Submerged Paleocultural Landscapes Project: A Summary

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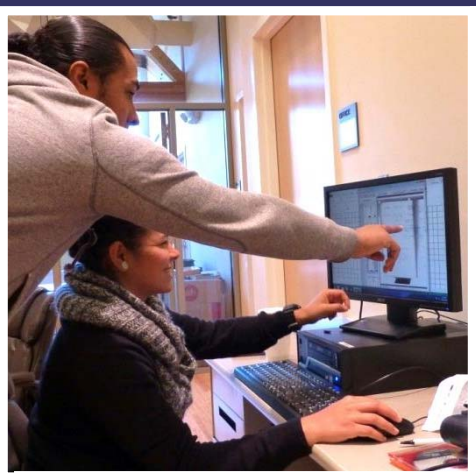
Southern New England Offshore Wind Energy Science Forum

URI-GSO Narragansett Bay Campus, Narragansett, RI – December 12, 2017





"May our work succeed, because all of our hearts and spirits request it to be so."
-Doug Harris (NITHPO)

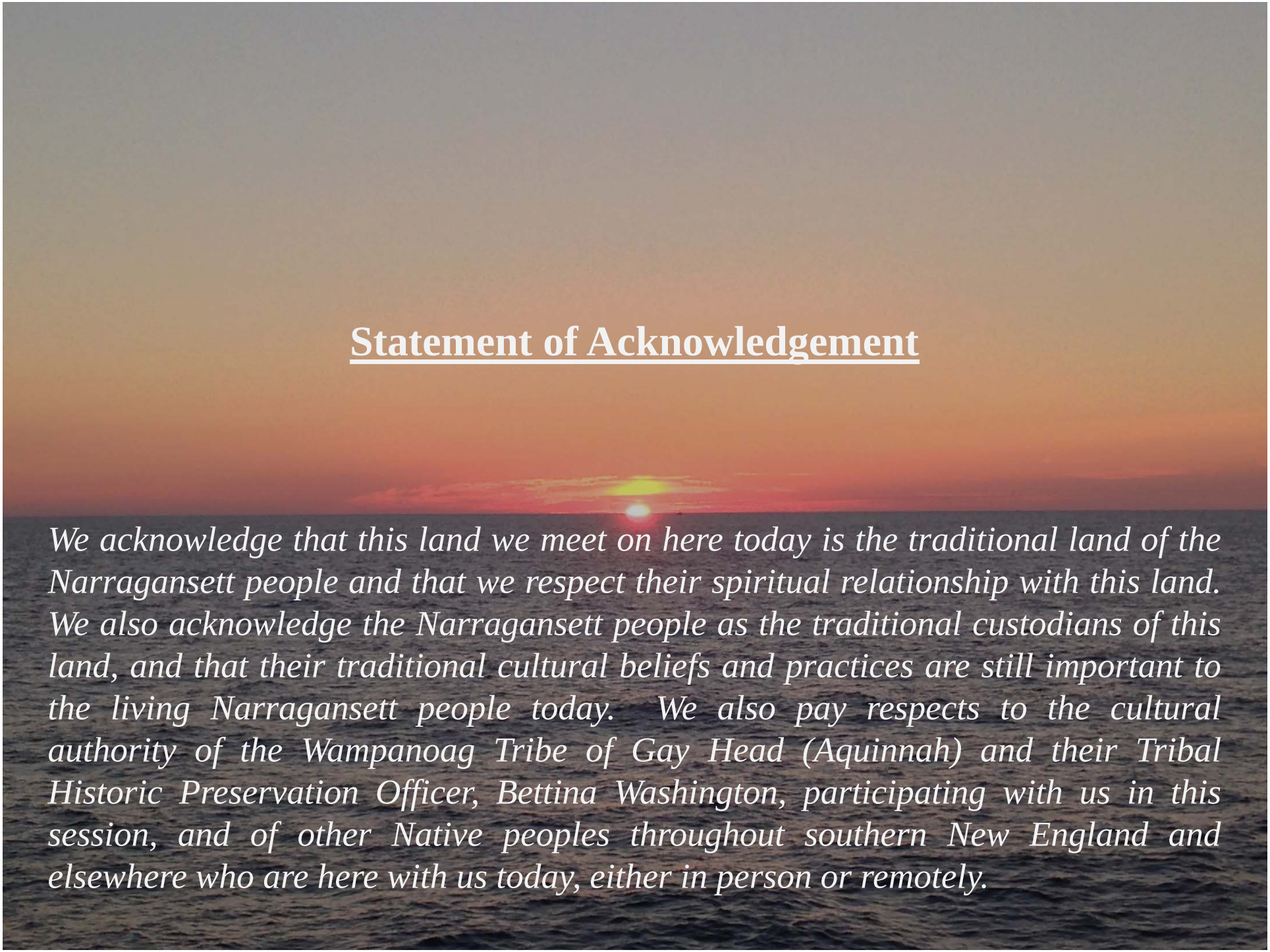

(Photographs by David S. Robinson, URI-GSO)

GSO

NITHPO
Narragansett Indian Tribal Historic Preservation Office

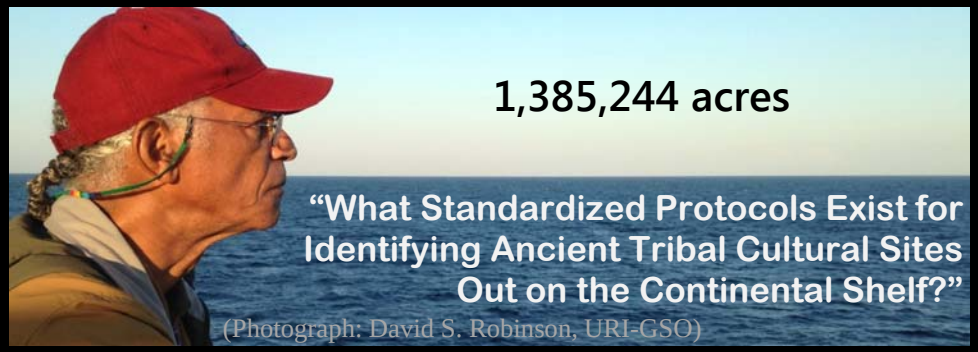
CRMC
Coastal Resources Management Council

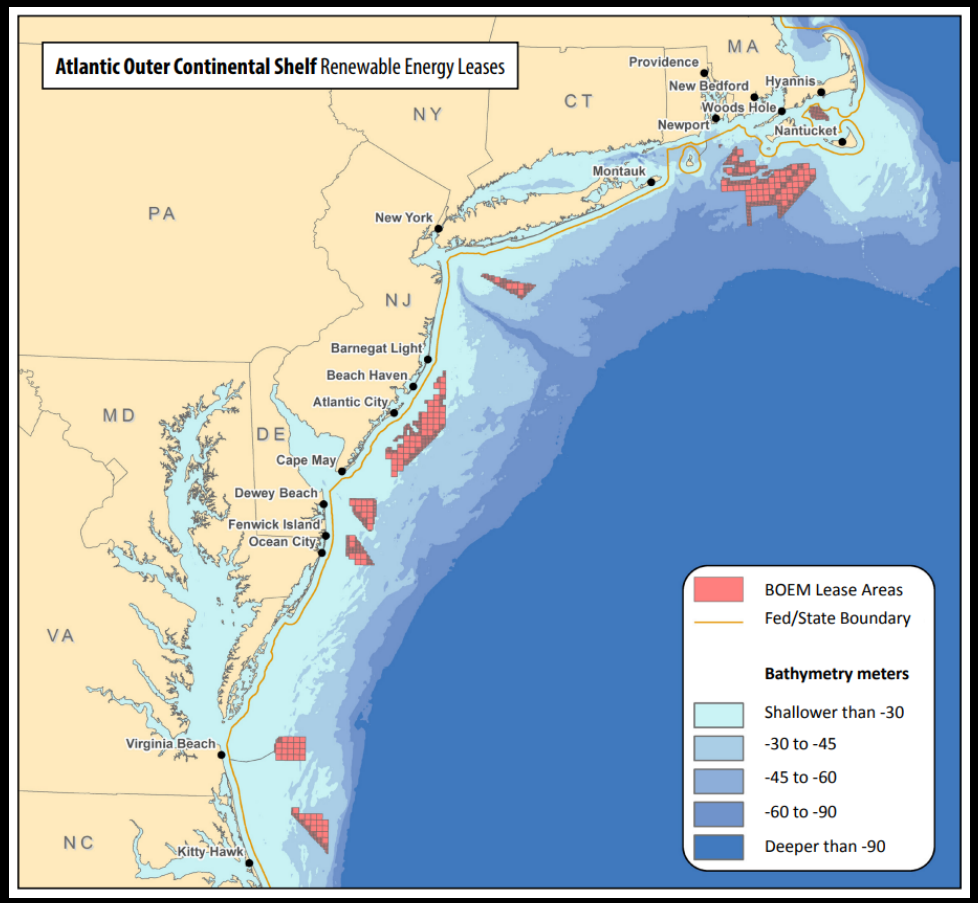
BOEM
Bureau of Ocean Energy Management



Statement of Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that this land we meet on here today is the traditional land of the Narragansett people and that we respect their spiritual relationship with this land. We also acknowledge the Narragansett people as the traditional custodians of this land, and that their traditional cultural beliefs and practices are still important to the living Narragansett people today. We also pay respects to the cultural authority of the Wampanoag Tribe of Gay Head (Aquinnah) and their Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Bettina Washington, participating with us in this session, and of other Native peoples throughout southern New England and elsewhere who are here with us today, either in person or remotely.





(Source: https://www.boem.gov/Renewable-Energy-Lease-Map-Book/)

SUBMERGED PALEOCULTURAL LANDSCAPES PROJECT INCEPTION (2011-2012)

Narragansett Tribal Historic Preservation Office (NITHPO)

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RI Coastal Resource Management Council (RICRMC)

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Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM)

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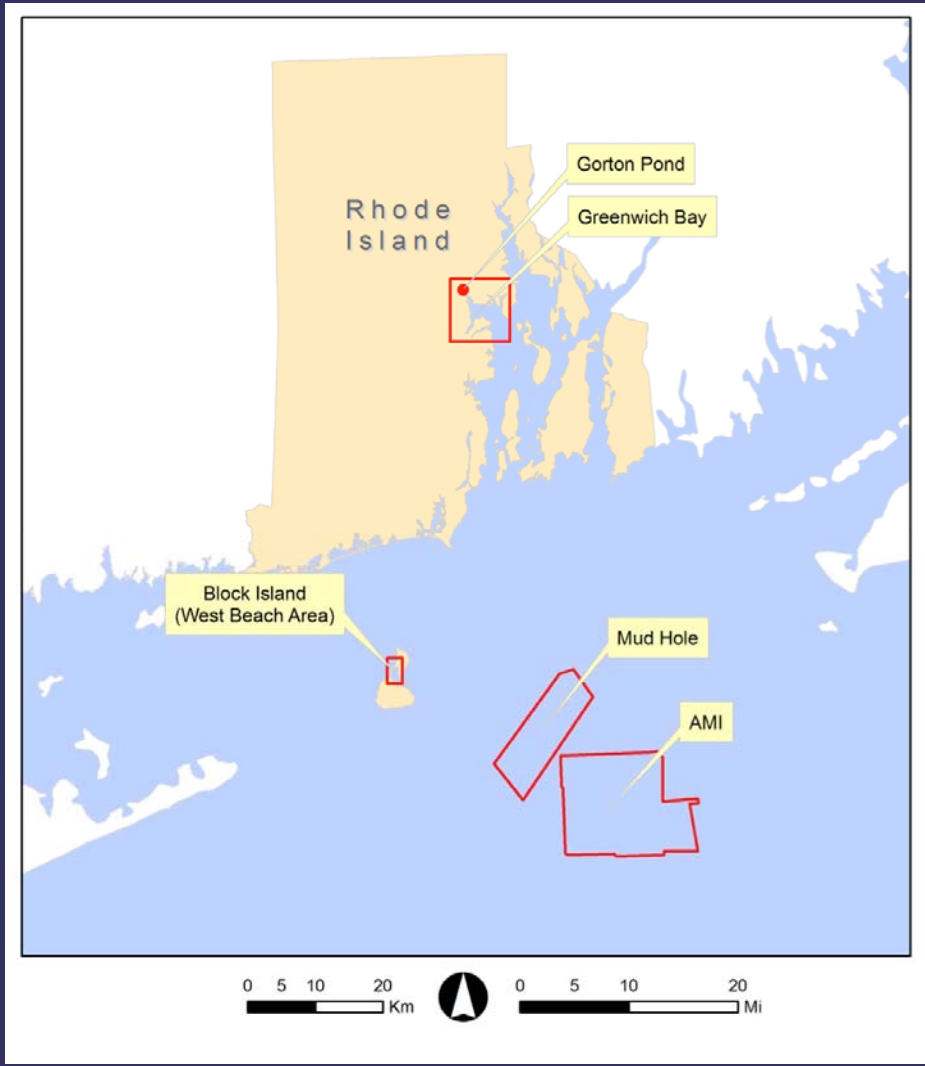
University of Rhode Island (URI)

Submerged Paleocultural Landscapes Project



(Map by Carol Gibson, URI-GSO)

PARTICIPANTS:

BOEM, RI-CRMC, URI-GSO, NITHPO

PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:

2012-2018

LOCATION:

Kettle Ponds, Coastal and Offshore Waters of RI

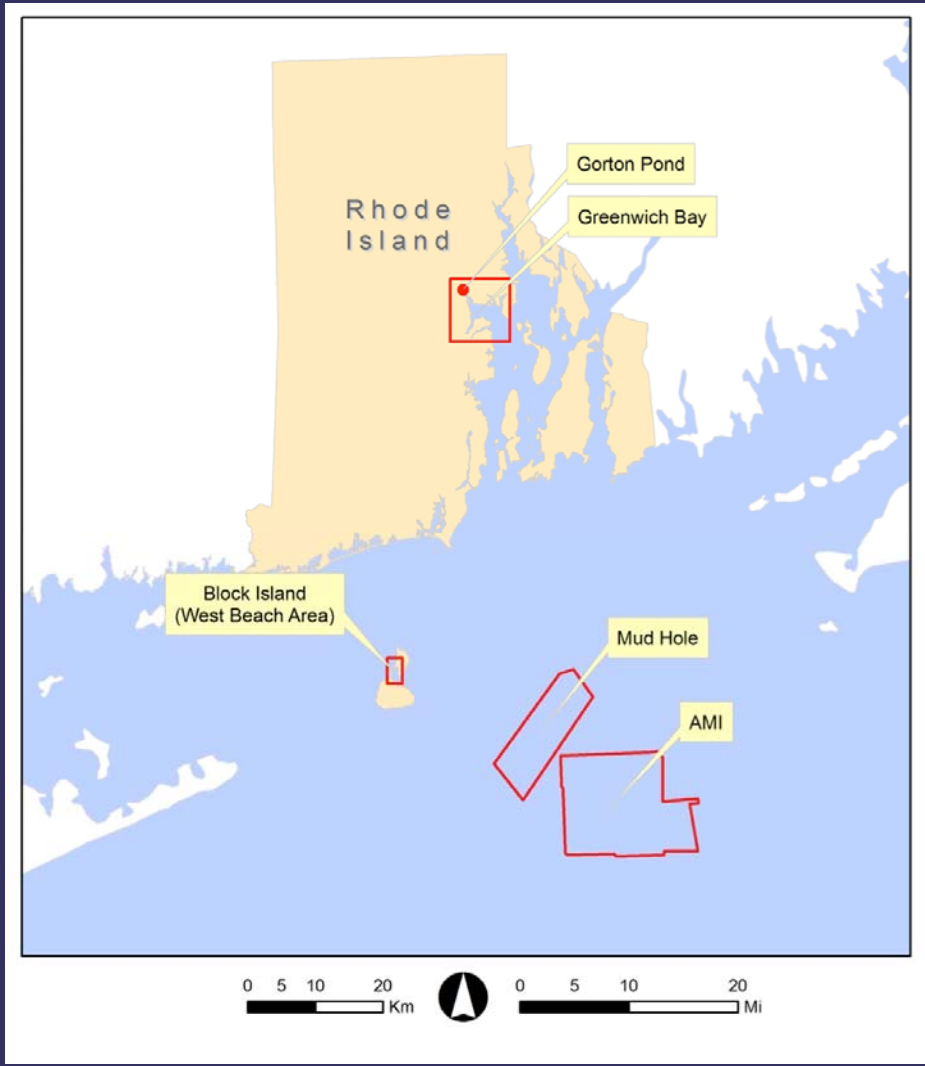
PURPOSE:

Develop recommendations for scientifically-based, Tribally-sensitive, "Best Practice" methods for identifying and protecting submerged paleocultural landscapes and sites

ANTICIPATED OUTCOME:

Assist federal and state, and Tribal communities develop information gathering protocols and survey measures to avoid or mitigate adverse effects to National Register-eligible or -listed submerged ancient Native American cultural sites

Submerged Paleocultural Landscapes Project

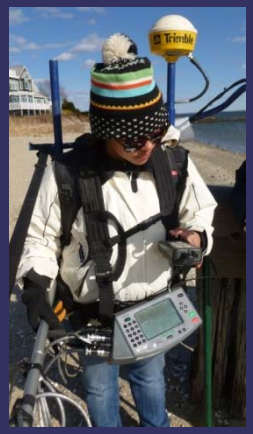


(Map by Carol Gibson, URI-GSO)

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- WORKSHOP & WORKSHOP REPORT
- LITERATURE SEARCH & EXISTING GEOSPATIAL DATA SYNTHESIS
- "BEST PRACTICES" DOCUMENT
- FIELD REPORTS
- MODELLING REPORT
- PROJECT EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
- FINAL PROJECT REPORT
- JOURNAL ARTICLE
- PROJECT FILM

BOEM/URI/NITHPO Research Partnership













(Photographs by David S. Robinson, URI-GSO)

Summary of Key Fieldwork Findings

Gorton Pond:

- Paleoenvironmental record documented back to 12,350 cal BP

Greenwich Bay/Cedar Tree Beach:

- Documented multi-channel paleo-drainage system and associated flood plain transition to freshwater swamp/marsh-to-estuary-to-bay and identified submerged paleocultural materials preserved in buried intact ca. 1,200-1,500 BP swamp/marsh deposit off of Cedar Tree and cultural materials in the beach swash zone spanning 9,000 yrs of human history

Block Island/West Beach:

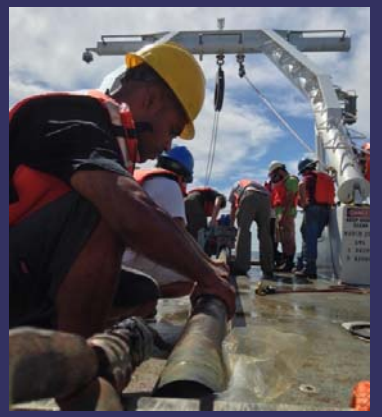
- Documented higher-energy zone preservation of a ca. 6,500-800 BP submerged paleocultural landscape with an intact forest floor, a possible hearth feature, and artifact concentrations at two locations

The "Mud Hole":

- Evidence in cores of a sandy beach deposit/formerly terrestrial shoreline

The "AMI":

- Analysis of existing data indicates that a flat, featureless seafloor is not always indicative of the same type of paleolandscape buried below the seafloor



Summary of Key Best Practice Recommendations

Agency/Tribal/Researcher Engagement:

- Need to improve the ability for agencies, Tribes and Researchers to work better together ("opportunities" to do so alone are not enough)

- The development of improved Communications, Relationships, and Capacity Building are the key foundation elements to improved engagement and consultation

Geoarchaeological Research:

- Predictive models for the submerged environment are not well-developed due to significant gaps in data (geological and archaeological) and shouldn't be used to develop management strategies (yet)

- Identification survey efforts should focus on identifying preserved elements of the paleocultural landscape first, and then try to identify cultural sites within them

- Paleocultural landscape identification is a multi-disciplinary process that should follow a standardized, systematic, phased investigative approach that includes: Tribal engagement, a thorough desktop study to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the regional and local geology and cultural history, and a geoarchaeological data acquisition program that is appropriate for the environment being surveyed and can adequately characterize its geology

What's Next?

Building Capacity & Community