

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 15, 2014

Contacts: Dr. Ben Strauss, 609-613-0832
bstrauss@climatecentral.org
Richard Wiles, 609-986-1997
rwiles@climatecentral.org

RECORD OCEAN FLOODS FORECAST FOR NORTH CAROLINA

Online Tool Details Threat Down to Zip Code
New Sea Level Rise Map and Projections for State

PRINCETON, N.J. — Coastal communities in North Carolina will likely see record floods topping 4 feet above the high tide line within 30 to 60 years, possibly sooner, depending on location. That is the threat under multiple sea level rise scenarios presented in a [new report](#) released by Climate Central. At risk are more than 60,000 homes, \$8 billion of property, 2,500 miles of road, 1.3 million acres of land, and 131 EPA-listed sites that are potential sources of contamination.

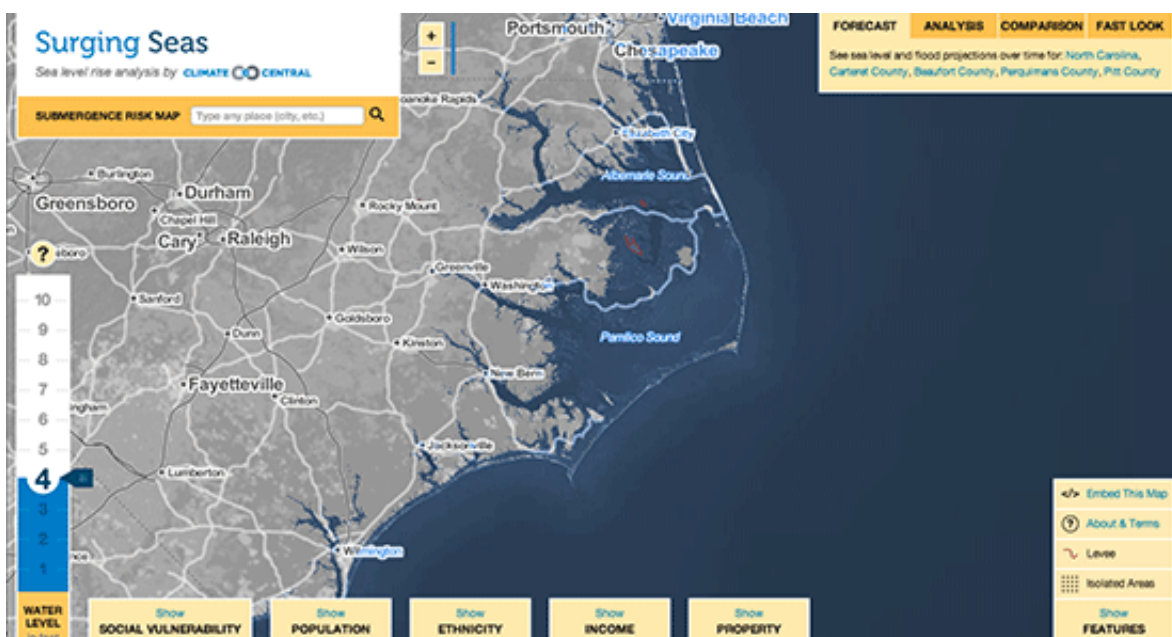
“Sea level rise means more floods, reaching higher – and that’s already happening today,” said Dr. Ben Strauss, study lead and Climate Central’s vice president for climate impacts. “The flooding from Hurricane Arthur was about 8 inches higher and more damaging because of past global sea level rise. With rise now accelerating, the same storm would cause a lot more damage in the future.”

Climate Central’s interactive tool offers new research results in unprecedented detail, mapping threats from neighborhood to state level, by decade, and for more than 100 topics, from schools to hospitals to heavy infrastructure. The independent research group blended global sea level projections with local trends to get sea level and flood forecasts tailored to the state.

Dr. Strauss will give a webinar explaining the research, results and how to use the tool for local insights at 2 p.m. Eastern Time TODAY (July 15).

JOIN HERE

Password: ncslr



[Click here to explore the embeddable map](#)

Climate Central’s analysis found a better-than-even chance of at least one flood exceeding 4 feet by 2050 at Beaufort, and 2070 at Wilmington, based on an intermediate high sea level rise scenario adapted from the U.S. National Climate Assessment. A rapid rise scenario would make the same level of flooding an every-year event within the same time frame. No recorded flood has ever topped 3.5 feet at either water level station.

The tool includes customized brief reports for every affected city and county in the state. [New](#)

Hanover and Brunswick Counties include more than half of the threatened property value at 4 feet, while Dare and Carteret Counties have the most homes at risk, and Hyde and Tyrrell Counties have the most land. Threatened cities include Wilmington, Greenville, Jacksonville, New Bern, Havelock, Elizabeth City and Leland.

Dr. Strauss will be available for interviews from 3-5 p.m. today (July 15) and 10 a.m. through noon tomorrow (July 16), and is reachable by phone (609-613-0832) or email (bstrauss@climatecentral.org).

Over the past 20 years, sea level has been rising at nearly double the 20th century average rate. Research published this May indicates that the West Antarctic Ice Sheet [has begun an unstoppable collapse](#) that will lead to [10-plus feet](#) of rise over centuries, the maximum range of Climate Central's map and analysis. Other research this spring indicates that Antarctic ice loss rate has recently doubled, and that Antarctica contributed more than 6 feet of sea level rise per century during a geologically recent warming episode. None of this has yet been factored into current sea level projections.

Drawing on data from more than 10 federal agencies, Climate Central is developing research and tools for every coastal state. This launch adds North Carolina, [bringing the total complete to 12](#). Previous coverage includes [USA Today](#) and [The New York Times](#).

###

Climate Central is a non-profit research and journalism organization providing authoritative, science-based information to help the public and policymakers make sound decisions about climate and energy.

[View this email in your browser](#) | [Unsubscribe from this list](#)

