

Sharing Capacity for Community Resilience Planning and Ecosystem Restoration in Grand Caillou/Dulac



Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Indians of Louisiana

Project Team: Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Indians of Louisiana and Climigration Network

Funding Amount: \$122,000

Project Summary

This project increased the collective capacity of Tribal leadership and of the Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of the Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Indians of Louisiana (GC/D), community members, and partners to develop an actionable, community-led Community Resilience Plan in Dulac and Chauvin, LA. GC/D strengthened and built new relationships among local, regional, and national partners, and guided the team on the development of core principles for the project that were included in signed contractual agreements among the project team. Red Plains Professional helped to synthesize existing data and reports and generate new up-to-date maps of risk and nature-based projects to inform adaptation strategies. GC/D led development and implementation of a community survey and conversations to understand residents' perspectives on climate risk and adaptation strategies, and priorities for the resilience hub at the GC/D Community Outreach Program Office. Importantly, as a result of CSCI funding, the project team was able to raise an additional \$563K to sustain resilience planning over the next three years. The project culminated in the design of an in-person Gathering in summer 2025 for Tribal and community members to discuss risk and priorities for resilience planning.

Project Goals



Increase the capacity of Tribal leadership and the community to build climate resilience.



Mitigate the impact of disasters and safeguard lives and community livelihoods.



Ensure efficient and coordinated disaster response efforts to minimize loss and facilitate a speedy recovery.

Community Challenges



Catastrophic Land Loss and Degradation

Rapid coastal erosion, saltwater intrusion, and habitat destruction threaten infrastructure and cultural practices



Livelihood Disruption

Damage to fish and wildlife habitat undermines traditional food sources and employment opportunities



Barriers to Federal Recognition & Resources

GC/D's 28 year struggle to gain federal recognition limits access to essential resources



Increasing Disasters

Worsening storms and flooding cause repeated damage



Housing Insecurity:

Critical need for safe and sustainable housing



*GC/D's planning efforts are designed to address flooding, rapid coastal erosion, saltwater intrusion, and habitat destruction in their community that threaten infrastructure and cultural practices and undermine traditional food sources and employment opportunities.
(Photo provided by GC/D)*

Partnerships and Collaboration

The project was co-designed and led by GC/D Tribal leaders, members, and non-Tribal residents from Dulac and Chauvin, with support from the Parish and national and regional technical partners. Through this planning effort, new partnerships formed and existing regional partnerships were strengthened. Indigenous and community members have joined a planning team that will continue to work on a resilience plan over the next three years under NFWF funding.

Project Timeline

Months 1-4

Partner team and relationship building, development of core principles to guide the project, asset identification, data and report gathering, fundraising

Months 5-8

Preliminary asset and hazard mapping, Community Talking Circle and 1:1 dialogues with Indigenous and other community members, collaborative survey design

Months 8-12

Survey implementation, planning and hosting an in-person Community Gathering

Project Approach

Planning activities occurred over three phases:

Phase 1: Relationship Building, Principle Development, and Data Gathering/Analysis

- ★ Formed planning team including Tribal leadership, Climigration Network, Red Plains Professional, Tribal members, elders and youth, and regional partners
- ★ Gathered existing asset and hazard information to generate preliminary maps to characterize risk
- ★ Tribal leadership and partners develop core principles, co-design initial planning approach
- ★ Collaboration on additional fundraising to support the planning process beyond year 1

Phase 2: Outreach and Engagement Design and Preliminary Mapping

- ★ Hosted 1:1 dialogues and a Talking Circle to share information and gather community input on the planning approach
- ★ Completed preliminary asset and hazard maps to share with community members for feedback
- ★ Design community survey to gather residents' and experts perspectives on climate risk and adaptation strategies, including those that relate to the resilience hub at the GC/D Community Outreach Program Office

Phase 3: Survey Implementation and Community Gathering

- ★ Implement community survey
- ★ In-person core team meeting and Community Gathering

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The capacity that the Climigration Network shared with us, with support from CSCI funding, has been instrumental to our success. By funding a partnership designed to remove administrative barriers and add capacity for smaller community-based organizations, we are able to do what we do best, which is convening community members and experts to have creative and forward-facing conversations about what the solutions are, and ways to address them with a coalition of partners.

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Chief Devon Parfait

Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw Indians of Louisiana

Impact

This project significantly increased the leadership and capacity of GC/D to build climate resilience by strengthening partnerships, identifying climate hazards and mapping community assets, and securing the funding necessary to support the multi-year planning and collaboration needed for a resilience plan. The project increased Tribal and community awareness and engagement in regional climate resilience planning and built trust among core team members needed to achieve long-term planning goals.



The Grand Caillou/Dulac Band of Biloxi-Chitimacha-Choctaw (GC/D) are leading a new planning project called “Building Capacity for Community Resilience and Ecosystem Restoration in Grand Caillou/Dulac.” Their new Community Outreach Program Office (COPO) is a resource for all residents in Grand Caillou, Petit Caillou, Dulac and Chauvin. (Photo provided by GC/D)

Next Steps

- With NFWF funding, partner with Tribal and community members to develop a community-led resilience plan
- Host 4 Community Gatherings to assess risk, refine risk maps, develop adaptation strategies and finalize a resilience plan
- Conduct an in-depth household-level community survey to understand individual household vulnerability, stressors and interest in relocation
- Identify opportunities for nature-based approaches to reduce flood risk in the region

More Information

Grand Caillou/Dulac Band: <https://www.gcdbcc.org>

Community Outreach and Program Office: <https://www.gcdbcc.org/projects>

Climigration Network Next Step Cohort: <https://www.climigration.org/next-step-cohort>