritized activities to form the basis for future collaboration.

BACKGROUND: The USACE/NOAA Workshop on Natural and Nature-Based Features (NNBF) was attended by 37 participants representing USACE (HQ, Engineer Research and Development Center, Institute for Water Resources, North Atlantic Division, Philadelphia District, South Atlantic Division, Galveston District) and NOAA (National Ocean Service, National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, Office for Coastal Management, Center for Operational Oceanographic Products and Services, National Geodetic Survey, and National Marine Fisheries Service). Participants included leadership at numerous levels, a variety of roles in USACE and NOAA, and diverse disciplines and programmatic backgrounds. Over a period of three days, the participants gained a greater understanding for how missions are executed and ongoing and future anticipated NNBF-related work within the respective agencies. The workshop included plenary and breakout group (comprised of a mixture of USACE and NOAA participants) discussions. These discussions resulted in identifying areas where the two organizations could collaborate to address information gaps on a range of NNBF topics, projects and activities.

OUTCOMES: The high quality of engagement among USACE and NOAA participants was evidenced by focused, energetic, and productive dialogue that resulted in the identification of high priority needs and opportunities. Priority gaps in science, engineering and management practice were identified to reduce uncertainties and increase confidence in the design, construction, performance, and ecosystem services produced by NNBF. Current projects and activities within USACE and NOAA were identified as opportunities for coordinated action to address the gaps. Workshop participants developed an initial prioritization of specific opportunities for collaboration within a portfolio that included a mix of near to long-term efforts across a range of geographic areas and habitat types. Prioritized NNBF collaboration opportunities included:

1. Development of a Strategic Collaboration Framework that will support and strengthen the relationships and coordination between USACE and NOAA (including actions supporting technical exchange, regional coordination, and articulation of next steps).
2. Techniques and Approaches (e.g., application of thin-layer placement of sediment to support NNBF; dune construction and management; incorporating environmental features into existing infrastructure; use of native vegetation on dredge material placement areas);
3. Planning and Feasibility Studies at different levels (e.g., Texas Coastal, Sandy Focus Areas, South Atlantic Division's Regional Systems Management Strategy);
4. Regional Test Beds for increased collaboration (e.g., Delaware and Barnegat Bays).

NEXT STEPS: The immediate next steps that will be taken following the workshop include:

1. Prepare a joint, 1-page executive summary of the workshop (present document);
2. Develop a draft strategic collaboration framework for consideration by March 18, 2016;
3. Distribute a draft workshop proceedings report to participants for feedback by April 30, 2016, to be followed by report finalization and joint publication;
4. Hold a senior leadership team follow-up teleconference by March 25, 2016, to track progress;
5. NOAA will prepare a response to LTG Bostick's workshop letter through Vice Admiral Brown.