

## SERPPAS Circular

### December 2017/January 2018

*The SERPPAS Circular is a bimonthly collection of media coverage, funding opportunities and upcoming events/webinars from SERPPAS Partners across the Southeast. Updates are collected from websites, press releases, and newsletters, and organized according to the focus areas outlined in the 2015 – 2017 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](mailto:Addie.Thornton@ag.tamu.edu). You may also contact her at 919-515-3931.*

**Happy New Year!**

#### **FEATURE**

- ▶ **Thank you, Luther Jones!** As of January 1, 2018, Luther Jones retired as the USDA NRCS Longleaf Pine Initiative Coordinator. Luther was a great champion of Longleaf Pine, prescribed fire and many other important efforts across the region. He was an active member of the SERPPAS Steering Committee and provided key input to multiple project working groups. His dedication, passion, and hard work will be missed. We congratulate and wish Luther good luck in his next chapter!
- ▶ **SERPPAS Webinar – Using GIS for Large Landscape Conservation** – The conservation of natural resources and working lands, and the associated compatible land uses, can be a critical tool to the sustainment of military missions across the Southeast. Many landscape scale partnerships, specifically [Sentinel Landscapes](#), have recognized that these pillars (conservation, working lands, and military readiness) can work together to the benefit of all three, when focused in the priority areas of the military mission. When considering land conservation based on multiple priorities, GIS data can help create tools and maps to better understand where to conserve and how. This webinar will highlight several methods in which GIS data is used to develop an online conservation blueprint of the SE, to prioritize land conservation in a shared landscape and also to connect landowners to conservation opportunities within a specified landscape. Listen in at 10am EST on February 27, 2018, and learn more here: <https://serppas.org/webinars/using-gis-for-large-landscape-conservation/>

#### **IN THE NEWS**

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- **Spotlight**

- ▶ **(Sentinel Landscapes)** The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership is excited to announce the designation of the Georgia Sentinel Landscape, the seventh in this nationwide partnership. It plays a critical role in protecting working lands and vital resources while sustaining military missions and healthy communities in southern Georgia. Additionally, over 20 partners at the federal, state, and local levels coordinate programs that will benefit nine of the nation's most important installations and ranges in the state. Landscape partners such as the U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and several private conservation organizations have identified 1.3 million critical acres within the Landscape's boundary. For additional information on the Georgia Sentinel Landscape—its partners, priorities, and goals—or the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership in general, please visit the website: [www.SentinellLandscapes.org](http://www.SentinellLandscapes.org).

- ▶ (ESTCP) The FY 2019 DoD call for proposals from the Environmental Security Technology Certification Program was released this month. The topic area of resource conservation and resiliency focuses on living marine resources ecology and management, wildland fire management, and a special interest topic on DoD installation infrastructure risk exposure and resilience decisions support tools. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.serdp-estcp.org/Funding-Opportunities/ESTCP-Solicitations/DoD-Proposal-Instructions/FY19-ESTCP-DoD-Call-for-Proposals-Topic-D3-Resource-Conservation-and-Resiliency>
- **Sentinel Landscapes**
  - ▶ (REPI) The 2018 REPI Challenge Request for Pre-Proposals and the downloadable PDF pre-proposal form are now available through the U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities website. **Applications are due by 8pm ET on Friday, January 26, 2018.** To learn more, please visit: <http://www.usendowment.org/rfps/repichallenge.html>
    - Check out the Fall 2017 REPI Newsletter here: <http://createsend.com/t/d-E049BBB42B0FFC9C2540EF23F30FEDED>
  - ▶ (NCDACS) Landowners signed the first two conservation easement agreements under a joint partnership between the North Carolina Agricultural Development and Farmland Preservation Trust Fund and the United States Air Force. Two farms, Hubers Farm and McAden Farm, were recently awarded more than \$1.5 million to help protect farmland and promote agricultural enterprises in North Carolina. The landowners collaborated with members of Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, the ADFP Trust Fund, and the Working Lands Trust to accomplish this common goal. To learn more, please visit: <http://www.ncagr.gov/paffairs/release/2017/AgriculturalDevelopmentandFarmlandPreservationTrustFundandSeymourJohnsonAFBpartnership.htm>
  - ▶ (DOD NR) The Fall 2017 edition of the Natural Selections Newsletter from the DoD Natural Resources Program features an article about Sentinel Landscapes on page 4. This month's theme is 'Plants as Habitat', and includes a collection of articles related to the landscapes on which our soldiers, sailors, and air personnel perform their training operations. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.fedcenter.gov/admin/itemattachment.cfm?attachmentid=1115>
  - ▶ (NFWF) The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is soliciting Longleaf Stewardship Fund proposals to expand and enhance longleaf pine ecosystem restoration and management across longleaf pine's historical range. The proposal also aims to restore and enhance the bottomland hardwood forests within priority focal areas. Proposals must be submitted by **11:59pm (Eastern Time) on Thursday, February 8, 2018.** To learn more, please visit: <http://www.nfwf.org/longleaf/Pages/2018rfp.aspx>
  - ▶ (Congress) The FY 2018 National Defense Authorization Act was enacted on December 12, 2017. This bill authorizes FY2018 appropriations and sets forth policies for Department of Defense (DOD) programs and activities, including military personnel strengths. This includes Sec. 317 about the Sentinel Landscapes Partnership. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/2810>
  - ▶ (NPR) Over the past couple decades, the state of Georgia has purchased land along either side of the Altamaha River, creating a network of protected forests, marshes and streams called the Altamaha River Corridor. The state recently acquired a large chunk of property, closing a gap in the corridor. Earlier this fall, about 50 people made their way miles up a dirt road past tree farms, to celebrate the addition of the 17,000 acre-Sansavilla Wildlife Management Area. Some of this

area will be within the newly designated area of the Georgia Sentinel Landscape. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.wabe.org/georgia-piecing-together-network-protected-wild-lands/>

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

- ▶ (NC DEQ) The North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission began developing game land management plans in 2013 for individual or groups of small game lands that are owned by the Commission. The goal of the plans is to provide a framework that will help guide the management of these public lands into the future. Public review and comments are also included in the development phase of the plans. These management plans provide a management framework that balances science-based conservation practices with public access and usage. More information on the five new management plans can be found here: <http://www.ncwildlife.org/News/wildlife-commission-releases-five-game-land-management-plans>.
- ▶ (USFWS) On December 15, 2017, Leopoldo Miranda, Assistant Regional Director for Ecological Services of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Southeast Region, signed the Framework Programmatic Conference Opinion for the Department of Defense (DoD) Gopher Tortoise Conservation and Crediting Strategy (Strategy). This represents a new milestone for the Strategy and a step closer towards establishing the first Gopher Tortoise Conservation Area (GTCA) at Alapaha Wildlife Management Area in Georgia. To learn more, please visit: <https://serppas.org/media/2503/20171215-signed-programmatic-co-dod-gopher-tortoise-credit-strategy-002.pdf>
- ▶ (TCF) The Conservation Fund receives four USDA RCPP Awards that support critical water quality, wildlife habitat, and working lands in the Gulf of Mexico and Great Lakes Region. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.conservationfund.org/news-resources/press-releases/1755-four-usda-nrcs-awards-for-the-conservation-fund>

- **Southeast Wildland Fire Initiative**

- ▶ (International Journal of Wildland Fire) Concerns over increasing wildfire activity in the last few decades have prompted increased investment in fuels reduction treatments worldwide. Prescribed fire is a commonly used management tool for reducing fuels and modifying subsequent wildfire dynamics, yet the influence of prescribed fire on wildfire is difficult to evaluate empirically due to the unpredictable nature of wildfire. This study evaluated a 30-year record of wildfire, prescribed fire and drought at Fort Benning, a 74 000-hectare military training installation in west-central Georgia, USA. Annual wildfire incidents declined sharply from 1982 to 2012 as prescribed fire hectares increased. To read more about this study, please visit: [http://www.hurteaulab.org/uploads/3/8/7/3/38731639/addington\\_et\\_al\\_ijwf2015.pdf](http://www.hurteaulab.org/uploads/3/8/7/3/38731639/addington_et_al_ijwf2015.pdf)
- ▶ (USFS) The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) recently reflected on their 2017 accomplishments by highlighting significant progress in their strategic goals to improve the economic health, productivity, and sustainability of national forests and grasslands. The USFS successfully employed several treatments and tools to reduce fire severity and increase resilience for more than 2.7 million acres of forestland. Additionally, the agency treated over 1.3 million high priority acres nationwide to reduce fire risk and improve forest conditions in areas near communities and with high fire potential. For more information on this and other accomplishments, visit <https://www.fs.fed.us/news/releases/forest-service-us-department-agriculture-reflects-year-progress>.

- ▶ (SERPPAS) The SERPPAS Prescribed Fire Work Group published the 15<sup>th</sup> edition of the Driptorch Digest, which contains prescribed fire news, events, articles and more from across the region. Learn more here:  
<http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?m=1117561491017&ca=6748df05-f0d1-465a-a172-a7e244803fb8>
- ▶ (SERPPAS) The SERPPAS Prescribed Fire Work Group published the 16<sup>th</sup> edition of the Driptorch Digest, which contains prescribed fire news, events, articles and more from across the region. Learn more here:  
<http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?m=1117561491017&ca=90cef0f5-f10e-4bb8-9fde-155ffdbcef67>
- ▶ (NRCS) The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) will invest nearly \$32 million this year to mitigate wildfire risk, improve water quality and restore healthy forest ecosystems in 24 states and Puerto Rico. Since 2014, USDA has invested \$176 million in 56 Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership Projects, which focus on areas where public forests and grasslands intersect with privately-owned lands.  
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1375840>
- ▶ (USDA NRCS) Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG) are competitive grants that drive public and private sector innovation in resource conservation. Authorized by the 2002 Farm Bill, CIG uses Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funds to award competitive grants to non-Federal governmental or nongovernmental organizations, American Indian Tribes, or individuals. Producers involved in CIG funded projects must be EQIP eligible. This year there is an emphasis on improving ecosystem function and resilience through prescribed burning programs. **The application deadline is February 26, 2018 at 5pm.** To learn more, please visit:  
<https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/financial/cig/>
- **Coastal Resilience and Regional Adaptation**
  - ▶ (US Endowment for Forestry and Communities) The US Endowment for Forestry and Communities released a request for proposals for the Healthy Watersheds Consortium Grant Program. The goal of this program is to accelerate strategic protection of healthy, freshwater ecosystems and their watersheds through developing funding mechanisms, building sustainable organizational infrastructure and supporting innovative or catalytic projects. The grant proposals are due by February 1, 2018. To learn more, please visit:  
<http://www.usendowment.org/healthywatersheds.html>
  - ▶ (GCPO LCC) From 2014 to 2017, the Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative conducted research, assembled experts and spatial datasets, and conducted a series of complex analyses to produce peer-reviewed written drafts of Ecological Assessments for eight of our nine priority systems (the Beaches and Dunes Assessment is in progress using recently acquired LiDAR data) in the State of Gulf Coastal Plains & Ozarks 2017 Report. To learn more, please visit: [https://gcpolcc.org/resource/state-gulf-coastal-plains-ozarks-2017-report?utm\\_source=Gulf+Coastal+Plains+%26+Ozarks+Monitor&utm\\_campaign=a7ba3b2a80-GCPO\\_December\\_Newsletter\\_2017\\_12\\_14\\_17&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_756d27877f-a7ba3b2a80-457349309](https://gcpolcc.org/resource/state-gulf-coastal-plains-ozarks-2017-report?utm_source=Gulf+Coastal+Plains+%26+Ozarks+Monitor&utm_campaign=a7ba3b2a80-GCPO_December_Newsletter_2017_12_14_17&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_756d27877f-a7ba3b2a80-457349309)
  - ▶ (NLC) The Network for Landscape Conservation released its bimonthly bulletin, a compilation of news and information advancing the practice of conservation at the landscape scale.



Information listed in the bulletin can be viewed here:

<http://myemail.constantcontact.com/November-Bulletin---Network-for-Landscape-Conservation.html?soid=1109133276895&aid=7YLU16aDAjE>

- ▶ (SA LCC) The South Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative published their December 2017 and January 2018 Newsletters which can be viewed here:
  - <http://mailchi.mp/bbf948549ab4/pmx0j3o71h-2794197?e=63774bd623>
  - <http://mailchi.mp/8976ed1fc9b6/pmx0j3o71h-2800509?e=63774bd623>
- ▶ (USGS SECSC) The Southeast Climate Science Center released its December 2017 Newsletter and can be viewed here: <https://globalchange.ncsu.edu/december-2017-newsletter/>
- ▶ (FL DEP) Florida Governor Scott and the State's Cabinet approved a strategic land acquisition to preserve natural resources in December 2017. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection will acquire land to expand the Shingle Creek Regional Trail (SCRT), which is a multi-purpose recreational priority trail in central Florida. This 35.2-acre parcel will increase the number of ecotourism opportunities already offered by the SCRT, such as wildlife observation hiking, and cycling. Several conservation organizations such as the Florida Greenways & Trails Council and Audubon Florida Society proudly support this effort. To learn more, please visit: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/FLDEP/bulletins/1cb9d89>.
- ▶ (MS) Mississippi has made significant strides in sustainable energy development. Towards the end of 2017, Mississippi was ranked 26<sup>th</sup> among U.S. states for solar generation. This was a great improvement from being previously ranked 42<sup>nd</sup> in 2016. The \$7 million solar facility installed at the Naval Construction Battalion Center (NCBC) Gulfport has contributed to much of the state's success. For more information on the State's progress in energy development can be found here: <http://www.sunherald.com/news/business/article189832719.html>. Additional details about NCBC Gulfport's solar facility can be found here: [http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story\\_id=101420](http://www.navy.mil/submit/display.asp?story_id=101420).

- **Southeast Conservation Finance Initiative**

- ▶ (USDA NRCS) The Natural Resources Conservation Service plans to invest more than \$30 million in 2018 to support 30 new watersheds for its National Water Quality Initiative (NWSQI). Specifically, the agency's investment will help landowners improve surface water quality and agricultural operations. NWSQI focuses resources in watersheds most in need and implements conservation practices that promote soil health, lessen nutrient runoff and increase wildlife habitat. Farmers, ranchers, and forest land owners also receive personalized advice and financial assistance to address a broad range of natural resource concerns. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/newsroom/releases/?cid=NRCSEPRD1372426>.
- ▶ (ADCNR) Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – The National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) Alabama Chapter recently allocated more than \$150,000 to fund several wildlife management projects in Alabama. Approximately \$81,000 was donated to the Alabama Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries for projects such as wildlife habitat management and the annual wild turkey report. Other uses for the funding will include establishing outdoor education programs for schools and purchasing wildlife habitat management equipment. This donation to NWTF also provides the organization with access to federal matching dollars which advances ADCNR's work in protecting the state's natural resources. To

learn more, please visit: <http://www.outdooralabama.com/nwtf-donates-more-157000-wildlife-management>.

- ▶ (CFN) The Conservation Finance Network advances land and resource conservation by expanding the use of innovative and effective funding and financing strategies. Recently they released an article about closing the gap between farmers and investors which is key to advancing agricultural sustainability. Read the article to find out three steps that will help conservation and grower organizations collect the economic information needed to attract private capital investment to on-farm conservation.

<https://www.conservationfinancenetwork.org/2018/01/08/3-steps-to-close-the-conservation-data-gap-between-farmers-and-investors-an-op-ed-by>

- **Military Services News**

- ▶ (DoD NR) The Department of Defense Natural Resources Program honors individuals, teams, and installations for their conservation efforts with the annual Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards. Military Services and Defense Agencies are recognized in categories such as natural resource conservation, environmental quality, and weapon system acquisition. They are also recognized for program and individual/team efforts in using alternative sources of energy and developing innovative technologies for waste reduction. Nominations for this year's awards are due by March 1, 2018 and an announcement of the winners is anticipated for mid-April 2018. More information about the Environmental Award can be found here:

<http://www.denix.osd.mil/awards/home/>.

- ▶ (S.C. NG) Earlier this month, the South Carolina National Guard recognized the first Soldiers for completing the new Patriot Missile System training program. The program is designed to provide sustainment training for 14E Patriot fire control enhanced operators, training for 14A air defense artillery offers, and prerequisite training for 140E Air and Missile Defense Tactician/Technician and Air Defense Artillery Fire Control Operations. Soldiers will now have the appropriate skills to prepare for future joint training exercises as well as deployments. Further details on the program and associated trainings can be found here:

<http://www.nationalguard.mil/News/Article/1415673/sc-guard-leads-the-way-with-new-missile-training-program/>

## UPCOMING WEBINARS

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- ▶ Archived: [REPI and Water](#) by REPI
- ▶ Archived: [Communicating About Risks – It's more than just information](#) by Extension Disaster Education Network
- ▶ January 31, 2018: [Can you hear me now? Addressing Noise Impacts in Your REPI Partnership](#) by REPI
- ▶ January 31, 2018: [National Stormwater Calculator for Managing Runoff Using Green Infrastructure: Addition of a Cost Module and Mobile Web Application Version](#) by EPA
- ▶ February 27, 2018: [Using GIS for Large Landscape Conservation](#) by SERPPAS
- ▶ February 28, 2018: [Fire Season Primer – Save the Date!](#) By Advanced Fire Environment Learning Unit
- ▶ March 1, 2018: [Adaptive Silviculture for Climate Change: A Scientist-Manager National Network](#) by Climate Learning Network

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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- ▶ January 23 – 25, 2018: [Longleaf Academy: Longleaf 101](#) (Aiken, SC)

- ▶ January 27 – 31, 2018: [National Association of Conservation Districts 2018 Annual Meeting](#) (Nashville, TN)
- ▶ January 29 – 31, 2018: [National Association of State Departments of Agriculture Winter Policy Conference](#) (Washington, DC)
- ▶ February 12 – 14, 2018: [Association of Defense Communities Installation Innovation Forum](#) (San Diego, CA)
- ▶ February 22 – 25, 2018: [2018 Annual Southeast Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation](#) (Helen, GA)
- ▶ February 23 – 26, 2018: [National Governor’s Association Winter Meeting](#) (Washington, DC)
- ▶ **March 6-7, 2018: [Spring SERPPAS Steering Committee Meeting](#) (Atlanta, GA)**
- ▶ March 14 – 16, 2018: [Joint CESU Rally](#) (Raleigh, NC)
- ▶ March 20 – 22, 2018: [Longleaf Academy Longleaf 101](#) (Waycross, GA)
- ▶ March 26 – 30, 2018: [83<sup>rd</sup> North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference coincides with National Military Fish and Wildlife Association Meeting](#) (Norfolk, VA)
- ▶ April 16-19, 2018: [2018 Tools for Engaging Landowners Effectively Advanced Training](#) (Atlanta, GA)
- ▶ April 17 – 19, 2018: LLA Longleaf Academy G201 Groundcover Restoration (Aiken, SC)
- ▶ **May 7-9, 2018: SERPPAS Principals Meeting (Okaloosa Island, FL)**

*For more information about SERPPAS, visit [www.serppas.org](http://www.serppas.org), or email [info@serppas.org](mailto:info@serppas.org).*