



INITIATIVE NEWS

During last month's Coffee with SASMI, we gathered input from the Coalition to shape the next SASMI communication product to be produced by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. We asked members to reflect on their use of the [SASMI overview film](#) and identify topics and messaging that will resonate with key audiences. For those who didn't get a chance to weigh in, look for a survey to be sent out soon.

Our hearts go out to those who have been impacted by Hurricane Idalia, and we wish you a speedy recovery.



Andy Johnson / Cornell Lab of Ornithology

SASMI PARTNERS' GOOD WORK

[New developments in understanding coastal marsh change in the Southeast](#). Threats to coastal wetlands, including sea-level rise and subsidence, led the NWR System to protect over 500,000 hectares of coastal wetlands during the twentieth century, with approximately 20% occurring in

the South Atlantic geography. To gather information about which wetlands are most vulnerable to sea-level rise and prioritize adaptation efforts, the Inventory and Monitoring branch of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—along with many wetland researchers, managers, and biologists—have been sampling Surface Elevation Tables (SETs) on National Wildlife Refuges (NWRs) across the country. Learn more about SETs and how they're used in this article.

[NCDOT Turns to Living Shorelines to Protect Roads from Rising Seas](#). The North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is turning to nature-based solutions to protect an important causeway from rising seas and stronger storms. The agency has partnered with the nonprofit North Carolina Coastal Federation to build a living shoreline along the causeway between Swansboro and Cedar Point to protect N.C. 24. The highway section was selected for the project because it is a vital hurricane evacuation route and offers important access for military installations like Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune in Jacksonville. The project will include a salt marsh planted over a quarter of an acre, about 900 feet of granite rock to break the waves and protect the marsh, and a 3-D structure made of coconut fiber and cement to attract oysters to the area.

[Victory for Beaufort land conservation, 500 acres saved](#). High-density housing development will be off limits on another 500 acres of land on South Wimbee Creek in the Dale area north of Beaufort thanks to a conservation easement that protects not only the ACE Basin but also military flight operations. The \$2.2 million conservation easement covers the 488-acre “Bowers Farm,” located north of a runway at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort (MCAS), bringing the total amount of protected lands along Whitsell Road to more than 9,000 acres. The Department of Defense and the Open Land Trust will partner in holding the easement.

FUNDING REMINDERS

[Job Opening: Volunteer Coordinator, ACE Basin Reserve](#)

This Outreach Biologist I (Volunteer Coordinator) will create meaningful connections and inspire actions that will positively impact the ACE Basin by coordinating volunteer programs, public visitation, and public programs at multiple locations within the ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve in South Carolina, including Botany Bay Plantation WMA, Edisto

Environmental Learning Center, and McKenzie Field Station. The **September 6th** deadline is approaching fast; to apply, go to the SC Career Page.

[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 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, outplanting corals to rebuild reefs, building living shorelines that protect coasts from erosion and sea level rise, and more. Full proposals are due **November 17**; see Learning Opportunities below for upcoming applicant webinars.

[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**.

[Guidebook: Ocean Climate Funding for Coastal Cities](#)

After years of advocacy by the ocean community, the federal government meaningfully invested in ocean climate action, including through passage of the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) in 2022 and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) in 2021. Collectively, the IIJA and the IRA provide coastal cities throughout the country with unprecedented opportunities to adapt and become part of the solution to the climate crisis. This guidebook organizes opportunities that cities are eligible for into four categories of action: coastal resilience and disaster risk reduction, climate-ready coastal infrastructure, coastal ecosystems, and the blue economy and workforce.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

[Webinar: NOAA THRCR Applicant Information | September 6 or 13, 2023 | Virtual](#)

NOAA is hosting two live webinars with information for potential applicants of the Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grant:

September 6 at 2-3 PM Eastern – [Register here](#)

September 13 at 3-4 PM Eastern – [Register here](#)

A Q&A will also be posted to [this page](#) following these webinars.

[Webinar: Connecting people and landscapes: From urban to wilderness, how connectivity plays a key role in landscape conservation climate work | September 7, 2023 | Virtual](#)

Climate change and biodiversity loss are interlinked urgent crises. To date, efforts by climate scientists and conservation practitioners have largely been siloed, limiting the potential for greater collective impact. But there are important exceptions. Land conservation organizations play a vital role in planning and implementing nature-based solutions that are needed at scale to address both the climate and biodiversity challenges.

[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.

MARSH Forward!

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