



INITIATIVE NEWS

September was a busy month for SASMI. Another event celebrating the completion of the SASMI Plan was hosted in North Carolina on September 13th. Thank you to our partners with the North Carolina Coastal Federation, The Pew Charitable Trusts, and the Department of Environmental Quality for making that happen, and you can read more about it in the article below. We've also been keeping up with several promising funding opportunities for SASMI and our partners—see the funding section for more information.



Photo by Kwame Sha, use permitted by the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition

SASMI PARTNERS' GOOD WORK

[N.C. Environmental Management Commission meets at CCC to discuss ongoing issues.](#) On September 13, NC Coastal Federation, NC Department of Environmental Quality, and The Pew Charitable Trusts co-hosted a series of events for the NC Environmental Management Commission and other local and state partners to discuss coastal habitats and ways to increase

resilience along the NC coast. Over 100 commissioners, state and local officials, scientists, environmental partners, and members of the Gullah/Geechee Nation gathered in Morehead City, NC for a luncheon, boat tour highlighting different coastal habitats and restoration projects, a walking tour of Carteret County Community College's living shoreline project, and a reception featuring the SASMI film.



Photos from Kwame Sha, James Lewis

[Ghost forests haunt the East Coast, harbingers of sea-level rise](#). All along the margins of the mid-Atlantic today, in Maryland, Delaware, and Virginia, as well as many other low-lying parts of the East Coast, rapid sea-level rise is driving a deadly sogginess inland. Frequent floods and higher high tides are pushing marsh into forests and drowning the cedar and pine trees that fringed the shore even a decade ago. Some habitats are changing so fast that the dead trees haven't had time to fall over. They haunt the landscape, effigies of climate-driven change. Learn more about these "ghost forests" in this article.

[US Fish and Wildlife Service announces major expansion of Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge](#). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced the addition of 446 acres to the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge near Charleston, a key acquisition that will boost wintering wetland habitat for migratory birds and recreational opportunities for bird lovers. Cape Romain covers about 10 percent of the South Carolina coastline and serves as critical wintering and breeding grounds for dozens of migratory shorebirds. The soon to be acquired, previously private land will add needed wetlands, managed impoundments, and forested uplands to Cape Romain.

[FEMA Designates First Communities to Receive Targeted Assistance for Hazards](#)

[Resilience](#). FEMA is announcing the initial designation of 483 census tracts that will be eligible for increased federal support to become more resilient to natural hazards and extreme weather worsened by the climate crisis. Congress directed FEMA to make these designations in the Community Disaster Resilience Zones Act of 2022 and implement this bipartisan legislation to help build resilience to natural hazards in communities most at-risk due to climate change. There are several tracts within SASMI's geography; learn more in this article.

[How to Protect Your Air Base From Hurricanes](#). Hurricane Michael tore through Tyndall Air Force Base nearly five years ago, devastating hangars and aircraft and prompting some to ask if the installation should be given up for good. This 2-part article series details Tyndall's efforts to protect its coastline and infrastructure from future hurricanes using living shorelines and other nature-based solutions.

FUNDING REMINDERS

[Two Funding Opportunities in Support of Fish Passage Projects](#)

NOAA Fisheries has announced two funding opportunities totaling \$260 million through President Biden's Investing in America agenda to support new fish passage projects, which will not only help protect and restore migrating fish and their habitats, but yield important community and economic benefits. The two opportunities are detailed in [this press release](#) and have closing dates of [October 16](#) and [November 8](#).

[NOAA 2024 Effects of Sea Level Rise](#)

Providing the scientific foundation for coastal decision making, particularly related to sea level rise and coastal flooding, is key to supporting adaptation and planning for long term coastal resilience. The ESLR Program is soliciting research proposals to evaluate and quantify the ability of nature-based solutions (NBS) to mitigate the effects of sea level rise and inundation (i.e., storm surge, nuisance flooding, and/or wave actions) on coastal communities, ecosystems and infrastructure. The deadline for Letters of Intent for both focus areas is **November 13, 2023**, and for full applications is January 24, 2024. View the [full NOFO here](#).

[NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience](#)

\$240 million in funding is available for habitat restoration and coastal resilience through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act. Projects selected through this funding opportunity will have a transformative impact for coastal communities and tribes across the country. They will help sustain our nation's fisheries, make significant strides in the recovery of threatened and endangered species, and help protect coastal communities and ecosystems from the impacts of climate change. They will support efforts such as reconnecting rivers to their historic floodplains, planting corals to rebuild reefs, building living shorelines that protect coasts from erosion and sea level rise, and more. Full proposals are due **November 17**.

*We are exploring the possibility of connecting multiple SASMI partners for a collaborative proposal for this opportunity; a brief intake form was previously sent to the Coalition to gather input for this idea. If interested, please fill out the form and send it back to amanda.qobeli@ag.tamu.edu by **Friday October 6th**, or request that the form be re-sent.*

Climate Ready Workforce Initiative

Sea Grant and the NOAA Climate Program Office, with support from the NOAA Office of Coastal Management, have opened the Climate Ready Workforce for Coastal States, Tribes, and Territories Initiative funding opportunity. NOAA envisions making between 10-20 awards under this competition, at amounts ranging from \$500,000-\$10 million each, to establish programs aimed at training people for and connecting them with good jobs related to climate resilience and assisting employers in developing a 21st century workforce that is climate literate, informed by climate resilience, and skilled at addressing consequent challenges. Letters of Intent are due Thursday, **November 30**.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Webinar: The Effects of Sea Level Rise Program (ESLR) | October 6, 2023 | Virtual

NOAA's National Centers for Coastal and Ocean Science Competitive Research Program (NCCOS/CRP) is pleased to announce a Fiscal Year 2024 Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Effects of Sea Level Rise (ESLR) Program. This webinar will help potential applicants navigate the submission process and construct a competitive proposal.

[Webinar: Partnerships to Advance Climate Resilience in Sentinel Landscapes | October 11, 2023 | Virtual](#)

The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership recognizes climate resilience and adaptation challenges have a significant impact on the partnership's shared objectives of conservation, working lands preservation, and national defense. As a result, the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership is finding ways to tackle these challenges through a holistic and outcomes-based manner. Join us on October 11, 2023, to hear from speakers that will highlight partnerships and opportunities to advance climate resilience in sentinel landscapes.

[77th Annual SEAFWA Conference | October 15-18, 2023 | Corpus Christi, TX](#)

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.

[2023 Living Shorelines Tech Transfer Workshop | October 24-25, 2023 | Galveston, TX](#)

The 2023 Living Shorelines Tech Transfer Workshop is coming to Galveston, TX this October 24-25th at the Moody Gardens Hotel & Convention Center. Hosted by Restore America's Estuaries and Galveston Bay Foundation, we are excited to offer a unique platform to learn, engage, and exchange knowledge with professionals, experts, and stakeholders in the field of coastal and estuarine habitat restoration.

[Webinar: Conservation Efforts for Managing Populations of Threatened and Endangered Species | November 2, 2023 | Virtual](#)

This webinar, hosted by DoD's Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP) and the Environmental Security Technology Certification Program (ESTCP), will focus on T&E species management in and around DoD lands. Guest speakers include Dr. William Morris of Duke University, Dr. Allison Louthan of Kansas State University, Dr. Ashley Long of Louisiana State University and Mr. John Macey of the U.S. Army.

MARSH Forward!

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