



## INITIATIVE NEWS

We offer condolences to our friends and partners who were affected by the ferry dock collapse that occurred on Sapelo Island, Georgia on October 19th, leading to the deaths of 7 individuals and left others critically injured. This tragedy was a devastating loss to the Gullah Geechee community and beyond during what was supposed to be a time of celebration. Our hearts go out to the friends and families of the deceased during this difficult time.

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## SASMI PARTNERS' GOOD WORK

[Online survey to help guide coastal management strategies](#). North Carolina Division of Coastal Management officials are in the process of determining priority areas and strategies for the 2026-2030 cycle of the Section 309 Assessment and Strategy and are asking for public input. The assessment is a process to evaluate and enhance the effectiveness of a coastal management program using guidelines outlined in Section 309 of the Coastal Zone Management Act, and it allows for additional funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The division is asking the public to complete its Section 309 Survey available [at this link](#) until Nov. 22.

[New Tool Provides Insight into Coastal Community Well-Being](#). NOAA Fisheries social scientists have launched the new Community Environmental Justice Explorer web tool. It

describes environmental justice concerns for nearly 5,000 coastal communities in the United States. By visualizing indicators, such as fishing dependence, gentrification pressure, and poverty, this tool creates a dashboard to explore and compare the different pressures coastal communities can face. This web tool helps managers, researchers, and the public understand environmental justice concerns. Learn more or access the tool at the link above.

[Science panel applies 2022 sea level report projections to NC](#). The science panel that advises the state Coastal Resources Commission is showing with a new report how the findings of a 2022 federal-level report projecting that sea levels will rise by more than a foot by 2050 apply to North Carolina. Released in mid-October, the “North Carolina 2024 Sea Level Rise Science Update” is the product of the science panel following the commission’s 2022 charge to present any new or significant data and research on sea level rise projections. You can access the [full report at this link](#).

[Biden-Harris Administration, NOAA make \\$95 million available for fish passage as part of Investing in America](#). NOAA Fisheries announced two funding opportunities totaling \$95 million through President Biden’s Investing in America agenda to support new fish passage projects. Projects will help protect and restore migrating fish and their habitats, and support communities and economies that depend on these resources.

The two funding opportunities are:

- The \$75 million Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Notice of Funding Opportunity, which will fund projects that reopen migratory pathways and restore access to healthy habitat for fish across the coasts and Great Lakes.
- The \$20 million Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Notice of Funding Opportunity, which will support tribes and tribal organizations in implementing fish passage work and building tribal capacity to sustain these efforts.

Learn more about these opportunities in the Funding section below.

## **FUNDING REMINDERS**

[Catalyzing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to Support Oyster Aquaculture and Restoration](#)

The Supporting Oyster Aquaculture and Restoration (SOAR) Program is excited to announce the release of its Catalyzing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to Support Oyster Aquaculture and Restoration request for proposals (RFP). SOAR is soliciting proposals from organizations and individuals to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within the shellfish aquaculture industry and to encourage future initiatives to promote DEI to achieve sustainable growth for restoration and aligned industry efforts.

As part of the Catalyzing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to Support Oyster Aquaculture and Restoration RFP, The Pew Charitable Trusts, in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, intends to fund three (3) to four (4) proposals, at a value of approximately \$75,000 to \$100,000 each. Industry members or an aligned organization with a clear industry partner are eligible to apply. Funding priorities are listed in the RFP in Appendix A: Scope of Work. Funded projects will be completed in collaboration with Pew and TNC staff leading the SOAR program.

The deadline for submission of proposals has been extended to **November 15, 2024**. Please email any questions to Chip Heil ([cheil@pewtrusts.org](mailto:cheil@pewtrusts.org)), the Pew point of contact for the RFP.

### **[Environmental Protection Agency Community Change Grants Program](#)**

EPA's new Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants program (Community Change Grants) has announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for approximately \$2 billion dollars in Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funds in environmental and climate justice activities to benefit disadvantaged communities through projects that reduce pollution, increase community climate resilience, and build community capacity to address environmental and climate justice challenges. These place-based investments will be focused on community-driven initiatives to be responsive to community and stakeholder input. They are designed to deliver on the transformative potential of the IRA for communities most adversely and disproportionately impacted by climate change, legacy pollution, and historical disinvestments. To learn more or check eligibility, visit the link above; due **November 21, 2024**.

### **[Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grants](#)**

Up to \$75 million in funding is available for fish passage projects under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This funding will support projects that reopen migratory pathways and

restore access to healthy habitat for fish around the country. There will be applicant webinars on November 20 and December 3, and the closing date is **February 10, 2025**.

### [Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grants](#)

Up to \$20 million in funding is available for fish passage and tribal capacity building under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This funding will support U.S. federally recognized tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and tribal organizations in implementing fish passage work and building tribal organizational capacity. There will be applicant webinars on November 20 and December 3, and the closing date is **February 27, 2025**.

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

### [The North Carolina Coastal Conference | November 11-13, 2024 | New Bern NC](#)

North Carolina Sea Grant's biennial conference serves as a platform for engaging with like-minded participants and potential collaborators dedicated to the prosperity of our state's coastal communities, environments, and economies. Join us for stimulating presentations and discussions featuring researchers, agency and business experts, community leaders, educators, students, and all individuals passionate about coastal topics.

### [SECAS Third Thursday Web Forum | November 21, 2024 | Virtual](#)

Every year, Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy (SECAS) staff update the [Southeast Conservation Blueprint](#) to incorporate new data and address input from new partners. Learn more about the latest updates to the Southeast Conservation Blueprint and SECAS Goal Report with Rua Mordecai, Coordinator, Southeast Conservation Blueprint.

SECAS is also hosting a series of virtual workshops to gather input on the Blueprint! This feedback will help ensure the Blueprint represents on-the-ground conditions and captures your conservation priorities. It also helps staff prioritize future improvements. The last of these is set to take place [November 7, 2024](#).

### [Building Coastal Adaptive Capacity through Nature-based Solutions | November 26, 2024 | Virtual](#)

This webinar features two presentations that relate to increasing coastal adaptive capacity. The first, funded by AdSci, will provide an overview of how communities are working to increase their coastal adaptive capacity and community resilience to sea level rise through workshops and vulnerability assessments that identify potential adaptation pathways, funding opportunities, and data needs. The second project featured will be from the West CAP team, the California-Nevada Climate Adaptation Program, highlighting their approach to providing technical assistance and integrating regional data and projections for sea level rise, coastal storm flooding, and beach erosion.

### [SEAFWA 78th Annual Conference | December 9-13, 2024 | Augusta GA](#)

Following thoughtful discussion and evaluation, **SEAFWA has decided to postpone the 78th Annual Conference**. The new dates are Monday, December 9 through Friday, December 13.

The Annual Conference of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies is a forum for the exchange of ideas and critical information regarding the management and protection of fish and wildlife resources primarily in the Southeast. The conference attracts over 500 representatives from state and federal agencies, citizens' organizations, universities, private wildlife research groups, fisheries and wildlife scientists, agency enforcement personnel, and other natural resource-related organizations.

### [NOAA Climate and Societal Interactions Division Nature-Based Solutions Webinar Series | Multiple dates through January 2025 | Virtual](#)

This webinar series features projects funded by the NOAA Climate Program Office, Climate and Societal Interactions (CSI) Division's Adaptation Sciences (AdSci) and Climate Adaptation Partnerships (CAP) programs, focused on the research and application of nature-based solutions (NbS) for climate adaptation. Attendees must register for each webinar episode separately; find more information and registration at the link above.

**Tue. Nov. 26, 3-4 pm ET:** Building Coastal Adaptive Capacity through Nature-based Solutions

**Tue. Dec. 17, 3-4 pm ET:** Utilizing Nature-Based Solutions for the Advancement of Multiple Objectives, Co-Benefits, and Health

**Thur. Jan. 23, 2025 1-2 pm ET:** Challenges and Opportunities of Scaling Nature-based Solutions for Climate Adaptation

## [Coastal GeoTools Conference | January 27-31, 2025 | Wilmington NC](#)

The Coastal GeoTools conference, established in 1999, is typically held every two years and focuses on geospatial data, tools, technology, and information for coastal resource management professionals. Coastal GeoTools 2025 will be the thirteenth in the conference series. Conference themes include Enhancing Resilience through Relationships, Information, and Technology; An Emphasis on Tribal and Indigenous Applications; The Power of Partnerships for Resilience; Innovation, knowledge sharing, the effective use of geospatial technologies, and partnerships. Learn more or register at the link above.

### **MARSH Forward!**

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