

SOUTH ATLANTIC CHAPTER REPORT FOR 2008 SWS MID-YEAR BOARD MEETING

January 16, 2008

South Atlantic Chapter of the Society of Wetland Scientists

Kimberli J. Ponzio, Chair
Dianna M. Hogan, Vice Chair
William Conner, Secretary/Treasurer

Prepared by Kimberli J. Ponzio

Abstract:

In the past six months, the South Atlantic Chapter of the Society of Wetland Scientists sponsored several regional workshops through participation on discussion panels and supplying meeting materials and other in-kind services. We increased funding for our student research program of \$750 grants for four students and offered a one-time travel award (\$2000) to a UMEB (Undergraduate Mentoring in Environmental Biology, NSF) student within the South Atlantic Chapter to the 2008 Annual SWS Conference. We also increased the number of travel grants from one to two students to the Annual SWS Conference, while continuing to fund five travel awards (\$100 each) for students to attend the Association of Southeastern Biologists conference. We continued our fundraising by selling merchandise with the chapter logo and ran our second annual calendar photo contest. We donated SAC merchandise to improve outreach to other like-minded organizations and to increase visibility of the SAC and SWS. In fall 2008, we plan to hold our first regional chapter meeting together with the South Central Chapter and offer a local wetlands tour of SAC wetlands in the South Carolina area.

Chapter /Committee Roster:

Kimberli J. Ponzio, Chair
Gregory B. Noe, Past Chair
Dianna M. Hogan, Vice Chair
William Conner, Secretary/Treasurer
Shanin Speas-Frost, Webmaster
David Bailey, Awards Chair



SWS South Atlantic Chapter

Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia,
Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands

1. Chapter mission

The objective of the South Atlantic Chapter of the Society of Wetland Scientists is to encourage communication of wetland issues and research activities in the South Atlantic region (from Virginia down to Florida as well as Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands). The Chapter also sponsors meetings and other activities as well, and sponsors students to attend such meetings, which foster interaction of wetland scientists and managers in the region.

2. Activities, actions, and accomplishments

The SAC implemented a new Student Research Grant program in 2006, annually awarding four \$500 grants to students that are conducting wetland research within the regional boundaries of the SAC. For 2008, we have increased the award amount to \$750 each. The SAC grant program will follow the guidelines and application deadlines of the SWS program. This activity will support the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Action 1.1.1, Objective 2.2.2, and Objective 6.3.

The SAC offered a one-time sponsorship of one UMEB (Undergraduate Mentoring in Environmental Biology, NSF) student within the South Atlantic Chapter with a \$2,000 travel award to the 2008 Annual SWS Conference in Washington, DC. The SAC has increased the number of 2008 Student Travel Awards to the Annual SWS Meeting from one to two awards for \$500 each. These activities support the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Action 1.1.1, Action 2.2.1, Objective 2.2.2, and Objective 6.3.

The SAC will hold its annual Business Luncheon during the Annual Meeting of the Association of Southeastern Biologists in April 2008. Five students will be presented with their SAC student travel awards for \$100 each. This event will provide an opportunity to recruit new SWS members and involve existing SAC members in chapter activities. This activity will support the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Action 1.4.1, Objective 7.1, and Objective 7.3.

The SAC held its second annual photo competition with winning photos being published in a 2008 wetland calendar that is being sold online. SAC members were allowed to submit three photos of southeastern wetlands. The top twelve photos were chosen by our judges, printed in a calendar, and sold with the rest of our merchandise at CafePress.com. This effort has increased the visibility of SWS and SAC and will increase revenue to support SAC programs. This activity directly supported the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Action 7.7.2 and Objective 7.1, and will indirectly support Action 1.1.1, Objective 2.2.2, and Objective 6.3.

The SAC is continuing to sell merchandise with our chapter logo in order to increase revenue and visibility of the chapter. We are selling merchandise with our new logo through an online company, CafePress.com. Color or black and white logos (designed by Florida artist Robert Ponzio) are available on apparel, posters, cards, housewares, and bags. The SAC has earned \$350 to date. The revenue from this program has been used to donate merchandise for silent auctions held by other societies (see below). The merchandise can be viewed and purchased online at <http://www.cafepress.com/swssac>. This activity directly supported the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Action 7.7.2 and Objective 7.1, and will indirectly support Action 1.1.1, Objective 2.2.2, and Objective 6.3.

We increased our interactions with other scientific and conservation societies. We sponsored a 1-day workshop at the Tall Timbers Research Station in Tallahassee, Florida in October 2007 entitled "Management Strategies for Ephemeral Ponds". Chapter members served on a panel discussion concerning wetlands restoration and the chapter provided note pads with the SAC logo and website to support the Coastal Plains Institute and Land Conservancy's work on a grant from the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission. SAC members will serve on a multi-disciplinary technical advisory committee that was formed as a result of this workshop. We also sponsored the SWS Mid-Atlantic Chapter in holding the Wetlands & Watersheds Workshop in October 2007 in Ocean City, Maryland. We are collaborating with NC State University to help plan sessions for the Stream Restoration Conference in November 2008 in Asheville, NC. We will serve on the planning committee and will encourage a focus on the wetland-stream connection. We plan to sponsor the Florida Chapter of The Wildlife Society and the annual conference of the Society of Wetland Scientists, by donating our chapter merchandise to silent auctions. We are also sponsors of the Integrating Science into the Restoration and Management of Floodplain Ecosystems of the Southeast Symposium to be held March 4-6, 2008 in Little Rock, Arkansas (<http://www.afrc.uamont.edu/floodplainsymposium>). These activities support the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Action 1.2.3, Action 1.4.1, Action 4.1.1., and Action 4.3.1.

The SAC website has been updated with easy to find chapter information, keeping chapter members well informed with news of Chapter and wetland happenings. Information on all of the Chapter's various grants and awards programs is available online, including current year's application guidelines, deadlines, and past recipient awards. In addition, the SAC has utilized free advertizing avenues by placing an ad on the Society for Ecological Restoration website in their Restoration Marketplace. These activities support the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Objective 2.4, Objective 7.1, Action 7.1.3.

3. Planned activities and actions

In addition to the ongoing activities listed above, the SAC is developing a SAC Field Trip in fall 2008 involving a tour of local wetlands led by William Conner. We will also hold our first regional meeting together with the South Central Chapter of SWS in October 2008 in Tuscaloosa, Alabama in association with the University of Alabama. These activities will support the following items in the SWS Strategic Plan: Action 1.2.3, Action 1.2.4, Action 1.4.1, Action 4.1.1, Action 4.3.1, and Action 5.2.1.

4. Recommendations for activities or action

Recommendation that chapters be able to submit applications to join Giveline.com – a website that allows non-profit organizations to raise funds (at no cost) through an internet shopping site.

Sample Announcement:

SHOP ONLINE AND RAISE FUNDS FOR SWS-SAC. *The next time you would like to shop online for books, movies, music, electronics, housewares, gifts or any other item, check out **Giveline.com**. Giveline.com is an online store created for the community-minded shopper. When you purchase a needed item, a portion of your purchase (an average of 16%) will be donated to SWS-SAC. Review the store by clicking on the following link: <http://www.giveline.com>.*

5. Background information

The South Atlantic Chapter currently has 848 members as of Dec 31, 2007. Currently we have \$9,106.78 in our checking account (with \$6,500 in known future expenditures: \$2000 to UMEB student, \$500 to ASB travel awards, \$3000 for research grants, and \$1000 for SWS travel awards) and \$16,756.36 in a CD.