



INITIATIVE NEWS

This month we're gearing up for the Restore America's Estuaries Coastal & Estuarine Summit, where multiple SASMI Coalition members will be in attendance to share their expertise and learn from others in the fields of coastal resilience and restoration. If you'll be in San Francisco with us, don't miss the Salt Marsh Restoration session on Wednesday, September 23 (3:30 PM), where we have a 15-minute presentation slot to speak on SASMI successes. We hope to see you there!



Photo from the article "Modeling Sediment in San Francisco Bay's Tidal Marshes" at Exploratorium.edu

SASMI PARTNERS' GOOD WORK

[A new plan to preserve Georgia's marshes: Give them space to migrate](#). A big shoutout to our Georgia partners who are working with Liberty County's Consolidated Planning Commission to incorporate SASMI priorities and solutions (as outlined in [the state roadmap](#)) into efforts to address coastal erosion in the face of sea level rise! Read more about this awesome collaboration in the article linked above.

[**Rising Seas are Swallowing the Vast Majority of US Coastal Wetlands**](#). The first national-level assessment of coastal wetland submergence shows most of them may still be able to migrate inland, highlighting the need for strategic coastal management (and the importance of our SASMI work!). “Our study provides wetland managers with new information to help them make better-informed decisions and identify meaningful solutions to issues they may be encountering, including to facilitate wetland migration upslope,” said Glenn Guntenspergen, a coastal wetland ecologist with the U.S. Geological Survey and senior author on the study. Learn more above or [access the full publication here](#).

[**A National Toolkit for Wetland Resilience**](#). The National Estuarine Research Reserve System’s (NERRS) Wetland Resilience Toolkit is a new tool that can help protect and restore our invaluable wetlands. This online resource is a gateway to nine research and engagement initiatives from across the Reserve System. Each offers science-based information, practices, and tools for scientists, coastal resource managers, policymakers, funders, and anyone interested in tracking how wetlands change and protecting them for the future. Learn more and access the kit at the link above.

[**Improving the selection of salt marsh mapping methods for shoreline change analysis**](#). This paper quantifies multiple sources of error across various methods available to practitioners and evaluates their effects on final shoreline movement rate estimates. An app linked at the end of the paper, [Shiny Shores](#), allows users to evaluate methods relative to their specific needs.

[**Accelerating wetland loss threatens coastal connectivity**](#). As sea levels continue to rise and extreme weather becomes more frequent, understanding how tidal wetlands shift across space and time is becoming increasingly important. These changes have significant implications for wetland connectivity, since the movement of water, sediment, nutrients, and wildlife depends on interconnected coastal habitats that can adapt and migrate as environmental conditions change. Learn more in this article by Conservation Corridor.

[**St. Johns County commissioners greenlight \\$100M conservation bond for November ballot**](#). ST. JOHNS COUNTY, Fla. – St. Johns County commissioners voted Tuesday to put a major land conservation measure on November’s ballot, giving residents the final say on a bond that could reshape how the county protects its natural lands for generations to come. Learn more about the proposed measure in the article above.

[Sea level rise weakens the restoration benefit of mussel cordgrass facilitation in salt marshes](#). This scientific article examines how the symbiotic relationship between mussels and cordgrass is affected by sea level rise. Ribbed mussels are ecosystem engineers that can enhance the performance of *Spartina alterniflora* and contribute to shoreline protection, and this work addresses the question of how mussel facilitation of cordgrass growth and associated stability benefits vary across inundation gradients expected under accelerating sea level rise.

[U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Proposes Major Boundary Expansions for National Wildlife Refuges in Coastal Georgia and South Carolina Lowcountry](#). Responding to changes in the coastal Georgia and South Carolina Lowcountry landscape, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS, Service) proposes to expand 10 national wildlife refuges (NWRs) to balance ongoing and increasing pressures by conserving a diverse suite of lands, waters, and habitats with a goal to establish or enhance the network of Federal, state, local, and private connected or complimentary conservation lands in this important coastal area. There is a currently an opportunity to provide comments on this proposal, which are requested **by September 17**—learn more in the bulletin linked above.

FUNDING REMINDERS

[FY2027 Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership Funding Cycle](#)

The Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership (ACFHP) is requesting project applications to restore and conserve habitat necessary to support coastal, estuarine-dependent, and diadromous fish species along the U.S. Atlantic Coast. Federal funding available through the National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) program will be used to support the top ranked proposals. To ensure available funding is being directed most effectively, projects should be geared toward meeting ACFHP's conservation objectives described in its Conservation Strategic Plan. Submissions are due **Friday, September 25**.

[North American Wetlands Conservation Act \(NAWCA\) U.S. Standard Grants](#)

NAWCA U.S. Standard grants are competitive, matching grants that support public-private partnerships carrying out projects in the U.S. that involve long-term protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetlands and associated uplands habitats for the benefit of all wetlands-associated migratory birds. Proposals are due **Friday, September 25**.

[USFWS Coastal Program](#)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program provides technical and financial assistance to partners to support projects that protect and restore fish and wildlife habitats on public and private lands in priority coastal ecosystems. This support is provided through cooperative agreements with conservation partners and landowners, including state and Tribal agencies. Coastal Program staff work with partners, stakeholders, and other Service programs in important areas for conservation. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis with the current window closing **Wednesday, September 30**.

PROTECT Competitive Grant Program

The intent of the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Competitive Grant Program is to fund projects to improve the resilience of the surface transportation system, including highways, public transportation, ports, and intercity passenger rail. Program goals include protecting: surface transportation assets by making them more resilient; communities through resilience improvements and strategies that allow for the continued operation or rapid recovery of surface transportation systems; coastal infrastructure; and natural infrastructure that protects and enhances surface transportation assets. Submissions are due **Friday, October 9**.

National Park Service/REPI Readiness and Recreation Initiative

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) invites applications for the Readiness and Recreation Initiative (RARI), administered by the National Park Service (NPS). The purpose of the program is to: 1) provide outdoor recreation opportunities, and 2) promote or support compatible land uses and avoid incompatible development in areas in the vicinity of, or ecologically related to, a military installation or military airspace, and/or to maintain or enhance disaster resilience. Applications are accepted on a **rolling basis** through November of 2030, but funds are likely to be expended before that date.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Unified, not uniform - A webinar on regional conservation collaboratives | September 9, 2026 | Virtual

Come join the Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy (SECAS) partnership on September 9th @ 2 pm ET to learn more about how SECAS, the other regional conservation partnership hubs in the Northeast, Midwest, and West, and the AFWA Joint Task Force are all working together! Speakers will

present about their collaborative work and highlight tools and approaches to working across boundaries. Learn more at the link above or [register here](#).

[Nature-based Solutions Planning, Design & Construction Short Course | Multiple dates from September 15 – October 15, 2026 | Virtual](#)

This virtual course will meet live twice a week to provide over 30 hours of instruction and facilitated discussion with experts and practitioners from the University of Georgia and across the country.

Led by Dr. Todd Bridges and Dr. Ram Mohan, the course will include a balance of:

- Coastal, river, and inland applications
- Hazard contexts related to flooding, drought, heat, wildfire, water quality, and more
- Integrating NbS and conventional engineering for a range of infrastructure purposes
- Planning, design, and construction
- Benefit-Cost Analysis
- Regulatory evaluation
- And more...

The short course will be held on the following dates:

- September 15, 17, 22, 24 and 29 from 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. EST
- October 1, 6, 8, 13 and 15 from 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. EST

Have questions? Contact Ram Mohan at ram.mohan@uga.edu

[Restore America's Estuaries 2026 Coastal and Estuarine Summit | September 22-25, 2026 | San Francisco, CA](#)

Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) proudly presents the 2026 Coastal & Estuarine Summit in partnership with Save the Bay (STB) in San Francisco, California. This event will bring together the coastal restoration and management communities to explore issues, solutions, and lessons learned. The Summit will address all aspects of coastal and estuarine restoration and management, including the Great Lakes and international locales. These topics are crucial as coastal communities pursue new, more robust strategies to manage, protect, and restore their resources in a changing climate and the need to support all community members.

[Webinar Series: Drones in the Coastal Zone - Drone Case Studies in the Mid Atlantic | September 30, 2026 | Virtual](#)

This is the third in a 3-part webinar series hosted by Maryland Sea Grant exploring coastal monitoring using drones. Including LiDAR in your drone project can yield valuable results, but there are several important things to consider. Learn from examples as members of the MACU COP share their trials and successes!

Speaker: Zak Poulton, The Nature Conservancy, Virginia, Tom Allen and Blake Steiner, Old Dominion University

[Hope Summit 2026 | October 1-3 2026 | Charleston, SC](#)

The Hope Summit 2026 will explore how, to create vibrant communities, we must expand our understanding of who and what is part of a community. Topics and themes for the conference include: preparing the conditions for seeds of change to thrive, how do you define community, Creating Communities of Care, Gardens Growing Communities, Finding Your Civic Voice, Designing a Civic Ecology and Tactical Urbanism Toolkit, Rewilding Landscapes and Seascapes, Designing Communities for Radical Hospitality, The Nature of a Resilient City, and Creating Pathways to Rights of Nature.

[SEAFWA 80th Annual Conference | October 26-30, 2026 | Nashville, TN](#)

The 80th Annual Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Conference will bring together leading conservation professionals, researchers, policymakers, and industry partners from across the Southeast for a week of collaboration, innovation, and professional development. Hosted October 26–30, 2026, at the Sheraton Music City Hotel in vibrant Nashville, the conference will feature technical sessions, organized symposia, networking events, poster presentations, and discussions focused on the future of fish and wildlife conservation.

[South Carolina Marine Educators Association \(SCMEA\) Conference | November 6-8, 2026 | Charleston, SC](#)

The S.C. Marine Educators Association is currently accepting presentation proposals for their 2026 conference from November 6th through the 8th, 2026 at S.C. Department of Natural Resources, Marine Resources Research Institute (Fort Johnson), in Charleston, SC! This year's conference theme, Lessons from the Lowcountry: Changing Coasts and Cultural Connections centers on education about dynamic coastal ecosystems, and connections to cultural histories of the Lowcountry. Suggested presentation

topics include lessons and curriculum, resources for educators, placed-based education, current research on marine topics, and connections to cultural history. The call for presenters closes on **Sunday, September 13th**. Learn more at the link above or reach out to scmarineeducator@gmail.com with questions.

[North Carolina Coastal Conference | November 17-18, 2026 | Chapel Hill, 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.

[Coastal GeoTools Conference | January 25-27, 2027 | Charleston, SC](#)

You are invited to submit abstracts of 300 words or less for the 2027 Coastal GeoTools Conference. Coastal GeoTools 2027 is the premier biennial event for professionals dedicated to the development and application of geospatial technology in coastal resource management. Abstracts must be submitted via the online submission form by **September 28, 2026**. Presenters are responsible for all expenses related to preparing and presenting their papers. Additionally, all presenters must pay registration fees and attend the conference in person.

MARSH Forward!

This newsletter is distributed by the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative Please share salt marsh related news, learning opportunities, publications, and management tools by emailing amanda.gobeli@ag.tamu.edu | [Unsubscribe](#) from this list.