

Volunteer Opportunities: HMS Database Management Activities

Kassie attended meetings for the NERRs collaborative science grant. Kassie created updated maps and point shapefiles for the resubmission of the field permit application sent to DHR. Kassie also worked on formatting the Survey123 form and FieldMaps map the crew will use in the field to record shovel tests. She also worked with Rep. Jenkins of the Gullah/Geechee Nation to create maps and organize FMSF update forms for Nassau County cemeteries. Kassie worked with Rep. Jenkins and FPAN Northeast staff to create a poster based on the People of Guana project and how the project focuses on working with descendent communities. This paper was presented by Sarah Miller at the NERRS conference in Seattle, WA, and by Rep. Jenkins at the Restore America’s Estuaries 2022 Coastal & Estuarine Summit in New Orleans, LA.

Kassie worked on QRQC and updates for the HMS Florida Arches Database. She collaborated with Adam Cox at Legion GIS to fix bugs and glitches and clean up Scout Report entries in Arches. Kassie and Adam also worked to plan and set up the implementation of the new FMSF update format for Arches. Kassie continued to attend Arches US User Group meetings and manage scouts as they sign up and coordinated with regional coordinators on HMS activity. She worked with Rachael Kangas to revamp the HMS Scout signup program, finalize our use of Canvas software for scout management, and began testing out its functionality. Kassie and Rachael got in touch with host institutions to set up a Canvas course for our use. She also worked with staff at the West Central, Southeast, and Southwest regions to do virtual HMS training focusing on post-hurricane assessments in partnership with the Florida Trust for Historic Preservation. Kassie also worked with Sarah Miller to set up an Open Science Framework page for the state HMS Grant completed last year. She uploaded publicly accessible data, references, and associated documents for longtime curation and public consumption.

This project uses a science collaborative mindset to **connect living Gullah/Geechee descendants** with a conserved landscape to better understand their **significant role** in Florida’s coastal heritage.

People of Guana: Collaborative Science, Heritage, and Working with Descendent Communities

Sarah E. Miller, Rep. Glenda Simmons-Jenkins, Emily Jane Murray, Kassie Kemp, Ula Sanson, Lori Lee, Lindsay Cochran, and Meg Gaillard

Introduction

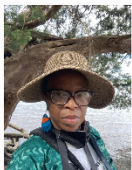
For 6,000 years people have called the Guana Peninsula in Northeast Florida home; now, natural and cultural resources on the peninsula are threatened by climate change. Using a collaborative science mindset, the People of Guana project hopes to gain a better sense of how resources were used in the past and how they currently are being used by communities to ensure responsive resource management and relationship building with visitors, descendants, and other community stakeholders. One key descendent community is the Gullah/Geechee, descendants of Africans who were ‘human trafficked’ to the coastal Southeastern United States. Little is known about their ancestors’ lives on the Guana Peninsula, and the current community is striving to fill in lost connections to these ancestral landscapes. This project combines archaeological investigations and applied anthropological methods to broaden the scope of interpreted history and connect living Gullah/Geechee descendants with the conserved marsh landscape to better understand their significant role in Florida’s collective coastal heritage.

Strategies


The project is the inaugural case study for the North American Heritage at Risk (NAHAR) research pipeline, designed not just get input from stakeholders, but to really engage communities in understanding and addressing climate change impacts at heritage sites at every step in the process. The project team meets monthly with representatives from the Gullah/Geechee Nation and the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission to share project updates and ongoing results and seek guidance in decision-making processes. Project events including site tours, Community Conversation focus groups, and eventually, archaeological fieldwork, are all aimed to bring descendants back to the Guana Peninsula to engage with the cultural landscape.

Discussion

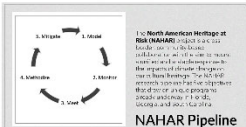
The project team has recognized the need for a truly reciprocal relationship; while the project aims to bring descendent communities to a ancestral spaces at the GTM to learn more about the past, the team also needs to go where the communities are to support their efforts towards environmental and social justice in their present locations. Team members have been asking descendent communities in Nassau and Duval Counties (just north of the GTM Research Reserve) with projects including site recording, cemetery care training, and community heritage days. Additionally, staff are reaching out to other descendent communities to meet them where they are, including scheduling trips to tribal lands and supporting heritage events in the local community.




Representative Glenda Simmons-Jenkins of Gullah/Geechee Nation during a coastal walk at the GTM. (Photo credit: Rep. Jenkins)




Participants at the first public meeting for the project.

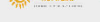






1. North American Heritage at Risk (NAHAR) research pipeline. The pipeline is a circular process that includes: 1. Integrate, 2. Assess, 3. Share, 4. Monitor, 5. Evaluate. The pipeline is designed to be iterative and flexible, allowing for adjustments as needed. The pipeline is supported by the National Executive Research Reserve System Collaborative, a group of federal agencies that address coastal management problems on a national scale. The Science Collaborative is led by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and managed by the University of Michigan Water Center.



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This poster was created to highlight the People of Guana project and how it uses a collaborative science mindset to connect with descendent communities and Florida’s cultural heritage.