This exhibition intends to bridge the complexities of science with the richness of place. As Louisiana embarks on a tremendous 50-year/ $50 billion effort to protect and restore its coast, it remains fundamental that this landscape is home to millions of people. Restoration – first and foremost – is for them.

Located within a research center dedicated to connecting state, federal, and university partners, the design behind the exhibition reinforces these partnerships. A diverse team of faculty researchers and graduate students working within the design research center were assembled to work with the clients to develop an impressive welcoming space of exploration, reflection, education, and inspiration. The interior architecture, exhibit messaging, graphics layout, and interactive displays were developed to tell the story of the Mississippi River Delta, the challenges it faces, and the exciting ongoing research dedicating to preserving this region.

The exhibition offers visitors to the Center an introduction to the history of coastal land-loss, a deep dive into the scientific research needed to respond effectively, and inspiration for people to get involved in the protection and restoration of our coast. The exhibition is a “gateway” for visitors to the center’s primary attraction, a large working hydrological model of the Lower Mississippi River. Visitors including school children, professional researchers, even elected officials are enticed to learn more through a range of thematic exhibition walls, interactive data displays, areas for individual research, and spaces for public gatherings.
The exhibition was designed within a previously designed research center. The exhibition's primary goal is to create spaces for a range of learning activities to introduce the history, challenges, opportunities, and actions currently underway to protect and restore the Louisiana Coast. The Center's main attraction is an operational hydrological model of the Mississippi River. The exhibit's purpose is to introduce, educate, and inspire visitors as they visit the model but also provide areas for reflection and gathering.
A primary concern for the space was that it will work for a range of visitors with different agendas. From school kids, to elected officials, to visiting scholars everyone was to find this exhibition helpful and the space comfortable for a range of activities. The design team estimated that visits to the exhibition could last 5-minutes or 3-hours. The exhibition is designed to be accessible to a large range of people with varying experiences and expertise in the coast from cultural to political to scientific.
The primary design concept is the positioning of 6 freestanding walls in the existing space to guide movement and experience. Each wall has a strong message that frames a particular coastal focus. Behind each wall is additional programmatic space that supported various center activities from a library, video center, and classroom.

Wall 1
**Shifting Foundations**
Upon entering the center, visitors are confronted with a 60' long geological transect through the coastal landscape. Milled from high density particle board the model charts a path from the Gulf of Mexico to Baton Rouge highlighting 8,000 years of land built by the migrations of the river.
Wall 2
**Interrupted Delta** opens with a map of the “sediment shed” of the Mississippi River covering 41% of the continental US. Each wall in the main space includes a large super graphic image and thematic title, a series of sub-storylines told through renderings and aerial photographs, and a long shelf that meanders through the space providing a rich narrative of the river, its people, its current plight, and its future.

Wall 3
**Losing Ground** provides a sobering reminder to the visitor that the path this region is on will lead to the disappearance of the coast.
The current moment of loss is seen through the progressive rendering of the declining Bayou Bienvenue on Wall 3 coupled with a timeline on the shelf.

**Wall 4**

**Managing Change** is a turning point in the exhibition, from the problems of the past, to the opportunities to change in the future.
The wall outlines the work currently being undertaken by the state, supported by university research, to implement a far reaching restoration plan. Coastal Louisiana’s sustainability requires restoring the natural processes that drive land building in the Mississippi River delta and ensuring that measures taken to reduce flood risk are integrated properly.
Creating Solutions

The many groups that support the Coastal Master Plan and the state’s protection and restoration efforts include researchers and planners, scientists and engineers, community leaders and citizens, and many more – all with different perspectives and talents, and all of whom have an essential role in creating a more sustainable future.

With so many diverse disciplines working to solve our coastal crisis, Louisiana is emerging as a global leader in creating innovative solutions for communities that face challenges similar to ours.
Behind the walls throughout the exhibition space, there are smaller more intimate areas dedicated to support the programming determined by the client. One example is the video center where tour groups stop along their visit route to watch a video on the challenges facing the state and actions currently being undertaken to protect and restore the coast.
Conference Room
The mezzanine between the exhibition space and the model space operates as a fully functioning conference room that can support up to 80 people. This space hosts community gatherings, state led workshop, or university functions.
Inside the model warehouse informational kiosks line the rail. Each kiosk allows viewers to use touch screens to zoom cameras in on particular portions of the model, watch video, view maps and previous model outputs.
This exhibition intended to bridge the complexities of science with the richness of place. As Louisiana embarks on a tremendous 50 year effort to protect and restore its coast, it remains fundamental to remember that this landscape is home to millions of people. Restoration – first and foremost – is for them. The exhibition blends technology with history and culture to inspire and educate the people of Louisiana.