

Coastal Retreat, Relocation, and Restoration

**Proactively & equitably
reimagining our coasts for
safer people and restored
coastal habitats**

Timothy Clark, Southeastern Connecticut Program Director
Northeast Regional Ocean Council, November 2024



Today

1 Challenges of managed retreat

Why we need to proactively plan for managed retreat

2 Centering equity in managed retreat

Ensuring Environmental Justice in this approach

3 What's Next?

How can we move forward, together?

What is Managed Retreat?

Eliminating flood risk by helping people, homes, and infrastructure move out of high flood risk areas.

- Direct Buy-outs
- Moving structures
- Rezoning
- Rolling easements

Image Credit: Jesse Mendoza/[Sarasota Herald-Tribune](#) (Sarasota, FL, Sept 2024)



A note about words



What is Managed Retreat?

Complicated!

Politically tricky

Expensive

Poorly branded

Intersectional

Painful

Potentially inequitable

A new field

Image Credit: MyCoast [Report #184950](#) (Nantucket, MA, Sept 2024)



What is Managed Retreat?

Necessary

An opportunity to reimagine our coast

An opportunity for restoration

An opportunity to prevent losses

Image Credit: MyCoast [Report #185144](#) (Keyport NJ Sept 2024)



Coastal flooding = intersectional

More than 2,000 Superfund sites within 25 miles of the East and Gulf Coasts

These sites are often in or near communities of color and low-income communities

Coastal flooding threatens the availability of subsidized affordable housing

Image Credit: Timothy Clark





Territories



Languages



Treaties

Search your address, or toggle switches above to add shapes. Click around! [Think critically about this map.](#)

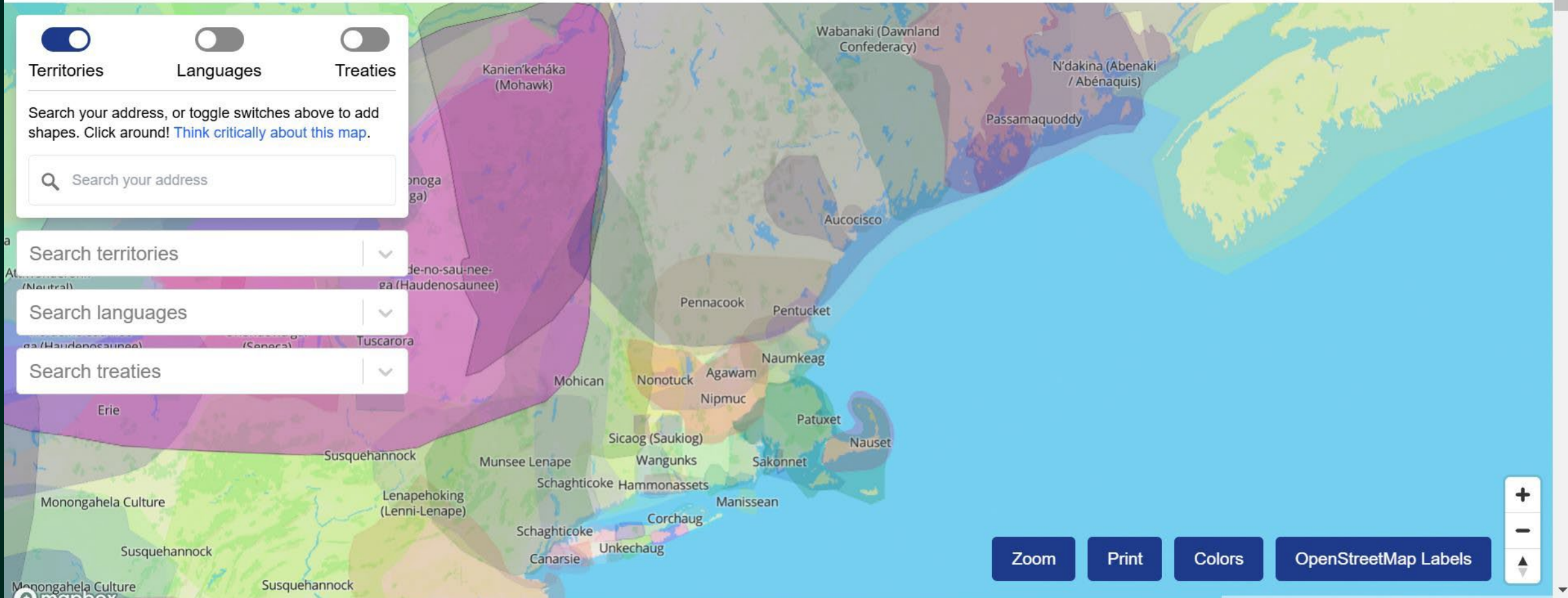


Search your address

Search territories

Search languages

Search treaties



Zoom

Print

Colors

OpenStreetMap Labels

Proactive Planning is Essential for Just and Equitable Adaptation

- EJ communities at **highest risk** from intersectional crises – flooding, housing, pollution, etc.
- Reactive retreat in response to disasters **reinforces social and structural inequality**
- Limited financial, municipal capacity for proactive planning



Opportunities for Action

Convene
Partners

Develop & Share
Case Studies,
Best Practices

Engage
Community
Members

Provide
Technical
Expertise

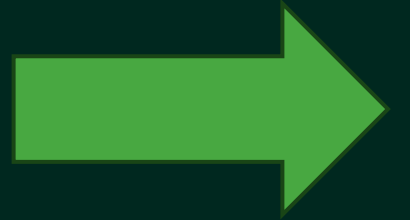
Develop Data &
Spatial Tools

Create
Communication
Tools

Partner with
Munis,
Agencies, CBOs

Lead & Partner
on Projects

What else?





If we get this right:

Integrated, Proactive Planning

for safe, connected, resilient coastlines to reduce risks from coastal flooding and erosion, particularly for our most vulnerable people.

Protection & Restoration

of the lands left behind to functional coastal ecosystems which dynamically adapt to climate impacts.

Equity-driven support for communities

to relocate to safer areas nearby before they suffer flood losses.

Image: Emma Gildesgame





