



MEDIA RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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FLOODING COULD HAVE BEEN PREVENTED ***SIERRA CLUB PRESENTS "GEOLOGY OF KATRINA"***

NEW ORLEANS – Anyone who wants to understand the geologic setting of New Orleans and how the sediments buried below the levees led to their failure and the flooding of the city should attend the next meeting of the New Orleans Sierra Club.

Stephen Nelson, PhD, Chair of the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Tulane University will present "Geology of the Katrina Disaster" at 7 p.m. on Sunday, May 21, 2006 at the First Methodist Church, corner of Freret and South Carrollton streets. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting is open to all people and is free of charge.

Dr. Nelson has visited all the levee breaches and he will provide an analysis of the reasons for the engineering failures at the 17th St, London Avenue and Industrial canals. Dr. Nelson says his presentation will show that flooding could have been avoided if simple geologic principals had been followed.

"We're going to talk about the geological conditions that existed at the time of Katrina and how they led to breaches in the levees," says Dr. Nelson. "We're not going to talk much about what happened in the Lower Ninth Ward as the surge waters were simply too high there. But the failure of levees and floodwalls at the 17th Street and

London Avenue canals was not due to overtopping but to failures to account for the geological conditions present beneath those levees.”

Dr. Nelson will discuss the geologic landscape of the area going back 5,000 years and will explain changes that occurred up until the day the hurricane struck. He will present a comprehensive slide show that contains numerous images to back up his points.

Since Early November, 2005, Nelson has been conducting field trips to the levee breaches for interested parties from throughout the New Orleans community as well as visitors from out of state and students enrolled in his natural disasters course. For more information about Dr. Nelson, visit his website at: www.tulane.edu/~sanelson.

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The Sierra Club's 750,000 members work together to protect communities and the planet. The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. The Delta (Louisiana) chapter of the Sierra Club has more than 3,500 members and has been active in local conservation projects for more than 30 years. For more information, contact the organization's website: www.louisiana.sierraclub.org.