



INITIATIVE NEWS

You'll find a lot of exciting developments in the "Partners' Good Work" section this month, including: the imminent completion of South Carolina's longest living shoreline, a new NFWF Business Plan that includes a SASMI shoutout, some beautiful salt marsh educational signage (that you are free to download and use!), and new research and funding commitments to support the future good work of our SASMI partners as we continue to Marsh Forward. Be sure to check out the full stories below!



Photo by Lance Cpl. Kyle Baskin, U.S. Marine Corps

SASMI PARTNERS' GOOD WORK

[National Fish and Wildlife Foundation \(NFWF\) Southern Habitats Business Plan Released](#). The NFWF business plan presents clear investment strategies for its conservation programs by outlining the resources needed for multiple species, setting landscape-scale conservation goals, and creating accountability for measurable outcomes. This business plan features the Southern

Habitats, NFWF's first NextGen Business Plan, with a vision of a thriving southern landscape of connected, resilient, and healthy forests, rivers, and communities. The plan establishes a comprehensive 30-year vision, structured into three sequential 10-year cycles for phased implementation. You can find the full plan at the link above and be sure to check out page 9 which references SASMI!

[After 2 years of work, volunteers near completion of the longest living shoreline in SC.](#) It's been two years since the first volunteer squished out into the pluff mud near the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort. Now, The Nature Conservancy, in collaboration with the installation, SC DNR, and a host of volunteers, is close to completing the longest living shoreline of its kind in South Carolina. Read more about this awesome project at the link above--the final volunteer event to finish this work is set to take place October 24!

[New Signs at Isle of Palms Marina Highlight Salt Marsh and Tidal Waterways.](#) Earlier this year, the City of Isle of Palms Environmental Advisory Committee (IOP EAC) completed an installation of 14 nature signs at the Isle of Palms Marina that are focused on the ecosystems of the salt marsh and tidal waterways. They worked closely with graphic designer & illustrator Kaitlyn Hackathorn, previously with SCDNR, to produce a set of signs that create something of an outdoor classroom. As an amazing gesture of collaboration, IOP EAC is also offering the content for others to use as an educational resource! [This page](#) on the City's website for the Public Dock Eco-education Project includes PDFs of all 14 sign designs, which can be downloaded.

[Built to Last: Resilient Road-Stream Crossings for People, Fish, and Wildlife.](#) This newly published report was developed by the Environmental Policy Innovation Center, ARC Solutions, and Wildlands Network, with support from The Pew Charitable Trusts. It highlights how aging culverts and bridges can be upgraded using integrated road-stream crossing designs that improve resilience to changing weather conditions while benefiting aquatic and terrestrial wildlife. It also offers case studies, design approaches, and policy recommendations to help transportation, wildlife, and resilience agencies put these approaches into practice. You can read the [full report here](#) and a [Pew analysis at this link](#).

[Investing in Water and Nature to Build Climate Resilience.](#) As part of its Environment Program, the Walton Family Foundation is launching the Water and Nature Fund to advance solutions

that work with nature to protect rivers, oceans and the communities that depend on them. The Water and Nature Fund will invest in innovative projects that use the power of nature to advance solutions addressing the significant water challenges we face. The fund will issue loans and guarantees that qualify as program-related investments. The foundation will seek to invest where others don't, in hopes of derisking early nature-based solutions to climate resilience and ultimately drive more capital to this important work. Learn more about the fund at the link above.

[The grass looks healthy. But most of Georgia's marshes are losing their roots to sea level rise.](#)

We picture a salt marsh as miles of lush green grass broken up by rivers emptying into the Atlantic, but most of it exists below the mud. The roots hold the marsh plants up, preventing the grass from being waterlogged by flooding and high tides. But if inundated too frequently — that is, if sea water floods the area — the grass can lose its roots. Learn more about the research informing this phenomenon, known as "marsh drowning," in this article.

[\\$4.1 Million Awarded for Research to Inform Coastal Flooding Resilience and Adaptation.](#)

NOAA's National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS) Effects of Sea Level Rise (ESLR) Program is announcing \$3.1M for new and continuing competitive research awards that will help federal, state, and local officials better manage flood events and make sound decisions leading to safer coastal communities and healthier coastal environments. This funding includes: \$1M for three new awards and \$2.1M for eight continuing awards funded under ESLR, with newly funded work occurring in in Virginia, North Carolina, and Florida. Learn more about the funded work in the article above.

FUNDING REMINDERS

[PROTECT Competitive Grant Program](#)

The intent of the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Competitive Grant Program is to fund projects to improve the resilience of the surface transportation system, including highways, public transportation, ports, and intercity passenger rail. Program goals include protecting: surface transportation assets by making them more resilient; communities through resilience improvements and strategies that allow for the continued operation or rapid recovery of surface transportation

systems; coastal infrastructure; and natural infrastructure that protects and enhances surface transportation assets. Submissions are due **Friday, October 9**.

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. Pre-proposals for this opportunity are due **Monday, October 19**.

NFWF Hurricane Response Marine Debris Removal Fund

The Hurricane Response Marine Debris Removal Fund is a partnership between NFWF and the NOAA Marine Debris Program that awards grants to assess, remove and dispose of marine debris caused by severe storms. Grants are awarded based on the targeted debris' existing or potential impact to coastal communities and resources, and to prevent further harm to sensitive marine habitats and species listed under the Endangered Species Act. Eligible projects will reduce marine debris from coastal habitats and nearshore waters of coastal counties as depicted in the maps below in Guam, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina impacted by the 2023-2024 hurricanes Idalia, Helene, and Milton, and Typhoon Mawar. Submissions are due **Wednesday, October 21**.

Federal Opportunity for 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.

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

Coastal Risk Finder and FloodVision in the Field: A Regional Resiliency Planner's Perspective on Coastal Flooding Tools | October 14, 2026 | Virtual

Join this interactive webinar exploring Coastal Risk Finder and FloodVision, two coastal flooding and sea level change tools. Dan Rizza, senior engagement specialist at Climate Central, will share key features and future updates for Coastal Risk Finder and FloodVision, including how-to guides and real-world examples of these tools in practice. Andrew Prokopiak, senior resiliency planner with the Northeast Florida Regional Council, will share how his team applies FloodVision to support their community resilience planning efforts. Please bring questions and come ready to engage!

SECAS Third Thursday Web Forum: Assessing modeled and measured habitat loss using local building records, regional development models, and national biodiversity data | October 15, 2026 | Virtual

In this webinar hosted by Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy (SECAS), Josh Daskin of NatureServe will present two complementary approaches for understanding and managing biodiversity risk from development. First, he will show how nearly 450,000 building permits issued in Florida between 2019 and 2022 can serve as a real-world benchmark for evaluating development scenario models and identifying areas where future habitat loss may be underestimated. Second, he will share pilot analyses using the National Land Cover Dataset to detect habitat change across the foundational set of hundreds of thousands of mapped

locations of at-risk species and ecosystems maintained by NatureServe and its Natural Heritage Program Network.

[SEAFWA 80th Annual Conference | October 26-30, 2026 | Nashville, TN](#)

The 80th Annual Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies Conference will bring together leading conservation professionals, researchers, policymakers, and industry partners from across the Southeast for a week of collaboration, innovation, and professional development. Hosted October 26–30, 2026, at the Sheraton Music City Hotel in vibrant Nashville, the conference will feature technical sessions, organized symposia, networking events, poster presentations, and discussions focused on the future of fish and wildlife conservation.

[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.

[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.

MARSH Forward!

This newsletter is distributed by the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative Please share salt marsh related news, learning opportunities, publications, and management tools by emailing amanda.gobeli@ag.tamu.edu | [Unsubscribe](#) from this list.