

Galveston Island booming, but sinking

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The economy of Galveston Island, Texas, with its 60,000 residents, is booming, but the narrow strip of land is sinking a few inches each decade.

The low-lying West End, beyond the protective seawall, will most likely suffer problems of subsidence, sea-level rise and coastal erosion the soonest, reported the Houston Chronicle Sunday.

"What I am afraid of is that people living there will one day look back and wonder why, if scientists knew changes were occurring to the island, they didn't do anything about it," John Anderson, an oceanographer at Rice University.

Roy Dokka -- who heads the Louisiana Spatial Reference Center at Louisiana State University -- has caused a stir in Texas by suggesting subsidence is occurring along the Texas coast at a rate similar to that of coastal Louisiana, which has accelerated to at least 5 feet per century.

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