

2013 YEAR IN REVIEW

An Annual Report of the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership

Together We Are Expanding Regional Partnerships

- SARP and the Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative held a joint steering committee meeting to better integrate aquatic and terrestrial habitat conservation to ensure the sustainability of aquatic resources in the region.
- SARP, in partnership with Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, the Tennessee Chapter of The Nature Conservancy and American Rivers, hosted a workshop on developing a dam removal state program and dam removal project management in Nashville, Tennessee. We hope to expand this approach to removing fish barriers to more states in the SARP region in the future.
- SARP reached out to watershed audiences nationwide through collaboration on a workshop, "Partnering For Fish Habitat Conservation" with the National Fish Habitat Partnership at River Network's River Rally in St Louis, MO.



Our Mission: SARP will, with partners, protect, conserve and restore aquatic resources, including habitats throughout the Southeast, for the continuing benefit, use and enjoyment of the American people.



East Fork of the Stone's River (Brown's Mill Dam), TN

Andrea English



ACE Basin NERR, SC

Lindsay Gardner

Together We Are

Coordinating Aquatic Conservation Research

- SARP initiated the Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative (GCPO LCC) Aquatic Species-Habitat Model Project focused on the development of relationships of priority aquatic species with flow and other habitat conditions, connectivity and water quality. This project will include Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky and Alabama.
- Working with regional partners, SARP facilitated the Gulf Coast Prairie LCC Instream Flow Resources Workshop (October 16 – 18) in Oklahoma City. Key outcomes of the workshop included: 1) demonstration of how to use the instream flow resources SARP developed on the GCP LCC Conservation Planning Atlas to make decisions related to instream flow management; 2) introduction to the regional flow-ecology hypotheses; 3) assessment of results of the use of existing ecological and hydrologic data to test regional flow-ecology hypotheses; and 4) identification of priority information needs to advance instream flow science in the region.
- SARP and other partners sponsored the Black Bass Symposium titled, “Black Bass Diversity: Multidisciplinary Science for Conservation” in conjunction with the 2013 Southern Division American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting in Nashville, TN. The symposium emphasized the conservation need and diversity of black basses in their native habitats.

- The SARP Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Work Group was instrumental in working with USFWS and USGS to develop a request for an updated report on ANS in USFWS Region 4 and to update point data in the USGS NAS database for the SARP geography, increasing database records from 17,907 to 25,038 in 2013.
- To date, States in the SARP region with completed ANS plans include Oklahoma, Louisiana, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Mississippi, and Arkansas. Alabama has a conditionally approved plan and Florida has a combined terrestrial and aquatic plan. Discussions continue in North Carolina about the development of a State ANS plan. These plans provide an important component in managing this national issue.



Devil's River, TX

Tim Birdsong



North Peninsula State Park, FL

Lindsay Gardner

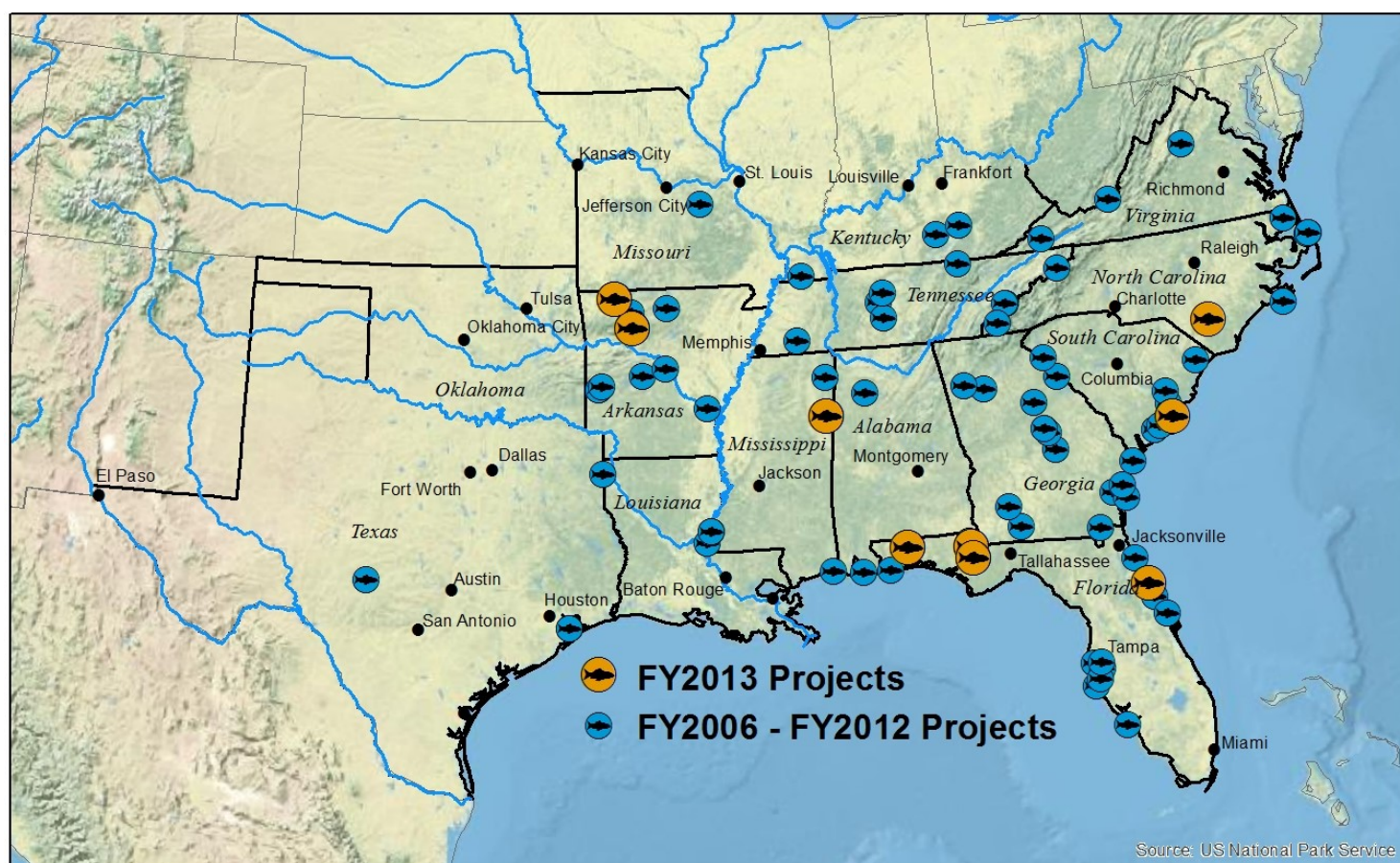
Together We Are

Assessing Aquatic Habitats In The Southeast

- Through its Science & Data Committee, SARP provided input into the NOAA-led Gulf Coast Assessment available at www.southeastaquatics.net/resources/science-data/national-fish-habitat-partnership-marine-assessment-update-september-2013/view.
- SARP was involved in the development of a decision support tool to prioritize and guide stream restoration projects for redeye bass in South Carolina and habitat assessments are underway to guide potential restoration actions for shoal bass in tributaries of the Chattahoochee River in Georgia.
- SARP, the SALCC and The Nature Conservancy developed the Southeast Aquatic Connectivity Assessment Project, which seeks to conduct a GIS-based assessment that prioritizes barriers to aquatic species movement for mitigation throughout the Southeast region and strategically reconnecting fragmented freshwater habitat through removal or bypassing of key barriers to fish passage www.southeastaquatics.net/groups/seacap.

SARP works with local partners throughout the region to address regional habitat objectives and national conservation priorities. Through grant programs and collaboration with partners, SARP is integral to the identification and implementation of restoration projects in the Southeast.

SARP Aquatic Habitat Restoration Projects Map



FY 2013 Projects	Program
Big Piney Creek Ft. Douglas Stream Bank Stabilization (AR)	NFHP/USFWS
Stream Restoration Project on Unnamed Tributary to Blackwater River (FL)	NFHP/USFWS
Buttahachie River Aquatic Habitat Restoration - Phase II (MS)	NFHP/USFWS
Chipola River Watershed Restoration - Phase II (AL, FL)	NFHP/USFWS
Stream and Riparian Restoration to Improve Habitat and Water Quality in Kings River (AR, MO)	NFHP/USFWS
Chipola River Applied Habitat Mapping Project (AL, FL)	NFHP/USFWS
Cape Fear River Fisheries Enhancement Project (NC)	NOAA
SARP/NOAA-North Peninsula State Park Saltmarsh Restoration (FL)	NOAA
Community-based Oyster Reef and Saltmarsh Restoration in the Charleston Harbor Watershed and Cape Romain Wildlife Refuge (SC)	NOAA



Together We Are

Supporting Aquatic Habitat Restoration & Conservation Planning

- SARP, the Southeast Watershed Forum and The Nature Conservancy, hosted a conservation planning workshop in Dallas, Georgia for community leaders and conservation professionals in the Raccoon Creek Watershed. It focused on the integration of county land use planning into comprehensive watershed/conservation planning in order to ensure long-term benefits for prime habitat and water quality in the region.
- Habitat restoration efforts continue in support of the Southeast Native Black Bass Keystone Initiative to restore and enhance fish habitat for Guadalupe bass on the South Llano, Blanco and San Antonio rivers in Texas, shoal bass populations in the Chipola River in Alabama and Florida, and redeye bass in the Savannah River in Georgia.
- SARP provided regional aquatic datasets that were included in the Southeast Region Conservation Planning Atlas <http://seregion.databasin.org/>, a science-based mapping platform where conservation managers can view, retrieve, and perform analyses on spatial information with specific conservation goals in mind. To date, portals have been created for South Atlantic, Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks, and the Gulf Coast Prairie LCCs, covering a substantial portion of SARP's geography.
- Through its NOAA Community-based Restoration Program, SARP hosted a coastal restoration webinar series. Well attended webinars on living shorelines and monitoring were held in order to share lessons learned with project partners and other members of the aquatic restoration community and provide insights into how to improve upon/enhance activities, including the design, planning and execution of future projects.



Cape Fear River, NC

Lindsay Gardner

Together We Are

Elevating Regional Communications & Outreach

- SARP launched a new website within the Appalachian Landscape Cooperative web portal www.southeastaquatics.net.
- Two SARP nominated waterbodies, the Cape Fear River, NC and the Chipola River, FL, were nationally recognized by the National Fish Habitat Partnership and listed among the 2013 “10 Waters To Watch” www.fishhabitat.org as benefiting from strategic conservation efforts to protect, restore or enhance their current condition.
- As part of the Whitewater To Bluewater Partnership, SARP, along with the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture and Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership, drafted a joint communications strategy and developed the Whitewater To Bluewater website, www.easternbrooktrout.org/groups/whitewater-to-bluewater to highlight the activities and products of this collaboration. This includes a Species Spotlight page with information about the life history and habitat needs, habitat restoration efforts, and fun facts about select fish species.

Together We Are

Spearheading National Conservation Needs In The Region

- Through the success of the Southeast Native Black Bass Keystone Initiative, SARP and partners are working to achieve genetically-secure, self-sustaining populations of Guadalupe bass in Texas, shoal bass in Alabama and Florida, and red-eye bass in South Carolina. Efforts in 2013 included on-the-ground habitat restoration, habitat and genetic assessments, and fish stocking in support of the national conservation goals of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Bring Back the Natives/More Fish Program and National Fish Habitat Action Plan.
- SARP joined a national cooperative with eight other Coastal Fish Habitat Partnerships that are helping to protect, restore, and enhance fish habitats in coastal marine environments. Initial efforts include the development of a poster, fact sheet and quarterly newsletters highlighting coastal FHP activities and accomplishments, and strategizing opportunities for future joint collaboration.
- SARP helped shape the future direction of habitat restoration programs across the country through participation in the National Fish Habitat Partnership's Excellence Workshop, a participatory training session focused on the unique needs of Fish Habitat Partnerships.

ABOUT SARP

The Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP) is a regional collaboration of natural resource and science agencies, conservation organizations and private interests developed to strengthen the management and conservation of aquatic resources in the southeastern United States.

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This publication was funded by the Multistate Grant Program (Grant #F12AP00134), a program supported with funds from the Sportfish Restoration Program of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and jointly managed with the Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies.