

SERPPAS Circular

December 2016/January 2017

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 the SERPPAS Coordinator, Addie Thornton, at Addie.Thornton@ag.tamu.edu. You may also contact her at 919-515-3931.

In the News

• **Featured**

- (DoD REPI Program) The DoD REPI Program, in partnership with the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior, has announced that the Sentinel Landscapes Federal Coordinating Committee will now accept applications for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Sentinel Landscape designation process. Entities that are eligible to submit an application include Federal agencies; state and local governments; Native American tribes; for-profit and non-profit organizations or associations with conservation, agricultural, or silvicultural missions; municipal water treatment entities; and water irrigation districts. Applications must be submitted electronically, and are due by March 30, 2017.

In conjunction with the opening of the FY17 application window, the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership has released the 2016 Sentinel Landscapes Report on the accomplishments of the Partnership to-date.

- To access the online application portal for FY17 Sentinel Landscapes proposals, visit: <http://sentinellandscapes.org/application>
- To access the 2016 Sentinel Landscapes Report, visit: http://www.sentinellandscapes.org/media/1184/sentinel_landscapes_2016_report_final_12dec16.pdf

• **Sentinel Landscapes**

- (USFS) The U.S. Forest Service is developing new tools to identify strands of longleaf pine, using new software to train computers how to analyze and compare patterns in massive, high-resolution aerial imagery files. These new analytical capabilities will become more important as longleaf conservation efforts expand from large tracts of public land to pockets of longleaf pine on private lands. For more information, visit: http://www.nfwf.org/whowere/mediacenter/feature/Pages/longleaf_16-0630.aspx
- (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 as part of the Longleaf Stewardship Fund. Proposals must be submitted by February 9, 2017. For more information, visit: <http://www.americaslongleaf.org/news/news-articles/the-national-fish-and-wildlife-foundation-is-soliciting-proposals/>
- (Longleaf Alliance) The Longleaf Alliance has published the Winter 2016 edition of *The Longleaf Leader*, the Alliance's quarterly magazine. The edition includes stories on the Black Pinesnake, Red-Cockaded Woodpecker, and Gopher Tortoise. To view the magazine, visit: https://issuu.com/thelongleafleader/docs/longleafmagazine_issuu

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

- (USFWS) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service finalized the Endangered Species Act Compensatory Mitigation Policy, the first comprehensive treatment of compensatory mitigation under the authority of the ESA to be issued by the USFWS. The policy clarifies existing guidance and covers all compensatory mitigation mechanisms recommended or supported by USFWS when implementing the ESA. For more information, visit: https://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ref=final-policy-provides-standards-to-offset-impacts-of-development-on-&_ID=35923
- (USFWS) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, along with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA), have finalized revisions to the Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCA) policy under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) aimed at developing and approving CCAs. For more information, visit: https://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ref=federal-agencies-strengthen-opportunities-for-public-engagement-in-&_ID=35922

- **Southeast Wildland Fire Initiative**

- (TNC) The Nature Conservancy (TNC) was among 129 organizations that signed a letter to Congress seeking a comprehensive solution to the wildfire suppression funding issue by funding fire suppression at 70 percent of the ten-year average. For more information, visit: <http://www.nature.org/newsfeatures/pressreleases/bipartisan-fix-to-wildfire-disaster-funding-burns-out.xml>
- (WFLC) The Wildland Fire Leadership Council signed an MOU to extend the working relationship between DOI, USDA, and Homeland Security another 5 years, as well as added DoD as a new partner. See the MOU here: <https://serppas.org/media/2248/wflc-mou-final-signed-12-21-16.pdf>
- (USDA, DOI, EPA) The USDA, DOI and EPA have solidified an agreement to continue to strengthen the relationship and understanding of issues around smoke management and air quality between land management and regulatory agencies, and to continue to use fire as a land management tool. <https://serppas.org/media/2249/partnership-agreement-regarding-wildland-fire-and-air-quality-final-signed-11217.pdf>
- (WFLC) A diversity of partners and interests, came together to identify current challenges and research in the wildland fire and air quality impacts realm. See findings and recommendations here: <https://serppas.org/media/2250/wflc-smoke-research-gap-forum-executive-summary-and-paperfinal-january2017.pdf>
- The fourth edition of the SE Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy Newsletter is available here: <http://www.southernwildfire.net/news/december-2016>

- **Coastal Resilience and Regional Adaptation**

- (USFWS) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has released final digital maps for all of the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS) units in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Louisiana. The maps cover 514,834 acres, or approximately 15 percent of the entire CBRS system, and are updated once every five years. For more information, visit: https://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ref=service-updates-coastal-barrier-resources-system--maps-for-puerto-rico-&_ID=35924

- (USFWS) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will award over \$17 million to 20 projects in 10 coastal states, including Georgia and North Carolina, to protect, restore, or enhance more than 13,000 acres of coastal wetlands and adjacent upland habitat under the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program. For more information, visit: <https://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ref=importance-of-resilient-coastal-wetlands-to-conservation-recreation-& ID=35932>
- (GSAA) The Governors' South Atlantic Alliance Coastal Wetlands Monitoring Workgroup has completed its final report and recommendations on the status of wetlands monitoring in the Southeast. The report assesses the monitoring methods employed across the region, and serves as the starting point for developing regional monitoring guidelines. For more information, and to access a copy of the report, visit: <http://southatlanticalliance.org/coastal-wetlands-monitoring-report-and-database/>
- (GSAA) The Governors' South Atlantic Alliance has released a Living Shorelines Strategic Needs Assessment prepared by the GSAA's Living Shorelines Work Group. The assessment identifies prioritized research, policies, and outreach needed to expand and enhance the appropriate use of living shorelines. For more information, and to access a copy of the assessment, visit: <http://southatlanticalliance.org/living-shorelines-needs-assessment-released/>
- (GCERC) The Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (GCERC) has released and accepted an update to its 2013 Comprehensive Plan. The update provides additional strategic guidance for the Council to follow as they make decisions on funding projects and activities aimed at restoring the Gulf of Mexico. For more information, visit: <https://www.restorethegulf.gov/release/2016/12/08/2016-comprehensive-plan-update-release>
- (GOMA) The Gulf of Mexico Alliance released its December 2016 newsletter, which includes updates on current conservation and restoration projects underway in Gulf states, as well as funding opportunities. To view a copy of the newsletter, visit: <http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs130/1104176519411/archive/1126606106251.html>
- (TNC) The Nature Conservancy praised the U.S. Congress for passing the Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation Act, which includes funding for Gulf Coast Oyster Bed Recovery, a South Atlantic Coastal Regional Study, and Southwest Louisiana Coastal Risk Reduction and Ecosystem Restoration, among other projects. For more information, visit: <http://www.nature.org/newsfeatures/pressreleases/congress-passes-water-resources-bill-1.xml>
- (SA LCC) The South Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative (SA LCC) has released their December 2016 and January 2017 newsletters. The newsletters include articles on regional urban planning, upcoming webinar series, and coastal adaptation strategies. The newsletters can be accessed through the following links:
 - December 2016 SA LCC newsletter: <http://us2.campaign-archive2.com/?u=59d57e49ab5b1afb3a66167ee&id=dd0621fc25&e=e86655520f>
 - January 2017 SA LCC newsletter: <http://us2.campaign-archive2.com/?u=59d57e49ab5b1afb3a66167ee&id=9ff4005662&e=e86655520f>
- **Southeast Conservation Finance Initiative**
 - (USFWS) The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is seeking proposals from states and U.S. territories for federal financial assistance for conservation activities that benefit threatened and endangered species, under the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund. Proposals must be submitted by March 17, 2017. For more information, visit:

https://www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ref=u.s.-fish-and-wildlife-service-seeks-proposals-from-states-for--2017-&_ID=35929

- (USDA) The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is investing \$225 million in federal funding in 88 high-impact projects across the country, as part of the NRCS's Regional Conservation Partnership Program. For more information, visit: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1308133>
- (USDA) The U.S. Department of Agriculture's NRCS is investing more than \$33 million in 197 high-priority watersheds across the country to help landowners improve water quality through the National Water Quality Initiative. For more information, visit: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1303631>
- (FL DEP) The Florida Department of Environmental Protection awarded a \$1 million grant for a water-reuse project in Bay County, Florida, to improve water quality and implement water conservation. For more information, visit: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/FLDEP/bulletins/175e50b>
- (NFWF) The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) has announced more than \$2.6 million in grants to conserve, improve, or connect wildlife habitat across more than 82,00 acres in five states, including Louisiana, through its Acres for America program. For more information, visit: http://www.nfwf.org/whoware/mediacenter/pr/Pages/acres_16-1213.aspx
- (NFWF) The NFWF is soliciting proposals to support conservation projects that enhance coastal ecosystems of the Gulf of Mexico and bolster priority fish and wildlife populations, through its Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program (GCCGP). Proposals are due by January 26, 2017. For more information, visit: <http://www.nfwf.org/gulfconservation/Pages/2017rfp.aspx>

Upcoming Webinars

- January 26: [Final Regional Haze Rule Revisions](#) by EPA
- February 9: [How important is it to mimic natural fire regimes in the Southeastern Coastal Plain?](#) by Southern Fire Exchange
- February 15: [Integrative Forest Management for Wildlife and Forest Health](#) by Southern Regional Extension Forestry
- February 16: [A Four-Step Approach to Planning for Wildfire in the WUI](#) by Southern Fire Exchange
- February 22: [Successful Buffer Restoration](#) by Southern Regional Extension Forestry
- February 23: [Next Generation Fire Modeling for Advanced Wildland Fire](#) Training by Southern Fire Exchange
- March 15: [Environmental Law Institute Brief: Sentinel Landscape Partnership Authorities and Opportunities](#) by REPI
- March 29: [Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Biology and Management in the Southeastern US](#) by Southern Regional Extension Forestry
- April 12: [Conservation Finance Tools and Strategies](#) by REPI
- May 3: [Annual REPI Help Session for FY18](#) by REPI

Upcoming Events

- February 3-4, 2017: Louisiana Environmental Education State Symposium (Baton Rouge, LA)
- February 6-9, 2017: Coastal Geotools 2017 Conference (North Charleston, SC)
- February 6-9, 2017: Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill & Ecosystem Science Conference 2017 (New Orleans, LA)
- February 23-25, 2017: Environmental Education Association of Alabama 2017 Conference (Andalusia, AL)
- March 4-11, 2017: 82nd North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference (Spokane, WA)
- March 21, 2017 SA LCC Conservation Blueprint Version 2.2 Workshop (Chapel Hill, NC)
- March 26-28, 2017: Gulf of Mexico Summit (Houston, TX)
- **March 29 – 30, 2017: SERPPAS Steering Committee Meeting (Atlanta, GA) - Logistics information coming soon**
- March 29-31, 2017: Gulf of Mexico Alliance All-Hands Meeting (Houston, TX)
- April 3-4, 2017: Spring 2017 Longleaf Partnership Council Meeting (Montgomery, AL)
- April 11, 2017: SA LCC Conservation Blueprint Version 2.2 Workshop (Tallahassee, FL)
- April 13, 2017: SA LCC Conservation Blueprint Version 2.2 Workshop (Atlanta, GA)
- April 25 – 27, 2017: National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy Workshop (Reno, NV)

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