



SERPPAS Circular

January/February/March 2024

The SERPPAS Circular is a quarterly 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 [2021+ SERPPAS Strategic Plan](#). If you have information to share in the next SERPPAS Circular, please email your input directly to SERPPAS: info@serppas.org.

FEATURED

- ▶ **SERPPAS Spring 2024 Steering Committee Meeting:** The SERPPAS Spring 2024 Steering Committee Meeting was held on March 7-8, 2024, in Atlanta, GA. The SERPPAS Steering Committee continues to support the work group actions in advancing the 2021+ SERPPAS Strategic Plan, connect the SERPPAS Steering Committee in person, validate the revisions for the updated 2024 SERPPAS Strategic Plan for Principals' approval, and prepare for the 2024 SERPPAS Principals Meeting. See the agenda with resources here: https://serppas.org/media/gj2gejp5/202403_serppas-steering-committee-meeting-with-read-aheads-and-presentations.pdf (Please note some draft resources linked in this document may be outdated.)
- ▶ **SAVE THE DATE: 2024 SERPPAS Principals Meeting:** The 2024 SERPPAS Principals Meeting will be held on May 8-9, in Gulfport, MS. The purpose of the meeting is to continue to build relationships among the SERPPAS Principals and, through learning and engagement on partnership progress, to inspire continued advancement of the SERPPAS mission in the Southeast. All of the logistical and registration details for the meeting can be found on the SERPPAS website: <https://serppas.org/resources/serppas-meetings/2024/may/2024-serppas-principals-meeting/>

IN THE NEWS

- ▶ **Spotlight**
 - The National Fish and Wildlife Fund released the 2024 Request for Proposals for the America the Beautiful Challenge. This RFP expects to award approximately \$119 million in federal and private sector funding to conserve, connect, and restore the lands, waters, and wildlife upon which we all depend. The themes of the proposal invite applicants to develop landscape-level ATBC proposals that address conservation and public access needs with cumulative benefits to fish and wildlife, enhanced carbon sequestration and storage, benefits to and engagement with underserved communities, and protection of ecosystems through resilience-focused and nature-based solutions. **Pre-proposals are due April 4, 2024.** For more details and the RFP, please visit: <https://www.nfwf.org/programs/america-beautiful-challenge/americas-ecosystem-restoration-initiative-america-beautiful-challenge-2024-request-proposals>
 - The National Fish and Wildlife Fund released the 2024 Request for Proposals for the National Coastal Resilience Fund. This RFP expects to award approximately \$140 million in federal funding 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. **Pre-proposals are due April 10, 2024.** For more details and the RFP, please visit: <https://www.nfwf.org/programs/national-coastal-resilience-fund/national-coastal-resilience-fund-2024-request-proposals>



- The Network for Landscape Conservation announced the 2024 Request for Proposals for the Catalyst Fund. The Catalyst Fund strives to accelerate the pace and practice of collaborative landscape conservation and stewardship across the United States by investing in Landscape Partnerships. The Fund couples financial support (through a competitive grant program) with capacity building support (through in-depth Peer Learning) to catalyze Partnership efforts to achieve long-term conservation and stewardship goals. A portion of the Fund is reserved specifically to advance Tribal-led Partnerships. **Proposals are due April 26, 2024.** For more details and the RFP, please visit: https://landscapeconservation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Catalyst-Fund_RFP_2024.pdf
- The 2024 Request for Proposals for the Inflation Reduction Act funded portion of the Forest Legacy Program from the U.S. Forest Service is now available. The purpose of the Forest Legacy Program is to identify and conserve environmentally important forest areas that are threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. Providing economic incentives to landowners to keep their forest as forests encourages sustainable forest management and supports strong markets for forest products. **Proposals are due May 20, 2024.** For more details and guidance, please visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/private-land/forest-legacy/program>
- The Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation announced the 2024 Defense Community Infrastructure Program (DCIP) Notice of Funding Opportunity. DCIP is a competitive grant program designed to address deficiencies in community infrastructure, supportive of a military installation, in order to enhance military value, cadet training at covered educational institutions, installation resilience, and military family quality of life. An informational webinar will be held on **April 18, 2024, at 3pm ET** to review DCIP goals and objectives and answer questions. **Proposals are due June 17, 2024.** To learn more, please visit: <https://oldcc.gov/defense-community-infrastructure-program-dcip>
- USFWS is seeking applications from eligible state agencies for the 2025 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program. Applicants may apply for matching grants between \$50,000 and \$1,000,000 to fund coastal wetlands acquisition, restoration, and management projects that conserve and enhance coastal wetlands as defined in the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act. A total of \$20 million is available across approximately 25 awards. **Proposals are due June 21, 2024.** For more details, please visit: <https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/352451>
- 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.** For more details, please visit: <https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/352170>
- The National Wildlife Federation's Nature-based Solutions Funding Database includes 86 federal grant programs for communities interested in pursuing federal funding and/or technical assistance for nature-based solutions. To visit the database, please click here: <https://fundingnaturebasedsolutions.nwf.org/>
- Many of these funding opportunities can be found on the SERPPAS website: <https://serppas.org/resources/funding-opportunities/>



► Sentinel Landscapes

- The REPI Program awarded REPI Challenge funds for 17 projects benefiting 22 installations and many nearby communities. DOD contributed \$23 million to the projects, with more than \$36 million in additional funding from REPI partners. Two recipients are located in the SERPPAS region: 1) Avon Park Air Force Range in Florida and 2) MCAS Beaufort and MCRD Parris Island in South Carolina. To read more, please visit: <https://defensecommunities.org/2024/02/dod-awards-repi-challenge-funding-at-22-installations/>
- The Nature Conservancy announced the acquisition of one of the largest undeveloped waterfront properties in coastal South Carolina, the 4,409-acre Gregorie Neck property. In addition to the acquisition, TNC will also ensure the property will be permanently protected with a conservation easement. This property was also the recipient of a \$6 million REPI Challenge grant this year, awarded to prevent incompatible development and protect landscapes in the vicinity of the Marine Air Corps Station Beaufort. To read more press coverage regarding this transaction, please visit:
 - [Future of Massive Waterfront Property Now Certain](#)
 - [\\$35M conservation deal to protect 4,400 undeveloped acres in SC Lowcountry](#)
 - [Group pays \\$35M for 4,400 coastal acres in Jasper County to ensure conservation](#)
 - [Federal designation leads to Lowcountry land conservation](#)
- The Sentinel Landscapes Partnership announced the 2023 Sentinel Landscapes Accomplishments Report showcasing how USDA, DOD, DOI, and their on-the-ground partners collaborate to solve complex land-use challenges, combining resources and aligning funding across the 13 sentinel landscapes. Through FY22, projects in sentinel landscapes attracted \$1.16 billion in funds, permanently protecting over 677,100 acres. These contributions have enrolled 4.4 million acres in assistance programs to tackle land-use challenges in FY22 alone. To read more, click here: <https://sentinellandscapes.org/media/1xqlfbap/2023-sentinel-landscapes-accomplishments-report.pdf>
- The USDA announced that the USDA Forest Service is investing nearly \$145 million from the Inflation Reduction Act—the largest climate investment in history—to connect forest landowners with emerging climate markets as part of the Investing in America agenda. \$116 million from the funds being announced is for 20 [Forest Landowner Support](#) projects to provide equitable access to these emerging markets. Many of the awardees represent or will support underserved landowners located in or providing benefits to disadvantaged communities. Proposals for projects under \$2 million will continue to be accepted on a rolling basis through August. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/about-agency/newsroom/releases/usda-announces-145m-investing-america-agenda-help-landowners-access>
- The Northwest Florida Sentinel Landscape released the January and February Updates newsletters that provides news, resources, partner collaboration, and partnership progress:
 - January: https://serppas.org/media/kb5jok0g/northwest-florida-sentinel-landscape-update_january-2024.pdf
 - February: https://serppas.org/media/py3lad0t/northwest-florida-sentinel-landscape-update_february-2024.pdf
 - March: https://serppas.org/media/zrqlwhru/northwest-florida-sentinel-landscape-update_march-2024.pdf
- The REPI Newsletter for January is now available, providing exciting news and announcements related to the REPI community.
 - January: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USGOVREPI/bulletins/383c423>



- The Network for Landscape Conservation released its bimonthly newsletter, The Landscape Conservation Bulletin, sharing timely news, information, topics, and upcoming conferences and opportunities within the field of landscape conservation:

- January 2024: <https://myemail.constantcontact.com/January-Bulletin-Network-for-Landscape-Conservation.html?soid=1128366788872&aid=ocipYBJVmv5>

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

- The SERPPAS-endorsed America the Beautiful Challenge project, as well as another ATBC funded project through the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, received local media coverage. A press event highlighting the two projects was held in Raleigh, NC, with the acting Deputy Secretary of the Interior Laura Daniel-Davis attending. To read more, click here: <https://www.aol.com/nc-share-america-beautiful-us-133000598.html> and https://www.newbernsj.com/news/north-carolina-wildlife-resources-commission-receives-federal-funding-for-two-conservation-projects-in-enc/article_84c24ae1-0709-5083-b0eb-3ace3b4b22da.html
- USDA announced the launch of a new conservation initiative, Working Lands for Wildlife's North Bobwhite Pilot Project, as an opportunity to give producers tools to conserve wildlife habitat while achieving other conservation benefits, including sequestering carbon and improving water quality and soil health. The pilot project will provide \$13 million in dedicated funding for FY2024 in new assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program. This is for producers to help the bobwhite and other game and non-game species by managing their working lands for early successional habitat while meeting their lands natural resource and production goals. To read more, please visit: <https://landscapepartnership.org/networks/working-lands-for-wildlife/landscapes-wildlife/quail/information-materials/usda-launches-new-bobwhite-conservation-pilot-and-announces-general-conservation-reserve-program-signup/>
- The Florida Department of Environmental Protection recently celebrated the state's acquisition of 16,200 acres of conservation lands within the Avalon, Etoniah/Cross Florida Greenway, Longleaf Pine Ecosystem, Apalachicola River and Lake Wales Ridge Ecosystem Florida Forever projects. This \$26 million investment expands the Florida Wildlife Corridor, a designated network of connected lands that creates critical linkages for wildlife habitat, by 13,080 acres. To read more, click here: <https://www.floridadaily.com/state-completes-investment-of-26-million-to-serve-16200-acres-in-five-florida-forever-projects/>
- Marking a milestone of conservation success, two wild-born Eastern indigo snake hatchlings have been observed at The Nature Conservancy's Apalachicola Bluffs and Ravines Preserve in Florida. Over the past seven years, TNC and partners have released Eastern indigo snakes to the preserve, and the wild-born hatchlings are further confirmation that the previously released snakes are flourishing among the restored longleaf pine landscape and that conservation efforts in preserving ecosystems and creating healthy habitats play a vital role in benefitting the interconnected species within them. To read more, please visit: <https://www.nature.org/en-us/newsroom/eastern-indigo-snake-hatchlings-discovered-at-tnc-preserve/>
- A special PBS series, Insectarium, recently filmed a video on monarch butterflies, *Butterfly Effect: How Scientists Are Trying To Save the Monarch Butterfly*. The telemetry and forest structure studies and Western Monarch Count highlighted in this video were partially funded by the U.S. Forest Service and Department of Defense Cooperation on Monarch Butterfly Conservation project. This collaborative project brings together the U.S. Forest Service International Programs and the DoD Legacy Resource Management Program to promote sustainable land management and biodiversity;



and to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of managing habitat for Monarchs and other pollinator species on DoD and other tribal, federal, state and private lands. To watch the video, click here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mOvZ2ELfN3E>

- The Southeastern Partnership for Forests & Water released their newsletter containing news surrounding the pursuit of healthy Southeastern forested watersheds:
 - January: <https://mailchi.mp/8f144840cc2a/new-partnerships-new-year?e=af775ac18d>
 - February: <https://mailchi.mp/bfe6a00be90b/feb-2024?e=af775ac18d>

► **Southeast Prescribed Fire Initiative**

- Updates to the EPA's National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) have been released. The new standards for annual PM2.5 set a lower threshold of 9 micrograms per cubic meter, down from the previous standard of 12. EPA is also revising the Air Quality Index to improve public communications about the risks from PM2.5 exposures and making changes to the monitoring network to enhance protection of air quality in communities overburdened by air pollution. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/national-ambient-air-quality-standards-naaqs-pm> and <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2024-02/pm-naaqs-air-quality-index-fact-sheet.pdf>
- A recent article in the Sierra Club magazine highlights the Southwest Georgia Prescribed Burn Association and the benefits of prescribed fire, the south's strong fire culture, and the importance of burning on private lands. PBAs teach individuals to manage their land with fire in states like Georgia, where 93 percent of the land is privately owned. To read more, please visit: <https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/private-landowners-prescribed-burns>
- The Integrated Research Management Team, a collaborative effort between the U.S. Forest Service, DoD, and various wildland fire research and educational intuitions, gathered at Fort Stewart in February for the second year to harvest data and best practices from local prescribed burns. To read more, please visit: <https://coastalcourier.com/news/burn-notice-fort-stewarts-prescribed-burning-program-draws-attention-research/>
- In an effort to increase acres burned annually in the state, Georgia has created a reciprocal agreement to allow certified burners from other southern states to apply to become certified burners in Georgia. Certified burners from Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia are eligible to submit the reciprocal agreement. To learn more, please visit: <https://gatrees.org/fire-prevention-suppression/certified-burner-reciprocal-agreement/>
- The SERPPAS Prescribed Fire Work Group published the 87th, 88th, and 89th editions of the Driptorch Digest, which contains prescribed fire news, events, articles and more from across the region. Learn more here:
 - January: <https://bit.ly/3TVWfhp>
 - February: <https://bit.ly/4cB1jPp>
 - March: <https://bit.ly/3xe0dJj>

► **Coastal Resilience and Regional Adaptation**

- The Department of the Interior and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service launched the Salt Marsh Keystone Initiative in January 2024 with funding support from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The initiative will work with partners to advance nature-based solutions that increase resilience, protect important natural carbon storage opportunities, conserve fish and wildlife habitat, and promote



local economies. To read more, click here: <https://www.fws.gov/story/2024-01/keystone-initiative-centers-salt-marsh-conservation> and <https://www.doi.gov/sites/default/files/salt-marsh-fact-sheet.pdf>

- Pew Charitable Trusts recent article spotlights five ways to help nature and communities build climate resilience, including Pew’s collaborations with communities, Tribes, governments, and others on conservation projects tailored for a changing planet. To read more, please visit: <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2024/03/12/5-ways-to-help-nature-and-communities-build-climate-resilience>
- A USFWS story features the efforts to save the salt marsh. The feature mentions the work of the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative, and its formation from the partnership between SERPPAS and Pew Charitable Trusts. To read more, please visit: <https://www.fws.gov/story/saving-salt-marsh>
- NOAA released the *Efficient Permitting Roadmap for Coastal Sediment Management*, a first of its kind manual that shows users how to navigate the permit review of projects involving sediment management, including everything from tidal marsh, beach, or dune restoration to sediment storage and beneficial use of dredged material. While this guide is specific to the North-central California coast, it serves as a helpful resource for nature-based solutions permitting. To learn more, please visit: <https://coastalscience.noaa.gov/news/sediment-management-guide-supports-coastal-resilience-by-identifying-path-to-efficient-permitting/>
- The SE Climate Adaptation Science Center released its January, February, and March Newsletters, which includes climate related news, resources, publications, webinars and more for the Southeast region:
 - January: <https://secasc.ncsu.edu/2024/01/24/january-2024-newsletter/>
 - February: <https://secasc.ncsu.edu/2024/02/20/february-2024-newsletter/>
 - March: <https://secasc.ncsu.edu/2024/03/19/march-2024-newsletter/>
- The Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy released its January, February, and March Newsletters, which combines all the blogs written on the SECAS website during the previous month:
 - January: <https://bit.ly/3xa2eWR>
 - February: <https://bit.ly/4a22Xbb>
 - March: <https://bit.ly/49mgg5i>
- The South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative released its February and March Newsletters, which includes salt marsh related news, updates on SASMI efforts, and relevant funding opportunities.
 - February: <https://serppas.org/media/b3hhzvvg/sasmi-newsletter-february-2024.pdf>
 - March: <https://serppas.org/media/dgjl53jt/sasmi-newsletter-march-2024.pdf>

► Energy Development and Siting

- The DoD announced its participation in Florida Power & Light Company's SolarTogether program. DoD will be subscribing for approximately 75 megawatts of emissions-free solar energy as part of its Carbon Free Electricity (CFE) goal to help build a robust, clean, and domestically based electricity supply chain by 2030. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3701837/dod-announces-participation-in-florida-power-lights-solartogether-program-to-po/>
- The U.S. Army Regional Environmental & Energy Office released its January, February, and March editions of the Southern Review of Legislative & Regulatory Actions for Federal Region 4. This newsletter includes environmental and energy related developments for DoD/Army leaders and



installation staff, giving early notice of legislative and regulatory activities relevant to DOD interests.

- January: <https://serppas.org/media/535bg5d5/southern-review-01-2024.pdf>
- February: <https://serppas.org/media/lrbtn5eh/southern-review-02-2024.pdf>
- March: <https://serppas.org/media/05lpyaox/southern-review-03-2024.pdf>

► **Military Services News**

- DoD released its Resilient and Healthy Defense Communities (RHDC) Strategy, which will guide the Department's actions in the coming years to improve the built and natural environment on defense installations. Directly supporting the Secretary of Defense's priority to take care of our people, the strategy focuses on improving the quality of life for Service members, their families, and the DoD civilian workforce. To learn more, please visit: <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/3677999/dod-releases-resilient-and-healthy-defense-communities-strategy/>
- Shaw Air Force Base in South Carolina is using controlled burns in an effort to maintain 12,500 acres of military land while preventing wildfires, sparking growth in the ecosystem and keeping predators away from endangered Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, who call the range home. To read more, click here: <https://www.shaw.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3697575/shaw-increases-mission-flexibility-while-sustaining-local-ecosystem/>
- Tyndall Air Force Base's environmental flight forestry program is expected to achieve a significant milestone this year of planting approximately 7.5 million longleaf pine trees throughout the base. Following the devastation of Hurricane Michael, members of the forestry program deliberately ramped up efforts, planting longleaf pine trees and other native plants to replenish what was lost in the storm. To read more, click here: <https://www.tyndall.af.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3651168/sprucing-up-tyndalls-forests/>
- The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Energy, Installations and Environment announced the release of *Boots on the Ground: Saving Species, Supporting the Mission*—a video that showcases the DoD's success in maintaining its national defense and security mission, while conserving military lands and the species that call them home. To view the video, please visit: <https://youtu.be/mA3GIs0hmPA>

UPCOMING EVENTS

- April 3, 2024: [5th National Climate Assessment Regional Event: Southeast](#) (Raleigh, NC)
- April 17-18, 2024: [Longleaf Academy: Herbicides & Longleaf 201](#) (Albany, GA)
- April 19, 2024: [Mississippi Longleaf Landowner Field Day](#) (Camp Shelby/Hattiesburg, MS)
- April 20, 2024: [Party for the Pine](#) (Southern Pines, NC)
- April 30-May 1, 2024: [Georgia Forests & Water Forum](#) (Forsyth, GA)
- May 1-3, 2024: [Longleaf Academy: Fire & Longleaf 301: Advancing Fire Management Goals in Longleaf Ecosystems](#) (Tallahassee, FL)
- **May 8-9, 2024: 2024 SERPPAS Principals Meeting (Gulfport, MS)**
- June 3-6, 2024: [Southern Group of State Foresters 2024 Annual Meeting](#) (Wilmington, NC)
- June 22-25, 2024: [2024 Association of Consulting Foresters National Conference](#) (Ponte Vedra Beach, FL)
- June 24-27, 2024: [14th North American Forest Ecology Workshop](#) (Asheville, NC)



- ▶ September 16-19, 2024: [7th Annual National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy Workshop](#) (Atlantic City, NJ)
- ▶ September 17-20, 2024: [2024 Society of American Foresters National Convention](#) (Loveland, CO)
- ▶ October 8-11, 2024: [15th Biennial Longleaf Conference](#) (Sandestin, FL)
- ▶ October 12-16, 2024: [78th Annual SEAFWA Conference](#) (Augusta, GA)

UPCOMING WEBINARS

- ▶ Series: [Landscape Conservation Webinar Series](#) by the Network for Landscape Conservation
- ▶ Series: [Southeast Monthly Webinar Series](#) by NOAA
- ▶ Series: [SE CASC Science Seminar Series](#) by the SECASC
- ▶ Archived: All Southern Fire Exchange webinars are recorded and housed on the [SFE YouTube channel](#).
- ▶ Archived: [Climate-Driven Changes in Land Management Practices and Wildland Fire Smoke in the Southeast](#) by SECASC
- ▶ Archived: [Southeastern Plants Regional Species of Greatest Conservation Need](#) by SECASC
- ▶ April 17, 2024: [2024 REPI Report to Congress](#) by REPI
- ▶ April 18, 2024: [Defense Community Infrastructure Program Informational Webinar](#) by OLDCC
- ▶ May 1, 2024: [Fire and Game Species](#) by Wisconsin Forestry Center
- ▶ July 10, 2024: [Fire and Climate Change](#) by Wisconsin Forestry Center
- ▶ July 24, 2024: [2024 Designation Cycle Sentinel Landscapes Spotlight](#) by REPI
- ▶ October 9, 2024: [AICUZ and REPI Partnerships for Enhanced Land Protection](#) by REPI
- ▶ December 11, 2024: [Navigating Military Readiness Through Responsible Project Execution](#) by REPI

For more information about SERPPAS, visit www.serppas.org, or email info@serppas.org