



INITIATIVE NEWS

Our SASMI work groups are officially underway! These small groups of Coalition volunteers are focused on specific topics and issues relevant to SASMI's success such as funding, policy, and communications. Most groups have had or will soon have their kickoffs, and you can expect to hear more about their activities at this month's Coffee with SASMI. We're also looking ahead to our next Partnership Council meeting coming up December 11-12.



Lora Clarke, The Pew Charitable Trusts

SASMI PARTNERS' GOOD WORK

Twenty-Seven New Projects Will Advance Habitat Restoration and Climate Resilience Priorities of Tribes and Underserved Communities. NOAA is recommending more than \$45 million in funding for 27 new projects that will advance the coastal habitat restoration and climate resilience priorities of tribes and underserved communities. Selected projects will

support community-driven habitat restoration and build the capacity of tribes and underserved communities to participate in restoration and coastal resilience activities more fully. Every community has its own unique needs and priorities for engaging in these efforts.

[**Gregorie Neck: Victory for conservation and military readiness**](#). Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Beaufort, the Department of the Navy (DoN), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Open Land Trust (OLT), announce the permanent protection of the 4,409-acre Gregorie Neck tract located in Jasper County, S.C. Gregorie Neck is situated between the Coosawhatchie and Tulifiny rivers and borders 1.7 miles of Interstate 95. Located in the heart of the Port Royal Sound and in proximity to MCAS Beaufort's flight paths, this property was under increasing pressure from potential overdevelopment due to its access to major transportation and commercial markets.

[**States Improve How They Assess Coastal Wetlands' Impacts to Reduce Climate Pollution**](#). As coastal states grapple with the best nature-based solutions to reduce the effects of climate change on their residents and economies, organizations are developing tools to help assess and quantify the role that "blue carbon" habitats play in this effort. Although nothing will slow global climate change faster than reducing overall greenhouse gas emissions, boosting blue carbon—the atmospheric carbon dioxide that habitats such as seagrasses and salt marshes absorb and sequester—can make a difference. Learn more in this article.

[**Deputy Secretary of Commerce visits Lowcountry**](#). U.S. Deputy Secretary of Commerce Don Graves recently visited the lowcountry community of Rosemont to learn how grant dollars will be used to support marsh restoration in 5 historically underserved communities. The event was hosted by the Sustainability Institute and included a coalition of local and state leaders. This video highlights comments by Deputy Secretary Graves and others.

FUNDING REMINDERS

[**National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grants**](#)

FHWA has announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity with an availability of up to \$784 million of FY 2023 through 2026 funding for the National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program (Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) program). This program

funds projects that would improve anadromous fish passage by mitigating AOP barriers posed by transportation-related facilities such as culverts. The deadline to apply is **September 23, 2024**.

Environmental Protection Agency Community Change Grants Program

(Recently featured in Coffee with SASMI!) 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**.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

SASMI Summit in Georgia | Multiple Dates August – October | Multiple Locations

The Georgia Conservancy cordially invites you to attend the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative (SASMI) Summit! This interactive workshop, to be held at six different locations throughout coastal Georgia, will focus on the long-term resiliency and protection of our coastal salt marsh. The workshops will feature speakers, mapping resources, videos, light refreshments, and interactive stations designed to foster a community conversation regarding threats to our coastal marshlands and opportunities for restoration and conservation of marshland now and in the future. Dates and locations are as follows (each workshop will follow the same format, so please attend whichever workshop is most convenient). More details at the link above.

Tuesday, September 10 from 4 PM – 6:30 PM, Brunswick, GA

Thursday, September 12 from 4 PM – 6:30 PM, Kingsland, GA

Tuesday, October 22 from 4 PM – 6:30 PM in Liberty County, TBD

Thursday, October 24 from 3 PM – 6 PM, Darien, GA 31305

SECAS Third Thursday Web Forum | September 19, 2024 | Virtual

This month's topic is SERPPAS—one of SASMI's founding partners! Since 2005, the Southeast Regional Partnership for Planning and Sustainability (SERPPAS) has been coordinating across federal agencies, state agencies and the Department of Defense in six states in the southeast to promote collaboration in natural resources and environmental challenges to sustain the military mission, ecosystems, and working lands. One of the focus areas, the Coastal Resilience and Regional Adaptation Work Group has been assisting installations, defense communities and partners in sharing knowledge, tools, and lessons learned across the region to advance climate resilience.

International Conference on Shellfish Restoration | September 15-18, 2024 | Jekyll Island GA

The International Conference on Shellfish Restoration 2024 (ICSR2024) will be held from September 15-18, 2024, on Jekyll Island, Georgia, USA, and will bring together experts from around the world to discuss the latest developments in shellfish restoration and conservation. For more information, visit the link above.

The Hope Summit | September 28 - October 1, 2024 | Charleston SC

The Hope Summit is a multidisciplinary and intersectional ideas and solutions summit with core thematic tracks that include water quality and plastic pollution, stewardship and citizen science, governance, ecological restoration, resilience and adaptation, storytelling as a catalyst of change, environmental justice, and traditional ways of experiencing and managing terrestrial and marine ecosystems. The 2024 theme is "Reshaping our relationship with water, waterways, and the ocean through community-driven solutions." Don't miss the film festival on the 28th showcasing powerful filmmakers whose stories inspire tangible, solutions-driven action.

Restore America's Estuaries Summit | October 6-10, 2024 | Arlington VA

Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) proudly presents the 2024 Coastal & Estuarine Summit. In its 12th year, the 2024 Summit will bring together the coastal restoration and management communities to explore issues, solutions, and lessons learned in their work. The Summit Program will address all aspects of coastal and estuarine restoration and management, including the Great Lakes and international locales.

SEAFWA 78th Annual Conference | October 12-16, 2024 | Augusta GA

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.

MARSH Forward!

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