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Marine Policy Seminar
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Risk Perception and Sea Level Rise: Perceptions of SLR Risk of Policy Actors in Delaware

Sea level rise (SLR) represents a significant threat to Delaware's coastline, natural resources, and its citizens. Delaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) created the Sea Level Rise Advisory Committee in 2010 – "a now-disbanded panel of state and local government planners, business people, academics and nonprofit staffers" (Hurdle – WDDE 2014.) The group recently published a set of 81 recommendations on how the state should plan for sea level rise. Currently, policy actors across the state are figuring out how these recommendations should be implemented, if at all. Some of the recommendations have been more controversial than others, and some policy actors are not in support of certain recommendations, citing concern that their costs aren't justified. Their argument being that SLR just isn't that risky to merit certain expenses that the recommendations might generate. It is a crucial time for sea level rise planning in the state. This presentation will review the problem that sea level rise presents to Delaware and describe the current sea level rise planning policy landscape. The presentation will also include a discussion of my proposed analysis of policy actors' perceptions of the risk of SLR and whether or not this has an impact on their decision-making in regards to SLR planning.