

TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy
April 20, 2016

We're Hiring!

The Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy is pleased to announce that we are hiring a new Senior Research Fellow. It is a position that lasts up to two years and is open to people who have received a JD or LLM within the past two years (or next month). Interest in water law and policy is a must, tolerance of [dad jokes](#) a plus. Applicants can apply at <http://tulane.edu/jobs/>.

I Don't Care if it was Already Broken! Just Put it Back How you Found it!

If you've been through Uptown New Orleans in the last few years (perhaps visiting us at [Chateau d'Eau](#)), you've likely been witness to some pretty major drainage work being done by the Corps of Engineers along several major streets. This is for the [Southeast Louisiana Urban Flood Control Project](#) ("SELA"), a project approved by Congress in the '90s, but not funded until after Katrina flooding. Yet, as [Bob Marshall reports](#) for The LENS, the project approved 20 years ago doesn't quite match up with the city's current vision for how it wants to handle stormwater.

Two years ago, the city's Sewerage and Water Board [approved](#) the [Urban Water Plan](#) to embrace green infrastructure and manage stormwater in a way that didn't exacerbate subsidence and deepen the city's famous bowl-like topography. So, the Corps, following its 20-year-old marching orders, is recreating and even expanding a system that has been deemed obsolete and damaging. We're left with dissatisfied citizens trying to embrace the Urban Water Plan and a more integrated approach to water management, a city hall looking confused or hypocritical about its approach to water, and the Corps seeming out of touch or like the bad guy.

Well, this is just another example of the problems with the default approach of only addressing infrastructure issues after they've failed (granted, sometimes 20 years after) and then in the name of saving time we just recreate that which failed in the first place.

Milton Friedman [wrote](#), "Only a crisis—actual or perceived—produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around." The thirty-plus years since Friedman wrote that have confirmed that he was right. It stinks, but as long as this is how we choose to (dis)function, let's all make sure that as many good ideas as possible are lying around.

The **Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy** is a program of the Tulane University Law School.

The Institute is dedicated to fostering a greater appreciation and understanding of the vital role that water plays in our society and of the importance of the legal and policy framework that shapes the uses and stewardship of water.

Coming up:

[River Rally](#)

Mobile, AL

May 20-23, 2016

[State of the Coast 2016](#)

New Orleans, LA

June 1-3, 2016

[RAE/The Coastal Society Summit on Coastal and Estuarine Restoration](#)

New Orleans, LA

December 10-15, 2016

Water jobs:

[Staff Attorney](#)

Chesapeake Legal Alliance

[Clean Water Advocate](#)

Environment America

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Know Any Teachers in New Orleans? Tell Them About THIS!

Speaking of getting some good ideas lying around, dig [Ripple Effect NOLA!](#) How do you penetrate the population to make them understand a crisis to get them to change? The children! It worked with seat belts. It worked with recycling. It [worked](#) with the [Wu Tang Clan!](#) So, let's get this water crisis into the brains of our citizenry through the children! Ripple Effect NOLA is currently [looking for elementary school teachers](#) to do research and curriculum development. Because [life as a shorty is rough](#) enough as it is without climate change and sea level rise.

Sand, Sediment, Debris, and Trees. The Simon & Garfunkel Album That Should Have Been

Southern Louisiana is a big pile of dirt – dirt from the Rockies to the Appalachians delivered via the Mississippi River system (thanks, by the way). So maybe we shouldn't be surprised that a lot of issues around here have to do with that dirt, or sand, or sediment or whatever you want to call it, being distributed in unhelpful ways. Sediment in the Mississippi River is [costing shippers millions](#) (again). Meanwhile, we're spending millions [pumping sediment](#) out of the river to [restore barrier islands](#). Then, flooding on the Bogue Falaya River left 80 truckloads of sand in a city park in Covington, north of Lake Pontchartrain. On the south shore of Pontchartrain, however, we're working on restoring Pontchartrain Beach with [17,000 tons on sand](#). See how annoying this sand and sediment insists on being? Why won't it just go where we want it to? We're reduced to [dropping Christmas trees out of helicopters](#) into the water to try and entice that sediment to stay put. If only we had some [really good ideas](#) lying around.

If You Don't Want to Work with Us, and You're in Vietnam, Laos, or Cambodia...

You can take a swing at working on the Mekong River Commission. They're [hiring a bunch of positions](#), but hurry, the deadline is in a week.