



INITIATIVE NEWS

Following the release of the SASMI [state roadmaps](#), we are now preparing to debut our first SASMI impact report later this year. This report will be an opportunity to highlight the work and accomplishments of our partners since the release of the regional plan in May of 2023, and we have been working on gathering metrics that highlight the length of living shorelines constructed, acres of marsh migration space protected, and more.

As part of our impact report preparations, we are gathering all the information we can about the roadmaps release. If you know of articles, newsletters, or other places where the roadmaps have been mentioned, please let us know!



Cam Jaggard, The Pew Charitable Trusts

SASMI PARTNERS' GOOD WORK

[New method to raise investment funds for projects that restore coastal wetlands for climate adaptation.](#)

The Center for Coastal Climate Resilience partners with The Nature Conservancy and others to develop an innovative process for turning natural flood protection into a certifiable investment. By quantifying the exact dollar value of storm protection provided by wetlands, this new methodology creates “Coastal Resilience Assets” that can be sold to private and public investors. Learn more about this new tool at the link above.

[Port Royal Sound is the heart of the southern Lowcountry. A new program tracks its health.](#)

This article by the Post and Courier highlights the extensive and vital stretch of salt marsh located in the Port Royal Sound in Beaufort Co., SC. As important as the sound is, many questions remain about its health and day-to-day functioning. A new program run by the Port Royal Sound Foundation measures a variety of elements with the intent of creating a long-term picture of the health of the sound. Learn more in this article.

[Mangrove crab outruns its namesake in climate-driven coastal shift.](#) New research from William & Mary’s Batten School & VIMS shows the Atlantic mangrove fiddler crab (*Leptuca thayeri*) is settling into temperate salt marshes along the southeastern U.S. coast. Published in the Journal of Crustacean Biology, the study documents the species as far north as Beaufort, South Carolina, almost 200 miles north of its traditional range in Florida. Driven by rising ocean temperatures, the expansion reflects a broader global pattern known as “tropicalization,” where warm-water species move poleward into cooler regions.

[Five new indicators for Blueprint 2026.](#) Additional updates and improvements are underway for Southeast Conservation Blueprint 2026. New and improved indicators include imperiled amphibians, reptiles, and mammals, among others. Learn more about the changes that are on the way in this article.

[Dirt to the rescue: Using sediment to restore evolving saltmarshes in the subtropics.](#) One restoration approach gaining popularity today for helping wetlands keep up with sea level rise is thin-layer placement (TLP). This strategy adds thin layers of clean sediment (typically $\leq 30\text{cm}$) to the surface of wetlands to rebuild lost elevation. TLP has been successful in northern saltmarshes but remains untested in subtropical regions where different plants, such as mangroves, exist. In this study, researchers explored how a drowning subtropical saltmarsh on

the northern Atlantic coast of Florida would respond to TLP restoration. Find out what they learned in this blog or check out the [full scientific article here](#).

[Identifying Gaps in Coastal Marsh Models for Decision-Making](#). A new study led by researchers from the US Geological Survey (USGS), NCCOS, several state Sea Grant programs, and not-for-profit organizations analyzed information collected from marsh model users across the US East Coast and Gulf. The study highlights that while current models are powerful, practitioners still face “scale mismatches” between model outputs and decision-making needs. Additionally, the research emphasizes the need to incorporate human dimensions data, such as the impact of dikes and culverts, to provide a more comprehensive view of marsh resilience. Learn more at the link above.

FUNDING REMINDERS

[NAWCA 2026 US Small Grants](#)

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) U.S. Small Grants Program goal is to promote partnerships between public agencies and groups interested in: Protecting, improving, restoring, and managing an appropriate distribution and a variety of wetland ecosystems and other habitats for wetland-associated migratory birds and other fish and wildlife in the U.S.; Maintaining and improving the current distribution of wetlands-associated migratory bird populations; and Maintaining an abundance of waterfowl (ducks, geese, and swans) and other populations of wetlands-associated migratory birds consistent with the objectives related state and federal plans. Applications are due **Thursday, June 25**.

[Defense Community Infrastructure Program](#)

The Defense Community Infrastructure Program is a competitive grant program designed to address deficiencies in community infrastructure that can/does support a military installation’s readiness and lethality. States and communities leverage private and non-profit utility providers through collaborations that deliver projects that support the needs of the defense mission. This program benefits and supports the readiness and lethality of our military installations as well as our service members and their families and the defense communities they live and work in. Proposals are due **Thursday, June 25**.

[Southeast Aquatics Fund 2026](#)

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) seeks proposals to conserve aquatic habitat in the southeastern United States. Funds from this program will support projects that improve water quality, water quantity, and instream and riparian conditions. In select geographies, funding is also available to support aquatic connectivity, species recovery, monitoring, and planning. Full proposals are due **Wednesday, July 1**.

[2027 REPI Challenge](#)

The Department of War's (DoW) Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program has announced the release of the 2027 REPI Challenge Request for Proposals (RFP). This year's Challenge continues the program's long standing role in reinforcing mission assurance by addressing encroachment pressures and environmental constraints that directly affect the readiness and operational flexibility of DoW installations and ranges. Learn more about this year's funding priorities and submission procedures at the link above; proposals are due **Thursday, July 2**.

[Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities \(BRIC\)](#)

FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) program is a Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) grant program that makes federal funds available to states, U.S. territories, federally recognized Tribal Nations, and local governments for hazard mitigation activities. It does so by recognizing the need to upgrade and modernize the nation's infrastructure against the growing risks to communities and the need for natural hazard risk mitigation activities that promote resilience with respect to natural hazards. Proposals are due **Thursday, July 23**.

*North Carolina Emergency Management is also accepting letters of interest for a potential multi-partner proposal for this grant opportunity. Learn more about that here.

[Norfolk Southern Thriving Communities Grant Program](#)

The Thriving Communities Grant Program is designed to promote sustainability initiatives, workforce development programs, and community resiliency efforts across Norfolk Southern's 22-state network. Note: as of 2026, only public 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations will be eligible for the Thriving Communities grant program. Applications are due **Monday, August 3**.

[FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance](#)

The Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA) grant program makes federal funds available to states, U.S. territories, federally recognized tribal governments, and local governments to reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings and structures insured under the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in participating communities. FMA funds a variety of flood mitigation activities that are designed to reduce flood risk to policyholders to reduce the NFIP's financial exposure. The current closing date for applications is **Thursday, August 6**.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

[Florida Society for Ethical Ecotourism \(SEE\) Annual Meeting | June 13, 2026 | Englewood, FL](#)

Whether you are an ecotour provider, resource manager, educator or a nature lover, the annual meeting is a great opportunity to dive into the dynamics and importance of responsible outdoor recreation and ecotourism and to know more about Florida SEE (Florida Society for Ethical Ecotourism). The day's agenda is available at the link above.

[Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy \(SECAS\) Web Forum | June 18, 2026 | Virtual](#)

The June 18th Web Forum for the Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy (SECAS) will offer a unique opportunity for attendees to actively participate in shaping the focus of the SECAS partnership. In the face of recent disruption and loss of capacity, staff are seeking feedback on how to best balance competing priorities and ensure that the partnership sustains the products and services that matter most to our community. Make your voice heard to help SECAS identify what matters most!

[Georgia Association of Conservation Districts \(GACD\) Annual Meeting | August 23-25, 2026 | Young Harris, GA](#)

Over the years, GACD has helped forge key partnerships among federal, state, and local entities all committed to a common goal: wise use and protection of our state's natural resources. The GACD Annual Meeting will offer breakout sessions and keynote speakers aimed at providing Conservation District Supervisors and partners with timely education and information. **Early registration ends July 31**; late registration ends August 14.

[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.

[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.

MARSH Forward!

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