

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



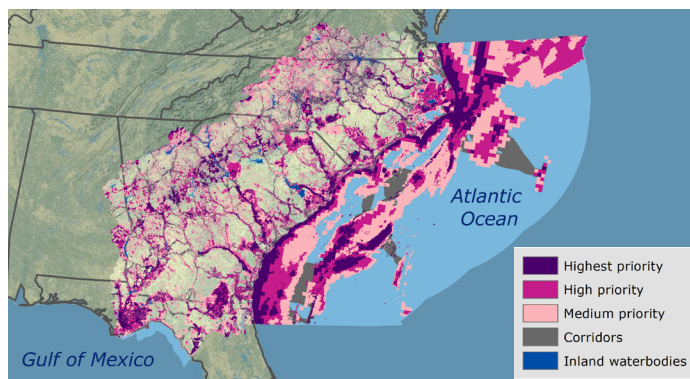
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Our mission: Facilitate conservation actions that sustain natural and cultural resources, guided by a shared adaptive blueprint

IMPROVING THE BLUEPRINT

THE RELEASE OF SOUTH ATLANTIC CONSERVATION BLUEPRINT 2.2

In November, the South Atlantic LCC released Version 2.2 of the Conservation Blueprint, a living spatial plan that identifies opportunities for shared action. It uses the current condition of terrestrial, freshwater, marine, and cross-ecosystem indicators to prioritize the most important areas for natural and cultural resources across the South Atlantic region. Through a connectivity analysis, Blueprint 2.2 also identifies corridors that link coastal and inland areas and span climate gradients. It uses similar data-driven methods and maintains the fine spatial scale of the previous version, but incorporates a new marine birds indicator, updated data for resilient biodiversity hotspots and unaltered beach, better corridor routes, a new approach for inland waterbodies, and more.



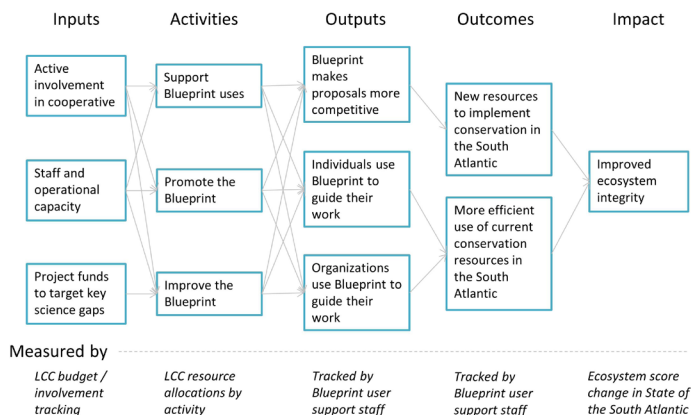
THE SPRING 2017 BLUEPRINT WORKSHOP SERIES



The South Atlantic LCC hosted six workshops in six different locations throughout the Southeast, convening the broader conservation community to review the draft of the latest Blueprint and help develop the first Blueprint implementation strategy. The workshops were attended by 142 people from 62 different organizations, including federal, state, nonprofit, private, and academic groups, as well as partnerships and local governments. Participants voted on their preferred allocation of capacity between improving the Blueprint, promoting the Blueprint, and supporting Blueprint uses, with the final results fairly evenly split across each component of the workplan.

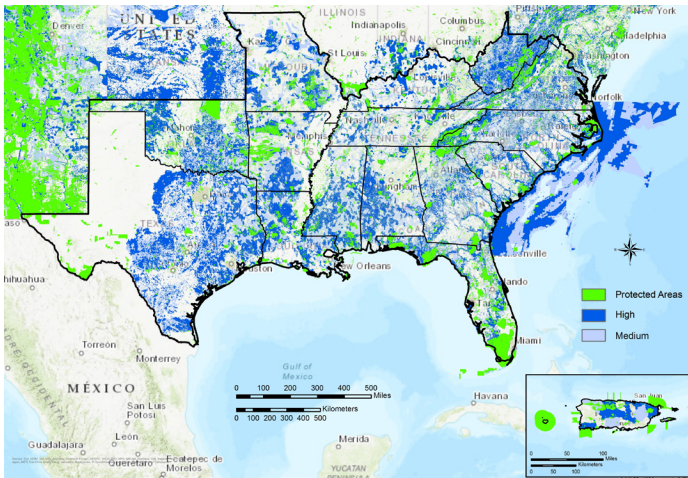
UNVEILING THE FIRST BLUEPRINT IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The first version of the Blueprint implementation strategy was also released this year. The strategy describes a set of recommended actions and approaches within Blueprint areas to improve the integrity of South Atlantic ecosystems. It outlines how the Blueprint can improve ecosystem integrity by bringing more resources to the South Atlantic and facilitating more efficient use of current resources. It describes how the Blueprint depicts priority areas for shared action within “high urgency” areas likely to change as a result of sea-level rise and urban growth, and within “low risk” areas not predicted to change. Finally, it suggests specific conservation actions within each subregion, incorporating information from Blueprint workshops and many local, state and regional plans. Like the Blueprint, the strategy will continue to be updated over time.



COLLABORATING ACROSS LCCs

ADVANCING THE SOUTHEAST CONSERVATION ADAPTATION STRATEGY (SECAS)



The SECAS Blueprint was updated to Version 2.0, combining the latest spatial plans from Southeast and Caribbean LCCs. It's available on the Southeast Conservation Planning Atlas (seregon.databasin.org). Version 2.0 improved consistency in climate change response through new corridors and resilience data in the Appalachian. Integration across LCC boundaries also improved. Adding western plans strengthened connections beyond the South.

The *Aligning Actions for Success* symposium was held at the Southeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) annual meeting. Discussion reinforced the value of working across jurisdictions and outlined ways to improve the Blueprint and advance the SECAS vision into 2018 and beyond. The SEAFWA Directors directed SECAS to initiate an engagement process to set explicit goals and objectives.

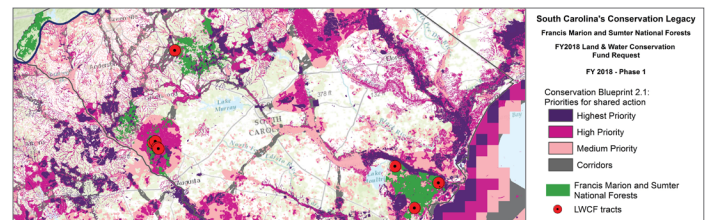
IMPROVING DATA MANAGEMENT ACROSS THE LCC NETWORK

The South Atlantic LCC actively participated in a LCC Network-wide effort to make all data and information generated through LCCs publicly accessible and consistently documented in one central location. All LCC projects and final products are now available on ScienceBase (sciencebase.gov) and will soon be displayed on the LCC Network Science Catalog. All LCCs have also archived their public and private information on secure servers for long-term preservation and sharing with partners.

SUPPORTING BLUEPRINT USES

INFORMING U.S. FOREST SERVICE PLANNING IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Blueprint 2.1 helped inform the Land Ownership Adjustment Strategy for Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests, a partner-driven plan identifying restoration and protection opportunities. It also supported a Land and Water Conservation Fund proposal to acquire more than 3,500 acres of priority Blueprint areas, which would expand the U.S. Forest Service's conservation legacy in the state and add recreational opportunities for the growing Charleston area.



ADDITIONAL BLUEPRINT USES IN PROGRESS



The Blueprint has been used in more than 30 completed projects so far, and staff are actively supporting at least 30 more in-progress Blueprint uses. The Nature Conservancy is using the Blueprint as the foundation of its Conservation Vision for South Carolina. The Longleaf Alliance is using the Blueprint to identify Local Implementation Team priorities. Together, the South Atlantic and Peninsular Florida Blueprints are anchoring a Landscape Conservation Design for the Big Bend of Florida.

PROMOTING THE BLUEPRINT

BUILDING KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS ACROSS THE COOPERATIVE

South Atlantic LCC staff continue to spread the word about the Blueprint. This year, promotional highlights include presentations to: the Albemarle Pamlico National Estuary Partnership symposium, Tall Timbers Land Conservancy, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, North Carolina land trusts, Southeast Climate Science Center researchers, and Army Corps natural resource managers.

CONTINUING THE MONTHLY THIRD THURSDAY WEB FORUM SERIES



After 61 webinars so far, the Third Thursday Web Forum continues to inform and engage the cooperative about the Blueprint and relevant projects. This year's topics included: Gulf of Mexico biological objectives, South Atlantic marsh distribution, at-risk species models, tracking fire and fire effects in open pine, and intersections between coastal protection and fisheries.