

Federal Actions to Build a Climate Resilient Nation

Josh Sawislak, AICP
Associate Director for Climate Preparedness
White House Council on Environmental Quality

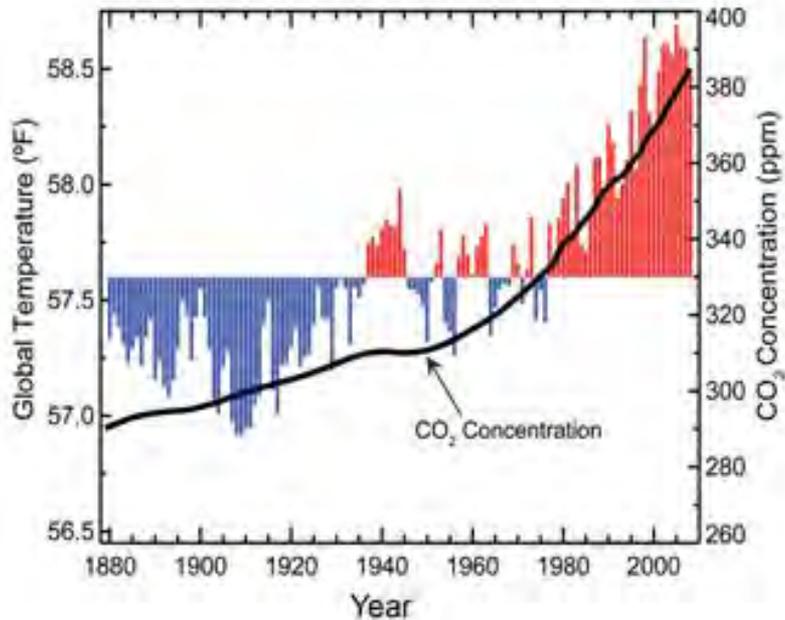
28 January 2015



Overview



- What does it mean to adapt to climate change?
- What do decision-makers need?
- How is the Federal Government responding?



The climate is changing

- In the United States, greenhouse gas emissions caused by human activities increased by 14 percent from 1990 to 2008
- Average temperatures have risen across the lower 48 states since 1901 to 2010, with an increased rate of warming over the past 30 years
- Seven of the top 10 warmest years on record for the lower 48 states have occurred since 1990, and the last 10 five-year periods have been the warmest five-year periods on record
- 2014 was the warmest year ever recorded



The Need to Adapt



- More variable weather patterns
- Extreme heat
- Intense storms
- Flooding
- Drought
- Social and economic concerns

What does it mean to adapt to climate change?

- Responsible risk management
- Actions that reduce vulnerability & enhance preparedness for climate & extreme weather-related impacts
- Common-sense planning to protect our health, safety & prosperity



Coastal erosion from sea-level rise.
Cedar Island, VA

What is the Federal role in adapting to climate change?

- Provide climate science & services to help communities make better decisions that reduce risks to people & property
- Manage climate risks to Federal services, operations & assets



Potential inundation of Charleston, SC with 0.5 meter of sea level rise.

How is the Federal Government adapting to climate change?

- Executive Order 13653 – Preparing the United States for the Impacts of Climate Change
- Interagency Climate Change Council
- Active engagement of over 20 Federal organizations
- Working with state, local, and tribal officials to provide data, tools, expertise, and cut red tape
- Implementing recommendations to minimize climate risks
- Coordination, exchange of best-practices
- Reporting on progress
- Agency Adaptation Plans



Principles to Guide Adaptation

- Integrate into ongoing planning
- Prioritize
- Best-Available Science
- Strong Partnerships
- Risk-Management
- Ecosystem Services
- Multiple Benefits
- Evaluate Performance



Disaster Preparedness & Infrastructure

- Improve disaster preparedness & recovery
- Protect critical infrastructure
- Reduce risks to highways, railways and ports of flooding & damage from more intense storms



Healthy & Safe Communities



- Monitor & reduce climate risks to public health, including severe heat & diseases
- Reduce flooding & storm-surge risks to property & people
- Lower risks of sewage overflow from severe storms



Overflowing sewer in Roswell, GA

Coastal Communities & Ecosystems

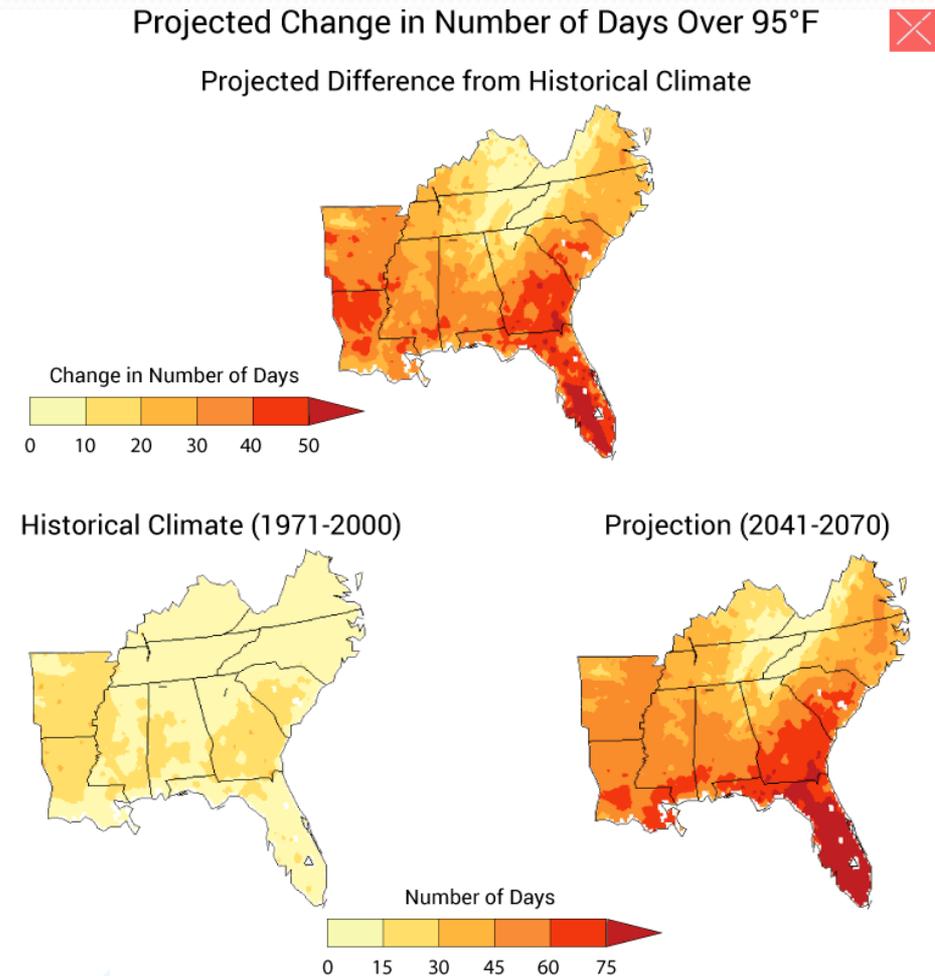
- Prepare for the threats of
 - rising sea levels
 - increased storm surge
 - groundwater salinization
 - coral bleaching
 - ocean acidification



Storm surge on a Louisiana highway

National Climate Assessment

- Third NCA released in 2014
- Data and projections by region
- Much of the data has been downscaled to help local communities



Climate Data and Toolkit

<http://toolkit.climate.gov>

The screenshot shows the homepage of the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit. At the top left is the logo, which includes a map of the United States and two interlocking gears. To the right of the logo is the text "U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit". Further right is a navigation menu with links for "Get Started", "Taking Action", "Tools", "Topics", and "Expertise". Below this menu are links for "About", "Contact", "Funding Opportunities", and "FAQ", followed by a search bar with a magnifying glass icon. A "Home" button is located in the top left of the main content area. The main content area has a dark blue background with a world map. On the left, the text reads "Meet the Challenges of a Changing Climate" and "The Climate Resilience Toolkit provides resources and a framework for understanding and addressing the climate issues that impact people and their communities." On the right, there is a vertical list of five steps: "1 Identify the Problem", "2 Determine Vulnerabilities", "3 Investigate Options", "4 Evaluate Risks & Costs", and "5 Take Action". At the bottom center, there is a navigation bar with a left arrow, a series of six dots (the first is filled), and a right arrow.

U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit

Get Started Taking Action Tools Topics Expertise

About | Contact | Funding Opportunities | FAQ Search

Home

Meet the Challenges of a Changing Climate

The Climate Resilience Toolkit provides resources and a framework for understanding and addressing the climate issues that impact people and their communities.

- 1 Identify the Problem
- 2 Determine Vulnerabilities
- 3 Investigate Options
- 4 Evaluate Risks & Costs
- 5 Take Action

Engaging the Private Sector

- Build America Investment Initiative
- Water Infrastructure and Resiliency Finance Center
- White House Insurance and Re-Insurance Discussions

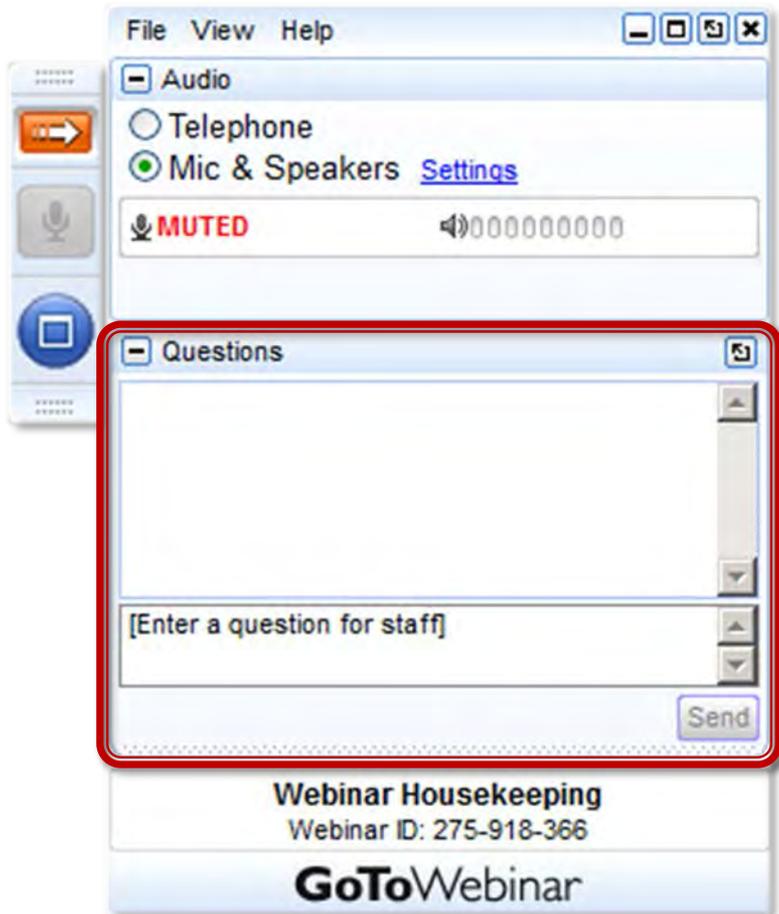
The Time to Act is Now

“And no challenge -- no challenge -- poses a greater threat to future generations than climate change. 2014 was the planet's warmest year on record. Now, one year doesn't make a trend, but this does -- 14 of the 15 warmest years on record have all fallen in the first 15 years of this century.”

President Obama

2015 State of the Union

Questions

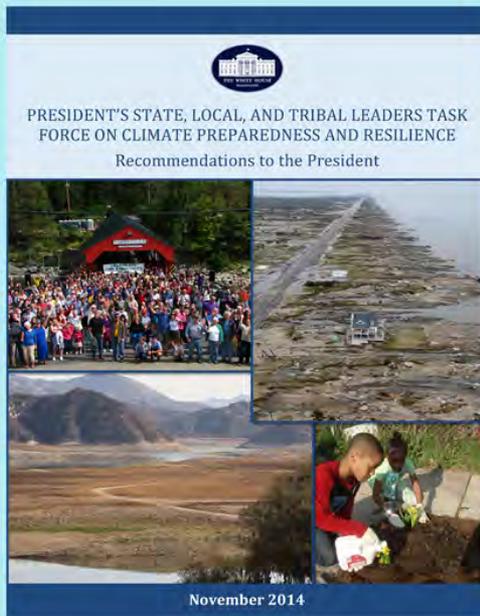


Your Participation

- Please continue to submit your text questions and comments using the Questions Panel.

Preparing Florida for the Future:

Opportunities for Resilience in Local Communities



Sponsored by the Southeast Florida Regional Climate Change Compact



Thank you!

For more information:

Jason Liechty

Environmental Projects Coordinator

Environmental Planning and Community Resilience Division

Broward County

954-519-0310

jliechty@broward.org

Today's webinar will be posted to the Compact's website soon:

www.southeastfloridaclimatecompact.org

