

## Extensive Dieback of Non-saline Coastal Marshes in Louisiana, 1999 to 2001

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**Study Initiated:** April 1999

**Completion Date:** April 2002

**Funding Source:**

**Study Site Location(s):** Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge, Cameron/Vermilion Parishes, LA

**Keywords:**

**Project Type:**

**Project Outline:**

**Specific Aims:** Document history and extent of marsh dieback of *Spartina patens* marshes at Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge and explore possible explanations.

**Methodology:** Review satellite imagery to predict possible dieback areas, field observations to ground truth possible sites and collect pore-water samples from selected areas to test for extreme soil acidity.

**Results to Date:** Dieback event occurred between March 1999 and April 1999. Site investigations confirmed predicted dieback areas of *Spartina patens* in localized areas. Soil water samples collected prior to dieback event suggest normal conditions. Post event samples were not collected until October 1999. Post event samples reveal a brief period of reduced soil pH levels.

**Lessons Learned**

Dieback event is still a mystery because death occurred during a period of seemingly normal pore-water conditions

**Publications, reports, or web-accessible materials**

None at this time.

Suggested citation: Georgia Coastal Research Council, 2004. Proceedings of the Marsh Dieback Workshop, held February 3-4, 2004, Savannah Georgia.