

**IKE DIKE/COASTAL SPINE STATUS:
RESEARCH, OUTREACH, POLITICAL SUPPORT**

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On September 13, 2008, Hurricane Ike came ashore near the east end of Galveston Island in Texas. Ike's strong Category 2 winds and especially its Category 4-equivalent storm surge, devastated the Galveston Bay region and Ike is ranked as the third costliest hurricane to make landfall in the United States. Two storm surge barriers that mitigated damage and loss of life and property were the existing Seawall constructed after the 1900 Galveston storm and the Texas City Barrier constructed after Hurricane Carla. Unlike Hurricane Katrina, when the media and the power of political process focused on the difficulties in New Orleans, the impact of Ike on the Houston/Galveston region was quickly forgotten as attention turned to the US presidential race and the worldwide financial meltdown.

Despite the initial lack of attention, Hurricane Ike may well be a watershed storm. It has already changed how NOAA classifies hurricanes by giving more credence to surge potential. Moreover, the devastation caused by Ike clearly pointed out the vulnerability of the Houston/Galveston area to hurricane storm surge and triggered ideas on regional approaches to suppressing surge for this urbanized region. Researchers from Texas A&M University at Galveston have teamed with hurricane experts at Jackson State University to concentrate on methods to stop the surge at the coast using a continuous coastal barrier – the “Ike Dike” concept.

Texas A&M University at Galveston has also formed strategic partnerships with the Bay Area Houston Economic Partnership (BAHEP) and the Bay Area Coastal Protection Alliance (BACPA) to foster research and public outreach. So far, in the Galveston Bay region, the Ike Dike surge suppression concept has been endorsed by over 60 cities and economic development organizations and the 132 industrial complexes represented by the East Harris County Manufacturers Association. In addition, a video showing how the benefits of Ike Dike surge suppression on individual properties was produced by

BACPA. At the time of this abstract (June 2016), the video had received well over 85,000 hits. At the conference, we will show the video, update other outreach efforts and summarize the status of political support.