TUWaterWays

Water News and More from the Tulane Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy
June 28, 2017

Get in the Boat

It's a cold, hard world out there these days, but we're not feeling it here in NOLA. And no, we're not talking about the humidity. Not to state the obvious, but New Orleans is an incredible city. We have the Saints, of course. We've got music, too – Louis Armstrong, Dr. John & Professor Longhair, Tank and the Bangas, Miss Mojo, to name too few. And, the food! Crawfish, doberge cake, red beans (and slot machines). On top of all that good stuff, we are also working hard to become leaders in the field of climate change resilience, and we've got some friends to back us up.

This weekend, Mayor Mitch Landrieu will step into his new position as the president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors. First on the agenda at their annual meeting, held this past week in another climate-conscious hub, Miami, is a heavy focus on climate change. This conference comes on the heels of the United States exiting the Paris Agreement. Rather than dwell on the decision, which many of the group were not in support of, Mayor Landrieu called for mayors across the country to support climate initiatives in their own cities. This included a non-binding pledge by many at the conference to reduce their city's emissions and a commitment to run cities on 100% renewable energy.

While not every mayor in the country is on board, and it may be hard to meet targets without federal support, New Orleans is well suited to try. Our incentives are clear (see above for a reminder of the awesomeness that is the Crescent City, lest you've forgotten, not to mention our disappearing coast), but we also have the know-how. Universities, NGOs, governmental agencies and others are banding together to attract and train the best talent we can to combat our coastal crisis. Our friends at GNO, Inc., released a report in April giving us some ideas on how to do that a little better. Check it out, y'all.

Time is a Flat Circle…

And the water economy should be too, say the folks over at Adaptation Strategies. They've released a report entitled *The Louisiana Water Economy: Our Shared Destiny*. The report takes a look at what the water economy in Louisiana looks like now, where it is succeeding, and where there is room from growth. From the minds behind the Louisiana Water Economy Network, there is a true understand that we are living with

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:

One Water Summit
New Orleans, LA
June 27-29, 2017

Water jobs:

Water Law & Policy Fellow
UC Berkeley School of Law
Berkeley, CA
Senior Manager (State Policy)
Ceres
Boston, MA

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water. The report advocates for the growth of our water economy, and wants to make sure that we're letting nothing go to waste.

Oh, Carp!

In a brave attempt, that we can only assume was meant to avoid next year's St. Patrick's Day celebrations, a lone Asian carp was found just a mere 9 miles away from Lake Michigan. What's that you say? Fish are supposed to swim in lakes! Normally, we'd agree, but this particular fish is persona (or piscis) non grata in these parts of the world. In fact, millions and millions of dollars have been spent on creating underwater barriers to prevent them from making their way over to the Great Lakes system. This is because the Asian carp is no small fish to fry. One fish can grow to as large as 100 lbs and put back up to 20% of his (or her) weight in plankton in one day. Unfortunately, this means there will be less grub for the other guys, who happen to support a $7 billion a year fishing industry. This discovery comes at a time when there is more to worry about, as well. The President has proposed substantial budget cuts to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, much of which goes towards preventing this invasive species from taking over this critical fishing industry habitat. Here's hoping that the carp does *not* keep swimming.

Woe to Us

The controversial Waters of the United States rule, or WOTUS, has been a topic of discussion amongst… well, pretty much everyone in the water world for the past couple months -- but just yesterday EPA administrator Scott Pruitt signed the proposed rule repealing it. The rulemaking aims to limit federal jurisdiction over water pollution to major, large bodies of water, as opposed to its previous interpretation, which allowed federal jurisdiction over smaller, navigable bodies of water. Proponents of the decision to repeal and replace the rule are excited, saying this returns decision-making power to the states and gives certainty to agriculture and some businesses. Others feel that this will give free reign for polluters to compromise public health, clean drinking water, and healthy ecosystems. Public comments are open for 30 days, starting when the rule is published in the Federal Register.

Score for Restore

This week, the Restore the Mississippi River Delta Coalition received a $15 million grant to implement coastal restoration projects in Louisiana under the Master Plan. It is a continuous and collaborative effort to save our unique and irreplaceable piece of paradise. Thanks to all who help make it possible, but this week, especially the Walton Family Foundation.