



INITIATIVE NEWS

Happy New Year SASMI Coalition and supporters! These first few months of 2024 we will be gearing up for the first in-person meeting of the newly formed SASMI Partnership Council, which will be taking place in April. Partners are also laying the groundwork for Plan implementation in each of our four SASMI states. We will be sure to share more about these efforts as they develop; thank you for Marshing Forward with us into 2024!



Lora Clarke, The Pew Charitable Trusts

SASMI PARTNERS' GOOD WORK

[SERPPAS Awarded 2023 Climate Adaptation Leadership Award for Natural Resources.](#) On September 25, 2023, SERPPAS received the 2023 Climate Adaptation Leadership Award for Natural Resources at the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Annual Meeting in Calgary, Alberta. SERPPAS was recognized in the Broad Partnerships category for exemplary leadership in reducing climate-related threats and promoting adaptation of the nation's natural resources. To learn more about why SERPPAS was nominated, check out the [nomination video here](#).

[Interior Department Announces New Actions in Support of Nature-Based Solutions](#). The Department of the Interior announced new steps to utilize nature-based solutions in its efforts to tackle the climate crisis, including the launch of a new tool to make those strategies more accessible to the public. The announcement comes as Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks Shannon Estenoz wraps up her trip to the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) in Dubai, where she highlighted nature-based solutions as key to improving the resilience of our lands, waters, wildlife, and communities in the face of climate change. Read the full article at the link above.

[The nation's first Regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need list for plants](#). Working with a coalition of partners, the Southeast Plant Conservation Alliance has created the nation's first Regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need (RSGCN) list for plants! Collaborators included the Atlanta Botanical Garden, NatureServe, and Terwilliger Consulting, with funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This list narrows down the vast number of plants native to the Southeast to 1,824 species that are a regional conservation priority based on criteria such as rarity, threats, and needed conservation actions. Learn more in [a webinar](#) taking place on Thursday, January 18 2024, 10am – 11am ET.

[An Update on Protecting St. Helena by SCCL](#). South Carolina Coastal Conservation League has been working to protect St. Helena Island by supporting the community in upholding the Cultural Protection Overlay (CPO) zoning rules, which prohibit gated communities and golf resorts. Much of this work has been centered around the Pine Island/St. Helenaville property and attempts by a developer to build an exclusive, luxury gated golf resort. Over the past few months, SCCL has continued to work with the community to support their vision for St. Helena Island, as the integrity of the island remains at risk.

FUNDING REMINDERS

[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](#).

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. Applications are due **February 13, 2024**.

Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Program

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law appropriates billions of dollars to FEMA to promote resilient infrastructure, respond to the impacts of climate change, and equip our nation with the resources to combat its most pressing threats. It is a once-in-a-generation investment in infrastructure, which will grow a more sustainable, resilient, and equitable economy by enhancing U.S. competitiveness and ensuring stronger access to economic and environmental benefits for disadvantaged communities. The funding priorities for this application cycle are: (1) Capacity and Capability Building (C&CB) Activities, (2) Localized Flood Risk Reduction Projects, and (3) Individual Flood Mitigation Projects. Refer to the full NOFO for more details on supported projects or access the [submission portal here](#). Applications are due **February 29, 2024**.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Webinar: Climate & Conservation Coffee | January 4, 2024 | Virtual

This climate & conservation coffee is an informal gathering of the landscape conservation and climate change community in the Raleigh, NC area. It began in 2012 as a South Atlantic LCC

event and is now co-hosted by the Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy (SECAS) and the Southeast Climate Adaptation Science Center (SE CASC).

[Southeast & Caribbean Disaster Resilience Partnership \(SCDRP\) Annual Meeting | January 23-24, 2024 | Savannah GA](#)

Throughout the 2 days of sessions, we will talk about how can we partner across sectors and work across political and geographic boundaries within our region. We will hear speakers and panelists highlight case studies and successful climate resilience initiatives, innovative public-private partnerships, strategies to address inequities, and the application of cutting-edge data tools and technologies. We will use this time together to make strides towards our vision that communities across the U.S. Southeast and Caribbean will be significantly more resilient to episodic and chronic impacts due to climate change, natural hazards, and disasters.

[Forested Wetlands of the Upper Estuary: Science and Management Advances | March 5-7, 2024 | Charleston SC](#)

Registration and abstract acceptance are now open for the Forested Wetlands of the Upper Estuary conference scheduled for March 5-6, 2024 in Charleston, S.C. and an optional management workshop on March 7th. Participants will convene to discuss the state of knowledge regarding tidally-influenced forested wetlands in the Southeast and to build an understanding of information needs, including ecological services, cultural identities related to this resource, cross-system management comparisons, and decision-making frameworks. The conference is co-hosted by S.C. Sea Grant, College of Charleston, Clemson University, USGS, and the U.S. Forest Service with support from National Sea Grant and the South Carolina Aquarium. For more information, contact Brita Jessen, Interdisciplinary Research and Partnerships lead, at (339) 223-2346.

MARSH Forward!

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