

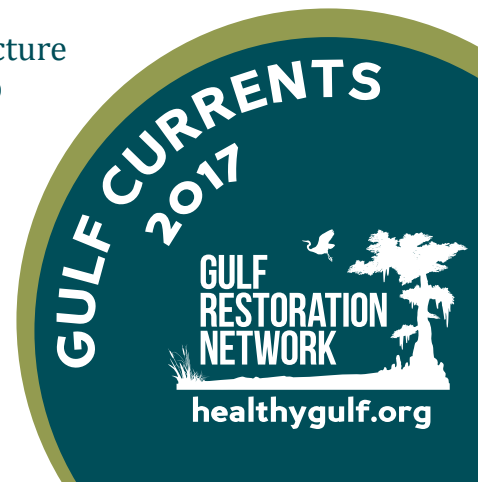
FLOOD LESS NEW ORLEANS

GRN continues to partner with neighborhoods in Greater New Orleans to empower people to reduce flooding, crumbling streets and pollution runoff. In the Treme neighborhood, we are partnering with the Micah Project and St. Peter Claver Church to hold developers accountable to the city's new stormwater management requirements.

Our first victory came with a developer that was asking the city for an exemption from the new stormwater management requirements; their historic renovation at 2606 St. Louis is from property line to property line. **We opposed the exemption and were able to negotiate with the developer to meet the requirements by installing stormwater retention technologies in the right-of-way next to their property.**

This victory has inspired other negotiations and the development of nolaconnects.org, a crowdsourcing platform to support green infrastructure projects. **Neighbors and businesses together are creating models to inspire better stormwater management.**

**NEIGHBORS AND BUSINESSES TOGETHER
ARE CREATING MODELS TO INSPIRE
BETTER STORMWATER MANAGEMENT.**



A rain garden built to reduce flooding waters in New Orleans.

THE PERSPECTIVE OF A SOUTHERN ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCATE

by Cynthia Sarthou

At a recent national gathering of environmental and conservation activists, it became very clear that my colleagues from the East, Mid-West, and West were extremely stressed and disheartened by the efforts of Congress and the White House to neutralize the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and roll back environmental laws. Comparatively, most of my colleagues from the South, although disturbed, were not too phased by what was going on. Why would there be this difference in outlook?

The answer lies, I believe, in the fact that Southern states, under the leadership of either party, are already loath to regulate business or industry, particularly if there is a promise of jobs. Consequently, political pressure brought to bear on federal agencies has always made EPA's ability to intercede on behalf of the environment in Southern states difficult. We have rarely benefited from forward thinking, environmentally protective administrations or agencies. Instead we have heard the steady drumbeat of jobs versus the environment, economic development is paramount, and energy is king. **Despite the challenges we face, we've been able to achieve real victories – to keep our water clean, protect our wetlands, and sustain our communities – through hard work, strategic advocacy and organizing coalitions across traditional political and ideological divides.**

For many of us the current administration is making environmental protection more difficult. **But have faith, while the battles are becoming more challenging, the war to protect our environment and communities remains the same and we need to keep up the fight.**

"FOR MANY OF US THE CURRENT ADMINISTRATION IS MAKING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIFFICULT."



Hilcorp Energy pipeline leak in coastal Louisiana.



Banners waved in Jackson Square in New Orleans on August 20, 2016 as people protest new leases in the Gulf of Mexico.



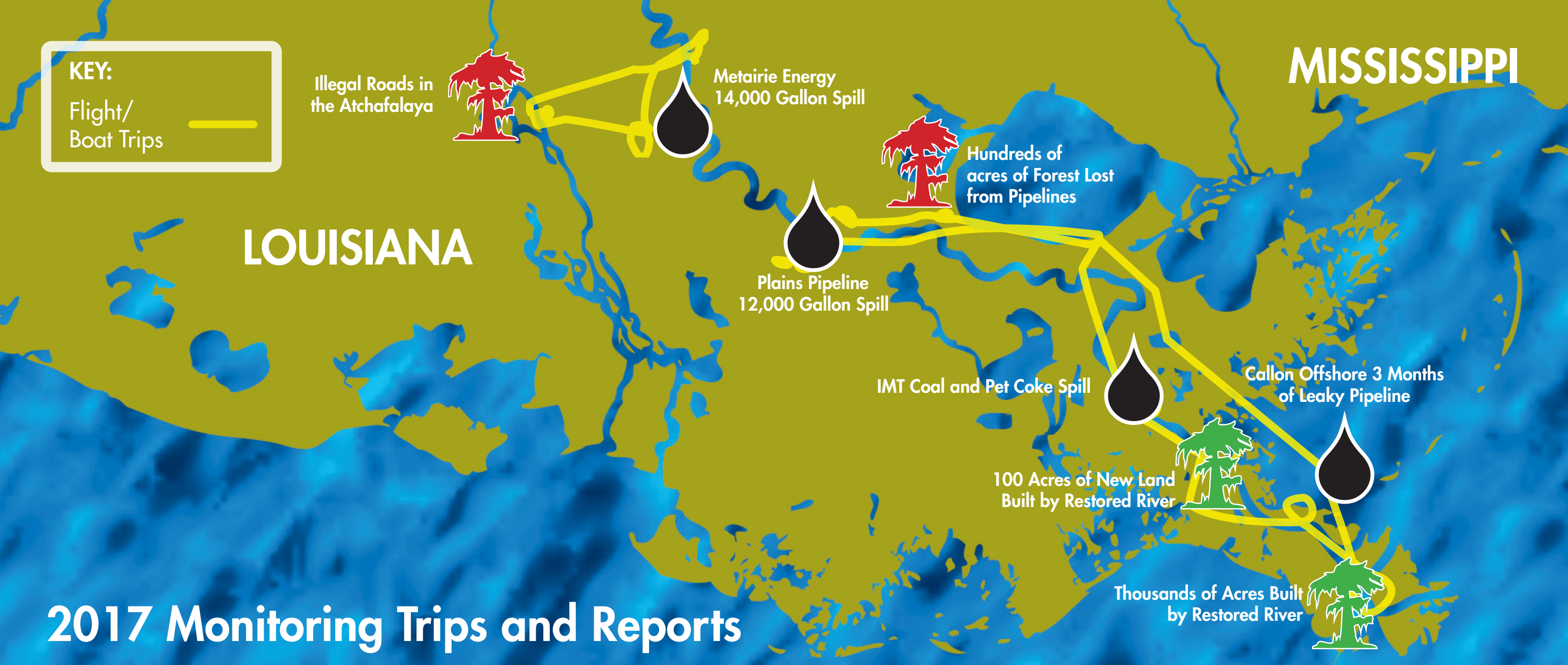
"WHY WOULD DECISION MAKERS REMOVE THESE BLOCKAGES AND THEN LET THE RIVER BE OBSTRUCTED UPSTREAM?"

An aerial view of the Pearl River. Photo Credit: Bonny Schumaker, On Wings of Care.

ONE LAKE: A FAR CRY FROM NEEDED RESTORATION

GRN advocates for the Pearl River's restoration and against further damming. The proposal to build a 1500-acre flood control lake on the Pearl River in Jackson, Mississippi has been in the study stage since 2013. In summer 2017, we expect feasibility studies and a draft Environmental Impact Statement for the "One Lake" project to be published. **The project poses risks to habitats and to the health of the Pearl River downstream of Jackson.** There is already a large dam on the Pearl River, impounding the Ross Barnett Reservoir, upstream from Jackson. Further channel modifications from a second lake include dredging the river deeper and wider, filling 1000 acres of floodplain wetlands, and blocking flow with a weir south of Interstate 20.

Lake construction doesn't offer restoration and could work against projects down the Pearl that do. In Mississippi and Louisiana, 10 approved downstream and coastal projects either study the Lower Pearl's hydrology or depend on its fresh water flow to work. Decommissioning the Pearl River Navigation canal locks and sills is a Louisiana project that Congress approved in 2016. **Why would decision makers remove these blockages and then let the river be obstructed again upstream?** Louisiana and Mississippi each have several BP disaster settlement-funded projects to restore shorelines, marshes or oyster reefs in coastal waters. Receiving enough fresh water from the Pearl at the right time of year is foundational to their success.



GRN was in the air and on the water many times in the first half of 2017, and the view from above is always educational.

In January, we documented recoverable oil from the Taylor Energy leak, and pinpointed the source. **We identified 5 other leaks from oil fields and coal terminals.** In the early spring, we flew over new logging roads and newly cut cypress and willow trees. We reported the illegal roads to wetland enforcement at the Army Corps. We've floated into the Atchafalaya basin to document the silt

that pipelines trap in the wild crawfishing waters.

Early spring is the last chance to see what's under the canopy, before the green leaves of Atchafalaya cypress hide the ground. We observed the massive oil spills at Metairie Energy and Plains Pipeline. **By accident, GRN documented illegal forest clearing for the Yuhuang Chemical plant in St. James.** GRN was the first to report the Plains Pipeline event to local community members.

In May, our allies at National Wildlife Federation and Vanishing Earth reported a spill from an unsecured BOPCO barge in Cox Bay. This was the same oilfield where GRN discovered a leak in 2015. GRN was also able to report on the extent of oiled marsh to federal and state oil response agencies.

Visit healthygulf.org/blog for the latest updates on our monitoring work.

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GULF FISH FOREVER

GRN has worked for decades to improve the quality of the Gulf of Mexico, its fish, and means through which fish are caught. Often times, diverse interests have different ideas about how our fisheries should be managed. GRN is committed to working with our partners to achieve victories for the fish, economy, and coastal culture that bring everyone to the table. Recently, we've been focusing on 3 such potential win/wins:

One: after years of work, **our campaign to protect bluefin tuna resulted in the allocation of \$20 million of BP disaster fines to help tuna and swordfish fishers transition away from longline fishing gear**, which can result in a significant unintended capture of endangered bluefin tuna, to greenstick gear that reduces bycatch. Now, seven of the longline vessels are participating in the four month pilot program.

Two: **GRN is dedicated to defending and strengthening the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA), the main federal law focused on sustainable fisheries.** In its 40 year history, MSA has helped rebuild 41 fish stocks, including red snapper and red grouper in the Gulf. Several bills in Congress would weaken MSA protections, but we are working to make sure it remains a strong tool for fisherfolk, chefs, conservationists and others to ensure sustainable fisheries for all.

Three: **there is a new opportunity to protect Gulf deep sea corals.** The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is considering amendments to protect valuable corals at risk from warming waters, oil spills, pipelines and certain fishing methods. This proposal will be open for public comments, so keep an eye out for more.



Fisherman Thien Duong Nguyen employs the greenstick fishing gear in order to catch yellowfin tuna. Photo Credit: The Pew Charitable Trusts.



Deep sea corals in the Gulf. Photo Credit: NOAA.

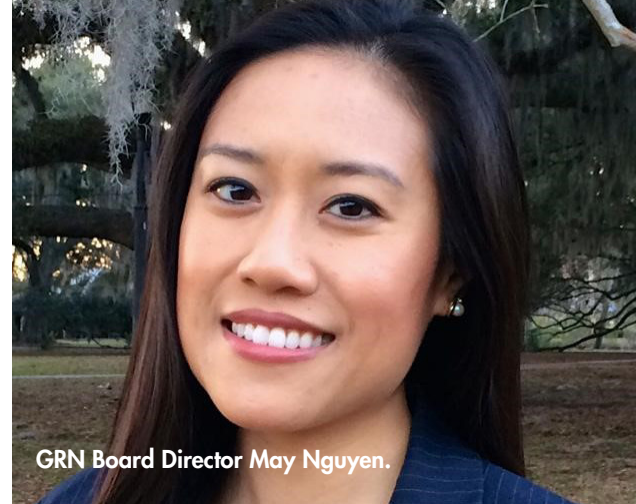
"GRN IS COMMITTED TO WORKING WITH OUR PARTNERS TO ACHIEVE VICTORIES FOR THE FISH, ECONOMY, AND COASTAL CULTURE THAT BRING EVERYONE TO THE TABLE."

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

We're thrilled to welcome two incredible leaders to the GRN Board of Directors.

May Nguyen collaborates with GRN often through her role as Community Outreach Director at the Tulane Environmental Law Clinic. Post Katrina, May supported the people of New Orleans East through business development and post-BP Disaster fighting for the recognition of subsistence fisherpeople.

Colette Pichon Battle, Esq. aims to connect the grassroots human rights movement to the climate movement in the United States. Colette was a lead coordinator for Gulf South Rising 2015, a regional initiative around climate justice and just transition in the South, and in 2016 she was named a White House Champion of Change for Climate Equity for her work with frontline communities in the US South.



GRN Board Director May Nguyen.



GRN Board Director Colette Pichon Battle, Esq.

AVEDA EARTH MONTH

At GRN, clean water is near and dear to our hearts. We've found a great ally in Aveda. From aggressive corporate production standards (nearly 100% recycling at their plants!) to their Earth Month initiative, Aveda puts their values into action.

For the last 11 years, Aveda salons and institutes across the South host raffles, catwalks and wine tastings to raise money for GRN's clean water initiatives. **Together these salons and spas raise over \$300,000!**

GRN is proud to partner with this powerful advocate for the environment. Thanks Aveda! Not just for your significant financial contribution, but also for making it possible to envision a world where ethical businesses protect the resources they rely on.



Kids cut-a-thon at Tangerine Salon.



GRN board member Acki Adams (right) with Aveda fundraisers wearing the new GRN Earth Month shirts.



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Gulf Restoration Network, founded in 1994, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to uniting and empowering people to protect and restore the natural resources of the Gulf of Mexico region.