



INITIATIVE NEWS

SASMI partners have been hard at work on a variety of projects. Our NFWF grant is underway with a recent kickoff convening a Community of Practice to support the work of identifying nature-based solutions projects across the SASMI geography. We're also excited to announce that SASMI will be hosting a session at the Restore America's Estuaries conference (see Learning Opportunities)—be sure to come see us if you plan to be there!



Nicole Dix, GTM NERR

SASMI PARTNERS' GOOD WORK

[New Study Reveals Mangroves and Saltmarshes Store Double the Carbon Previously Thought.](#)

Mangroves and salt marshes capture significant quantities of carbon, thereby reducing the greenhouse effect. New research from the University of Gothenburg shows that these environments are perhaps twice as effective as previously thought—learn more in this article.

[**Salt Marsh Initiative aims to protect SC lowcountry from storm surges**](#). This article highlights SASMI's efforts in South Carolina and features interviews with SASMI partners Brita Jessen (South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium and SC State Implementation Team lead), and Denise Sanger (South Carolina Department of Natural Resources).

[**Gaining Ground at Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge**](#). Cape Romain NWR was established in 1932 to provide a safe haven for migratory birds. Stretching for 22 miles along the coast of South Carolina - approximately 10 percent of the coastline – its pristine lands and waters include barrier islands with long sandy beaches, dense maritime forests, fresh and brackish water impoundments, emergent salt marshes and intricate coastal waterways. A recent land acquisition will expand the refuge's ability to manage wintering waterfowl (benefitting all waterbirds) while creating new recreational opportunities. Learn more in this article.

[**For the love of salt marshes: Michelle Covi fights for coastal resiliency**](#). Part of the University of Georgia's Public Service and Outreach division, Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant provides coastal communities with education and assistance to foster responsible use of Georgia's coastal resources. This article highlights the work of Michelle Covi, Coastal Resilience Department of Defense Liaison, and member of our SASMI Partnership Council. Michelle helps maintain essential connections between SASMI, Georgia Sea Grant, and our DoD partners in SERPPAS--learn more about her work here.

[**NC counts on salt marshes' role in hurricane protection**](#). As hurricane activity is projected to increase in frequency and intensity, the role of salt marshes in protecting coastal communities becomes even more critical. North Carolina has about 220,000 acres of salt marshes, but the protections they offer are dependent on their health and preservation. Coalition member Charlie Deaton of the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries weighs in on marsh conservation and SASMI in this article.

[**Mangrove Trees Are on the Move, Taking the Tropics with Them**](#). Since 1980 the world has lost more than 35 percent of its mangroves because of development, pollution, and extreme weather. In parts of southern Florida, more than 50 percent have been destroyed. Yet in northern Florida, on the East Coast, mangroves have doubled in area, and they are continuing to migrate northward as temperatures climb, weather patterns shift, and sea levels rise...which

may bring them into direct competition with salt marsh. Learn more about how marsh and mangroves interact in this article.

[U.S. Coastal Wetland Synthesis Applications Geonarrative Offers Useful Tools](#). The U.S. Coastal Wetland Synthesis Applications represent use-cases of the data to address diverse stakeholder needs in the coastal zone. Currently the applications include several tools which will be of use to SASMI partners—check them out at the link above.

FUNDING REMINDERS

[NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program \(RCPP\)](#)

RCPP is a partner-driven approach to conservation that funds solutions to natural resource challenges on agricultural land. By leveraging collective resources and collaborating on common goals, RCPP demonstrates the power of public-private partnerships in delivering results for agriculture and conservation. The 2024 RCPP funding priorities are climate-smart agriculture, urban agriculture, conservation, and environmental justice. Proposals are due **July 2, 2024**.

[National Coastal Resilience Fund \(NCRF\) 2024](#)

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is pleased to announce the 2024 National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF) Request for Proposals (RFP). NFWF will make investments in planning, design, and implementation of natural and nature-based solutions. The goal is to enhance protection for coastal communities from the impacts of storms, floods, and other natural coastal hazards and to improve habitats for fish and wildlife. Those who were invited for a full proposal should make their submission by **July 2, 2024**.

[Readiness and Recreation Initiative](#)

The 2024 Readiness and Recreation Initiative Notice of Funding Opportunity has been released. The National Park Service will provide \$40 million in funding from unobligated Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State and Local Assistance Program balances as a potential match for REPI Program funding to support projects that will provide outdoor recreation opportunities to military families and the public while also promoting military readiness and resilience. Proposals are due **July 12, 2024**.

[America the Beautiful Challenge \(ATBC\) 2024](#)

The ATBC vision is to streamline grant funding opportunities for new voluntary conservation and restoration projects throughout the United States. This RFP consolidates funding from multiple federal agencies and the private sector to enable applicants to conceive and develop large-scale, locally led projects that address shared funder priorities spanning public, Tribal, and private lands. Full proposals are due **July 18, 2024**.

[Southeast Aquatics Fund 2024](#)

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) seeks proposals to voluntarily conserve aquatic habitat in southeastern United States and Texas. Substantial new funding is available for grantees in a wider geography than previous SE Aquatics funding rounds. Approximately \$8.45 million is expected to be available for grants this funding cycle. The funding will support projects that improve water quality, water quantity, instream condition, and riparian condition through technical assistance for voluntary actions by private landowners. In some geographies, funding is available to support aquatic connectivity, species recovery, monitoring, and planning. Proposals are due Thursday, **July 18, 2024**. Contact SASMI Coalition member Will Singleton (will.singleton@nfwf.org) with questions about this opportunity.

[Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Coastal Zone Management Habitat Protection and Restoration](#)

The N.C. Department of Environmental Quality's Division of Coastal Management (DCM) announced the availability of more than \$40 million in funding through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Coastal Zone Management Habitat Protection and Restoration Competition for habitat restoration and conservation projects. DCM is inviting interested parties to submit project ideas for consideration. Project ideas should be no more than five pages and include a statement of purpose, brief project description, milestones, equity and inclusion, site geography, pre-existing uses, partnerships, project timeline, budget summary and project readiness. For more information on the competition and the Letters of Intent (LOI) requirements refer to the Notice of Federal Funding linked above. Please email project ideas to SASMI Coalition member Rachel Love-Adrick (rachel.love-adrick@deq.nc.gov) by **July 19, 2024**.

[National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grants](#)

FHWA has announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity with an availability of up to \$784 million of FY 2023 through 2026 funding for the National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program (Culvert Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) program). This program funds projects that would improve anadromous fish passage by mitigating AOP barriers posed by transportation-related facilities such as culverts. The deadline to apply is **September 23, 2024**. A webinar with more information will also be hosted Monday July 15, 1:00 to 2:30 PM ET - [Register for this event here](#).

[**Inflation Reduction Act Community Change Grants Program**](#)

EPA's new Environmental and Climate Justice Community Change Grants program (Community Change Grants) has announced a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for approximately \$2 billion dollars in Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) funds in environmental and climate justice activities to benefit disadvantaged communities through projects that reduce pollution, increase community climate resilience, and build community capacity to address environmental and climate justice challenges. These place-based investments will be focused on community-driven initiatives to be responsive to community and stakeholder input. They are designed to deliver on the transformative potential of the IRA for communities most adversely and disproportionately impacted by climate change, legacy pollution, and historical disinvestments. To learn more or check eligibility, visit the link above; due **November 21, 2024**.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

[**International Conference on Shellfish Restoration | September 15-18, 2024 | Jekyll Island GA**](#)

The International Conference on Shellfish Restoration 2024 (ICSR2024) is now accepting abstract submissions for presentations and posters. The conference will be held from September 15-18, 2024, on Jekyll Island, Georgia, USA, and will bring together experts from around the world to discuss the latest developments in shellfish restoration and conservation. For more information, visit the link above.

[**Restore America's Estuaries Summit | October 6-10, 2024 | Arlington VA**](#)

Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) proudly presents the 2024 Coastal & Estuarine Summit. In its 12th year, the 2024 Summit will bring together the coastal restoration and management communities to explore issues, solutions, and lessons learned in their work. The Summit

Program will address all aspects of coastal and estuarine restoration and management, including the Great Lakes and international locales.

[SEAFWA 78th Annual Conference | October 12-16, 2024 | Augusta GA](#)

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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