

Sea Grant Extension  
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From docking a shrimp boat to unload catch to fighting for a boat ramp to launch for a Saturday of snapper fishing, or finding a little piece of sand to set up your beach chair, water access is a topic of concern across the United States. Last week, representatives from coastal states from Maine to Key West to Texas and Washington to California gathered in Norfolk, Virginia to share their state's problems and discuss solutions.

At this meeting, Maine Sea Grant unveiled "Access to the Waterfront: Issues and Solutions Across the Nation." This report details information gathered from a survey of coastal managers across the country, and points to increasing coastal populations contributing to increased demand for private development along America's coasts. These demands are reducing all types of public access to the water and impacting our delicate water habitats.

The report also features a special section on the Gulf Coast states, detailing the more specific impacts the 2005 hurricane season had on water access and working waterfronts in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. As we in this area know from experience, natural disasters can exacerbate the demand on water access and coastal development.

The full report is available to download at <http://www.seagrant.umaine.edu/index.htm> .