

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana Names New Board Leadership

*Coastal nonprofit also forms new Coastal Advisory Council to strengthen diversity of voices*

**NEW ORLEANS** (Jan. 15, 2021) — The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana (CRCL) has announced its board membership and leadership for 2021, effective Jan. 1. The organization, which was founded in 1988, was the first statewide nonprofit dedicated to coastal restoration in Louisiana. CRCL brought public awareness to the state's coastal land loss crisis and helped craft the science-based solutions to restore wetlands, marshes and beaches across the coast. CRCL is also known for its volunteer habitat restoration and engagement events, its involvement in crafting the state's Coastal Master Plan, for its Oyster Shell Recycling Program and for State of the Coast, the premier conference on coastal restoration.

The leaders of the CRCL board for 2021 are as follows:

- Garvin Pittman, chairman. Garvin is a leader in Louisiana's coastal consulting industry with extensive experience with the Coastwide Reference Monitoring Systems program, damage assessments of coastal wetland vegetation resulting from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, managing CWPPRA and habitat restoration projects.
- Robin Keegan, vice chairwoman. Robin is the owner and principal of Spring Industries LLC, a platform for community-building solutions rooted in principles of sustainability. She also serves as an adjunct lecturer in Tulane University's in the School of Architecture and a fellow in the School of Social Work.
- Ashley Liuzza, secretary. Ashley is the chief operating officer and attorney at Stag Liuzza LLC in New Orleans. Her practice centers on litigating complex environmental pollution claims, toxic exposure claims and mineral royalty disputes.
- James Wiltenmuth, treasurer. James, a CPA, is an associate director in P&N's Accounting and Assurance Services Group.

The remaining board members for 2021 are as follows:

- Mindy Nunez Airhart, the president and CEO of Southern Services & Equipment Inc. (SSE), an AISC-certified structural steel fabrication contractor in St. Bernard Parish. Airhart is the vice chairwoman of the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce and on the boards of directors of the St. Bernard Economic Development Foundation, the New Orleans Regional Leadership Institute, the First Planning District of the Louisiana Workforce Development Board, and the Fidelity Bank POWER Advisory Board.
- Donald Brinkman, who leads the ports practice and southwest Louisiana region for CSRS Inc., an architecture and engineering firm headquartered in Baton Rouge. He is a licensed professional engineer in Louisiana and has a special port designation known as the PPM – Professional Port Manager from the American Association of Port Authorities (AAPA).
- Matt Butler, vice president of Louisiana operations for Atlas Technical Consultants.
- Woody Crews, who works at the Gray Insurance Co. — Insurance, Energy, and Timber. Woody has served on the CRCL Board since 1998 and was board chairman from 2006 to 2007. Woody is also a member of Ducks Unlimited and the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation. Woody was awarded the CRCL Lifetime Achievement Award for Coastal Stewardship in 2019.
- Melissa Daigle, a research associate and resiliency specialist for the Louisiana Sea Grant Law and Policy Program.
- Robert Gardiner, the retired president of Maine Public Broadcasting, former chairman of the National Wildlife Federation and former vice chairman of the PBS board of directors.
- Sarah Giles, a wetland biologist at ELOS Environmental.

- Robert Gorman, a licensed clinical social worker who was the first chairman of the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana and was one of the organization's founders, and who directed Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux for 37 years.
- Terrence Lockett, president of Axis Strategies LLC, a public and governmental affairs firm that provides strategic planning and management to candidates seeking elected office along with governmental affairs representation for a variety of entities at the state and federal level.
- Brock Piglia, director of marketing and business development at EskewDumezRipple, one of the largest architecture firms in Louisiana.
- Erin Rooney, a coastal project manager at HDR Engineering Inc. in Metairie, where she manages design of coastal restoration and protection projects across the state.
- Allison Stouse, who has dedicated the last decade to working with the Louisiana Children's Museum, first as a board member, then as project director, to realize its sustainable campus in City Park.
- Ed Theriot, a presidential appointee in Iraq in 2004 as senior adviser for water resources for secretaries of defense and the State Department under Ambassador Paul Bremer, the former director of the Environmental Laboratory and former executive director at the Institute for Coastal and Water Research, University of Louisiana.

The Coastal Advisory Council is a new group formed to involve leaders in diverse fields in advancing CRCL's mission to drive bold science-based action to sustain a dynamic coastal Louisiana through engagement and advocacy. The CAC will bring the state's leading experts in science and engineering together with the most passionate and motivated advocates for an aggressive defense of our communities. The state's response to land loss has been impressive in the past decade, but more determined efforts are needed as the timetable for action becomes more and more compressed by the rapid advance of climate change and intensifying storm systems.

The members of the inaugural CAC are:

- Ellen Ball, a community leader in New Orleans and on Avery Island and a former member of the CRCL board.
- Robin Barnes, an economic recovery and resilience expert, the chair of Coastal Communities Consulting, and the interim director of Market Umbrella, which runs the Crescent City Farmers Markets in New Orleans.
- Angela Chalk, the founder and executive director of Healthy Community Services in New Orleans.
- Mark Davis, the director of the Tulane University Institute on Water Resources Law and Policy and the former executive director of CRCL.
- Reggie Dupre, the executive director of the Terrebonne Levee and Conservation District in Houma, the president of Bourg Supermarket Inc. and a former state lawmaker.
- Al Duvernay, a fisherman, retired paleontologist at Shell and former CRCL volunteer of the year.
- Tina Freeman, photographer whose recent project juxtaposes images of Louisiana wetlands and ice in the Arctic and Antarctic, and whose work is included in permanent collections of the Bibliotheque Nationale de France (Paris), the National Media Museum (Bradford, UK), the New Orleans Museum of Art, and the Luciano Benetton Imago Mundi Collection in Italy.
- Albertine Kimble, who is retired after working in Plaquemines Parish government for 30 years, including as local coastal programs manager. She is a member of the parish's Coastal Zone Advisory Board.
- Ryan Lambert, the founder of Cajun Fishing Adventures in Buras and Venice.
- Walter Leger III, a lawyer, senior vice president for strategic affairs and general counsel for New Orleans & Co. and former speaker pro tempore in the state House.
- Brett Long, a CPA who has helped found a number of startups and who has a strong interest in coastal and city issues in New Orleans.
- Steve Mathies, the Coastal Restoration and Resilience practice leader for the Southeast region at Stantec and former director of CPRA.
- Tim Matte, a CPA and the former mayor of Morgan City.
- Norma Mattei, a UNO civil engineering professor, former president of the American Society of Civil Engineers and a member of the Mississippi River Commission.

- John Morello, vice president of product, container and serverless security at Palo Alto Networks, a board member for the Coastal Conservation Association and a former member of the CRCL board.
- Sandy Nyugen, founder and executive director of Coastal Communities Consulting and a former consultant for the Louisiana Small Business Development Center.
- Denise Reed, a research professor at UNO who helped develop Louisiana's coastal master plan.
- Jennifer Sherrod-Blackwell, founder and owner of Elysian Seafood and Elysian Events Catering in New Orleans and a restaurant partner of CRCL's Oyster Shell Recycling Program.
- Randy Smith, director of business development at Royal Engineers & Consultants LLC.
- Robert Thomas, director of the Center for Environmental Communication at Loyola University, the founding director of the Louisiana Nature Center and a former member of the CRCL board.
- Jim Tripp, who is retired from the Environmental Defense Fund, where he served as general counsel, a founding member of CRCL and a former CRCL board member.
- Darilyn Turner, executive director of the Zion Travelers Cooperative Center and a member of the Plaquemines Parish School Board.

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**About Coalition To Restore Coastal Louisiana:**

*The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to drive bold, science-based action to rebuild coastal Louisiana through outreach, restoration and advocacy. Incorporated in 1988, CRCL represents a unique mix of businesses, local governments, industries, scientific communities, national and local conservation groups, hunters, anglers and a broad spectrum of concerned citizens who all share a common vision and commitment to the sustainability of coastal Louisiana. The common vision of these varied and diverse interests is the driving strength of CRCL, the most effective and recognized coastal advocacy organization in the state. Recognizing that Louisiana's coastal land loss will have dramatic impacts on the nation's energy, navigation and fisheries interests, CRCL works at the state, local and federal level to ensure that restoring and protecting coastal Louisiana is a top priority for our state and the nation.*