

Adapting to the Storms:

A conversation about Wilmington and the Cape Fear Region after Florence

A scientist, a writer, and a coastal planner walk into a bar...

Well, not a bar maybe, but **UNCW's Center for Marine Sciences auditorium on September 24 at 6:30**. Their topic? Hurricane Florence, Hurricane Dorian, and future hurricanes. How do we respond to these storms? As individuals, as a school, as a community? How do we live, and adapt creatively, in a place on the edge of land and water in a time of rising seas and powerful storms?

This inaugural seminar on coastal resiliency takes a cross-disciplinary approach to these questions. UNCW's Dylan McNamara, Chair of the Department of Physics and Physical Oceanography, and David Gessner, Chair of Creative Writing, will host Tancred Miller, who works directly with Governor Roy Cooper on resiliency and adaptation issues as North Carolina's Coastal & Ocean Policy Manager for the Division of Coastal Management. Each speaker will consider past and future storms through the prisms of their various disciplines: how do we adapt—practically, scientifically, artistically, psychologically?

These are pressing questions for anyone living in the Cape Fear Region, or anywhere along the coast, at this time. The hope is to engage the audience in an open discussion of these issues, issues that our lives depend on. Cities like Norfolk, Virginia, with downtown streets that often flood during king tides, have had to face the reality of rising seas and have become leaders in doing so creatively. UNCW and the city of Wilmington, living on the edge as we do, have the opportunity to do the same.

BIOS:

Dr. Dylan McNamara is the Chair and a Professor in the Department of Physics and Physical Oceanography at UNCW. Dr. McNamara received his PhD in Oceanography from the Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UCSD and he holds an MS degree in Physics from San Diego State University. Dr. McNamara's current research interests are in coastal sustainability, coastal fluid dynamics, and using tools from nonlinear dynamical systems to explore stability in coupled human-natural systems. He has published over 30 peer reviewed journal articles in a wide range of fields including coastal sustainability, economics, physical oceanography, ecological modeling, and physics. Funding for his research has come from the National Science Foundation, the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, where Dr. McNamara has acted as Principal Investigator on grants totaling more than \$2.5 million.

Tancred Miller is the Coastal & Ocean Policy Manager for the Division of Coastal Management, and the division's lead on resilience and adaptation. Tancred coordinates the Coastal Resources Commission Science Panel's Sea Level Rise Assessment Reports, with the next report due in 2020. He is DEQ's program designee to the Governor Cooper's Climate Change Interagency

Council, which was created to fulfill the Governor's Executive Order 80 directives. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Morehouse College in Atlanta, and a Masters in Coastal Environmental Management from Duke University. Tancred joined the Division of Coastal Management in 2003.

David Gessner is the author of ten books that blend a love of nature, humor, memoir, and environmentalism. These books include the *New York Times*-bestselling *All the Wild That Remains: Edward Abbey, Wallace Stegner and the American West* and the prize-winning *The Tarball Chronicles. Leave it As it Is*, his book about Theodore Roosevelt and past, present and future of our public lands, is due out in Spring of 2020.

Gessner experienced his first North Carolina hurricane (Isabel) a month after moving to Wilmington sixteen years ago and soon after, in an effort to get to know his new home, began a series of travels along the coast with Duke Emeritus professor and geologist Orrin Pilkey. One of those trips, from North Carolina to New York City in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, resulted in "Down the Coast with Doctor Doom," a feature in *Outside* magazine that in turn led to a stint as a guest on MSNBC's special on Hurricane Sandy. Those trips, interwoven with reporting from Hurricane Florence, will be the subject of his next book.

About the Coastal Community Resiliency Seminar Series

This conversation is the first in a new monthly series of research seminars that will examine what it means to be a resilient community living in the coastal zone. UNCW and the Cape Fear Region are fully immersed in the benefits and challenges of living in the coastal zone. Those challenges crystalized when Hurricane Florence made landfall near Wilmington and lingered for several days. The resulting damage compromised the university's mission and ability to be a community resource. As we recover, UNCW has an opportunity to be a leader in both the research and implementation of best practices in coastal community resilience. The seminar series provides opportunities to hear from local and national leaders in coastal resilience research, initiate a dialog among UNCW's researchers and community leaders, and foster partnerships with the local community.

This monthly seminar series to highlight ongoing research, scholarship, and creative activity related to hurricanes and coastal community resiliency. Our focus is intentionally broad. In our view, a full consideration of community resiliency in the coastal zone refers to engineering solutions to protect from storms and climate change, public policy that promotes stewardship and sustainability, the ecological services provided by living resources, and human institutions that protect and sustain the physical and mental health of communities following times of distress.