

# The Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy

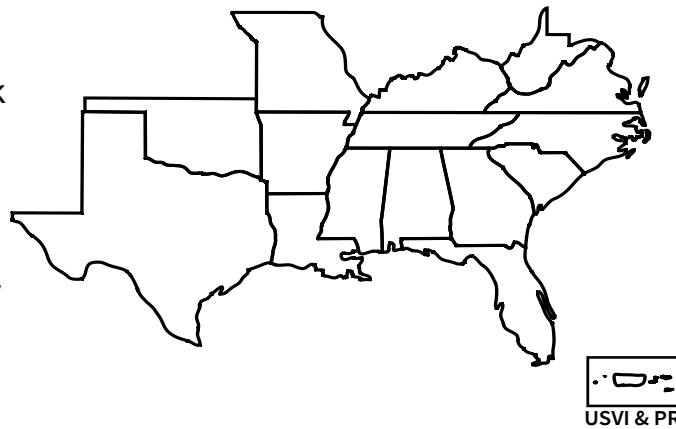
## SECAS



Credit: Texas Tongs/Flickr, CC BY-NC 2.0

### A Bold Vision

A connected network of lands and waters that supports thriving fish and wildlife populations and improved quality of life for people



### An Ambitious Goal

A 10% or greater improvement in the health, function, and connectivity of Southeastern ecosystems by 2060

### A Blueprint for Action

A data-driven spatial plan that helps accelerate conservation action in the places where it will make the biggest impact



*“The time is upon us all to be more collaborative and strategic in targeting our collective conservation*

*activities to achieve broader landscape level conservation goals within the context of our individual conservation missions.”*

—Ed Carter, retired Executive Director, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

## Who We Are

SECAS is a regional conservation initiative that spans the Southeastern United States and Caribbean. SECAS was started in 2011 by the states of the Southeastern Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies and the federal Southeast Natural Resource Leaders Group.

SECAS emerged as a response to the unprecedented challenges facing our natural and cultural resources, like urban growth and climate change. We see these challenges as an opportunity to coordinate conservation action and investment around a shared strategy.

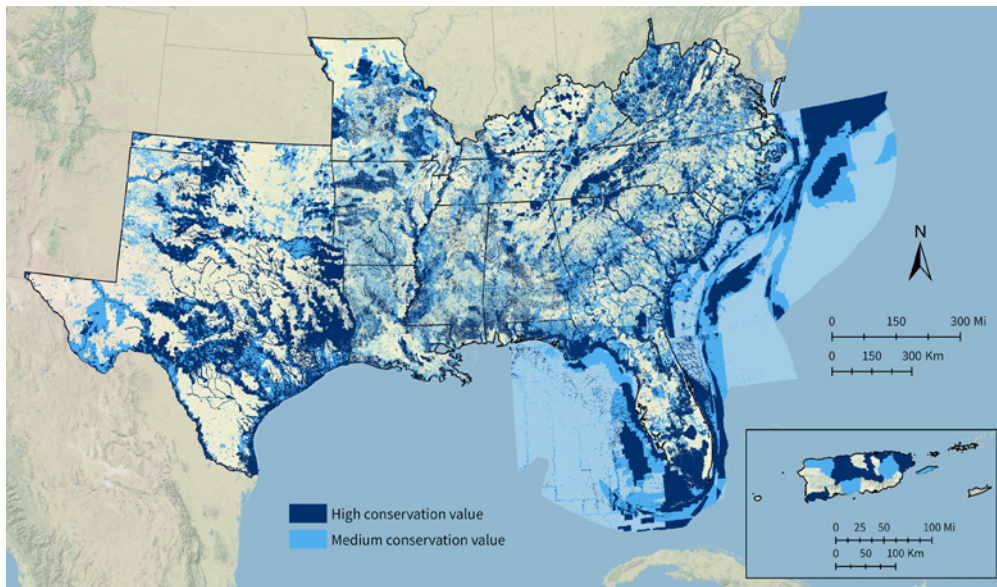
## What We Do

- We bring together state, federal nonprofit, and private organizations around a shared vision for the future.
- We track regional metrics of ecosystem health, function, and connectivity to report annually on progress toward achieving the SECAS 10% goal.
- We develop the Southeast Conservation Blueprint, a spatial plan that identifies the most important areas for conservation and restoration.

## Latest Accomplishments

- The Southeast Blueprint is helping more than 300 people from over 130 organizations bring in new funding and inform decisions.
- In Spring 2021, the SEAFWA Directors established an official SECAS Executive Steering Committee intended to provide oversight and strategic direction to SECAS.
- In Fall 2021, SECAS released its third report on progress toward the SECAS goal, *Recent Trends in Southeastern Ecosystems*.

# The Southeast Conservation Blueprint



*Blueprint Version 2021. High value areas are most important for ecosystem health, function, and connectivity. Medium areas may require more restoration, but are still important for buffering and connecting high value areas. Get started at [secassoutheast.org/blueprint](https://secassoutheast.org/blueprint).*

- The Blueprint identifies potential areas for a range of conservation actions, like landowner incentives, management, education, or protection.
- It's a work in progress that regularly incorporates new data, partner input, and information about on-the-ground conditions.
- The Blueprint provides a regional perspective and is intended to be used in combination with local data and knowledge.

The Southeast Conservation Blueprint is the primary product of SECAS. The Blueprint is more than just a map. It's a living spatial plan that identifies important areas for conservation and restoration across the Southeast and Caribbean.

The Blueprint stitches together smaller subregional plans into one consistent map, incorporating the best available information about key species and habitats, as well as future threats. You can use these underlying layers to find your part of the Blueprint.

## Get Help Using the Blueprint

Staff are available to answer questions and help you use the Blueprint to support a proposal or inform a decision. Your experience will guide future improvements and ensure the Blueprint reflects on-the-ground conditions.

We also welcome feedback on the Blueprint data and methods!

- Find contact information for Blueprint user support staff at [secassoutheast.org/staff](https://secassoutheast.org/staff)
- Or, contact Alex Lamle at [alexandria\\_lamle@fws.gov](mailto:alexandria_lamle@fws.gov) and she'll put you in touch with the best person to help

## For More Information

- Visit [secassoutheast.org](https://secassoutheast.org)
- Subscribe to the monthly newsletter at the bottom of any page of the SECAS website
- Contact the SECAS Coordinator: Amanda Sesser [amanda\\_sesser@fws.gov](mailto:amanda_sesser@fws.gov)

## Who's Using the Blueprint?



*Credit: Rua Mordecai*

*The Blueprint helps identify potential longleaf corridors in North Carolina.*

- A state wildlife agency seeking funds to protect coastal wetlands and improve public access
  - A National Wildlife Refuge applying for funding to boost endangered salamander recovery
  - A nonprofit supporting the reauthorization of a critical conservation funding source at its state legislature
  - A Council of Government helping a town refine its comprehensive plan
  - Longleaf pine conservation partnerships prioritizing restoration and management efforts
  - A local African American community organization communicating the natural resource benefits of a cultural heritage trail
  - A watershed partnership developing a land protection strategy
- These are just a few of the more than 100 Blueprint use cases completed so far, with over 60 still in progress!