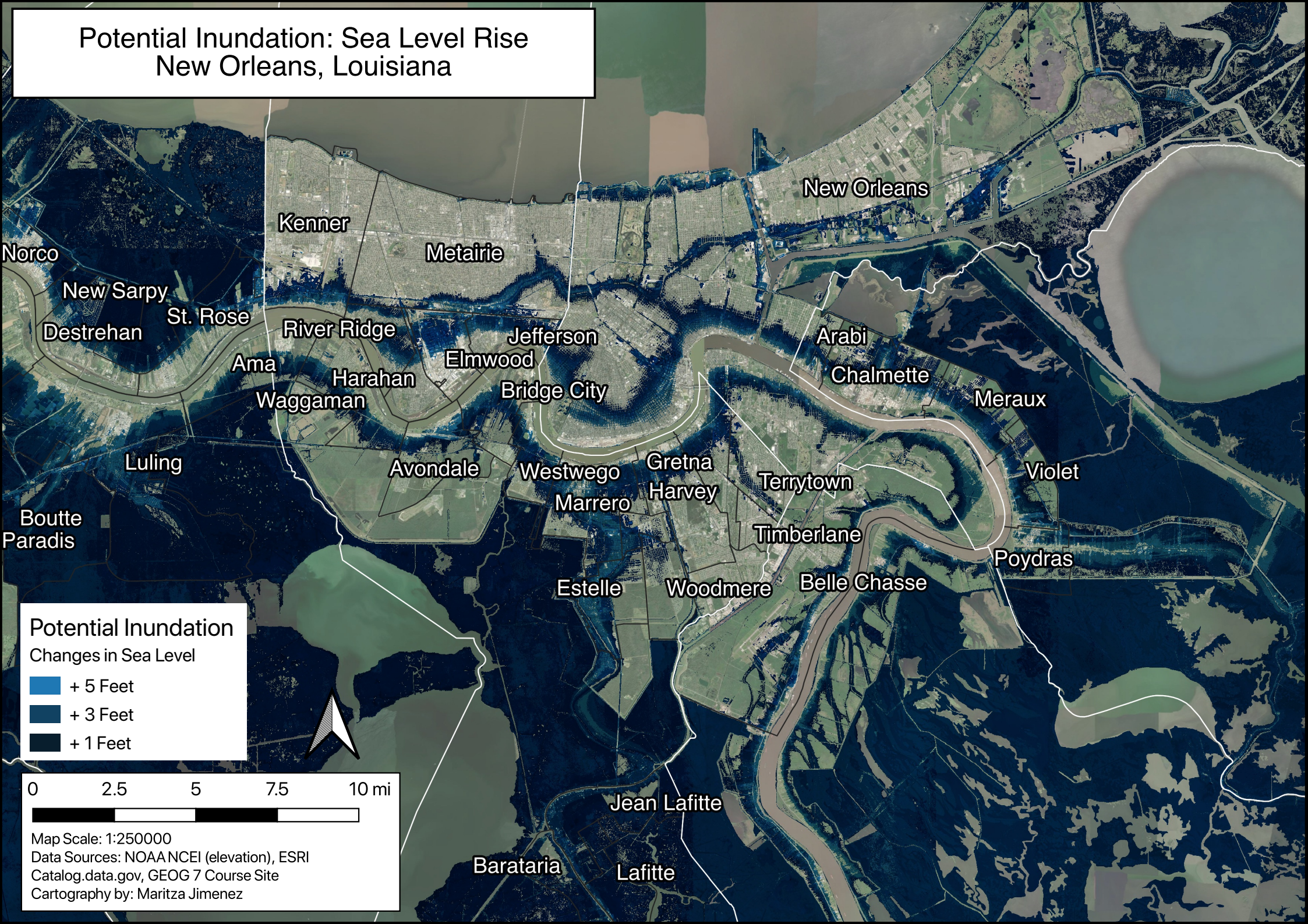


Potential Inundation: Sea Level Rise New Orleans, Louisiana



Potential Inundation

Changes in Sea Level

- + 5 Feet
- + 3 Feet
- + 1 Foot

0 2.5 5 7.5 10 mi

Map Scale: 1:250000

Data Sources: NOAA NCEI (elevation), ESRI

Catalog.data.gov, GEOG 7 Course Site

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GEOG 7

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New Orleans and the Effect of Sea Level Rise

I determined the sea level change scenarios shown on my map by looking for a reliable article describing the severity of sea level rise in New Orleans, Louisiana. I found the perfect source on the Natural Resources Defense Council website. The specific article details that by 2100, sea level rise in New Orleans is expected to rise by 1 to 4.6 feet, making it one of the highest in the nation (NRDC). Based on the range given in the paper, I chose 1 foot to be moderate, 3 feet to be severe, and 5 feet to be extreme. I understand now that all cities will be affected differently by sea level rise. Some cities are more susceptible to flooding, like those on the coast or those already below sea level. I found it interesting to learn that there are two major reasons why sea levels rise; one of them I was familiar with; glaciers melting; the other I wasn't aware of; sea level rises because seawater expands as it gets warmer. Of course, as climate change worsens, more glaciers will melt at a faster pace and ocean temperatures will increase (NASA).

After reading up on the situation in New Orleans and seeing the differences on the map I made, I realized that the city is in critical danger of being completely underwater within the next 100 years. Even one foot of inundation will have a profound effect on the region. If climate change continues to accelerate at the pace it's going at right now, there is no doubt that New Orleans will sustain critical harm and likely be underwater within the next decade if precautions aren't taken. I've heard of precautions against flooding being taken in the Netherlands and they have proved to be effective, so it's possible that if those practices are put in place in New Orleans, the city will survive past 2100.

Works Cited

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