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As part of the USGCRP research framework on coastal lands and ecosystems, the Biological Resources Division of the U.S. Geological Survey (National Wetlands Research Center) entered into partnership with Rice University, Louisiana State University, Duke University, Clemson University, University of Southwestern Louisiana, University of Georgia, and the Virginia Institute of Marine Studies (University of Virginia) to (1) document the current state and vulnerability of coastal ecosystems including an assessment of past changes in land cover, (2) develop an understanding of the processes which underlie these changes, and (3) predict the extent of future alterations to these habitats and the consequences for the sustainability of the resource and land base. This document summarizes the initial findings of our collaborative efforts. Overall, the studies exemplify an integrated approach addressing questions at the species, community, and landscape levels of organization and focusing on factors related to hydroperiod, sea-level rise, disturbance events, and coastal marsh submergence.

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