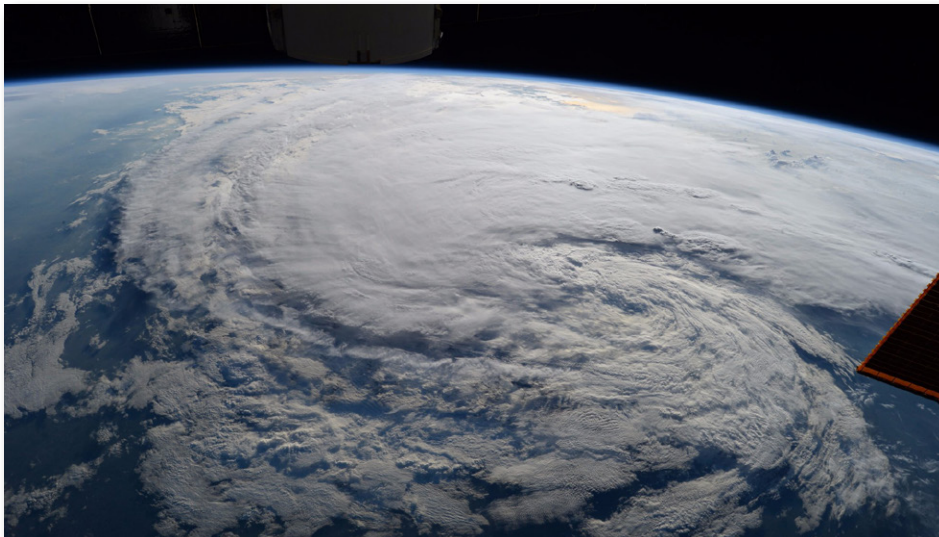




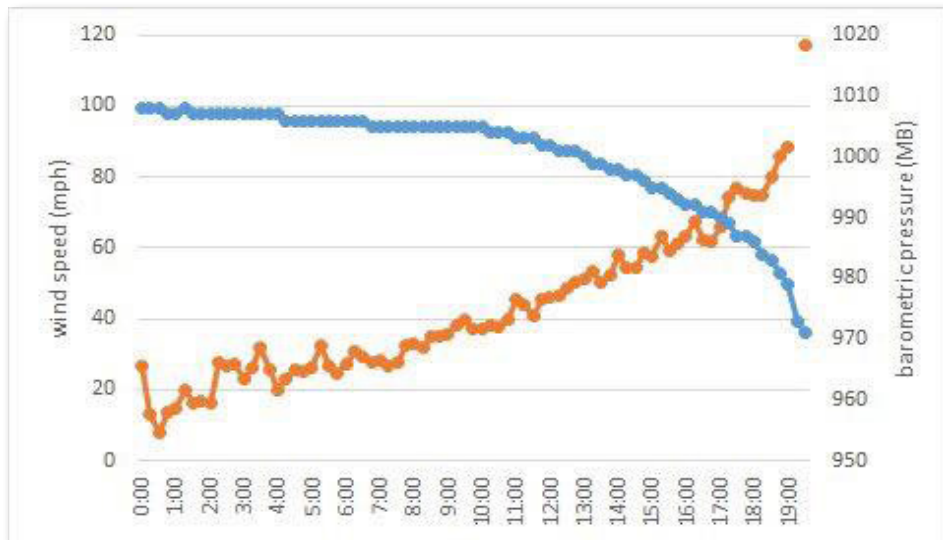
DISCOVERY STARTS HERE



The week of August 20th, staff and students at UTMSI began preparation for Hurricane Harvey. It was originally predicted to be a tropical depression, but rapidly increased in strength culminating to a category 4 at landfall. NASA astronaut Randy Bresnik took this photo of Tropical Storm Harvey from the International Space Station on Aug. 28 at 1:27 p.m. CDT.



The tropical depression rapidly intensified into a hurricane. Staff and students at UTMSI immediately initiated the severe weather action plan which included securing fiscal files (pictured to the left), intellectual property and securing the campus. Photo credit: Annette Ables.



When Hurricane Harvey was making landfall, one of our weather stations on the UTMSI pier was still collecting data until it lost power when winds hit close to 120 mph. The Mission-Aransas Reserve operates five system wide monitoring program stations throughout the Mission-Aransas Estuary. These stations that collect water quality and weather data continuously. Our researchers are looking at the information collected during the storm and preparing plans to replace the instruments lost. Many organizations and individuals use the data from these stations for recreational, informational, and emergency situations. It's important that these stations come back online for our local community.



Hurricane Harvey made landfall the evening of August 25, 2017. The Marine Science Institute implemented their severe weather emergency plan and heeded the mandatory evacuation issued by the City of Port Aransas. First responders from the City rode out the storm in our dormitory D. Director, Dr. Robert Dickey was the first on scene at the campus midday on August 26th. "The campus has substantial damage. There are waterfalls in the Estuarine Research Center," texted Dickey that evening. Courtesy photo taken on August 26th.



Upon reentry to the campus, Director Dickey formed the first response team that included University of Texas (UT) System Risk Management, UT police, UT environmental health and safety, and disaster response contractor Cotton Holding Incorporated. The team immediately secured the campus and began assessment for chemicals and other hazards.





While all of the birds were evacuated from the Amos Rehabilitation Keep (ARK), the sea turtles were not. They all rode out the storm in our Oiled Wildlife Rehabilitation Facility. Staff from the ARK, including Alicia Walker and Andrew Orgill (pictured on the left) arrived on campus two days after the storm on August 27th to release all the turtles that were releasable and transfer those that were not to an adjacent rehabilitation facility, the Sealife Center, on North Padre Island. Photo credit: Jace Tunnell.



All of the campus buildings sustained water damage, primarily from roof failures, like that shown in the Estuarine Research Center, or damage from blown out windows. Photo credit: Cotton Holdings, Inc.



Laboratories and offices in the Estuarine Research Center were among those that were most impacted. Water penetration occurred on all three floors from the top (left) to the bottom floor (below).







The Fisheries and Mariculture Laboratory campus also sustained damage including the seawater pump house (left), roof of main laboratory, and exterior garages. The life support for the fish in the exterior garages failed and all fish were lost in those buildings. Photo credit: Cotton Holdings, Inc.

Student and visiting scientist housing complexes at Beach Street Apartments (right) and Wilson Cottages sustained water damage from roof leaks and broken windows. All of the students and visiting scientists have since relocated to Corpus Christi. Photo credit: Cotton Holdings, Inc.



The Bay Education Center in Rockport, Texas sustained water damage. Staff from the Mission-Aransas Reserve removed all carpet and salvageable exhibits. Photo credit: Jace Tunnell.







On August 31, 2017 a drilling rig ship ran aground on the south jetty destroying the UTMSI research pier. Photo credit: Jace Tunnell.



The disaster response contractor, Cotton Holding Incorporated, quickly mobilized a team to clean the campus of large debris, set up temporary power, temporary roofing, remove water-damaged interiors and other response actions. Photo credit: Cotton Holdings, Inc.







Director Dr. Robert Dickey speaks with UT System Chancellor William McRaven at the Fisheries and Mariculture Laboratory. Chancellor McRaven visited the campus, very soon after the storm on August 31st, to lay eyes on the damage. The chancellor and UT Austin President Gregory L. Fennes have been fully engaged and extremely supportive in aligning emergency aid and specialized personnel to help with recovery in the immediate aftermath, damage assessments and planning our path for full recovery going forward.



State Representative and Chairman of Calendars, Todd Hunter (in black) speaks to UT System Chancellor William McRaven about the damage that Hurricane Harvey inflicted to the Marine Science Institute. Representative Hunter has met with UTMSI staff on at least a weekly basis to provide updates and state support to the Institute.

While our boat fleet survived the hurricane with minimal damage, the vehicle fleet was not so lucky. Only two of the eighteen vehicles survived without damage.







A week after the Hurricane hit, scientists prepare their offices and laboratories to move to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMUCC). President Fennes and Texas A&M University System Chancellor John Sharp were instrumental in arranging the relocation of 80 percent of our faculty, students and staff to TAMUCC, which came through Harvey in good shape and stepped up magnificently with a helping hand. Photo credit: Jace Tunnell.

After being dried out, the auditorium serves as a temporary storage for belongings of displaced students from campus housing as well as laboratory and office equipment that can't be moved to TAMUCC. Photo credit: Jace Tunnell.



The University of Texas is moving forward. UTMSI is working with University of Texas System Risk Management to document insurance claims and begin the damage assessment and claims process. UT Austin has assigned Mary Knight, Associate Vice President for Finance, to be chief liaison and point of contact for emergency funding to begin rebuilding. Concurrently, Director Dr. Robert Dickey and Facilities Manager Salvador Rojas, pictured, are working with UT Project Management and Construction Services to develop plans for the rebuilding effort.







Faculty, students and researchers move their office and laboratory belongings to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMUCC). Special thanks go out to TAMUCC President Kelly Quintanilla, Harte Research Institute Executive Director Larry McKinney and other colleagues at TAMU-CC for their generous assistance and hospitality. Photo credit: Larry McKinney.



Our Marine Science Advisory Council and several other generous donors immediately rose to the occasion with offers to support our students, staff and faculty with emergency funds and lodging. We are very grateful to each and every one of our Council Members and contributors to HornRaiser for their emergency support. "Your generosity is heartwarming and encouraging as we move forward. It shows that not only Texas but also Texans, indeed our colleagues across the nation, have big hearts," says Director Dr. Robert Dickey.





Amidst the aftermath of the Hurricane, we also lost an icon. UTMSI will recover from Harvey, but the loss of Tony Amos leaves a void that cannot be filled. "Tony has long been a larger-than-life presence at UTMSI, in our community, the coastal bend, indeed the nation. He was a passionate naturalist, educator and a font of knowledge. He had an illustrious career at UTMSI and carried his passion for nature into his retirement with the ARK for a total of 41 years. To say Tony was a charismatic advocate for nature is an understatement; he captivated and motivated people. He was a champion and he was loved by all he touched. Tony lived life on his own terms and dealt with his illness in the same way, something we all aspire to do. Our hearts go out to his wife, Lynn and son, Michael. Piping Plover #19 will miss him." said Director Dr. Robert Dickey.

For those of you that would like to contribute a special remembrance of Tony Amos, we are preparing a collection of stories. If you would like to share your Tony Amos story, please visit <https://goo.gl/hRpS9k>.