



# Gulf Coastal Plains & Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Newsletter, The Monitor



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## Headlines at a Glance:

### **Project Highlight:**

[Complex picture of alligator gar habitat emerges from innovative application of landsat imagery along the lower Mississippi River](#)

### **Greg Wathen's blog**

[Integration of Aquatic and Terrestrial Conservation: a deeper relationship between SARP and the GCPO LCC](#)

### **John Tirpak's blog**

[An RFP from the GCPO LCC in Support of the Integrated Science Agenda: A Means to our End\(points\)](#)

## The Wide Angle View

### *News from Greg Wathen, LCC Coordinator*

**Integration of Aquatic and Terrestrial Conservation: a deeper relationship between SARP and the GCPO LCC**



Last week, the Steering Committees of the GCPO LCC and Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP) got together on the banks of the Mississippi River in Memphis, TN, to discuss conservation of aquatic resources in our region, and how our two partnerships can better coordinate and collaborate with each other. We were also joined by leadership of the Lower Mississippi River Conservation Committee, which provided us a unique view of hands on conservation along one of America's most important aquatic resources, the lower Mississippi River. All told, about 55 people came together for two days to discuss priorities, roles and responsibilities in aquatic conversation.



## **GCPO LCC Highlights**

[Pondering the 2060 landscape of the future: 20 minutes per week and 60 day check-ins](#)

Read the GCPO Report: [Using Remote Sensing to Assess Alligator Gar Spawning Habitat Suitability in Large River Floodplains](#)

[SARP and GCPO LCC hold joint Steering Committee Meeting in Memphis: Background materials and presentations](#)

[The GCPO LCC gateway to the Conservation Planning Atlas for the Southeast](#)



## **Opportunities & Events**

[Workshop on Gulf Restoration & Recovery, RESTORE in AL, June 12](#)

[All Hands meeting of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance June 25-27](#)

[Comment period for first LMRRA Assessment on river-related information needs](#)

[Read more . . .](#)

## **From Under the Scope**

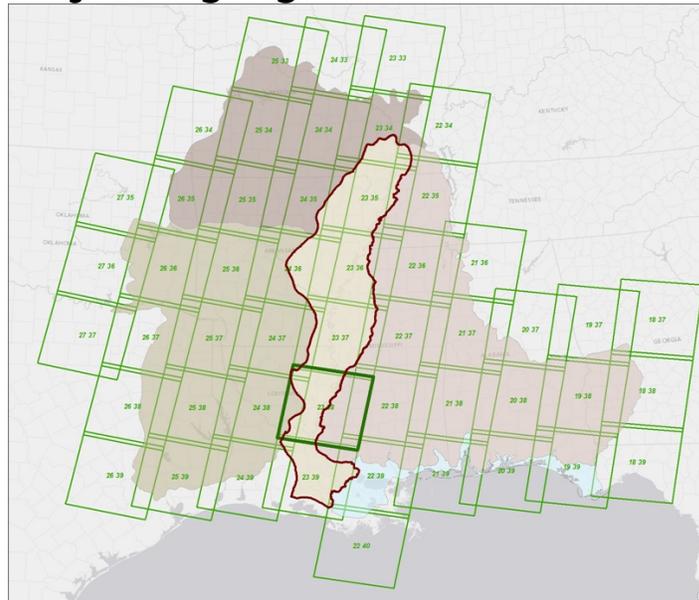
*News from John Tirpak, LCC Science Coordinator*

### **An RFP from the GCPO LCC in Support of the Integrated Science Agenda: A Means to our End(points)**

In the coming weeks the GCPO LCC will post a Request for Proposals (RFP), and we are hopeful that it will receive a robust response from a science community eager to address the knowledge gaps identified therein. However, with all the attention on the details of the RFP process, it will be potentially easy to forget the “why” of this science. Why is it needed? What is it for?

[Read more ....](#)

## **Project Highlight**



### **Complex Picture of Alligator Gar Habitat Emerges from Innovative Application of Landsat Imagery along the lower Mississippi River**

by Gregg Elliott

Historically, aquatic conservationists have been relegated to spatial data that points to aquatic habitats on the landscape and essentially says, “water.” Contrast this with reams of data available for terrestrial habitats

[ends July 5, 2013](#)

[Public Sessions for the Gulf Coast Draft Initial Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Mississippi Delta National Heritage Area Plan Nears Completion, Needs Your Input](#)

[Call for Papers - National Wild Turkey Symposium](#)

**More listed at:**  
[Events page](#)

[Funding & Grants](#)

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### **News You Can Use**

[New paper measures the rate of decline in site occupancy of amphibians nationwide](#)



[Large-scale coordinated program/monitoring across multiple organizations is entirely possible and can be very successful](#)

[USDA Secretary Vilsack Announces Regional Climate Hubs, New Research Tools, Uniform Policy Guidelines to Help Producers Mitigate Threats, Adapt for the Future](#)

[Forest Service Report on fire risk spotlights homes on the edge of wildlands](#)

including the National Land Cover Database, soil type, vegetation health, and tree canopy density.

Now an [innovative application of existing landsat data](#) is providing land managers with information on some of the key variables that affect fish and other aquatic species: extent of inundation through time, water temperature, and ultimately the dynamic nature of large river floodplain habitats. Partners working at St. Catherine's Creek National Wildlife Refuge (SCC NWR) initiated this project to assess spawning habitat suitability for alligator gar in response to requests from state agencies seeking guidance on how best to manage this species of conservation concern. What they have created is a Habitat Suitability Index methodology that has the potential to be applied to any species that responds significantly to water temperature, inundation frequency and land cover type. Moreover, their techniques can also identify the most suitable habitats for protection, management or restoration of each such species using remote sensing.

[Read more](#)

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## **GCPO LCC Highlights**

**Pondering the 2060 landscape of the future: 20 minutes per week and 60 day check-ins**  
by Bill Uihlein

There is a tremendously ambitious and forward thinking effort initiated by Directors of the Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) and supported by the federal agency Regional Directors of the Southeast Natural Resource Leaders Group (SENRLG). The effort is in response to the ongoing transformational changes that are shaping southeastern landscapes. It's called the Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy, or [SECAS](#). The Directors have an expectation that the partners and partnerships coming together as part of the LCC Network of the South and Climate Science Centers will [play a key role](#) in facilitating the development of SECAS and in executing its recommended conservation and adaptation strategies.

## ***Gulf Coast News***

[Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council releases Draft Initial Comprehensive Plan: Restoring the Gulf Coast's Ecosystem and Economy](#)

[Dauphin Island Sea Lab Designated as Alabama's RESTORE Research Center of Excellence](#)

[Advisory Group Appointed to Lead National Academy of Sciences' New Gulf of Mexico Program](#)



***Our LCC Network (border LCCs & CSCs)***

[LCC and CSC Communicators nationwide web meeting scheduled for August 7](#)

[News feeds from Southeastern LCCs](#)

[News from the South Central Climate Science Center](#)

[News from the Southeast Climate Science Center](#)

[News from the Northeast Climate Science Center](#)

[Read more . . .](#)

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## **Using remote sensing to assess alligator gar spawning habitat suitability in large river floodplains**

St. Catherine Creek NWR, outside of Natchez, MS is part of the Lower Mississippi River floodplain and provides valuable aquatic and upland habitats for a large diversity of both terrestrial and aquatic organisms. Federal and state fisheries managers both recognize the importance of this floodplain habitat as an integral part of the large river ecosystem and many state partners have crafted management plans that seek to promote conservation activities that enhance and preserve this important resource. The frequency, timing and duration of Mississippi River flooding, drives the spatial extent of floodplain inundation which in turn determines habitat quality and suitability of floodplain habitats for both aquatic and terrestrial organisms. However, fisheries managers typically have only limited information to consider when evaluating when and where suitable floodplain habitat exists.

[Read the full report](#)

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## **From the Gulf Coast**

### **Draft Initial Comprehensive Plan for Restoring the Gulf is Released for Comment**

On May 23rd, the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council publicly released the [Draft Initial Comprehensive Plan: Restoring the Gulf Coast's Ecosystem and Economy](#) and accompanying [Draft Programmatic Environmental Assessment](#) for [formal public comment](#). The Draft Plan provides a framework to implement a coordinated region-wide restoration effort in a way that restores, protects, and revitalizes the Gulf Coast region following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. See [GCPOLCC News](#) about the press release. Public meetings to discuss the Draft Plan have also been scheduled

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