

Press Release

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Future Changes Due to Sea Level Rise Seen Through SLAMM View 2

Sea level rise is one of the most pressing issues facing many coastal communities today. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's online sea level rise simulation tool, Sea Level Affecting Marshes Model (SLAMM) visually shows sea level rise predictions, allowing people to see the impacts in a more intuitive way.

SLAMM-View 2 is a web browser application that displays map pairs of the same area, each with different sea level raise simulations. Users can select different scenarios by combining both time, in 25 years intervals, at different sea level increase severities (0.5 meter to 2 meters).

For nearly 20 years, the information was available only in table or static map form. SLAMM-View 2 now provides this in a visually dynamic way. SLAMM-View 2 is used by researchers and managers to understand the impacts of sea level rise on critical coastal resources and educate the public on the effects of sea level changes.

"Most sea level rise models do not take into account the biological impacts," said Bill Wilen, National Wetlands Inventory. "SLAMM-View 2 also looks at sediment and organic matter accumulation on the marshes as well as erosion from tides and storms that can overtake coastal barrier beaches."

One of the most useful things about SLAMM-View 2 is that the information is available through a web cloud environment and is readily accessible to fish and wildlife managers as well as the general public. The Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge recently used this technology to help explain future plans for the management of that refuge to the public.

"I continue to see great value in SLAMM-View 2 as an outreach and educational tool," said Lou Hinds, Refuge Manager for Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. "As we continue to refine the SLAMM analysis for a refuge, delivering that information via SLAMM-View 2 will instill greater confidence by the American public in the science of sea-level rise modeling."

As of April 2012, the National Wildlife Refuge System has coordinated SLAMM analysis for all coastal refuges. The SLAMM reports for these 136 refuges are available at <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/planning/seaLevelRise.html>.

Currently 23 National Wildlife Refuge SLAMM simulations are available online, with 30 more in progress. Funded by the National Wildlife Refuge Inventory and Monitoring Program, simulations can be viewed on the Service's SLAMM-View 2 portal: <http://www.fws.gov/slamm>

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