

SERPPAS Circular

December 2015/January 2016

The SERPPAS Circular is a bimonthly collection of media coverage and upcoming events from SERPPAS Partners across the Southeast. Updates are collected from websites, press releases, and newsletters, and organized according to the objectives outlined in the SERPPAS Strategic Plan. If you have information to share in the next SERPPAS Circular, please email your input directly to khoury_christopher@bah.com.

In the News

• **Sentinel Landscapes**

- (Suwannee River Water Management District, FL) Approximately 2,000 acres of natural systems in Bradford County, FL will be protected while providing a military base buffer for Camp Blanding, thanks to a partnership among the Suwannee River Water Management District, Camp Blanding, Clay County, and Rayonier Atlantic Timber Company. For more information, visit: <http://www.mysuwanneeriver.com/DocumentCenter/View/11155>.
- (USDA) On November 10, 2015, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) announced \$10.6 million in funding available to aid forest managers working to restore longleaf ecosystems on private lands in nine states (AL, FL, GA, LA, MS, NC, SC, TX, and VA). Interested landowners should contact their local USDA service center. For more information, visit: <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/?navtype=BROWSEBYSUBJECT&ss=16&cid=NRCEPRD414408&navid=220130000000000&pnavid=220000000000000&position=News&type=detail>.
- (NFWF) The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is soliciting proposals to expand and enhance longleaf pine ecosystem restoration and management across longleaf pine's historical range. Funding priorities, competitive criteria, and eligibility guidelines can be found at: <http://www.nfwf.org/longleaf/Pages/LSF-RFP-2016.aspx>.
- (NC Sun Journal) A Joint Land Use Study is currently underway at MCAS Cherry Point, focusing primarily on noise, wind turbines, development, and economic impact. For more information, visit: <http://www.newbernsj.com/article/20151126/NEWS/151129230/?Start=1>.

• **Threatened, Endangered, and At-Risk Species**

- (DoD and USFWS) The Department of Defense and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service collaborated to produce the Fall 2015 Wildlife Stewardship & National Defense issues of the *Endangered Species Bulletin* (ESB). This issue focuses on DoD's projects that sustain the military mission while protecting and managing endangered, threatened, and candidate species. Read the ESB at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/news/bulletin.html>.
- (USFWS) On December 23rd, the USFWS released the 2015 List of Candidates for Endangered Species Act Protection. Two species were removed from the list (both species of anchialine pool shrimp endemic to Hawaii), and two changed priority from the last review. For more information, visit: http://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ref=u.s.-fish-and-wildlife-service-releases-2015-list-of--candidates-for-&_ID=35406.
- (USDA) USDA announced on December 10th the availability of \$50 million in financial assistance to partner with agricultural producers who want to restore and protect habitat for seven

focus species, including the gopher tortoise. For more information, visit:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/fl/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD421531>.

- (South Atlantic LCC) On November 23rd, the South Atlantic LCC released their 2015 Network Conservation Science Plan, designed to identify common science and technical priorities and practices in support of landscapes capable of sustaining natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. For more information, and to access a copy of the plan, visit:

<http://www.southatlanticlcc.org/2015/11/23/announcing-the-lcc-network-conservation-science-plan/>.

- **Southeast Wildland Fire Initiative**

- (Georgia Public Broadcasting) On October 21st, Georgia Public Broadcasting aired “Secrets of the Longleaf Pine”, a documentary highlighting Fort Benning, prescribed fire, longleaf ecosystems, and critical species (gopher tortoise, red-cockaded woodpecker, and the indigo snake). To view this documentary, visit this link: <http://video.gpb.org/video/2365587919/>.

- **Coastal Resilience and Regional Adaptation**

- (Biloxi Sun Herald) A \$214,000 grant from the DoD Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) will pay for a two-year study of land use issues affecting Keesler Air Force Base in Biloxi, MS as part of OEA’s Joint Land Use Study program. Joint Land Use Studies look for compatible development that serves the mission of the military base and the host community. For more information, visit: <http://www.sunherald.com/news/article40866084.html>.

- (USGS) A coalition of research institutions and fish and wildlife agencies unveiled a new online tool for use by local decision-makers, conservation managers, land trusts, regional planners, landowners, and community leaders in Massachusetts who are interested in taking action in response to climate change. For more information, visit:

http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=4398&from=rss&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+usgs%2FnewsEverything+%28Newsroom+-+Everything%29#.Vlyryb-vEnI. To explore the Massachusetts Wildlife Climate Action Tool, visit: <https://climateactiontool.org/>.

- (NC DEQ) The North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) announced the formation of an Energy Group that will be led by an Executive Director for Energy. The Energy Group will be responsible for developing a consistent energy policy for the department and ensuring the integration of environmental protection in the development of that policy. For more information, visit:

http://portal.ncdenr.org/c/journal/view_article_content?groupId=4711509&articleId=26750661.

- (USGS) A new approach by USGS scientists to model water temperatures resulted in more realistic predictions of how climate change will affect fish habitat by taking into account effects of cold groundwater sources. For more information, visit:

http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=4363&from=rss&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+usgs%2FnewsEverything+%28Newsroom+-+Everything%29#.VlzH9b-vEnL. To access the entire study, visit: <http://www.esajournals.org/doi/10.1890/14-1354.1>.

- (NOAA) On October 28th, NOAA’s Office for Coastal Management released *Guidance for Considering the Use of Living Shorelines*, designed to clarify and encourage the use of living shorelines as a shoreline stabilization technique along sheltered coasts. To access the Guidance, visit:

http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/pdf/noaa_guidance_for_considering_the_use_of_living_shorelines_2015.pdf.

- (NOAA) A NOAA study published on November 16th describes how living shorelines can lessen the effects of climate change by promoting shorelines stabilization, improving water quality, and providing important habitat. To read the study, visit: <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0142595>.
- (NOAA) NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program has awarded over \$8.4 million for coral reef conservation to seven U.S. states and territories, including Florida. For more information on NOAA's Coral Reef Conservation Program, visit: <http://coralreef.noaa.gov/>.
- (USFWS) The USFWS released its Gulf Coast Vulnerability Assessment (GCVA), a comprehensive report that evaluates the urbanization and coastal changes on four Gulf of Mexico coastal ecosystems and 11 species that depend on those ecosystems. To learn more about the GCVA and access a copy of the report, visit: <http://gulfcoastprairielcc.org/science/science-projects/gulf-coast-vulnerability-assessment/>.
- (DoD) The Fall 2015 issue of Natural Selections, the DoD Natural Resources program quarterly newsletter, focuses on issues related to climate change, including articles on sea level rise, climate change adaptation, and climate resilient landscapes. To view the entire newsletter, visit: https://www.dodlegacy.org/Legacy/Documents/635848417632329128NaturalSelections_Fall2015_v7hr.pdf.
- (USFWS) As part of President Obama's Climate Action Plan and the National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy, an interagency group of federal, state, and tribal agencies announced the creation of a new Climate Adaptation Leadership Award for Natural Resources. Individuals or groups can be nominated until January 8, 2016. For more information, visit: <http://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ref=new-award-recognizes-outstanding-efforts-to-increase-awareness-and-&ID=35301>.
- (NOAA) On December 17th, NOAA announced that coastal Louisiana has been added to the NOAA Sea Level Rise Viewer, a powerful planning tool that allows users to visualize and map the potential effects of sea level rise and coastal flooding. To access the tool, visit: <https://coast.noaa.gov/slr/>.
- **Southeast Conservation Finance Initiative**
 - (USDA) USDA announced the start of this year's enrollment period for the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), a federally funded program that assists agricultural producers with the cost of restoring, enhancing, and protecting wildlife habitat. The enrollment period began on December 1st, and will end on February 26th, 2016. For more information on the CRP, visit: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-program/>.
 - (Gulf of Mexico Alliance) On December 9th, members of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council met to approve the first list of funded activities of the RESTORE Act, which focus on habitat and water quality projects and includes activities that can be implemented in the near term. Details of the funded activities can be found here: <https://www.restorethegulf.gov/>.
 - (DoD) DoD's Strategic Environmental Research and Development Program (SERDP) is seeking environmental research and development proposals for funding beginning in FY 2017. For more information on SERDP and current funding opportunities, visit: <https://www.serdp-estcp.org/Funding-Opportunities/SERDP-Solicitations>.

- (USDA) USDA announced the availability of \$350 million on November 16, 2015, to help landowners protect and restore key farmlands, grasslands, wetlands, and working lands across the nation. The funding is provided through the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). Through the voluntary sale of an easement, landowners limit future development to protect these key resources. For more information, visit:
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/?navtype=BROWSEBYSUBJECT&ss=16&cid=NRCSEPRD416615&navid=22013000000000&pnavid=2200000000000000&position=News&type=detail>.
- (NFWF) On November 10th, NFWF announced the award of more than \$80 million from its Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF) to 22 projects in four Gulf States (Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, and Texas). For more information, visit
http://www.nfwf.org/whoweare/mediacenter/pr/Pages/gebf_pr_15-1110.aspx.
- (DOI) On December 15th, DOI announced the creation of a Natural Resource Investment Center designed to spur partnerships with the private sector to develop creative financing opportunities that support economic development goals. For more information, visit:
<https://www.doi.gov/pressreleases/interior-department-announces-initiative-spur-innovation-investments-support-water>.
- (NOAA) On December 1st, NOAA announced \$4 million in recommended funding for six habitat restoration projects across the United States, including a living shorelines project in North Carolina and a flood protection program in Florida. For more information, visit:
<http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2015/120115-noaa-announces-4-million-in-funding-to-build-coastal-resilience.html>.
- (NOAA) On December 14th, NOAA announced \$23.7 million in funding for coastal restoration projects in Louisiana, to be administered through the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) Program. For more information, visit:
<http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2015/121415-noaa-awards-23.7-million-for-coastal-restoration-project-in-louisiana.html>.
- (NFWF) The NFWF is soliciting proposals to support conservation projects that enhance Gulf of Mexico coastal habitats and bolster priority wildlife populations, through its Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program (GCCGP). Proposals are due January 28th, 2016, and more information can be found here: <http://www.nfwf.org/gulfconservation/Pages/2016rfp.aspx>.
- (U.S. Endowment for Forestry & Communities) On December 10th, Enviva, the world's largest producer of wood pellets, announced the establishment of the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund; a \$5 million, 10-year program designed to protect thousands of acres of bottomland forests in North Carolina and Virginia. For more information, visit:
http://www.usendowment.org/images/Press_Release_Forest_Conservation_Fund_12.10.15.pdf.
- **Other**
 - (USDA) The USDA will award \$30 million to projects in six states (IA, KY, MO, MS, NE, and TN) to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on private and tribal agricultural lands. The projects are being funded under the Wetlands Reserve Enhancement Partnership (WREP), a program authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill. For more information, visit:
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/?navtype=BROWSEBYSUBJECT&ss=16&cid=NRCSEPRD407211&navid=22013000000000&pnavid=2200000000000000&position=News&type=detail>.

- (SGA) Seymour Johnson Air Force Base has been selected as the location for the first Reserve-led KC-46A Pegasus Air Refueling Squadron, with the first planes arriving in 2019. For more information, visit: <http://www.southerngovernors.org/articleview.aspx?articleid=13622>.
- (Center for Public Environment Oversight) The Alabama Public Service Commission approved solar energy projects by Alabama Power at Fort Rucker and the Anniston Army Depot, which would produce approximately 10 megawatts each. For more information, visit: <http://yellowhammernews.com/business-2/alabama-powers-latest-solar-without-subsidies-move-could-protect-states-military-bases/>.

Upcoming Events

- January 10-14, 2016: American Meteorological Society 96th Annual Meeting (New Orleans, LA)
- January 29: Alabama 2016 Sustainability Summit (Mobile, AL)
- January 30-February 3: National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Annual Meeting (Reno, NV)
- February 1-4: 2016 Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill and Ecosystem Science Conference (Tampa, Florida)
- February 9-12: 3rd Southeast Regional Sea Turtle Meeting (Mobile, AL)
- February 11-12: National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) Convention (Nashville, TN)
- February 29-March 2: Association of Defense Communities (ADC) Installation Innovation Forum (Charleston, SC)
- March 6-10: Association of Partners for Public Lands Convention (Spokane, WA)
- March 7-9: Sustainable Trails Conference (Knoxville, TN)
- March 14-18: North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference (Pittsburg, PA)
- March 23: Longleaf Federal Coordinating Committee Meeting (Atlanta, GA)
- **March 24: SERPPAS Steering Committee Meeting (Atlanta, GA)**
- March 31-April 3: Association of Southeastern Biologists 2016 Annual Meeting (Concord, NC)
- **May 10-11: SERPPAS Principals Meeting (Fort Benning, GA)**

For more information about SERPPAS, visit www.serppas.org.