In August, CHART’s Director, Dr. Monica Farris, participated in the Vermilion River Watershed Summit. The summit was attended by Governor John Bel Edwards, members of the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP), the Louisiana Office of Community Development, the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, the Army Corps of Engineers, and multiple parish presidents. Dr. Farris participated in the panel discussion on “Community Risk Decisions” and provided expertise on the Community Rating System.

In October, CHART held a CRS Users Group Program for Public Information (PPI) meeting for the Flood Loss Outreach and Awareness Taskforce (FLOAT) at the University of New Orleans. The meeting was attended by members of the PPI Committee, which includes both public officials and residents. At the meeting, the PPI Committee reviewed the current outreach projects in the FLOAT communities, and discussed new target audiences and outreach projects for the upcoming year.

The evaluation meeting occurs annually, and allows the FLOAT communities to obtain comments and suggestions from the PPI committee on each community’s outreach projects. FLOAT utilized the feedback of the committee to edit the outreach project list.

UNO-CHART Begins Work on State Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

In August 2017, CHART began work on the 2019 Update of the State of Louisiana Hazard Mitigation Plan. In partnership with the Governor’s Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness and Louisiana State University, the project team will update and develop material related to the 2019 Update of the Louisiana State Hazard Mitigation Plan, including the planning process, mitigation strategy and priorities, state mitigation, and local coordination and mitigation.

CHART will also draft both a Repetitive Loss and Community Rating System Strategy for the State of Louisiana, which will serve as an appendix to the Hazard Mitigation Plan.
CHART and UNO Students Participate in LA SAFE Planning Process

The Louisiana Office of Community Development Disaster Recovery Unit, in partnership with the Foundation for Louisiana, is leading a resident-driven planning process in Jefferson, Lafourche, Plaquemines, St. John the Baptist, St. Tammany and Terrebonne parishes. The process is designed to aid these parishes in planning for and adapting to coastal issues. UNO-CHART is conducting an evaluation of the resilience planning strategy and implementation, assisting with engagement, facilitation and education throughout the planning process, and providing support related to the Community Rating System program in the six participating parishes.

In March, May, August, November and December of 2017, the UNO-CHART project team, as well as numerous graduate students from the University of New Orleans, were able to attend multiple community planning meetings and document the meeting process.

In 2018, UNO-CHART will use the documented notes to evaluate the effectiveness of the planning process. Also in 2018, the project team will submit a final planning document to the six parishes.

About UNO-CHART...

Founded in 2001, UNO-CHART is an applied social science hazards research center that partners with and supports Louisiana communities in efforts to achieve disaster resilience. The objectives of UNO-CHART projects are to assist residents and local and state officials in reducing risk to natural hazards, especially hurricane and climate hazards, and to help them gain a better understanding of their risk and what they can do to protect themselves from these hazards.

UNO-CHART is comprised of a multi-disciplinary group of faculty, staff, and graduate research assistants representing various academic backgrounds including sociology, political science, public administration, planning, urban studies, engineering and geography. Research efforts address repetitive flooding, disaster mitigation planning, community resilience assessments, storm mitigation efforts by coastal communities, coastal restoration, community continuity, risk literacy, risk management and hurricane evacuation of vulnerable populations.