

TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law & Policy
April 1, 2022

Keeping You [In the Loop](#) on Lake Charles

Lake Charles and Mother Nature have had a bit of a rocky relationship in recent years. In particular, the region is still reeling from the back-to-back 2020 hurricanes Laura and Delta. Thankfully, [federal aid for those storms is finally on its way](#). And in other good news, it seems that it'll take more than a few hurricanes to [sour](#) residents' feelings towards the incredible natural environment of southwestern Louisiana. Capitalizing on the region's plentiful water resources, community leaders have proposed a plan to create a [connected loop of bayous and canals](#) for kayakers, bikers, and [walkers](#). Picture a 23-mile long [lazy river](#), but less lazy and less chlorinated.

Recent estimates show that Calcasieu and Cameron parishes suffered some of the [steepest population declines](#) across the nation last year, but perhaps the Bayou Greenbelt plan can help turn those numbers around. Although the project is still in early stages, its creators are confident it will revitalize the area, attracting residents to stay, evacuees to return, and tourists to visit.

New Experi-mint Provides Fresh Look into Sand Dunes' Breath

Water woes are worsening in the West. In California, Governor Newsom has called for [increased conservation measures](#). Leaders from [20 tribes in the Colorado River Basin](#) met with the DOI Secretary this week seeking full participation in water allocation decisions. And it's every neighbor for themselves as [communities compete over rights to the scarce resources out in Arizona](#). But now a new study suggests there might be another surprising culprit bogarting water out west: deserts.

Researchers recently discovered that [sand dunes "breathe" atmospheric water vapor](#) after highly sensitive technology detected moisture percolating between individual grains of sand. The scientists were particularly fascinated by the dunes slow rate of "exhaling" — despite the desert air being unusually arid, even for that region, the dunes were not releasing water vapor at an increased rate to maintain humidity levels. The discovery answers a lot of questions, such as how organisms can survive in the driest deserts, where water might be hiding on Mars, and even the direction a lot of our own planet could be headed as the climate continues to change. In the meantime, maybe [the Southwest's sand dunes](#) have added values beyond [recreating scenes out of Mad Max](#).

May the Source Waters Be With You

Earlier this year, Nebraska's Governor Ricketts turned a few heads when he asserted rights under a century-old compact to [divert water from the South Platte River](#) out of Colorado. The announcement came

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 legal stewardship of water.

Coming Up:

[ABA SEER 51st Spring Conference](#), April 6 – 8

[California Water Law Symposium](#), April 9

[University of Denver Water Law Review Symposium](#), April 14-15

[Coastal Law in Louisiana \(CLE\)](#), April 21- 22

Water jobs:

[Water Justice Specialist](#), Bayou City Waterkeeper, Houston, TX

[Sustainability/ESG Director](#), PwC; multiple locations

[Research Associate](#), University of New Orleans; New Orleans, LA

[Research Associate 1](#), University of Louisiana Lafayette; Lafayette, LA

[Advocacy Director](#), Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana; New Orleans, LA

[Policy Advisor, Mississippi River Basin Floodplain](#), The Nature Conservancy; LA, MS, AR, TN, or KY

[Sportsmen Outreach coordinator](#); National Wildlife Federation; New Orleans, LA

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as a real [slap in the face](#) for Coloradoans also struggling with water scarcity. This week, that plan made it past second-stage floor consideration in the Nebraska legislature and is on its way towards final enactment. Several projects dependent on water that would be captured from the South Platte are also making their way through the legislature, including a proposed 4,000-acre lake between Lincoln and Omaha. The lake project is part of the JEDI Act proposed by the legislature's [STARWARS study committee](#). While we love a [creative acronym](#) and [cultural reference](#) as much as the next newsletter, it does make one wonder, did Colorado really agree to sharing the South Platte River with Nebraska all those years ago, or is it a [trick](#)?

Coastal Law! Getcha Hot Fresh Coastal Law!

Interested in Louisiana coastal issues and the laws and policies that surround them? Looking for some CLE credit this spring? Need something to fill your social calendar the week before Jazz Fest? Well, we've got just the conference for you—featuring our very own fearless leader, Mark Davis, discussing nutrient management, Mississippi River resources, as well as surface and groundwater rights. The Seminar Group will be putting on the "[Coastal Law in Louisiana](#)" conference April 21-22 in New Orleans, with expert panels on topics including flood management and levee issues, oysters and aquaculture, offshore wind energy, environmental justice and coastal planning, and more. So check out the current agenda [here](#) and register if you're interested. We hope to see you there!

Our Swan Song

We'd like to announce that this will be the final installation of TUWaterWays. To put it simply, the world of water news has dulled to a monotonous bore and we've exhausted every last cultural reference in our repertoire. Have fun navigating the ever-consistent topics of WOTUS and PFAS without us from here on out, suckers.

With that, have a great weekend, and Happy April Fools! ;) – we'll keep this up for as long as we can convince someone to let us.