



Waters for Georgia

Georgia Power Foundation Grants 2023-2026 Cycle 3 & 4 Summary

In 2023–2026, the Georgia Power Foundation awarded \$2M in projects within two grant cycles, that targeted vital watersheds in two geographic areas of the state. In the Atlanta Metro area, funding prioritized projects that enhance the Chattahoochee River watershed, which is the major water source that sustains Metro Atlanta. The other geographic area included the Tallapoosa River and Coosa River watersheds of northwestern Georgia. These important waterways originate in the southern region of the Appalachian Mountains and flow westward across the state.

The Waters For Georgia grants were awarded to projects that focused on implementing conservation actions that demonstrate enhanced environmental and community resilience along these major waterways. This report includes highlights of the Waters for Georgia grantee projects, including implementation results for projects that are ongoing and outcomes for the completed projects.



Fleximat installation on the living shoreline. Fleximat is an alternative substrate made of concrete and geotextile fabric that stabilizes the shoreline and promotes oyster spat settlement. Photo credit: Zulu Marine.

Project Highlights

The Nature Conservancy

Restoration of 550 Feet

Of Coahulla Creek and the reconnection of 248 miles of upstream aquatic habitat within the Conasauga River watershed.

Trust for Public Land

Chattahoochee RiverLands Gateway Park

Is the southern anchor serving as the regional trailhead for visitors to leave their cars and become “RiverLands-ers.”

American Rivers

The Flint Headwaters Restoration

This project will re-emerge magnesia springs, the historic site where the headwaters of the Flint River will be conserved.

Seabrook Village Foundation

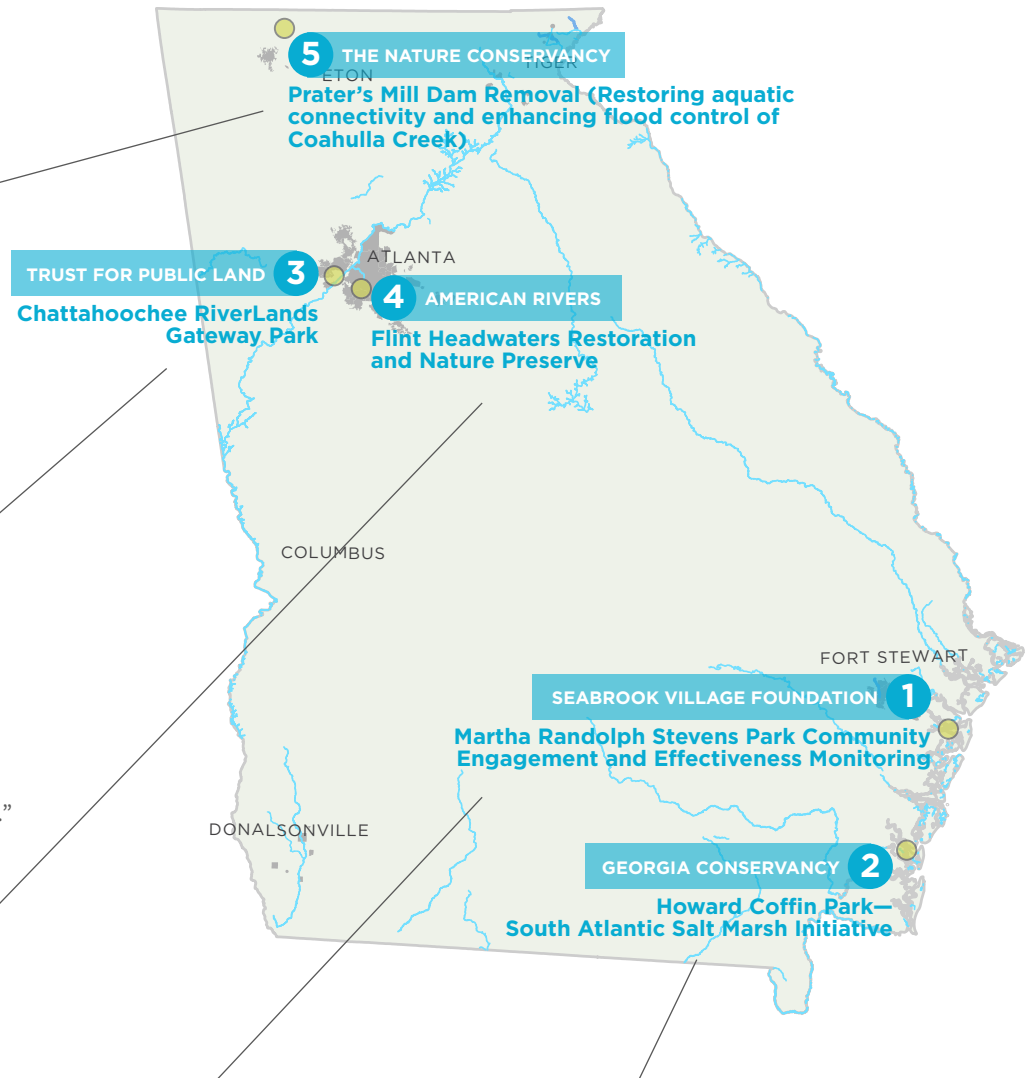
Engaged the community with educational events and volunteer activities that

Reached over
295
Participants.

Georgia Conservancy

Living streambank project that provides erosion control and native vegetation to

Reestablish
bankside
habitat.



Project Summary



Members of the Martha Randolph Stevens Park Living Shoreline construction team conduct post-installation water monitoring led by Savannah State University Master of Marine Sciences Student Kaila Leonard under the direction of Dionné Hoskins-Brown, Ph.D., of NOAA Fisheries.

PROJECT PARTNER: Seabrook Village Foundation

CYCLE 3

GRANT YEAR: 2024

STATUS: Complete

1 Martha Randolph Stevens Park Community Engagement and Effectiveness Monitoring

This project involves the historic Trade Hill community, a rural community whose history dates back over 150 years.

The Seabrook Village Foundation now manages the nearby 12-acre Martha Randolph Stevens Park, also known as “The Landing.” The park provides access to the tidal marshes critical to the history of Seabrook’s unique coastal Gullah Geechee culture. Funding from the Waters for Georgia grant supported the Seabrook Village Foundation in engaging the community, collaborating with residents and informing them of the conservation project to mitigate shoreline erosion at the site. In partnership with the Georgia Conservancy, the Seabrook Village Foundation helped implement a nature-based solution that uses bioengineered materials and native vegetation to reduce shoreline erosion while enhancing habitat along the tidal stream. The Seabrook Foundation also hosted community meetings and collaborated with Savannah State University to track the effectiveness of the shoreline conservation project.

- Engaged the community with educational events and volunteer activities that reached more than 295 participants.
- The community events included an art exhibit and opening reception that introduced the project to the public, community forums explaining the benefits of living shorelines, public meetings providing project updates, and an oyster shell recycling event where volunteers collected oyster shells for future shoreline restoration efforts.
- Collaborated with a team from Savannah State University to conduct post-project monitoring to assess the effectiveness of the living shoreline and track its long-term sustainability.



Martha Randolph Stevens Park Living Shoreline that completed in Spring 2026.



Installation of locally grown and cultivate spartina (marsh grass). Photo Credit: Sydney Williams, University of Georgia Marine Extension.

2 Howard Coffin Park—South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative

Georgia Conservancy and the South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative (SASMI) are spearheading a regional effort to ensure the long-term abundance, health, and resilience of about 1 million acres of coastal marshland along the South Atlantic coastline.

Funding from the Waters for Georgia grant contributed to the living streambank project at Howard Coffin Park, in the City of Brunswick. This living streambank project will install erosion control and native vegetation to reestablish bankside habitat, supporting ecosystem functions and protecting a community park and water supply well pump station.

- Design and permitting are complete, and construction began in the first quarter of 2026.
- A berm will be constructed to protect the ParCourse Fitness Trail, restoring community access during high tide events.
- Georgia Conservancy, in partnership with Georgia Southern University and University of Georgia Marine Extension is monitoring the site to evaluate the success of the native vegetation installation and subsequent oyster recruitment.

PROJECT PARTNER: Georgia Conservancy

CYCLE 3

GRANT YEAR: 2024

STATUS: In Progress



"Fish-eye view" of the newly installed living shoreline. Photo Credit: Sydney Williams, University of Georgia Marine Extension.



The RiverLands Greenway connects this trailhead park to the river, inviting visitors to explore the waterfront, fishing dock, and kayak launch while providing restrooms, a picnic pavilion, and a convenient place to rest or begin their journey. Rendering by: SCAPE Landscape Architecture.

PROJECT PARTNER: Trust for Public Land

CYCLE 3

GRANT YEAR: 2024

STATUS: In Progress

3 Chattahoochee RiverLands Gateway Park

The Chattahoochee RiverLands project is a bold vision for ecological restoration that incorporates a seamless greenway, tributary trails, and a water access for 100 miles between Buford Dam and Chattahoochee Bend State Park.

Trust for Public Land, in collaboration with a committed group of organizations, developed the idea of a public greenway that will link 19 metro Atlanta cities and 7 counties into one connective outdoor recreation experience. The Waters For Georgia grant will support the RiverLands Gateway Park parking lot bioretention/filtration infrastructure. The RiverLands Gateway Parking Lot is the southern anchor of the Chattahoochee RiverLands Showcase, serving as the regional trailhead for visitors to leave their cars and become “RiverLands-ers”, to walk, fish, kayak, cycle, and interact with the river.

- The parking lot will have a green design that incorporates underground stormwater direction infrastructure and filtration.
- Held community engagement events to gather community thoughts on the project. Feedback suggested upgrading amenities such as a playground, dog run, and performance pavilion (a community gathering space).
- The Chattahoochee RiverLands will be accessible to people of all backgrounds, abilities and ages. The resources of the RiverLands will be inviting to the widest possible range of users, creating a common ground for recreation that equitably serves the diverse and expanding communities of the Metro Atlanta Region.



A community-requested hammock grove provides a shaded place to relax along the bioswale, inviting visitors to pause beneath the trees and enjoy a quiet moment by the river. Rendering by: SCAPE Landscape Architecture.



The project site where the Flint River emerges aboveground.

4 Flint Headwaters Restoration and Nature Preserve

The source of the Flint River in East Point was called “Magnesia Springs” at the turn of the century, but it was piped underground as industries grew along the railroad.

This site, right on the boundary of College Park and East Point, is where the stream first daylight. Funding from the Waters for Georgia grant will go toward stream restoration, floodplain reconnection, and wetland restoration on the site. This restoration project will result in a lush public greenspace called the Flint Headwaters Restoration and Nature Preserve, increasing public access to nature for residents.

- The project site is the first place where the Flint River emerges aboveground, from a network of pipes that diverted the river.
- The restoration of the headwaters will create the opportunities for the second phase of the project: invasive plant removal, native planting, and the development of the site as a public nature preserve.
- The project site has “high research potential” in archaeological surveys including Flint River surveys dating back to 1977. The site is historically significant in that it was once home to Muscogee-speaking people and the intersection of two well-traveled roads, the Sandtown Trail and the New Town Trail, which followed the high ridgelines of Georgia’s Piedmont.

PROJECT PARTNER: American Rivers

CYCLE 4

GRANT YEAR: 2025

STATUS: In Progress



The project site before construction, the project will restore natural function to a 7.8-acre parcel at the location where the Flint River first emerges. Photo Credit: Stacy Funderburke.



Volunteers from the Georgia Power Foundation support the project by planting native trees in January 2026.

5 Prater's Mill Dam Removal (Restoring aquatic connectivity and enhancing flood control of Coahulla Creek)

The Nature Conservancy restored a section of Coahulla Creek that once powered a working mill.

The project successfully removed a longstanding barrier to aquatic passage while preserving and reinforcing the historic Prater's Mill Dam for cultural and recreational purposes. The restoration involved channel realignment, instream habitat enhancement, and stream bank restoration including replanting over one acre with native trees, shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers. The Prater's Mill Building and Dam will be preserved and structurally reinforced to reduce the risk of erosion, while enhancing recreational access and providing long term ecological outcomes.

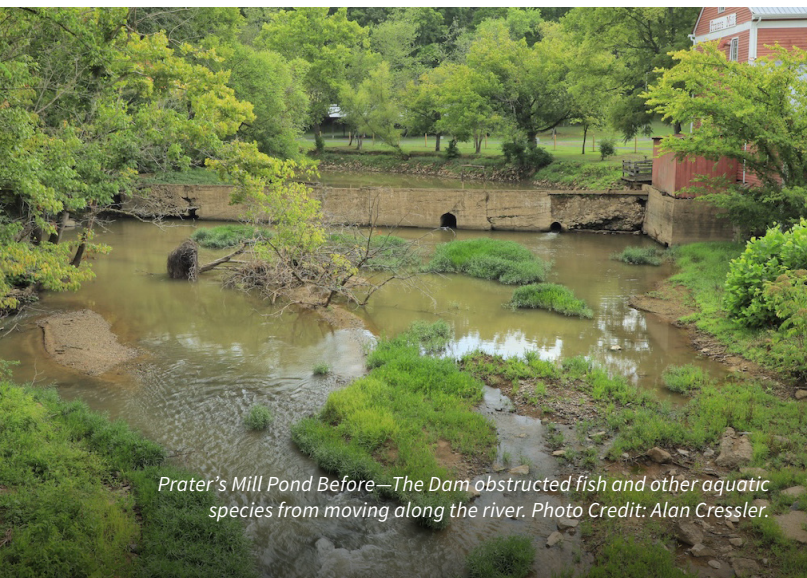
- Channel realignment to promote fish passage was successfully completed in October 2025.
- Native grasses, forbs, shrubs, trees, and river cane were planted to restore the creek bank through Spring 2026.
- Restoration of approximately 550 feet of Coahulla Creek included restoration and replanting of 1 acre of floodplain, and the reconnection of 248 miles of upstream aquatic habitat within the Conasauga River watershed.

PROJECT PARTNER: The Nature Conservancy

CYCLE 4

GRANT YEAR: 2025

STATUS: Complete



Prater's Mill Pond Before—The Dam obstructed fish and other aquatic species from moving along the river. Photo Credit: Alan Cressler.



Prater's Mill Pond After—After restoration there is free movement of the river, and plantings of native vegetation. Photo Credit: Alan Cressler.



Waters for Georgia



Waters for Georgia
is a grant program of the
Georgia Power Foundation
with **BEF** as the program
administrative partner.

For more info about the application and website please go to:

<https://www.georgiapower.com/grants.html>

For more info about the Waters for Georgia Program, please contact:

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