

Doomed New Orleans

- September 21, 2005—For years man-made changes to the landscape of New Orleans have affected how well it could withstand the wrath of a powerful storm.
- When hurricane Katrina struck New Orleans, entire neighborhoods vanished under 20 feet of water.
- The devastation ranks as one of the natural AND man made disasters.
- Over time, the soil beneath New Orleans has compacted and sunk. The entire city has been sinking.
- Many years ago, the Mississippi river flooded regularly. The silt deposited from the floods replaced the compacted soil and kept the area at sea level.
- New Orleans is built to keep the water from the Mississippi river, as well as the renewing sediments, out.
- New Orleans is sinking at a rate of approximately 3 feet every 100 years.
- The odds of another flood devastating New Orleans are increasing due to the sinking city and the shrinking wet lands that surround the city.
- Canals built through the wetlands and levees built around the city funnel silt out to the ocean before it can be absorbed.
- Every 3 miles of wetland can absorb up to a foot of storm surge.
- Since 1930, Louisiana has lost over 1900 square miles of wetlands.
- By 2050, many barrier islands will disappear altogether.
- If nothing is done, New Orleans will eventually slip beneath the sea, with or without another hurricane.