

# The Southeast Ecosystem Indicators

Base Blueprint 2022 is based on 35 different natural and cultural resource indicators that represent terrestrial, freshwater, coastal, and marine/estuarine ecosystems. The indicators on this page cover the relevant portions of the full Base Blueprint area; the indicators on the next page apply only to specific subregions.

## Regionwide Indicators



### Terrestrial

- **Fire frequency:** Estimates the number of times an area has been burned from 2013-2020.
- **Intact habitat cores:** Size of large, unfragmented patches of natural habitat.
- **Resilient terrestrial sites:** Index depicting the ability of terrestrial sites to continue supporting biodiversity and ecosystem function in the face of climate change.



### Cultural

- **Equitable access to potential parks:** Prioritizes places to create new parks to fill gaps in access to green space within socially vulnerable communities.
- **Greenways & trails:** Index of natural condition and connected length of recreational paths.
- **Urban park size:** Measures the size of parks larger than 5 acres in the urban environment.



### Freshwater

- **Imperiled aquatic species:** Number of aquatic Species of Greatest Conservation Need by watershed.
- **Natural landcover in floodplains:** Percent natural landcover in the estimated floodplain, by catchment.
- **Network complexity:** Index depicting the number of stream size classes in a river network not separated by dams or waterfalls.
- **Permeable surface:** Percent non-impervious cover by catchment.



### Coastal

- **Coastal shoreline condition:** Index based on presence of hardened structures and ease of development in coastal areas.
- **Resilient coastal sites:** Index depicting the ability of coastal sites to sustain biodiversity and natural services under increasing inundation from sea-level rise.
- **Stable marsh:** Index of marsh stability based on the ratio of open water to plants.



### Marine & Estuarine

- **Estuarine coastal condition:** Index of estuarine water quality, sediment quality, contaminants in fish tissue, and benthic community condition.
- **Seagrass:** Represents the presence of seagrass in the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico.

## Subregional Indicators



### Terrestrial

- **Central Southeast grasslands:** Index of known grasslands, areas with potentially compatible management, and grassland geology in the Central Southeast.
- **East Coastal Plain open pine birds:** Index of areas within the longleaf pine range east of the Mississippi River where open pine habitat management would most benefit six focal bird species.
- **Great Plains perennial grasslands:** Represents grassland condition in the Great Plains using the percent of perennial forbs and perennial grass.
- **Mississippi Alluvial Valley forest birds – protection:** Prioritizes new areas for protection within the MAV based on benefits to forest breeding birds that need large interior cores of bottomland hardwood habitat.
- **Mississippi Alluvial Valley forest birds – reforestation:** Prioritizes areas for reforestation within the MAV based on benefits to forest breeding birds that need large interior cores of bottomland hardwood habitat.
- **South Atlantic amphibian & reptile areas:** Priority Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Areas in the South Atlantic.
- **South Atlantic beach birds:** Index of habitat suitability for four shorebird species in the South Atlantic.
- **South Atlantic forest birds:** Index of habitat suitability for twelve upland hardwood and forested wetland bird species in the South Atlantic.
- **West Coastal Plain & Ouachitas forested wetland birds:** Index of habitat suitability for five forested wetland bird species in the West Gulf Coastal Plain/Ouachitas Bird Conservation Region.
- **West Coastal Plain & Ouachitas open pine birds:** Index of areas with existing pine trees that, if managed for open condition, could support a population of three umbrella bird species in the West Gulf Coastal Plain/Ouachitas Bird Conservation Region.
- **West Gulf Coast mottled duck nesting:** Depicts grasslands along the Western Gulf Coast that are important for mottled duck nesting.



### Freshwater

- **Atlantic migratory fish habitat:** Index of Atlantic migratory fish habitat condition based on water quality, connectivity, flow alteration, and more.
- **Gulf migratory fish connectivity:** Index capturing how far upstream migratory fish species in the Gulf of Mexico have been observed.
- **West Virginia imperiled aquatic species:** Number of globally imperiled, threatened, or endangered aquatic species by watershed in the state of West Virginia.



### Cultural

- **South Atlantic low-urban historic landscapes:** Index of sites on the National Register of Historic Places surrounded by limited urban development within the South Atlantic.



### Marine & Estuarine

- **Atlantic estuarine fish habitat:** Index of Atlantic estuarine fish habitat condition based on water quality, marsh edges, seagrass and oyster reefs, and more.
- **South Atlantic hardbottom & deep-sea coral:** Represents known and predicted suitable locations of hardbottom habitat and deep-sea corals within the South Atlantic.
- **South Atlantic marine birds:** Index of predicted seasonal relative abundance for birds that feed exclusively or mainly at sea within the South Atlantic.
- **South Atlantic marine mammals:** Index of predicted monthly dolphin and whale density within the South Atlantic.



### Coastal

- **South Atlantic maritime forest extent:** Current maritime forest in the South Atlantic.