SOUTH ATLANTIC SALT MARSH INITIATIVE



INITIATIVE NEWS

We have more details to share about SASMI's latest multi-state collaborative grant award, led by the University of Georgia, in which NOAA funds will support development of project designs that utilize dredged sediment for marsh restoration at four sites—one in each of our SASMI states! Not only will this work help advance marsh restoration work at these important sites, but it will also help inform the beneficial use of dredged material (BUDM) in similar restoration efforts. Learn more about this and other recent wins in the articles linked below!



Photo courtesy of UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant

SASMI PARTNERS' GOOD WORK

UGA awarded $8M NOAA grant to restore salt marsh in the Southeast. The University of Georgia has been awarded an $8 million grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration Fisheries to lead a three-year regional initiative to restore salt marsh habitat across the South Atlantic from North Carolina to Florida! The project is one of 16 habitat restoration projects selected by NOAA out of nearly 350 nationwide proposals and represents another major win for multi-state collaboration among SASMI partners. At the end of the project, each state will have engineering designs for the proposed project sites, which include:

Bird-Long Island, Georgia
Cape Lookout National Seashore, North Carolina
Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, South Carolina
Julia's Island, Florida

Learn more about this great news in the press release linked above or in this article!

Georgia sets new limits on private dock size. A major win for salt marsh protection in Georgia! The Georgia Department of Natural Resources recently came to a decision over new rules regarding the length of private recreational docks. A prior proposal would have allowed docks up to 1,650 feet long—double the current standard—to be built over saltmarsh. Instead, new rules limit the dimensions of private docks to 1,000 feet long and 6 feet wide (allowing for a 10% variance), a scaling back that is attributed largely to public comments. Way to go! Another article covering this story can be found here.

Gullah/Geechee Nation's Queen Quet honored as a Mother of the Environmental Justice Movement. Queen Quet Marquetta L. Goodwine, Chieftess of the Gullah/Geechee Nation and founder of the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition, was among 27 women whose leadership has helped shape environmental justice in the United States. The celebration took place during NYC Climate Week 2026's Environmental Justice Oral History Project's "Stories that Move" gathering in New York City. The event brought together hundreds of environmental justice advocates, storytellers, journalists, filmmakers, and community leaders.

In another recent honor, **Queen Quet has been appointed by South Carolina Governor Henry D. McMaster to the newly established Governor's Conservation Commission**. The appointment recognizes the importance of bringing diverse conservation perspectives, including those rooted in generations of ancestral land stewardship and cultural preservation,

into discussions concerning the future of South Carolina's natural and cultural resources. Congratulations on both fronts, and great news for conservation in South Carolina!

New Engineering Practice Guide Advances Oyster Reefs as Natural Infrastructure. Well-designed oyster reefs can provide multiple benefits, including attenuating wave energy, influencing sediment transport, stabilizing shorelines, creating habitat, and supporting estuarine productivity. To support this practice, the Engineering With Nature® (EWN®) program has released the Engineering Practice Guide for Oyster Reefs: A Natural Infrastructure Approach for Coastal Systems, the second publication in a growing series of Engineering Practice Guides for Natural Infrastructure. The guide provides a practical framework for considering these functions when developing oyster reef projects for coastal systems. Learn more or access these resources at the link above.

Explore the NOAA C-CAP Watershed Assessment Tool.
Land cover is a key indicator of potential impacts on water quality and overall watershed health because it influences both the amount of water flowing off the land and the types and amounts of pollutants and sediment carried by runoff. Use these tools to explore important land-cover features in your coastal area, assess their potential impacts on water quality, and identify land-use actions for those conditions.

FUNDING REMINDERS

Advancing Coastal Flood Protection
NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science is pleased to announce the release of the fiscal year 2026 Federal Opportunity for Advancing Coastal Flood Protection. For this funding announcement, NOAA is soliciting proposals for projects that will support state-of-the-art information to advance the use of natural infrastructure for coastal flood protection through at least one of the following focal areas: public-private partnerships, partnerships with the risk management sector, or improved sediment management. Note that letters of intent are required to submit a full proposal. Letters of intent are due on **Monday, November 9, 2026**, while full proposals will be due by Friday, February 12, 2027.

Climate Smart Communities Initiative (CSCI)

CSCI provides funding and technical assistance to advance community-based climate resilience in U.S. communities that are highly vulnerable to climate change. CSCI anticipates awarding 16–20 grants in the 2027 cycle. Grants typically range from $75,000 to $115,000 based on the proposed scope of work. Funding is prioritized for communities with historically disinvested populations at increased risk of climate-related impacts. The 12-month grant period will begin in July 2027. The application process for this opportunity begins with a Letter of Intent (LOI), due **Friday, November 20, 2026**.

NFWF Acres for America

For more than 20 years, Acres for America has been the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's (NFWF) premier land conservation program, providing urgently needed private funding to permanently conserve largescale habitats for fish, wildlife, and plants through voluntary land acquisitions and perpetual conservation easements. Since its inception, Acres for America has far surpassed its original goal of protecting 100,000 acres, by helping to protect more than 2 million acres of high-priority habitat. It has also contributed to the connectivity of over 48 million acres of public and private conservation lands nationwide. Proposal invitations are expected to be sent out in early November, and full proposals will be due on **Wednesday, December 2, 2026**.

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

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. Learn more at the link above or reach out to scmarineeducator@gmail.com with questions.

Stories of Impact: Pathways to Collaborative Science | November 10, 2026 | Virtual

Collaborative science attracts individuals from a range of backgrounds and interests including scientists, resource managers, land stewards, educators at all levels, and more. But what draws individuals to collaborative science in the first place? Why do they keep using the approach? What kinds of impacts does collaborative science uniquely support and what are the implications for the trajectory of an individual's career? In this webinar, hear from guest speakers Whitney Jenkins of the North Carolina National Estuarine Research Reserve, Sarah Nuss, of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, and Chris Peter of the Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve.

Closing the Data Gap: Improving Our Understanding of Coastal Flooding with Local Water Level Observations | November 17, 2026 | Virtual

Join the Coastal Inundation Community of Practice for an interactive webinar exploring how local, real-time water level and flood observations are strengthening coastal resilience. Featuring perspective from research, coastal science, and flood intelligence, speakers will share how coastal observations collected from Hohonu sensors are applied, how monitoring networks complement models and predictions, and how these data inform decision-making.

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

Coastal GeoTools is the premier biennial event for professionals dedicated to the development and application of geospatial technology in coastal resource management. The 2027 conference is hosted by the Association of State Floodplain Managers in partnership with NOAA's Office for Coastal Management and serves as a nexus for data scientists, coastal planners, and technology developers. Coastal GeoTools emphasizes innovation, knowledge sharing, the effective use of emerging geospatial data and technologies, and partnerships for building more resilient coasts.

