

## Tulane ByWater Institute co-hosts leaders rethinking region's water management

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Urban Water @ 10 will convene regional leaders from across private, public and nonprofit sectors to celebrate successes, address challenges and continue examining the region's water management. The initiative is hosted by the Tulane ByWater Institute, the Greater New Orleans Foundation and Greater New Orleans, Inc. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

Marking the 10-year anniversary of the release of the Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan, a partnership of regional organizations, including Tulane University, has collectively launched *Urban Water @ 10* as a way to continue rethinking the region's

water management and to catalyze a thriving water economy.

Over the next five months, *Urban Water @ 10* will convene regional leaders from across private, public and nonprofit sectors to celebrate successes, address challenges and harness collective resources for continued momentum toward future projects. The initiative is hosted by the [Tulane ByWater Institute](#), the Greater New Orleans Foundation and Greater New Orleans, Inc.

“The achievements of the last decade have opened exciting new areas for scientific research, and the insights the scientific community is gaining into issues like groundwater dynamics and urban ecosystem change promise to strengthen work on urban water management in coming years,” said [Josh Lewis, Schwartz Professor of River and Coastal Studies and Research Director of the Tulane ByWater Institute](#). “We look forward to further developing the science of urban water to support decision-makers, engineers and residents of our region as we confront challenges and discover new opportunities for collaboration.”

[The Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan](#) was developed in 2013 by New Orleans-based Waggonner & Ball Architects and a team of Dutch and American water management experts. The plan outlines how resilient infrastructure projects can slow, store and use stormwater effectively to lessen subsidence and protect our neighborhoods from flooding while creating equitable and accessible green spaces and waterfronts.

Going forward, the initiative will work to identify, amplify and support many critical efforts currently underway around the region — including New Orleans’ Gentilly Resilience District and Jefferson Parish’s Green Infrastructure Plan, among others — while identifying action items that will build broad momentum across the region.

Continued implementation of the plan is estimated to potentially generate hundreds of millions of dollars in cost savings due to reduced flood losses, lower insurance premiums and increased property valuations.

“Over the past decade, community, government, business, academic and philanthropic partners have largely begun to embrace the idea of ‘living with water’ and using green stormwater infrastructure to reduce neighborhood flooding, develop equitable economic opportunities and improve quality of life,” said Andy Kopplin, President & CEO of the Greater New Orleans Foundation. “Our work leading the urban water series was designed to bolster the talent and capacity of our region’s

community leaders and professionals in the water sector. *Urban Water @ 10* aims to bring all those people and perspectives together to discuss the big lessons of the last decade and collectively determine priorities moving forward that will ensure a thriving, sustainable and just region.”

Tulane River and Coastal Center hosted a kickoff event for the initiative, which is supported in part by a grant from the National Science Foundation. The event included interactive mapping and visioning activities for event participants to look back at over a century of water management, share accomplishments from the past 10 years and envision the work ahead.

“Ten years ago, when the opportunity to develop a strategy for rethinking the region’s relationship with water resources emerged, it was imperative to embark on the work that will provide continuity and opportunities for the region’s numerous thriving industries,” said Michael Hecht, president & CEO of Greater New Orleans, Inc. “Over the past decade, the Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan allowed our community to remedy a century of mistakes which contributed to subsidence and flooding today, paving the way for southeast Louisiana to embrace water as an asset and transform New Orleans into an international model in resilience. This program moves the plan towards implementation, inciting project deployment and product development to produce generational wealth while restoring environmental health for future generations.”

Programming — including roundtables, workshops and field trips — will continue through the summer and fall, culminating in a report and celebratory event in November. More information and materials from the 2013 Greater New Orleans Urban Water Plan are available at [www.gnowater.org](http://www.gnowater.org).