



# Southeast Aquatics Fund

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## PARTNERS

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S Fish and Wildlife Service
- Southern Company
- Nestlé
- Cargill
- The Altria Group

## ABOUT NFWF

Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than 6,800 organizations and generated a total conservation impact of more than \$10 billion.

Learn more at [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org)



Bluehead chub

## OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), in partnership with the USDA's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Cargill, Nestlé, Southern Company and the Altria Group announced an eighth round of funding for Southeast Aquatics Fund projects. Sixteen new watershed-based habitat restoration, enhancement and assessment projects totaling \$7.7 million were awarded. The 16 awards announced leveraged \$2.3 million in matching contributions from the grantees, providing a total conservation impact of \$10 million.

The Southeast Aquatics Fund is a competitive grants program that supports watershed-based restoration to improve the health of southeastern aquatic systems and secure populations of native freshwater aquatic species. Utilizing a habitat-based approach means a diversity of species benefit, from game species to at-risk species, helping to reduce the possibility of future listings under the Endangered Species Act.

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**ALABAMA****Improving Water Quality through Technical Assistance in Locust Fork, Big Canoe Creek and Terrapin Creek (AL)**

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy

Grant Amount: .....\$270,500

Matching Funds: .....\$151,900

Total Project Amount: .....\$422,400

Increase technical capacity for landowners to enroll in cost-share programs in the Locust Fork, Big Canoe Creek and Terrapin Creek watersheds. Project will leverage cost-share programs to help landowners implement beneficial practices such as improved grazing management and will partner with Friends of the Locust Fork River to restore a stream bank.

**Prioritizing and Implementing Habitat Improvement Projects in Locust Fork (AL)**

Grantee: Cawaco Resource Conservation and Development Council

Grant Amount: .....\$379,800

Matching Funds: .....\$130,100

Total Project Amount: .....\$509,900

Support cooperative efforts of the Alabama Rivers & Streams Network (ARSN) to perform studies that lead to a greater understanding of imperiled species, use data-driven information to prioritize cooperative projects, share this data through public channels and engage landowners to implement climate-smart, habitat improvement projects. Project will gather data on urban darters in Locust Fork watershed to identify data gaps to assist in the development of conservation opportunities.

**Restoring Aquatic and Upland Habitat on Turkey Creek in the Locust Fork Watershed (AL)**

Grantee: Alabama Forestry Foundation

Grant Amount: .....\$83,000

Matching Funds: .....\$116,300

Total Project Amount: .....\$199,300

Restore wetlands, remove invasive species and implement prescribed fire along Turkey Creek in the Locust Fork watershed. Project will improve habitat for rush and watercress darters and engage private landowners to promote best management practices on their lands through education, hands-on activities and technical assistance.

**Stream Bank Restoration in the Turkey Creek Watershed (AL)**

Grantee: Freshwater Land Trust

Grant Amount: .....\$150,000

Matching Funds: .....\$333,700

Total Project Amount: .....\$483,700

Restore eroding stream bank on Turkey Creek, a tributary of the Locust Fork, to improve water quality and habitat for the federally endangered vermilion darter. Project will reduce sedimentation, improve floodplain access and benefit other aquatic species such as the Black Warrior waterdog and flattened musk turtle.

**FLORIDA****Engaging Landowners in Voluntary Conservation Activities to Improve Water Quality and Quantity (FL)**

Grantee: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Grant Amount: .....\$595,000

Matching Funds: .....\$0

Total Project Amount: .....\$595,000

Engage landowners in north Florida in voluntary conservation activities that will enhance streams through wetland, streambank, instream and riparian restoration. Project will result in improved water quality and quantity, benefiting freshwater mussels and fish species.

**Improving Aquatic Habitats through Technical Assistance to Private Landowners (FL)**

Grantee: Ducks Unlimited

Grant Amount: .....\$665,000

Matching Funds: .....\$195,200

Total Project Amount: .....\$860,200

Provide technical assistance to private landowners to plan, design and implement voluntary practices that will improve quality and quantity of surface water, maximize wildlife habitat in wetlands, reduce soil erosion and flooding, and improve aquatic habitat. Project will develop grazing and conservation plans that utilize agricultural best management practices for protection and improvement of water resources.

**Improving Outreach to Private Landowners to Support Technical Assistance in Florida**

Grantee: National Grazing Lands Coalition

Grant Amount: .....\$155,100

Matching Funds: .....\$306,000

Total Project Amount: .....\$461,100

Provide eight listening sessions that will educate landowners on technical assistance opportunities and open a dialogue about challenges they are facing. Project will develop partnerships with local conservation groups, increase awareness on water quality and quantity issues, and perform outreach activities that will reach 400 landowners.

**GEORGIA****Fish and Mussel Population Monitoring at Holly Creek (GA)**

Grantee: Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Grant Amount: .....\$95,200

Matching Funds: .....\$95,200

Total Project Amount: .....\$190,400

Survey fish, mussel and invertebrate communities in the Holly Creek watershed to evaluate population trends for focal species and impacts of conservation actions. Project will collect data at 17 sites over two years to assess aquatic species populations and water quality.

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**Improving Grazing Practice to Benefit Water Quality in the Upper Chattahoochee Basin (GA)**

Grantee: Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Grant Amount: .....\$105,000  
 Matching Funds: .....\$200,000  
 Total Project Amount: .....\$305,000

Implement agricultural Best Management Practices on livestock farms in the upper Chattahoochee River basin to enhance water quality and conserve priority aquatic species like the bluestripe shiner. Project will implement rotational grazing, fence cattle from streams, and plant native vegetation to enhance and protect 1.7 miles of stream.

**Improving Water Quality and In-Stream Habitat on Working Lands in the Conasauga Basin (GA)**

Grantee: Limestone Valley Resource Conservation and Development Council

Grant Amount: .....\$624,300  
 Matching Funds: .....\$111,000  
 Total Project Amount: .....\$735,300

Work with private landowners to implement voluntary conservation practices on working agricultural lands. Project will result in reduced nutrient and sediment inputs and improved fish passage in the Conasauga River, benefiting species such as the trispot darter and freshwater mussels.

**NORTH CAROLINA****Engaging Private Landowners to Improve Soil Health and Water Quality in North Carolina**

Grantee: Croatan Institute

Grant Amount: .....\$680,000  
 Matching Funds: .....\$246,500  
 Total Project Amount: .....\$926,500

Engage landowners and help them access cost share to implement voluntary agricultural practices that will improve water quality while also improving soil health. Project will develop 15 agricultural management plans and will help producers plant cover crops, implement rotational grazing and restore riparian habitat.

**SOUTH CAROLINA****Improving Grasslands and Riparian Forests for Northern Bobwhite in the Pee Dee River Basin (SC)**

Grantee: Carolina Wildlands Foundation

Grant Amount: .....\$150,000  
 Matching Funds: .....\$37,500  
 Total Project Amount: .....\$187,500

Provide technical assistance and outreach to landowners in the upper Pee Dee River Basin to expand grassland and riparian forest habitat for northern bobwhite quail and enhance stream habitat quality. Project will host eight on-farm workshops for landowners and establish four demonstration sites through NRCS cost-share programs.

**TEXAS****Developing Living Shorelines Using Oysters on the Texas Coast**

Grantee: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Grant Amount: .....\$394,000  
 Matching Funds: .....\$95,100  
 Total Project Amount: .....\$489,100

Identify suitable areas for living shorelines on the central Texas coast and evaluate the use of hatchery-reared oysters to "seed" living shorelines. Project will implement three demonstration sites, monitor oyster population development for one year and create guidelines to enhance coastal protection and oyster populations.

**MULTIPLE STATES****Accelerating Aquatics Barrier Removal across the Southeast**

Grantee: Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies  
 Grant Amount: .....\$528,200  
 Matching Funds: .....\$125,700  
 Total Project Amount: .....\$653,900

Provide capacity that will support Aquatic Connectivity Teams across the Southeast, helping to coordinate efforts and maintain momentum for aquatic barrier removal and engage with Working Lands for Wildlife national staff to prioritize conservation projects and to further refine priority areas. Project will provide technical assistance, engage in barrier assessments, produce engineering designs and remove barriers.

**Building Capacity to Advance Aquatic Conservation Efforts for the Eastern Hellbender (NC, TN)**

Grantee: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Grant Amount: .....\$500,000  
 Matching Funds: .....\$250,000  
 Total Project Amount: .....\$750,000

Improve habitat and water quality in support of Working Lands for Wildlife Eastern Hellbender Initiative. Project will establish four Private Lands Biologists and one Private Lands Engineer to assist private landowners with implementing conservation practices on their land to benefit aquatic species.

**Filling Gaps in Aquatic Species Conservation in the Southeast (AL, NC, TN)**

Grantee: Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy

Grant Amount: .....\$1,174,500  
 Matching Funds: .....\$185,800  
 Total Project Amount: .....\$1,360,300

Contribute to aquatic restoration in the Southern Appalachians, Neuse-Pamlico watersheds and Black Warrior-Mobile Tombigbee basin through work with private landowners and filling monitoring gaps. Project will benefit hellbender, Neuse River waterdog, Black Warrior waterdog and flattened musk turtle by implementing voluntary conservation activities on private lands, conduct monitoring for several listed species and pilot captive rearing program for several listed species.