



SCIPP Information Document

- [Introduction to SCIPP](#)
- [Climate Issues in the South](#)
- [Local-Level Engagement](#)
- [Stakeholders](#)
- [Program Priorities](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

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Introduction to SCIPP

The Southern Climate Impacts Planning Program (SCIPP) is a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) supported Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessment (RISA) program that serves the climate research and information needs of the south-central United States. Established in August 2008, SCIPP is a joint research program of the University of Oklahoma (OU) and Louisiana State University (LSU) with combined expertise provided through the Oklahoma Climatological Survey, Louisiana Office of State Climatology, Department of Geography and Anthropology at LSU, Southern Regional Climate Center, and National Weather Center at OU.



RISA is a unique stakeholder-driven research and engagement program that focuses on regional climate issues across the United States through collaboration of nine university-based research programs. As the 9th RISA program, SCIPP's engagement and research concentrate on several critical climate issues in the Southern U.S., including multi-hazard preparedness (severe storms, droughts, floods, hurricanes, extreme temperatures, etc.) as well as coastal impacts of climate change and variability. SCIPP addresses these regional climate issues by developing strong

relationships with partners, decision makers, and other stakeholders, conducting pertinent and regionally relevant scientific research, and providing critical information, products, tools, and education.

Climate Issues in the South

From the arid conditions that exist across western Texas to the humid subtropical conditions along the Gulf coast, SCIPP is home to a diverse set of climate regions. However, as varied as its climate is, the region is challenged by many of the same problems – notably, the high occurrence of climate hazards that regularly impact the region. In fact, since FEMA disaster declarations began in 1953, SCIPP states have been among the most declared in the U.S. As of August 2011, half of the 6-state SCIPP region was ranked within the top 6 most disaster declared states, while the entire SCIPP region ranked within the top 15. It can also be noted that FEMA disaster declarations do not include droughts, which additionally contribute to the suite of climate hazards that the region experiences.

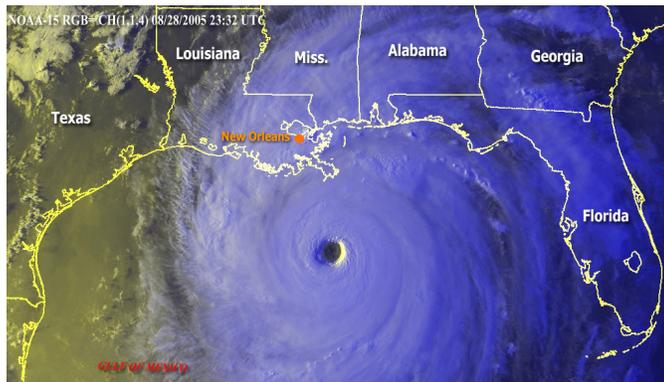
Climate issues critical to SCIPP are especially pronounced along the extended western coast of the Gulf of Mexico. Coastal locations are impacted by significant marine-related climate hazards, including hurricanes, storm surges, and flooding - all of which are likely to be affected by climate change. In addition, relative sea-level rise (as influenced by land subsidence and climate change) pose significant planning challenges for communities located in areas where these impacts may be greatest.

Local-Level Engagement

One of the key climate challenges the SCIPP region is faced with is continuing to improve preparedness for current climate impacts while also beginning to plan for future impacts. The SCIPP team aims to address these planning needs at local levels through close engagement with a select set of communities and county/parishes that will serve as research frameworks for the region. The primary goals of SCIPP engagement are to:

- Learn about hazard planning processes and challenges at local levels (community & county/parish)
- Assess hazard planning information needs
- Consider the incorporation of climate change into the hazard planning process
- Assess climate change data needs for planning
- Collaboratively design, develop, and test a webbased region-wide hazard planning decision support tool (multi-year effort)

Engagement with the SCIPP team is a long-term commitment that allows decision makers to play a critically important role in driving development of new climate tools and research that is applicable to users across the southern U.S.



Stakeholders

Natural hazard and climate planning is at the forefront of SCIPP's engagement, research, and education efforts. In partnership with others working in the region, SCIPP aims to engage:

- Emergency managers
- City/community-level planners
- Natural resource managers
- State planners
- Local government officials

Additional audiences include:

- General public
- University/academic research groups
- City developers
- Non-profit organizations
- Environmental organizations
- Insurance community

Program Priorities

At its core, SCIPP is a stakeholder-driven climate research and engagement program. It is designed to conduct physical and social science-related research in the interest of decision-makers across the south-central U.S. Results of scientific research and engagement lead to the development of SCIPP products and tools that directly address needs of stakeholders across the region. Education and outreach is another key focus of SCIPP which will involve many local partners, and is provided to enhance climate literacy as well as to train on new products and tools. The following include several SCIPP-related activities:

Research and Engagement

- Determine current and future climate information needs of hazard planners
- Develop an 'all hazards database' of climate events
- Assess the climate literacy of the SCIPP region
- Identify regionally-relevant climate issues
- Engage a series of pilot communities to focus in greater detail on specific climate-related issues
- Conduct applied research on climate hazards
- Undertake climate change projection research focused on the south central U.S.

Products and Tool Development and Delivery

- Develop an 'all hazards' web-based GIS decision/planning support tool for local-level hazard mitigation planning purposes
- Develop new tools to provide climate model forecast information
- Generate new data products based on user input
- Provide web-based climate information products
- Prepare climate risk assessments for each of the regional hazards

Education and Outreach

- Provide education on the basics of climate and climate change
- Introduce climate change adaptation planning into the hazard planning process
- Provide instruction on how to interpret climate information products and data
- Train on the usage of new products and tools

Contact Us

Please contact either one of our two program managers for more information about SCIPP or to get involved:

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SCIPP is a NOAA-supported Regional Integrated Sciences and Assessment (RISA) team.

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