

LAURA BRUGGER

Climate & Socio-Environmental Scientist

Climate and socio-environmental scientist with nearly a decade of experience integrating environmental and social data to assess climate risk and resilience. Focused on using spatial analysis and scientific synthesis to support climate adaptation, conservation, and resilience efforts for government and nonprofit partners.

EDUCATION

2024

- **Saint Louis University**
Ph.D. in Public and Social Policy – *Dissertation: “Spatial heterogeneity in the relationship between disasters, resilience, and political participation.”*
 St. Louis, MO

2019

- **Saint Louis University**
M.A. in Sociology
 St. Louis, MO

2011

- **University of Nebraska-Lincoln**
B.A. in Psychology & Spanish
 Lincoln, NE

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2024 -

- **Assistant Research Professor**
Washington University in St. Louis
 St. Louis, MO
 - Lead interdisciplinary research integrating geospatial, environmental, and social data to help establish the Brown School's environmental research portfolio.
 - Launched and directed the Disasters & Democracy Lab, creating a dedicated research platform for work on disaster risk, governance, and civic outcomes.
 - Convened and led five interdisciplinary research teams advancing new research agendas and proposals across climate risk, urban ecology, and conservation.
 - Publish peer-reviewed research and applied briefs on disaster risk, environmental exposure, biodiversity, pollution, and human health outcomes.
 - Provide scientific leadership in multi-institutional collaborations on nature-based solutions, contributing to grant proposals and research presentations.
 - Translate scientific evidence into decision-relevant guidance and syntheses for conservation, climate adaptation, and resilience.

2021

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2024

- **Senior Statistical Data Analyst**
Social Policy Institute, Washington University in St. Louis
 St. Louis, MO
 - Led end-to-end data collection, management, and analysis for concurrent research projects, delivering decision-ready datasets for multiple principal investigators.
 - Designed and executed quantitative and spatial analyses of climate risk and vulnerability, producing maps and research syntheses.
 - Authored research briefs and technical outputs translating complex findings for policy and practitioner audiences.
 - Produced 20+ briefings for government, nonprofit, and community stakeholders, with research cited in federal policy discussions, including the White House (2021).

2015

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2021

- **Grants Specialist / Program Coordinator**
Saint Louis University
 St. Louis, MO
 - Coordinated proposal development to support competitive interdisciplinary projects.
 - Delivered interdisciplinary programs, events, and stakeholder engagement activities.

CONNECT

 laura.brugger37@gmail.com
 laurabrugger.github.io
 LinkedIn
 Google Scholar

SKILLS

Research Strategy
Scientific Agenda Development
Applied Research Design
Spatial & Statistical Analysis
GIS & Data Visualization
Climate Assessment
Conservation Planning
Evidence Synthesis
Technical Writing
Science-Policy Communication

TOOLS

R · ArcGIS Pro / Online ·
QGIS · Stata · Git ·
GitHub

CERTIFICATES

Tropical Forest
Landscapes Restoration
(Yale) · Climate
Intelligence & Systems
Change (RegenIntel) ·
Quantitative Methods
(SLU)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Midwest Climate
Collaborative · Living
Earth Collaborative

ALL PUBLICATIONS

See [my website](#) for a full list of publications.

NONPROFIT EXPERIENCE

- 2025 –
 - **Board Member**
Missouri Coalition for the Environment  St. Louis, MO
 - **Program Manager**
The Covering House  St. Louis, MO

SELECTED RESEARCH OUTPUTS

- 2025
 - **Disasters and democracy: Spatial analysis of how Hurricane Helene impacted the 2024 election.**
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Research Conference.
 Seattle, WA
Alexander, L., Brugger, L., Li, B., & Reeves, A.
 - **Staying afloat: How families raising children with disabilities used the expanded Child Tax Credit.**
Journal of Disability Policy Studies.
Brugger, L., Parker, C., Hamilton, L., Baughman, A., Jarzombek, C., Comeau, M., & Roll, S.
 - **Spatial Variation in Disaster Risk and Voter Turnout: Insights from Los Angeles, Miami, and San Antonio**
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management Research Conference.
 Washington, D.C.
Brugger, L., Spindler-Ruiz, P. & Sandoval, N.

SELECTED FUNDING

- 2026-2027
 - **Assessing the InSPIRe Pilot: Insurance Supplements for Inclusive Disaster Recovery after Helene**
Carolina Community Impact, \$50,000, Co-Investigator
- 2025-2026
 - **Hurricane Helene & the 2024 Election**
WashU Geospatial Research Initiative, \$20,000, Principal Investigator
- 2025
 - **Mapping the Vote: Climate & Voter Behavior**
WashU Here & Next Initiative, \$25,000, Principal Investigator
- 2025
 - **Disasters & Democracy Lab**
WashU Center for the Environment, Principal Investigator
- 2022-2025
 - **Workforce Economic Inclusion & Mobility Project**
JPMorgan Chase Foundation, \$1.58M, Co-Investigator

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- 2025
 - **Environmental Justice & Mental Health**
Washington University in St. Louis
- 2022-2024
 - **Policy Evaluation & Analysis**
Washington University in St. Louis
- 2022-2024
 - **Foundations of Biostatistics**
Washington University in St. Louis