



Facts About Women of the Storm

Founded in January, 2006, Women of the Storm is a non-partisan grassroots alliance of Louisiana women whose families, businesses and lives were affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The group expanded its participation across the Gulf Coast in 2011, with the addition of women from Texas, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida. Members, who are culturally, socially and economically diverse, are bound by their passion for their communities. Women of the Storm draws the attention of Congress, policymakers, media and opinion leaders who set the national agenda to the needs of the entire Gulf Coast – and how the region’s recovery has a direct impact on every state. The organization seeks to demonstrate to national leaders the strong and deep support across America for the essential funding of Gulf Coast restoration.

Activities & Accomplishments

- When only 12 U.S. senators and 25 members of the House of Representatives had visited the Gulf Coast to see the destruction of Hurricanes Katrina & Rita, Women of the Storm organized 130 women and chartered a plane to Washington DC in January 2006. The group walked under blue-tarp umbrellas to a news conference and called on Congress in teams of two, offering a personal invitation to every member of the House and Senate to visit the area, focusing on needs for housing, safe levees and coastal restoration. Within a few weeks, a 36-member Congressional delegation traveled to New Orleans. Once they saw the magnitude of the devastation, leaders understood the issue better; most became advocates for the people of Louisiana and the Gulf Coast. In that spring, Congress approved fully funded the Road Home housing restoration program.
- The Women of the Storm’s second trip to DC (September 2006), again with 130 women, was focused on Outer Continental Shelf revenue sharing, which was approved by Congress in December 2006.
- Partnering with New Orleans universities, Women of the Storm made an unsuccessful bid to hold a 2008 Presidential debate in New Orleans.
- In 2008, representatives of the group were invited to present a platform for coastal restoration to the meeting of the Democratic National Committee Platform Committee. Women of the Storm members attended the Democratic Convention, throwing miniature footballs with a message of “a football field of wetlands is lost every 50 minutes;” plans to attend the Republican Convention were interrupted by Hurricane Gustav.
- On the eve of the Saints’ appearance in Super Bowl XLIV, each member of Congress received by hand-delivery a small, colorful football, similar to those distributed at the Democratic Convention, with a tag urging “Be a Saint! Save Our Coast! Invest in America’s Future!”
- On Day 92 of the oil spill, Women of the Storm unveiled the “Be the One” video campaign and e-petition, featuring an array of celebrities committed to Gulf Coast restoration. The video was also screened at more than 6,400 movie theatres across the nation. The petition has more than 131,000 signatures from every state.
- In early 2011, Women of the Storm expanded to become “A Gulf Coast Coalition,” including women from Texas, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida as well as Louisiana, to advocate for an 80% share of the Deepwater Horizon fine dollars.

For more information: <http://www.womenofthestorm.net>.