
Sea Grant
LOUISIANA
Strategic Plan
2028 – 2031



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Louisiana Sea Grant held an art contest during the summer of 2026; winners are included throughout this document. Entries were divided into three age-based categories and displayed a range of media, with the selection committee awarding 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and Honorable Mention awards. “Fan Favorite” awards (selected using social media) and “Director’s Choice” awards were also given.

Cover artwork:
Sara Buggs, *Take Flight*,
Adult Division, Honorable Mention

Inside cover:
Lucy Chiasson, *Louisiana Coastal Vibe*,
11-17 Division, Honorable Mention

Back cover, top:
Jo Paula Lantier, *Floating Lotus*, fiber art, Adult Division, Director’s Choice

Back cover, bottom:
Amelie “Molly” Zamora, *Catch of the Day*,
Adult Division, Honorable Mention

Context

Coastal Louisiana faces the nation's highest rates of wetland and land loss, has the largest annual hypoxic zone in the United States, is continuing restoration efforts from the largest marine oil spill in U.S. history, and has coastal communities that remain vulnerable to extreme events such as river flooding and hurricanes. More infrequently, threats to the state also include earthquakes, tsunamis, drought, ice and snow storms, tornadoes, and wildfires. From 1980-2024, there were 106 confirmed weather/climate disaster events with losses exceeding $1 billion each to affect Louisiana. These events included 15 drought events, 10 flooding events, one freeze event, 44 severe storm events, 27 tropical cyclone events, and nine winter storm events. Thus, Louisiana Sea Grant has extensive experience with crisis management. This becomes even more significant considering that Louisiana's coastal resources include the largest fishery (commercial and recreational) in the contiguous U.S., largest port complex (by tonnage) in the country, and is consistently in the top five states for the largest supply of domestic energy. The working coastline also features cattle ranching, a growing liquified natural gas industry, and potential aerospace development.



Josh Priola, *McCall Street at Mermentau River*, Adult Division, 3rd Place

To address the complex and wide-ranging issues listed above, Louisiana Sea Grant's professionals and partners co-produce, generate, translate, and deliver cutting-edge, unbiased science-based information. Louisiana Sea Grant is committed to continuous engagement, learning, and improvement to shape future programming and enhance the value to the state and region.

Since its establishment in 1968, the Louisiana Sea Grant College Program has worked to promote stewardship of the state's coastal resources through a combination of research, education, and outreach. Louisiana Sea Grant is an integrated program of extension, education, law, policy, communications, research, and administration. These core functions carry out the program's mission.

Louisiana Sea Grant, based at Louisiana State University, is part of the National Sea Grant College Program, a network made up of 34 programs located in each of the coastal and Great Lakes states, Puerto Rico, and Guam. Sea Grant programs work individually and in partnership to address major marine and coastal challenges. Louisiana Sea Grant was designated as a full college program, the nation's thirteenth, in 1978. State funding comes from Louisiana State University (LSU) and the Louisiana State University AgCenter (LSU AgCenter).

Extension serves Louisiana's coastal population. Sea Grant extension agents, who live in the coastal areas they serve, and extension specialists, who are based on the LSU campus, connect residents to university research. The Marine Extension Program is supported by Louisiana Sea Grant and the LSU AgCenter Cooperative Extension Service. Extension agents and specialists work on a wide range of topics including fisheries, aquaculture, natural resource economics, water quality, marine debris, resiliency, sustainability, and seafood.



Nabeeha Hossain, 0-10 Division, Honorable Mention

Education engages learners of all ages. The need for environmental literacy, especially as it pertains to the knowledge of and stewardship for coastal habitats and natural resources, is more urgent than ever. To promote wise use of Louisiana's rich coastal resources, Louisiana Sea Grant Education and Engagement provides a variety of formal and non-formal education materials and opportunities.



Annie Plauche, *Coastal Catch,* stained glass, 11-17 Division, 3rd Place

The **Law & Policy Program** aims to provide timely and relevant legal information and services for the many users of Louisiana's coastal lands and waters, including state and local governments, coastal businesses, and the general public. This information covers a wide range of topic areas affecting Louisiana's ocean and coastal environments and resources.

Research, sponsored and performed by Louisiana Sea Grant, is relevant and integrated. Louisiana Sea Grant develops applied research dealing with natural science and socioeconomic information, design innovation, policy guidance for fisheries management, natural hazards adaptation, resilient communities, and ecosystem restoration to enhance coastal systems and communities in Louisiana.

Communications supports Louisiana Sea Grant's commitment to providing neutral, science-based information, keeping the public up to date on current research and the latest news on relevant issues. Communications maintains the program's website and social media and produces publications, videos, and other materials for a range of user groups while supporting the program's other units.

Mission

Louisiana Sea Grant's mission is to generate and provide science-based information and tools supporting thriving coastal communities and ecosystems and increasing coastal resilience and economic opportunities.

Vision

Louisiana Sea Grant envisions resilient and sustainable coastal communities, economies, and ecosystems that are supported by engaged and informed public and decision-makers.

Core Values

The National Sea Grant College Program's core values are essential to influence the organization and support the mission. These core values support a culture of integrity and scientific objectivity enabling Sea Grant to serve as a trusted broker of information. Louisiana Sea Grant follows these core values to serve the people of Louisiana.

Vision – Advancing creative, innovative solutions that address emerging and chronic challenges through engagement, science, technology development and transfer, and stewardship.

Collaboration – Seeking and sustaining partners with whom we leverage relative strengths, and responsively, respectfully integrate a range of expertise, perspectives, and capacity to reach shared goals.

Accountability – Operating with integrity and transparency while maintaining quality and relevance in all functional areas, including program management.

Sustainability – Advancing environmental stewardship practices and communicating the value of the services - economic and otherwise - that the coastal, watershed, ocean, and Great Lakes ecosystems provide to the nation.

Non-advocacy – Maintaining a commitment to objective research and programming that avoids unfounded bias and position-taking in the development and sharing of information, tools, and services.

The 2028-2031 Planning Process

Input for Louisiana Sea Grant's Strategic Plan 2028-2031 was obtained from multiple sources. Strategic planning efforts by key partners were consulted.

Notable at the federal and regional level were the:

- National Sea Grant Strategic Plan and planning documents
- Regional alliances as well as the Fisheries Management Councils and Marine Fisheries Commissions

Considerable input was also received from partners, including:

1. Louisiana Sea Grant Advisory Council
2. Louisiana Sea Grant Marine Extension Program
3. Education Advisory Board
4. Sea Grant Law & Policy Program Advisory Board



Allison Swire, *A Horse and Crawfish Discovery*, pencil on paper with Prismacolor, 11-17 Division, Honorable Mention

1. The Louisiana Sea Grant Advisory Council (Council) is composed of approximately 20 to 25 individuals representing academia, the private sector, state and federal government agencies, and non-governmental organizations. Additionally, there is strategic overlap with members from the Law & Policy and Education advisory boards. The Council discussed Louisiana Sea Grant's goals for the 2028-31 cycle at the November 2025 Council meeting, members were surveyed in early 2026 with specific questions regarding programming, and members had another opportunity to provide input during a virtual Council meeting in May 2026.



James Daigle and Michael Dang, *The Holy Scrimptures*, salvaged metal, Adult Division, Director's Choice

Those in attendance shared their perspectives both on future program priorities as well as possible strategies for achieving the program's goals. At both meetings, and via survey results, the Council urged Louisiana Sea Grant to continue existing programming while building upon institutional knowledge, commitment to research and outreach, and reputation with community members as a trusted source of information.

The Council highlighted the impact of Louisiana fisheries nationwide as an area for strategic messaging given Louisiana Sea Grant's relationship with the industry. Additionally, continued leadership training and efforts to create space for different fisheries to work together will remain important into the future.

Community resilience continues to lead discussions, primarily around the impacts of rising insurance premiums. The Council pointed out that insurance is often a driver for relocation and displacement for communities, and Louisiana Sea Grant has the opportunity to examine a range of options for community responses.

Much like prior strategic plan iterations, workforce development was stressed as a common thread through all work by Louisiana Sea Grant, and the Council was vocal about the need for this to continue. In response, Louisiana Sea Grant has chosen to include this as a cross-cutting principle in addition to the dedicated focus area.

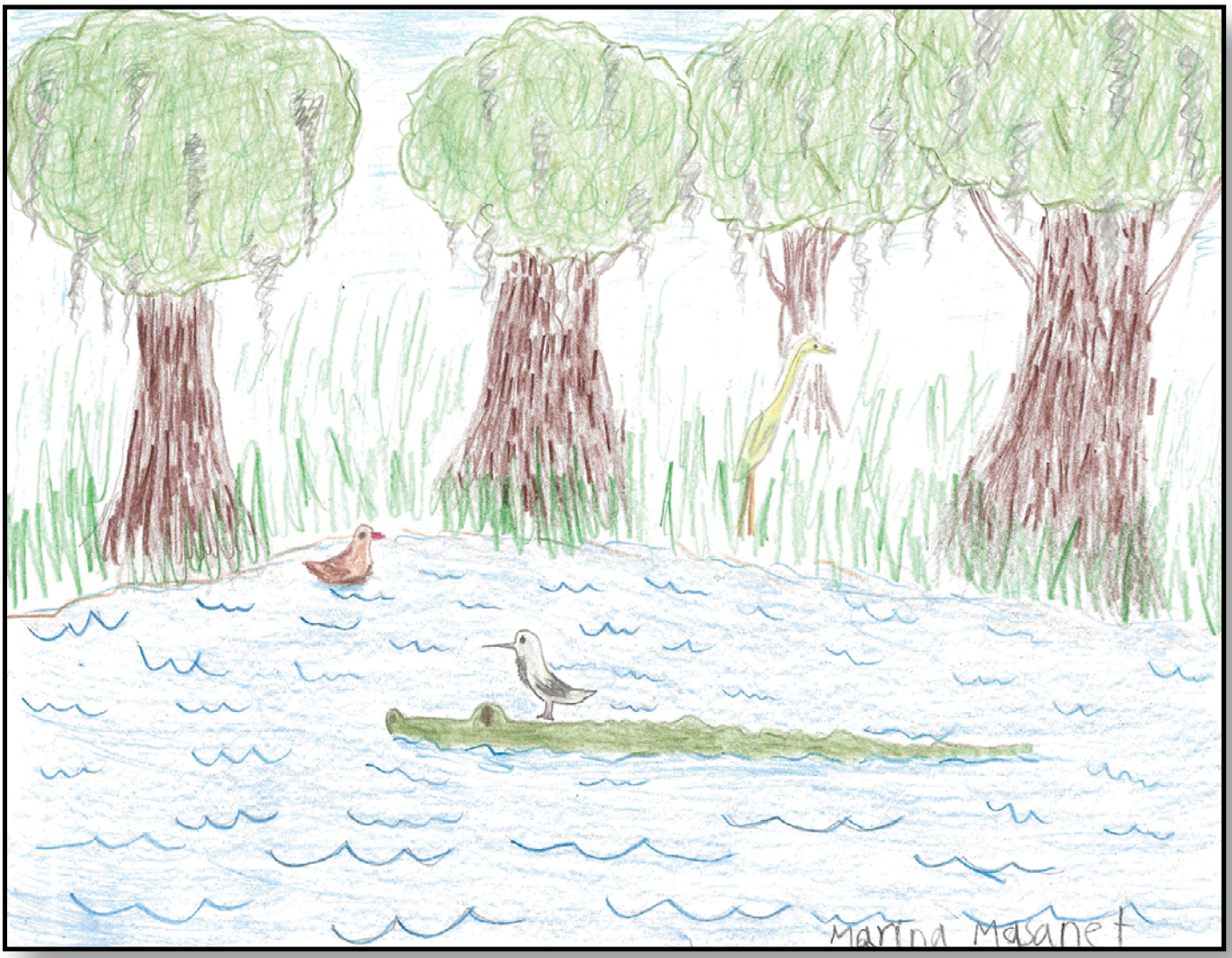
2. Louisiana Sea Grant's extension staff – collectively called the Marine Extension Program – engage with their stakeholders on topics of interest related to the strategic plan through regular stakeholder advisory meetings or by attending other partner's advisory meetings. Extension personnel were given a survey including prioritizing focus areas and goals and an opportunity to provide open comment on existing programming and new areas where research and outreach is needed.

3. The Education Advisory Board discussed the strategic plan at their most recent semi-annual meeting in August 2025. The Advisory Board is composed of participants whose experiences ranged from state and federal agencies, non-profits, university outreach, museums, and K-12 education providers. This forum maintains an ongoing discourse on evergreen and emergent challenges and opportunities in the K-16 space and allows for continued partnerships on endeavors. In preparation for this strategic plan, there has been discussion on (1) maintaining environmental

education network cohesion with the dissolution of the state commission; (2) growing and affirming the value of place-based education; and (3) extensive discussion about partnership avenues for projects focused on or incorporating environmental literacy to expand and amplify the reach of the work done in the discipline. Some of these conversations have been incorporated into this final draft to reflect a stronger focus on environmental literacy and workforce development.

4. The Sea Grant Law & Policy Program met with its Advisory Board in December 2024 and continued to engage with board members throughout 2025 and 2026 through individual targeted meetings and focused discussions. As a result, a wide-ranging discussion was conducted concerning legal research needs for the State of Louisiana and the Southeast coastal region. Topics identified as fertile areas for the program's research and outreach included: coastal wetland permitting and use of nature based solutions in restoration and mitigation; coastal property ownership; insurance availability as a driver of coastal development; impacts of storms and erosion on cemeteries, and mitigating those effects; issues with the federal disaster relief process; updates to the state building code and other non-structural mitigation measures; the role of alternative oyster culture in mitigating the adverse effects of coastal restoration.

All of the above was used in crafting the following plan.



Marina Masanet, *Louisiana Bayou: See You Later Alligator*, 0-10 Division, 1st Place

Cross Cutting Principles

Louisiana Sea Grant supports three cross cutting principles that will enhance the program's capabilities to meet future needs:

1. Develop and sustain partnerships — Louisiana Sea Grant will use its distinct capacity to integrate the expertise and capabilities of its federal, regional, state and local agency partners, as well as those from academia, business, industry, and nongovernmental organizations.

2. Provide trusted, science-based information — Louisiana Sea Grant will serve as an academic, neutral party and assist all audiences interested in coastal issues in making informed decisions about important, and sometimes controversial, issues in a factual and timely manner without advocating for specific positions or policies.

3. Workforce and economic development — Louisiana Sea Grant will strive to provide opportunities for workforce and economic development throughout its programming in addition to and beyond the dedicated focus area, as these are foundational themes that support and advance all the other focus areas.



David Jin, 0-10 Division, 3rd Place



Gracie Mock, *Pinky the Dolphin from My Daddy's Shrimp Boat*, 0-10 Division, Fan Favorite

Louisiana Sea Grant Focus Areas and Goals

In support of our mission, Louisiana Sea Grant will concentrate efforts in the following strategic focus areas aligning with the National Sea Grant Strategic Plan:

1. **Resilient Communities and Economies (RCE)**
2. **Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture (SFA)**
3. **Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development (ELWD)**
4. **Healthy Coastal Ecosystems (HCE)**

1. Resilient Communities and Economies

Resilient Communities and Economies

Louisiana Sea Grant's resilient communities and economies efforts focus on three topic areas:

1. Coastal hazards
2. Community sustainability
3. Quantity of water resources

Natural disasters are among the top challenges facing coastal Louisiana and impact both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems; they also pose threats to human lives, water resources, environments, and economies. Louisiana Sea Grant will continue to help communities and individuals plan for and respond to disasters.

Coastal communities provide vital economic, social, and recreational opportunities for thousands of Louisianans, but population migration, beginning with Hurricanes Rita and Katrina and continuing with Hurricanes Laura and Ida, have transformed the state's coastal landscapes and intensified demand for finite coastal resources including water resources and drainage infrastructure. Louisiana Sea Grant will continue to assist the coastal population and be responsive to expanding needs related to more recent population shifts to assist with community sustainability.



Sofia Olexia-Daigle, *The City that Collects Water*, glass/ceramics, Adult Division, Director's Choice



Tina M. Willett, *Hidden Sanctuary, Resilient Hearts*, oil on canvas, Adult Division, Director's Choice

Resilient Communities and Economies Goal 1:

Louisiana's coastal residents and leaders have the tools, resources, and increased capacity to prepare, respond, and adapt to extreme events, chronic coastal hazards, economic disruptions, and other threats to community well-being.

Outcomes:

- Members of the community have resources available and access to information to better understand, prepare, and adapt to changing conditions and coastal hazards.
- Community leaders have increased understanding of changing conditions and coastal hazards from scientific, traditional and local knowledge, and socio-economic information that improves their capability to implement mitigation and adaptive strategies to improve resilience and community sustainability.

Resilient Communities and Economies Goal 2:

Water resources are enhanced, sustained, and protected to meet existing and emerging needs of the communities, economies, and ecosystems that depend on them.

Outcomes:

- Improved outreach and decision-support tools will help guide planning processes related to the state's water resources.
- Communities and stakeholders have access to science, data, tools, and services to understand and anticipate changes in water quality and quantity, and make informed decisions that support existing and emerging water resource needs.

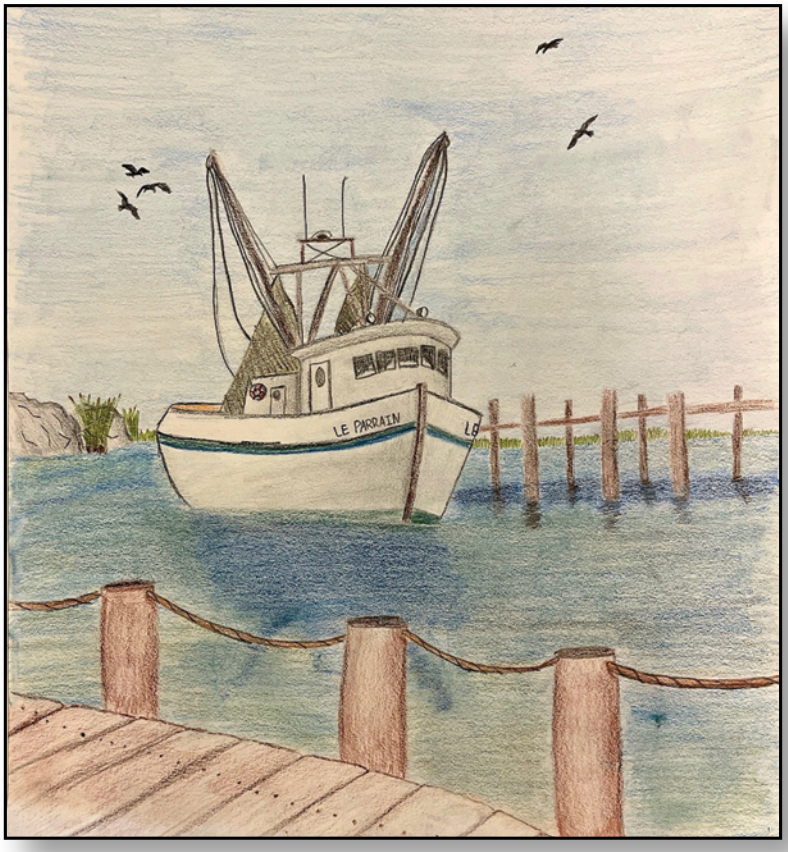
2. Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture

Louisiana Sea Grant's sustainable fisheries and aquaculture efforts focus on three topic areas:

1. Fishery sectors
2. Aquaculture
3. Seafood safety

Louisiana has experienced a decline in many of its major fisheries (marine and freshwater) while simultaneously seafood consumption nationwide has risen. Louisiana Sea Grant, through its research, extension, and education activities, and work with industry partners, has helped to stabilize and improve many sectors of the state's seafood industries.

Historically, Louisiana aquaculture has included crawfish, alligator, oysters, soft shell crab, and more. Aquaculture has the potential to expand economic opportunities which in turn will help meet the increased demand for seafood. But many questions need to be addressed for the industry's full potential to be realized.



Ayden J. Comb, 11-17 Division, 1st Place and Fan Favorite

Seafood safety is a concern in seafood production, and Louisiana Sea Grant plays key roles in advancing processors' and the public's understanding of the nature of these problems and opportunities. Louisiana Sea Grant supports the kind of informed public and private decision making that leads to a sustainable supply of safe and high quality seafood well into the future.

Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Goal 1:

Marine and freshwater wild-caught fisheries and aquaculture resources provide food, jobs, and economic and cultural benefits to coastal and inland communities.

Outcomes:

- The Louisiana seafood industry can adapt to economic and environmental changes and acquire innovative technologies to expand.
- The Louisiana seafood industry – including aquaculture, wild-caught and processing – employs technologies and reinforces strategies to ensure safe and sustainable seafood and products.

Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture Goal 2:

Natural resources are sustainably managed to support fishing communities and industries, including commercial, recreational and subsistence fisheries, and aquaculture.

Outcomes:

- Resource and restoration management decision-makers, commercial and recreational fishermen, and aquaculture interests have access to information about efficient, sustainable, and responsible tools, techniques, and uses of coastal and freshwater resources.



G. Micah Patout, *Red Drum Chasing Shrimp*, oil on canvas, Adult Division, 1st Place (tied)



Karen Kinberger, *Gold on the Gulf*, alcohol ink painting, Adult Division, 1st Place (tied)

3. Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development

Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development

Louisiana Sea Grant's environmental literacy and workforce development efforts focus on three topic areas:

1. Environmental and scientific literacy
2. Seafood and coastal industry professional development
3. Undergraduate, graduate, and career professional development

To address the environmental challenges confronting our state, environmental literacy and communication skills are critical to meet workforce needs. Louisiana Sea Grant is meeting the challenge of improving today's environmental education through its professional training for the seafood industry, educators, and innovative curriculum resources for students and teachers, from PreK to gray. The classroom and community stewardship programs are developed for all learners in coastal Louisiana. Louisiana Sea Grant also supports the professional development of undergraduate and graduate students through service programs, science communication training, conference travel awards, and by offering fellowship programs and other career development opportunities.

- Individuals consider themselves environmentally literate lifelong learners who use knowledge to support, build, and restore healthy ecosystems and communities.
- Communities are knowledgeable and equipped with the best available science, technology, and policy-related information to be able to contribute to adaptive management.



Isaac Scroggs, *The Crab Trap*, pencil on paper with Prismacolor, 11-17 Division, 2nd Place

Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development Goal 1:

Louisiana communities are increasingly scientifically and environmentally literate, participating in lifelong learning opportunities.

Outcomes:

- Louisiana teachers have the knowledge and tools to instruct students about watersheds, aquatic ecosystems, and natural resource management, while also having access to resources allowing students to develop a sense of awareness, understanding, and stewardship.

Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development Goal 2:

A skilled and environmentally literate workforce is engaged and able to build fulfilling lives and livelihoods in a changing world through traditional and innovative careers.

Outcomes:

- Increased opportunities are available for Louisiana's undergraduate and graduate students, as well as university faculty, resource managers, and seafood industry members, to gain knowledge and experience in the science and management of Louisiana's watershed, coastal, and marine resources.



Dawn Holmes, *Des Bon Amis*, acrylic painting on aged barnwood, Adult Division, Fan Favorite

- A responsive workforce is available to advance and benefit sectors that support the needs of Louisiana's coastal communities and ecosystems (e.g. industry, research, government).
- The state's existing and future workforce can more readily adapt to and thrive in changing environmental, social, and economic conditions.



Amber Elder, *Finding Fireflies*, Adult Division, Director's Choice

4. Healthy Coastal Ecosystems

Healthy Coastal Ecosystems

Louisiana Sea Grant will stress three topics under the healthy coastal ecosystem focus area:

1. Water quality
2. Coastal restoration
3. Coastal ecosystem health

Healthy ecosystems are fundamental to life along Louisiana's coastal and economic development. Development, land-use practices, increasing natural disasters, marine debris of all sizes and sources, subsidence, loss of barrier islands, and other factors are contributing to water quality degradation and human health impacts. Numerous municipalities including New Orleans rely on surface waters for their drinking water. Other healthy ecosystems concerns include decline of aquatic and terrestrial habitat for fish and other species, wetlands loss, and the proliferation of invasive species.



René Jones, *King of the Gulf*, acrylic on canvas, Adult Division, Honorable Mention

It is vital to provide protection and support restoration efforts that seek to achieve ecosystem function and deliver value. Working with partners to help restore and preserve the state's coastal ecosystems, Louisiana Sea Grant will promote innovative research, co-production of knowledge and outreach that increases the understanding of ecosystems and their services. The goals in this area relate to protecting, restoring and conserving natural resources, and developing mechanisms to help natural resource managers make optimal decisions.

Healthy Coastal Ecosystems Goal 1:

Coastal Louisiana habitats, ecosystems, and the services they provide, are protected, enhanced and/or restored through applied research and outreach of new knowledge.

Outcomes:

- Greater public awareness of water quality issues and impacts to Louisiana's ecosystems and participation in water resource management.
- Coordinated evidence-based science, traditional and local knowledge, and innovative solutions inform and improve the management and conservation of coastal habitats.
- Development of tools and technologies to guide shoreline and coastal protection, cleanup, or restoration.



Karen Kinberger, *Above Brackish Waters*, alcohol ink painting, Adult Division, Director's Choice

Healthy Coastal Ecosystems Goal 2:

Louisiana's coastal ecosystems and habitats are managed with science, tools, and stakeholder input in a sustainable manner.

Outcomes:

- Louisiana residents, managers, decision makers, and communities have resources and tools to make informed decisions about changes within the coastal ecosystem, how to improve coastal ecosystem health, and how to adapt restoration and protection efforts.

Appendix A

National Sea Grant College Program Performance Measures and Metrics

Performance measures and metrics
will be provided in Spring 2027



Donna Rose Pontiff, *Delicious Blue*, Adult Division, Fan Favorite



Anslei Pierre, *Falling Leaves and Pelican Dreams*, 0-10 Division, 2nd Place





Artists and artwork description located on inside cover.