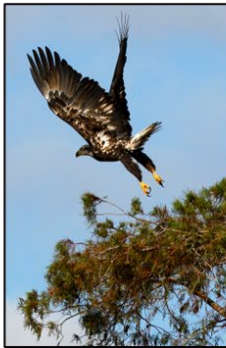


**2023 GULF PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE**

Hosted by the
PARTNERSHIP FOR GULF COAST LAND CONSERVATION
Pensacola Beach, Florida
October 19th-20th, 2023



www.gulfpartnership.org

Welcome to Pensacola Beach, Florida from the Gulf Partnership!



On behalf of the 26 land trust organizations and the Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation (Gulf Partnership), welcome to Pensacola Beach, and thank you for joining us. It is set to be a terrific gathering! Our focus this year on *Planning for the Future* is intended to help build relationships and a community of practice in conservation to provide sustainable solutions to the environmental and community challenges faced in the Gulf. This is important, as the delivery of conservation across the region has never been more significant, where projects must provide long-term solutions in the face of a changing landscape.

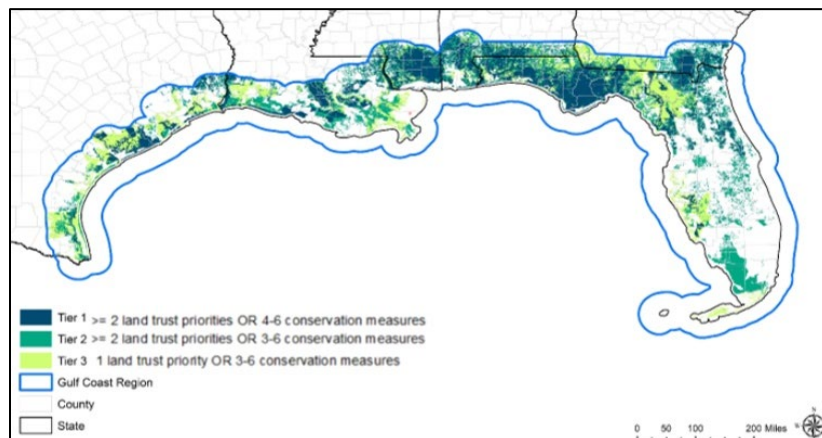
The Gulf Partnership has been committed to this goal, dedicating over \$500,000 in its Project Assistance Fund program to facilitate the development of projects by covering due-diligence expenses, and another \$500,000 towards reforestation efforts over the past two years. Through this collective effort over 30,000 acres will be permanently protected, and 1 million trees put in the ground. The future has never looked brighter.

The Gulf Partnership executive committee, members, and its staff have designed this conference to provide maximum benefit to the participants and have worked very hard to deliver an exceptional program. The Partnership is extremely grateful to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and all of our sponsors for their continued support of the Gulf Partnership and of this year's conference. I also want to thank the many volunteers who have invested numerous hours to ensure a quality program.

So welcome to a fantastic location. I sincerely hope you gain professionally from this year's conference and benefit from the ability to network, as well as enjoy the beautiful city of Pensacola Beach, and have some fun!



Vance Crain
Executive Director
Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation



Map of the Gulf Partnership's *Strategic Conservation Vision* for the Gulf of Mexico Region. To learn more about the Gulf Partnership's shared vision for protecting land in the Gulf Region, visit www.gulfpartnership.org.

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PARTNERSHIP FOR
Gulf Coast
LAND CONSERVATION

October 19th-20th, 2023
Holiday Inn Resort
14 Via De Luna Drive
Pensacola Beach, Florida 32561

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**Gulf Partnership Conference
Planning for the Future Agenda**

Thursday, October 19th

- 7:00 am – Registration [*St. Bart's pre-function space*]
- 7:30 am – 8:30 am Continental Breakfast [*St. Bart's pre-function space*]
- 8:30 am – 8:35 am **Welcome and Introduction** [*Guadeloupe Room*]: Pensacola Mayor D.C. Reeves
- 8:35 am - 10:00 am **Plenary Session I** [*Guadeloupe*]: *Planning for the future, land conservation investments, and building collaboration with the land trust community. Learn and be inspired by a plenary session dedicated to advancing local, state, and regional conservation.*
- Shawn Hamilton (Secretary): Florida Department of Environmental Protection
 - Jon Scott (Program Director, Southern Forests): National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
 - Meredith Budd (Director, External Affairs): Live Wildly Foundation
 - Moderator: Vance Crain (Gulf Partnership)
- 10:00 am – 10:30 am Coffee Break with light refreshments [*St. Bart's pre-function space*]
- 10:30 am – 12:00 pm **Unpacking the USDA Farm Bill Breakout Session** [*Guadeloupe*]: *Learn about policy and moments that led to the creation of the new Farm Bill, and how changes to the program will impact your organization.*
- Lori Faeth (Senior Director of Government Relations): Land Trust Alliance
 - Tim Fink (Policy Director): American Farmland Trust
 - Ben Knuth (Agriculture Policy Specialist): National Wildlife Federation
 - Moderator: Neil Fleckenstein (Tall Timbers)
- 10:30 am – 12:00 pm **Partnering with the US Fish & Wildlife Service Breakout Session** [*Antilles*]: *USFWS personnel will discuss updates/directions of the North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) process and how conservation partners can work with the Coastal and Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.*
- Doug Phillips: North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grant Administrator
 - Melody Ray-Culp: Florida Panhandle Coastal Program Coordinator
 - Chris Metcalf: Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program Coordinator
 - Moderator: Beau Hardegree (USFWS)
- 12:00 am – 1:30 pm Lunch Provided [*St. Bart's pre-function space*]
- 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm **Florida Conservation Corner Breakout Session C** [*Guadeloupe*]: *Learn about the numerous funding opportunities and conservation initiatives from programs that aid acquisition and easement efforts in Florida.*
- Callie DeHaven (Division of State Lands Director): Florida Department of Environmental Protection

- Sue Mullins (Rural and Family Lands Director): Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
- Jason Lauritsen (Chief Conservation Officer): Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation
- Kent Wimmer (Northwest Florida Senior Representative and Coordinator, Northwest Florida Sentinel Landscape): Defenders of Wildlife
- Moderator: Tom Kay (Alachua Conservation Trust)

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

State Funds for Conservation Breakout Session D [Antilles]: *This is an exciting time for conservation across the Gulf. With established, emerging, and new state funding initiatives in Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas, this panel discussion will discuss the successes, challenges, and opportunities they each create.*

- Lori Olson (Executive Director): Texas Land Trust Council
- Ricky Flint (Executive Director): Mississippi Outdoor Stewardship Fund
- Patti McCurdy (State Lands Director): State of Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Moderator: Doug Hattaway (Trust for Public Land)

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Afternoon Break *[St. Bart's pre-function space]*

3:30 pm – 5:00 pm

RESTORE Act Plenary Session II [Guadeloupe]: *A Practitioner's Perspective. Learn from RESTORE Act Coordinators about getting through their process, and from partners who have successfully navigated RESTORE funding to get projects on the ground.*

- Lisa Robertson (Senior Advisor): RESTORE Council
- Heather Young: RESTORE Council
- Matt Singer (Director of Land Conservation): Galveston Bay Foundation
- Moderator: Christina Mohrman (Gulf of Mexico Alliance)

5:00 pm – 5:30 pm

PGCLC Business Meeting - *Members Only [Antilles]*

5:30 pm – 7:00 pm

Conservation Florida and Innisfree Hotels Welcome Reception *[St. Bart's pre-function space]*

7:00 pm

Dinner (on your own)

Friday, October 20th

- 7:00 am – Registration [*St. Bart's pre-function space*]
- 7:30 am – 8:30 am **Beach Tour:** Interpretive beach tour learning about the natural history of Pensacola Beach, the species that call this unique ecosystem home, and the efforts conservation partners are making to protect, manage, and restore the Gulf Islands National Seashore.
- 7:30 am – 9:00 am Continental Breakfast [*St. Bart's pre-function space*]
- 9:00 am – 9:20 am **Welcome and Introduction [*Guadeloupe*]:** PGCLC Chair – Shane Wellendorf
NRCS Keynote Address: Ron Howard – Senior Advisor Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Team
- 9:20 am – 10:30 am **Building Partnerships with NRCS ACEP & RCPP Programs:** *The USDA-NRCS and conservation partners will provide updates on USDA-NRCS conservation programs such as the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), followed by an open discussion about how the land trust community can better engage with NRCS partners.*
- ACEP – Danielle Balduff: Branch Chief, Easement Division
 - RCPP – Kesha Harvey: Projects Branch, RCPP Team, Natural Resource Specialist
- 10:30 am – 11:00 am Break [*St. Bart's pre-function space*]
- 11:00 am – 12:00 pm **NRCS State Conservationist Breakout Sessions:** *PGCLC and NRCS will host individual breakout sessions with your state conservationists for additional state-level details and one-on-one discussions with your state representative.*
- Ben Malone: AL State Conservationist
 - Juan Hernandez: FL State Conservationist
 - Kurt Readus: MS State Conservationist
 - Richard 'Chad' Kacir: LA State Conservationist
 - Kristy Oates: TX State Conservationist
- 12:00 am – 1:00 pm Lunch (on your own)
- 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm **Kayak Tour [FULL]:** Paddle along the intercoastal waterway on a guided nature tour, observing waterfowl, wading birds, and the beautiful Gulf Seashore habitat. Kayaks, paddles, life vests, etc. will be provided.

Thank you for joining us!

KEYNOTE SPEAKER
2023 GULF PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Shawn Hamilton
Secretary
Florida Department of Environmental Protection



Shawn Hamilton has worked at the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) since 2007, where he has risen through the ranks of the department. Early in his career he served as Ombudsman and Public Affairs Manager in DEP's Northwest District Office. He was promoted to Assistant District Director in 2010 and was appointed District Director in 2011. He subsequently was promoted to Interim Deputy Secretary of Land & Recreation in 2020 and formally appointed as Deputy Secretary in 2021. He was appointed DEP Secretary in August 2021 and was subsequently reappointed in January 2023.



SPEAKER BIOS

DANIELLE BALDUFF

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Branch Chief, Easement Programs Division

danielle.balduff@usda.gov

Danielle Balduff earned a Ph.D. in Soil Science from the University of Maryland in 2007. Danielle joined USDA-NRCS in 2007 as a Soil Scientist with a focus on wetland compliance for farm bill programs. In 2011, Danielle became an Ohio NRCS Program Manager working on implementation of easement programs including enrollment, acquisition, and stewardship activities. In 2015, Danielle assisted the NRCS national office in the development of a streamlined easement acquisitions team and process for nation-wide implementation in 2017. Danielle accepted a position in NRCS national office in 2017, assisting in the development of easement policy, streamlining easement procedures, and leading development of new business tools for the Agency. Danielle is currently serving as the Implementation and Stewardship Branch Chief in the Easement Programs Division leading the easement program implementation for NRCS, including managing program funding allocations, implementation, training, and stewardship activities.

MEREDITH BUDD

Live Wildly Foundation: Director, External Affairs

meredith@livewildly.com

Meredith Budd is the Director of External Affairs with Live Wildly Foundation, a 501c3 dedicated to connecting and protecting wildlife corridors for a balanced ecology and economy. As the organization's senior strategist, Meredith engages with federal, state and local governments, NGOs, institutions, as well as the private sector to build and maintain strategic relationships, identify opportunities to deepen Live Wildly's impact, and effectuate landscape-scale conservation across the State. She has over a decade of experience in the environmental field with expertise in imperiled species policy, habitat conservation planning, and wildlife conflict resolution. Meredith is a graduate of both the Leadership Collier Foundation's Associate Leadership Collier (2016) and Leadership Collier programs (2021) as well as a graduate of the 2023 Leadership Florida Connect Class.

CALLIE DEHAVEN

Florida Department of Environmental Protection: Director of State Lands

callie.dehaven@floridadep.gov

Callie DeHaven is a fifth-generation Floridian whose passion for conserving Florida's historic and natural landscapes led to her dedicating more than two decades to conservation planning, land acquisition and land stewardship. She returned to the department in 2017 to lead the Division of State Lands, Florida's team of dedicated public land stewards and real estate specialists. Most recently, she spent seven years in the private sector implementing an accelerated conservation land sales program for a timberland landowner, where she led conservation business activities across 1.8 million acres in multiple states. Prior to that, DeHaven was the public lands protection manager for The Nature Conservancy, where she served as the primary negotiator for acquisition of environmentally sensitive land in Florida's Panhandle. Earlier in her career she served the public as a planning manager in the Division of State Lands. She was the principal liaison between the department and other state agencies in the development of Conservation and Recreation Lands, Preservation 2000 and Florida Forever projects. DeHaven's experience in the public, nonprofit and private sectors and commitment to strong partnerships complements our talented Division of State Lands team as they work to acquire, protect and preserve lands that will greatly benefit outdoor recreation and our natural and water resources across the state.

LORI FAETH**Land Trust Alliance: Senior Director of Government Relations**lfaeth@lta.org

Lori Faeth joined the Land Trust Alliance in July 2017 and serves as the Senior Director of Government Relations. Lori oversees the Government Relations team in advancing strategies and securing public funding to support land conservation. She also works to build and maintain relationships with elected officials, federal agencies and other key partners, while leading efforts across Alliance departments. She is a veteran of both federal and state government as well as nonprofit organizations. Lori joined the Alliance after serving as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy and International Affairs at the U.S. Department of the Interior where she was responsible for advancing the Department's cross-cutting and multi-stakeholder domestic and international policy issues. Prior to returning to DC in 2009 she spent six years as a senior advisor to Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano. She advised the governor on issues covering agriculture, energy, natural resources, and the environment and worked on broad policy issues including forest health, climate change and water management. Previously, she spent more than ten years at The Nature Conservancy as part of the national government relations team, ending her tenure as the Director of Government Relations for Arizona responsible for federal, state, and local policy.

TIM FINK**American Farmland Trust: Policy Director**tfink@farmland.org

Tim Fink joined American Farmland Trust (AFT) in 2019. Since then, he has led the organization's policy efforts, including COVID response and Farm Bill advocacy. Before joining AFT, Fink was the director of research and policy analysis at the Supporters of Agricultural Research (SoAR) Foundation, where he advocated for increases in USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative, fundraised for the National Academies' "Science Breakthroughs 2030" project, and led the development of a series of Farm Bill Research Policy Recommendations endorsed by 66 organizations. Prior to that, he was project manager for the 25x'25 Alliance where he led collaborations among government agencies, non-profits, academia, and private industry that involved agricultural adaptation to climate change and rural renewable energy policy. Fink holds a master's degree from Harvard and a Bachelor of Arts from Luther College.

RICKY FLINT**The Mississippi Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund: Executive Director**Ricky.Flynt@dfa.ms.gov

Ricky Flynt has served as the Executive Director of the newly established Mississippi Outdoor Stewardship Trust Fund since February of this year. Ricky has a B.S. Degree in Forestry and Wildlife Management from Mississippi State University. Ricky previously served for 30 years as a wildlife biologist and wildlife conservation officer with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks. For the past 20 years, Ricky served as the Alligator Program Coordinator where he developed Mississippi's first public alligator hunting season in 2005. Ricky also worked in the wildlife management area program and developed four new WMAs from the ground up. Ricky has extensive experience in wildlife habitat management, forestry, prescribed burning, and waterfowl management. Ricky is passionate about waterfowl and waterfowl hunting, turkey hunting, cooking, grilling, collecting fishing lures, and his most recent hobby is the pursuit of trout in mountain streams. Ricky and his wife Judy reside in Brandon, Mississippi.

KESHA HARVEY**Natural Resources Conservation Service: Natural Resources Specialist, RCPP**chakesha.harvey@usda.gov

Kesha began her career with the Florida NRCS in 2004 as a Soil Conservationist in the Baldwin Field Office. She subsequently served as a Soil Conservationist in the Fort Myers Field Office before moving to the Tavares Field Office as a District Conservationist in 2007. She worked with farmers and ranchers to provide financial and technical assistance on agricultural lands. In 2010, Kesha moved to the Bronson Field Office (FL) as a District Conservationist, where she continued to provide technical and financial assistance to farmers and ranchers on a variety of land uses. In 2012, Kesha successfully completed the NRCS Emerging Leaders Development Program. Kesha served as the Assistant State Conservationist for Programs (FL) where she provided statewide leadership and direction for financial assistance programs and successfully implemented new initiatives from 2019 to 2021. Kesha has served multiple assignments throughout her career as an acting Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations, acting State Program Specialist, and Team Leader. Her current role is Natural Resources Specialist under the Projects Branch at NRCS National Headquarters.

JUAN HERNANDEZ**Natural Resources Conservation Service: Florida State Conservationist**juan.hernandez@usda.gov

Juan C. Hernandez is the State Conservationist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Florida. Born in Adjuntas, Puerto Rico, Hernandez grew up on a small coffee plantation in the mountains of the island, and eventually went on to earn a bachelor's degree in agricultural sciences from the University of Puerto Rico. After graduation, he began his career with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Pennsylvania as a student trainee. After just five years with the agency, he was selected for his first leadership position as a District Conservationist in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Hernandez subsequently served in positions of increasing responsibility in Washington, D.C., Arkansas, Utah, and Nebraska. In April 2009, he accepted the position as State Conservationist in Maine, where he oversaw 14 NRCS field offices and more than 60 soil conservationists, engineers, and program administrators and served for 11 years before joining NRCS in Florida as State Conservationist. Juan and his wife Carmen live in Alachua, Florida, and have three children, Alejandra, Miguel, and Diego. They enjoy hiking, discovering Florida's extensive network of state parks; and their two funny pugs, Sol and Luna.

RON HOWARD**Natural Resource Conservation Service: Senior Advisor Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Team**ron.howard@usda.gov

Ronald Howard is the Senior Technical Advisor to the Director of the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Gulf restoration strategy as a part of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Team (GCERT). USDA established GCERT in response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. He has 26+ years of experience with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), helping people help the land. Ron has over nine years of practical experience implementing the USDA Gulf restoration strategy as a part of GCERT. Over the last year and a half, he has directed the operations of GCERT. Ron has provided leadership and technical expertise in the planning and implementation of ecosystem system-level restoration in the Gulf Coast region. Ron started this career with the Natural Resources Conservation Service in West Virginia, followed by appointments in Indiana, Florida, and Wisconsin. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Economics from Alcorn State University and a Master of Science degree in Agricultural and Resource Economics from West Virginia University. Ronald was born in Greenwood, Mississippi, and resides in Madison, Mississippi.

RICHARD “CHAD” KACIR

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Louisiana State Conservationist

richard.kacir@usda.gov

Kacir worked in the private sector and ran a successful cow-calf operation when he was first introduced to NRCS. He started his career as a soil conservationist in two South Texas locations. Kacir served four years as a district conservationist in Oahu, Hawaii, and eight years as assistant state conservationist for field operations for the east zone of Oklahoma. He also served in temporary assignments as acting state conservationist in South Dakota and management analyst in the Office of the Regional Conservationists. Kacir completed graduate studies in the Emerging Leadership Development Program through George Washington University in 2012 and graduated from the NRCS Strategic Leadership Development Program in 2014. A native of Victoria, Texas, he grew up working in a custom wheat harvesting operation with his uncle on the Great Plains where his love of farming and ranching began. Kacir graduated from Texas Tech University in 1986 with a degree in agricultural economics. Kacir and wife Risa, a registered nurse, have been married for more than 30 years and have four adult children. In his spare time, he enjoys fishing, hunting, and shooting sports.

JASON KEENAN

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Mississippi Assistant State Conservationist - Easements

jason.keenan@usda.gov

Jason Keenan attended Mississippi State University and the University of Georgia where he received degrees in Wildlife and Fisheries Management. He began his career as a Wildlife Biologist at the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources where he worked with private landowners and Farm Bill programs. In 2010, Jason joined NRCS as the Area Wildlife Biologist for central Mississippi. In 2016, he accepted the Assistant State Conservationist for Easements where he manages the Mississippi easement programs for NRCS. Jason is currently serving as the Acting State Conservationist.

BEN KNUTH

National Wildlife Federation: Agricultural Policy Specialist

knuthb@nwf.org

Ben Knuth, Agriculture Policy Specialist at the National Wildlife Federation, has a Master's in Public Policy from American University. Born and raised in Minnesota, Ben never expected to find himself in policy, much less in Washington, D.C. Despite an interest in politics, it seemed more likely that he would end up working somewhere with more hands on work. After several years of working various jobs in the Midwest, many related to the outdoors, Ben realized he wanted to get the expertise necessary to effect change on a larger scale and he enrolled in a Master's of Public Policy program at American University. Through this education, and an internship at a member-based organization in agricultural policy, Ben discovered a love for conservation agriculture policy. Now with NWF, Ben is able to combine his life's experience with his educational and professional expertise to advocate for wildlife, climate, water, and thriving communities via the voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs funded primarily through the Farm Bill. When not working, Ben enjoys hiking, canoeing, playing video games, eating good food, and watching the Minnesota Timberwolves lose (but maybe win?).

TIM LANDRENEAU

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Louisiana Assistant State Conservationist - Easement

tim.landreneau@usda.gov

A native of Evangeline Parish, Louisiana, Tim has been an avid outdoorsman and involved in the Agriculture industry through his youth, college and professional career. Tim grew up on his family's rice and soybean farm, and received his Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy from the University of Southwestern Louisiana. For the past thirty years, Tim has been employed by the USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service. He has

served as Soil Conservationist and District Conservationist in several locations across the state, and is presently the Assistant State Conservationist for Easement Programs in Louisiana. Through this position, Tim provides management of Farm Bill Programs such as the Wetland Reserve Program and the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program. Tim has also managed other conservation programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentive Program, the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program, and the Conservation Stewardship Program.

JASON LAURITSEN

Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation: Chief Conservation Officer

jason@floridawildlifecorridor.org

Jason Lauritsen is the Chief Conservation Officer of the Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation (Corridor Foundation) where he oversees the organizations land and water protection, science, stewardship and community relationships for the Corridor Foundation. He sits on the Office of Greenways and Trails Council, the Florida Transportation Plan Environmental Partners Working Group and is a part of the Statewide Bear Technical Assistance Group. Prior to joining the FLWC he was the Director of Audubon's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary. He has accumulated over 20 years of experience in conservation; from restoration and education to research and policy.

BEN MALONE

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service: Alabama State Conservationist

ben.malone@usda.gov

Ben is the eighth State Conservationist to serve Alabama's NRCS. After receiving a B.S. in Forest Management from Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University (Alabama A & M), he began his career in conservation as a student trainee in New York and Maine with the USDA Forest Service. He served as a Forester with the Forest Service in Vermont until he accepted a position with the NRCS as a Soil Conservationist in Mobile in 1997. Ben was District Conservationist in the Jasper and Mobile, Alabama until 2003, when he accepted a position as a Resource Conservation and Development Coordinator in Hammond, Louisiana. There he worked extensively on Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts. In March 2008, he became Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations for the Central Area. He has served on two National Technical Teams, and in the summer of 2014, he became Acting State Conservationist in Alabama. A native of Monroeville, Alabama Malone was heavily involved in 4-H during his childhood which guided him to a career in natural resources. He and his wife Felicia are proud parents of Benjamin and Alan.

CHRIS METCALF

US Fish & Wildlife Service: Supervisor Fish Biologist

chris_metcalf@fws.gov

Chris is the Field Supervisor for the Panama City Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office and coordinates the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, which provides technical and financial assistance to landowners for restoration and enhancement of wetland, longleaf pine and stream habitats. Chris received a B.S. degree in fisheries biology from the University of Wisconsin Stevens Point and an M.S. degree in aquatic ecology from University of Louisiana-Monroe. Much of Chris's work revolves around partnerships with state and federal agencies, private landowners, nonprofits, and industry to restore, monitor and maintain fish, mussels, other aquatic organisms, and wildlife resources. These partnerships aid in the recovery of species listed as threatened or endangered and help at-risk species from becoming listed.

PATTI MCCURDY

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources: State Lands Director

Patti.McCurdy@dcnr.alabama.gov

Patti McCurdy currently serves as Director of the State Lands Division of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR). The State Lands Division administers Alabama's Forever Wild Land Trust and manages the program's 285,000 acres for purposes of public recreation and habitat conservation. The State Lands Division manages additional state-owned jurisdictional trust lands, including submerged lands (inland and coastal), for uses including oil and gas exploration and development, timber harvesting, mineral extraction, agriculture leases, hunting leases and various other revenue generating activities. As State Lands Director, Patti's coastal duties include implementing Alabama's Coastal Zone Management program and managing both the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and 5 Rivers Delta Resource Center. Patti also assists ADCNR Commissioner Christopher Blankenship in administering the State of Alabama's Gulf of Mexico Security Act (GOMESA) program. Prior to becoming the State Lands Director in October of 2008, Patti served as Vice President-Legal for Column Financial, a Credit Suisse Company and was a partner in the Birmingham office of Burr & Forman LLP law firm. Patti is a graduate of the University of Alabama's College of Communication and School of Law.

SUE MULLINS

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services: Rural and Family Lands Protection Program Director

Sue.Mullins@fdacs.gov

Sue Mullins is an eighth-generation Floridian who has worked in land conservation since 1997, when she began her ten-year term as Government Relations Manager for The Nature Conservancy. Now in the role of Director of the Rural and Family Lands Program at the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Sue is charged with protecting Florida's once-vast agricultural landscape through the acquisition of conservation easements on working lands. As a lobbyist and policy advisor to several nonprofit conservation groups and the Florida Senate, Sue drafted the 2001 Rural and Family Lands Protection Act and the 2008 Florida Forever Act, and has long advocated for their funding. Sue has also helped create local conservation land programs in 17 Florida counties, and campaigned for many state Constitutional Amendments to secure authority, funding, and protection for public lands. Before joining the Rural and Family Lands Protection Program, Sue served many environmental clients in public affairs at Sachs Media, and drafted "*Marsh Forward*" A Regional Plan for the Future of the South Atlantic Coast's Million-Acre Salt Marsh Ecosystem, on behalf of The Pew Charitable Trusts. Sue holds a Master of Anthropology degree from Florida State University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Saint Leo College.

KRISTY OATES

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Texas State Conservationist

kristy.oates@usda.gov

Kristy began her career with USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in 1995 as a Soil Conservation Technician in Freestone County, Texas. During her 27 years of service, Kristy has served in multiple technical, supervisory, and leadership positions in Texas as well as detail assignments in multiple states. Her work included executive level positions of Acting Division Director of Conservation Planning and Technical Assistance Division in Washington DC, as well as Acting State Conservationist in Iowa and Minnesota. As the co-chair for the National Conservation Planning Partnership, Training, Certification, Technical Processes and Tools Committee, Kristy advances conservation planner certification across the nation. She fostered new opportunities to increase streamlining and efficiencies in landscape initiatives. Her leadership created a combined leveraging of federal, state, local, and private resources to maximize the impact of implementing

conservation across the country. Kristy holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Agriculture from Sam Houston State University, and she is a graduate of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Emerging Leaders Development Program from The George Washington University Center for Excellence in Public Leadership. She received her Senior Executive Service (SES) certification in 2020.

LORI OLSON

Texas Land Trust Council: Executive Director

lori@texaslandtrustcouncil.org

Lori Olson has served as the Executive Director of the Texas Land Trust Council since July of 2011, working to strengthen the coalition of more than 35 land and water organizations doing essential work across the state. Lori seeks to advance the conservation efforts of land trusts by engaging in advocacy and strategic program development, offering technical assistance, furthering collaborative efforts, and hosting the annual Texas Land Conservation Conference. Lori has over two decades of experience in the field of land conservation, working with conservation organizations in Oregon, North Carolina, Georgia, and Texas. A native Texan, Lori is a graduate of the University of Texas at Austin with a B.S. in Biology, and a graduate of the University of Oregon with a Master's degree in Community and Regional Planning, as well as a Master of Science degree in Public Affairs. She also received her Certificate in Non-Profit Management from Duke University. Lori serves on the Advisory Team for the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Land Trust Bird Conservation Initiative, on the Advisory Council of the Texas Real Estate Advocacy & Defense Coalition, and as a member of the Hays County Parks and Open Space Commission. She is an avid conservationist and lover of the outdoors. Lori lives in the Texas Hill Country with her family.

DOUG PHILLIPS

US Fish & Wildlife Service: Wildlife Biologist

douglas_phillips@fws.gov

Doug Phillips is a wildlife biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and has worked in the NAWCA program (Migratory Birds) since 2016. Previously, Doug worked in the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (PFW) in Central and West Texas. Doug resides in Austin TX with his wife (Solange) and two children. Doug enjoys trail running, camping, and spending time with his family.

MELODY RAY-CULP

US Fish & Wildlife Service: Coastal Program Coordinator - Florida Panhandle

melody_ray-culp@fws.gov

Melody Ray-Culp is a U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service biologist who coordinates the Coastal Program in the Florida Panhandle, a pro-active, non-regulatory approach to fish and wildlife conservation. She has a MS degree in Marine Sciences from the University of Puerto Rico, a BS degree in Biology from Principia College, and has worked for the Florida Ecological Services office in Panama City since 2005.

KURT READUS

Natural Resources Conservation Service: Mississippi State Conservationist

kurt.readus@usda.gov

Readus's NRCS service began as a student trainee in Arizona and Alabama in 1998. After two years as a student trainee, Readus became a soil conservationist and was promoted in 2005 to district conservationist in the Avondale Field Office in Arizona. In 2007, he became area conservationist for central Mississippi, where he provided leadership and guidance for 21 field offices and the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Tribal Field Office. Just prior to his current position, Readus served as assistant state conservationist for programs in Mississippi from January 2011 to September 2013. During his NRCS career, Readus served in

various temporary leadership assignments, which included acting deputy chief for science and technology, director of Financial Assistance Programs Division, and a member of the National Conservation Stewardship team in the agency's national headquarters in Washington, D.C., and acting deputy state conservationist for California. A native of north Alabama, Readus graduated from Alabama Agricultural & Mechanical University with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science. He also graduated from the Federal Executive Institute, Certificate of Mastery, Leadership for a Democratic Society in August 2018. He completed the Leadership Mississippi Class of 2016, Mississippi Economic Council's M.B. Swayze Foundation Program, and the NRCS National Leadership Development Program in the Class of 2010. He is married to Dr. Fonda Readus and has five beautiful children to keep his heart and mind on the country's future.

LISA ROBERSTON

RESTORE Council: Senior Advisor

lisa.robertson@restorethegulf.gov

Lisa Robertson serves as a Senior Advisor for the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE Council). Created by the RESTORE Act of 2012 and comprised of the Governors of the five Gulf Coast States and Cabinet-level officials from six federal agencies, the RESTORE Council is responsible for restoring and protecting the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, coastal wetlands, and economy of the Gulf Coast. Prior to joining the Council, Robertson served as the Administrator of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Deepwater Horizon Program where she oversaw the development of restoration plans and implementation of restoration projects in Florida through criminal, civil, and natural resource damage claims associated with the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. Robertson has a bachelor's degree in biology from Florida State University. She lives in Tallahassee, Florida.

JON SCOTT

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation: Southern Forests Program Director

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Jon Scott is the Program Director, Southern Forests with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) where he oversees and leads the strategic development and implementation of forest related conservation grant-making programs in the U.S. South, including programs that support restoration, management and protection of longleaf pine, bottomland hardwoods and other forest and freshwater systems. In this role, Jon supports multiple federal agency partnerships, corporate partnerships and a variety of local, regional and national stakeholder relationships, and provides technical assistance to grantees to develop proposals and projects that support measurable habitat and wildlife outcomes, as well as other co-benefits. Jon Prior to joining NFWF, Jon worked for land trusts in Virginia and North Carolina facilitating land acquisition and conservation easement projects and assisting with stewardship of conserved lands. Jon holds a Bachelor of Science in Wood Products and a Master of Natural Resources degree from North Carolina State University.

MATT SINGER

Galveston Bay Foundation: Director of Land Conservation

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Matt earned a degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences from Texas A&M University. After graduation, Matt spent time as a wildlife biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, where he worked to conserve high-profile threatened and endangered wildlife species and helped private landowners develop comprehensive habitat management and restoration plans. Since 2010, Matt has served as the Director of Land Conservation for the Galveston Bay Foundation. His role at GBF focuses on acquiring priority habitats within the Galveston Bay Watershed and managing habitat management, restoration, and enhancement projects on conserved lands.

KENT WIMMER**Defenders of Wildlife: Northwest Florida Sentinel Landscape Coordinator and Northwest Florida Senior Representative**

kwimmer@defenders.org

As Senior Representative for Defenders of Wildlife, Kent is advocating for protecting landscapes and wildlife habitats in northwestern Florida. His work focuses on protecting habitat for species at-risk such as sea turtles, gopher tortoises, manatees, red-cockaded woodpeckers and looking toward the return of the Florida panther. Kent is coordinator for the Northwest Florida Sentinel Landscape which is a partnership program to help secure resources and support for conservation of working lands and habitats while protecting military missions. In July 2020, he led a coalition which successfully advocated for passage of the Florida Uniform Partition of Heirs' Property Act. Kent joined Defenders in 2014 and has been involved in planning, advocating and protecting greenways and conservation lands in Florida for over 30 years. He served as the Outreach Director for the Florida Water and Land Legacy Campaign and directed the Florida National Scenic Trail program for the Florida Trail Association. Kent has served as a greenways planner for the Florida DEP Office of Greenways and Trails, 1000 Friends of Florida, National Park Service and USDA Forest Service. Kent is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners, and he earned a M.S. in Environmental Planning from Florida State University and a B.S. in Natural Resources from Ball State University.

HEATHER YOUNG**RESTORE Council: Senior Advisor for Ecosystem Restoration and Environmental Compliance**

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Heather Young serves as Senior Advisor for Ecosystem Restoration and Environmental Compliance for the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE Council). Created by the RESTORE Act of 2012 and comprised of the Governors of the five Gulf States and Cabinet-level officials from six federal agencies, the RESTORE Council is responsible for restoring and protecting the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, wetlands, and economy of the Gulf Coast. Young has over 25 years experience working to restore and protect habitats in partnership with federal and state agencies, local governments, industry, non-profit organizations, and residents. She has extensive experience in environmental compliance as well as development, technical review, and implementation of coastal restoration projects and programs. Prior to joining the Council staff, Young worked for National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service reviewing coastal development, federal navigation, and ecosystem restoration projects. Young served in Washington, D.C. during the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill response to improve communication between NOAA headquarters and Gulf staff located across multiple line offices, and coordinated with NOAA Leadership and interagency teams during development of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force's Gulf of Mexico Regional Restoration Strategy.

ABOUT THE PARTNERSHIP FOR GULF COAST LAND CONSERVATION



The Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation (Gulf Partnership) is a coalition of 26 local, regional, state, and national non-profit land conservation organizations devoted to advancing voluntary land and water conservation in the Gulf of Mexico region. For more information, to donate or volunteer visit www.gulfpartnership.org

MISSION: *To work together across the five Gulf of Mexico states to increase the pace, quality, and permanence of voluntary land and water conservation in the coastal region.*

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Local, State, and Regional Organizations

Alabama Coastal Heritage Trust (AL)	Galveston Bay Foundation (TX)
Alachua Conservation Trust (FL)	Land Trust for Louisiana (LA)
Artist Boat (TX)	Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain (MS)
Coastal Land Trust (AL)	Mississippi Land Trust (MS)
Coastal Prairie Conservancy (TX)	North Florida Land Trust (FL)
Colorado River Land Trust (TX)	Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy (FL)
Conservation Florida (FL)	Tampa Bay Conservancy (FL)
Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast (FL)	South Alabama Land Trust (AL)
Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries (AL)	Woodlands Conservancy (LA)
Florida's Nature Coast Conservancy (FL)	

National Organizations

American Farmland Trust
Atira Conservation
Ducks Unlimited
National Audubon Society
The Conservation Fund
The Nature Conservancy
The Trust for Public Land

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IN GRATITUDE TO OUR PGCLC CONFERENCE VOLUNTEERS AND CONFERENCE PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation would like to thank all our conference planning committee members for volunteering their time and energy to make this event our most successful ever. Their guidance and assistance are tremendously appreciated!

2023 Conference Planning Committee

Shane Wellendorf: Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy

Tom Kay: Alachua Conservation Trust

Christina Mohrman: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Sara Guice: Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain

Ben Miles: Land Trust Alliance

We also wish to thank all of the conference moderators, facilitators, volunteers, and our wonderful speakers for their hours of preparation and for sharing their expertise. We are so grateful to our conference supporters, grantors, and sponsors for their essential financial support, which allows us to produce this quality educational event.

Session Moderators, Facilitators, and Conference Volunteers

Shane Wellendorf: Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy

Tom Kay, Alachua Conservation Trust

Neil Fleckenstein: Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy

Christina Mohrman, Gulf of Mexico Alliance

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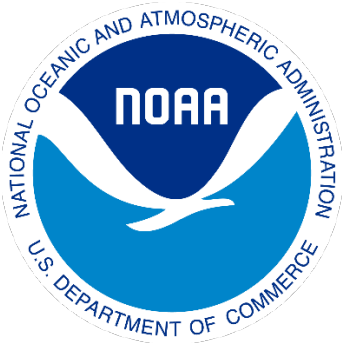


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