2019 Gulf Coast Land Conservation Conference Agenda

New tools for coastal conservation in a changing world

September 9 - 11, 2019
Marriott Grand Hotel, Point Clear, Alabama

Monday, September 9 – PRE-CONFERENCE

12:00 pm – 6:00 pm  Exhibitor Set up and Registration Open

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm  Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation Annual Business Meeting
PGCLC member organizations gather for business meeting and elections.

3:00 pm – 3:15 pm  Afternoon Coffee Break

3:15 pm – 5:00 pm  Free Pre Conference Training: Increasing Strategic Bird Habitat Conservation across the Gulf – open to all conference attendees
Kara Lankford, Director of Gulf Coast Restoration, National Audubon Society
Dr. Nicole Michel, Senior Quantitative Ecologist, National Audubon Society

NAS’s new report Audubon’s Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People (February 2019) details conservation strategies for 11 flagship bird species across the Gulf region. Get an overview of NAS’ rigorous modeling effort that identifies highly suitable habitat for these flagship species and recommendations for 30 projects with an investment of $1.7 billion in science, habitat restoration, land protection, and stewardship.

This workshop is designed for land trust leaders and other land conservation practitioners. Participants will learn how to use the report and modeling in the development of their own land protection and land stewardship projects to help meet bird conservation goals.

6:00 pm – 7:30 pm  Welcome to Alabama! Welcome Reception, Exhibits Open
Patti McCurdy, State Lands Director, Alabama Department of Conservation and Christine Johnson, Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast/PGCLC Chair.

Light hors de oeuvres and two drink tickets included in registration. Cash bar.

7:30 pm until  Dinner on your own
Tuesday, September 10

7:00 am – 8:00 am  Continental Breakfast, Registration and Exhibits

8:00 am – 9:15 am  Welcome and Morning Plenary I: Best Practices in Landscape Scale Conservation

Elizabeth Barber, Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation

Summary of the Gulf Partnership’s report to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund on recommended methods and best practices for implementing efficient and cost effective landscape scale conservation projects in the Gulf region.

Morning Plenary I, continued: Five Years of the Gulf Coast Project Assistance Fund: Lessons Learned

Meg Goecker, Alabama Heritage Coastal Trust
Tom Kay, Alachua Conservation Trust
Matt Singer, Galveston Bay Foundation
Stacey Shankle, Trust for Public Land
Ernest Cook, Land/Water Associates

Ernest Cook will lead a discussion with practitioners who have put Project Assistance Funds to work protecting coastal habitats. Panelists will discuss how the Fund accelerates conservation and other lessons learned.

9:15 am – 10:15 am  Morning Plenary II: Deepwater Horizon Investments in Land Conservation: a conversation with state and federal leaders from NRDA and the RESTORE Council

Chris Blankenship, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Jon Hemming, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Leslie Reed, Florida Department of Environmental Protection
Robin Riechers, Texas Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Ben Scaggs, Executive Director of the RESTORE Council
Chris Wells, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
Greg Gandy, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, Louisiana

Kara Lankford, Moderator

10:15 am – 10:45 am  Networking Coffee Break and Exhibits
10:45 am – 12:00 pm  Breakout Session I

**USDA’s Regional Conservation Partnerships Program: How RCPP works in the Gulf of Mexico Context**
Susan Carr, North Florida Land Trust
Steve Musser, USDA NRCS, Alabama
James Tillman, USDA Senior Regional Conservationist

Lori Faeth, Moderator

**How Hazard Mitigation funds can be used to fund conservation projects**
Ernest Cook, Land/Water Associates
Johnny Mojica, Earth Economics

Cindy Brown, Moderator

**Land stewardship: strategies for funding long-term land management**
Nicole Adimey, Partners for Fish and Wildlife, Southeast, US Fish and Wildlife Service
Robert Smith, Wildlife Mississippi/Mississippi Land Trust
Shane Wellendorf, Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy

Yael Girard, Moderator

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm  Picnic Lunch (provided) and Networking
Make a deli lunch and join your colleagues under the oaks or by the bay.

1:00 pm – 1:30 pm  Afternoon Plenary I: 2018 Farm Bill and Beyond
Lori Faeth, Government Relations Director, Land Trust Alliance

The 2018 Farm Bill was a huge win for land trusts! How did we do it? What’s the status of implementation and what’s on the horizon for 2023? All this plus a summary of what else is going on in Washington, DC that land trusts need to know.

Liz Barber, Moderator

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm  Roundtable Discussions with your USDA NRCS State Conservationists
Join USDA NRCS State Conservationists and Gulf Ecosystem Restoration Team leaders from AL, FL, LA, MS and TX for round table conversations about the new 2018 Farm Bill and how Deepwater Horizon funding can be leveraged with USDA programs for land conservation across the Gulf.

2:30 pm – 3:00 pm  Afternoon Networking Coffee Break and Exhibits
3:00 pm – 4:30 pm  
**Afternoon Plenary II: Putting Conservation Science into Practice**

Billy Van Pelt, American Farmland Trust  
Mike Osland, University of Louisiana  
John Oetting, Florida State University  
Chris Shepard, The Nature Conservancy  
Tom Kay, Moderator

5:30 pm – 8:00 pm  
**Field Trip and Evening Social at Weeks Bay Foundation**

Welcome to Weeks Bay by Yael Girard, WBF Executive Director.

Learn about the Weeks Bay Foundation and the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. Walk along the nature trails that wind through wetlands, marshes and forest, and take a boat ride on Weeks Bay (ticket purchase required in advance). Enjoy food, drink and conversation with colleagues.

*Social and dinner and one drink ticket included in registration. Cash bar. Boat tour requires ticket purchase.*

4:45 pm  
**DEPARTURE FROM HOTEL TO WEEKS BAY RESERVE RESOURCE CENTER** - For those who purchased a boat tour, meet in lobby to carpool to boat launch

*Those attending the boat tour meet in lobby at 4:45. Carpool to the Weeks Bay Reserve Resource Center boat launch at 11525 US Hwy 98, Fairhope, Alabama.*

5:30 pm  
**DEPARTURE FROM HOTEL TO WEEKS BAY FOUNDATION** - For those NOT attending the boat tour, meet in lobby to carpool to Field Trip and Evening Social.

*Please carpool to the Weeks Bay Foundation, 11401 US Hwy 98, Fairhope, Alabama. Guided nature walks from 6 pm - 7 pm. Gather at 7 pm for dinner/social.*

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**Wednesday, September 11**

7:00 am – 8:00 am  
**Continental Breakfast, Registration and Exhibits**

8:00 am – 8:45 am  
**Morning Plenary I: Dispelling the Overhead Myth: How to change the conversation and raise more support**

Christine Johnson, Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast  
Chair of the Gulf Partnership Executive Committee
8:45 am – 10:00 am  **Breakout Session 2**

*Staying Above Water Part 1: Land Protection in a Changing Climate*

Mark Anderson, The Nature Conservancy
Kelly Watkinson, Land Trust Alliance

Christina Mohrman, Moderator

*Protecting Healthy Watersheds: Ingredients for Success*

Susan Carr, North Florida Land Trust
Dan Dumont, Alabama Forest Resources Center
Debi Osborn, Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast
Mary Anne Piacentini, Katy Prairie Conservancy
Kari Servold, Moffatt and Nichol

Roberta Swann, Moderator

10:00 am – 10:30 am  **Morning Networking Coffee Break and Exhibits**

10:30 am – 11:45 am  **Closing Plenary:** *The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s conservation programs in the Gulf region: lessons learned and plans for the future.*

Mike Sharp, Director, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (AL, FL, MS)

Lisa Creasman, Moderator

11:45 am - 12:00 pm  **Closing Remarks and Adjourn**

12:00 – 1:00 pm  **Lunch on your own**

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm  **Free Post Conference Training: Staying Above Water Part 2: Land Protection in a Changing Climate**

Looking for science-based solutions to conserve biological diversity and maintain nature’s services within coastal landscapes under climate change? Wonder what tools you need to incorporate climate resilience into your coastal land protections work? Learn from the experts at TNC about new coastal resilience science and data specifically developed for the Gulf Coast. This session builds on the introductory workshop on Tuesday by providing an opportunity to work with the online mapping tool and learn more about how to integrate coastal resilience into your land protection decisions.
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This annual conference is hosted by the Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation, a collaborative of 28 land trusts working together across the Gulf Coast to increase the pace, quality and permanence of voluntary land conservation. Get involved by visiting us at www.gulfpartnership.org