

Living on the Edge

Saltmarsh Sparrows Fight the Rising Tides



Saltmarsh Sparrow Life History and Rising Tides

Female Saltmarsh Sparrows weave marsh grasses into teacup-size nests very close to the ground, where they are at the mercy of the tides. Rising seas are eliminating safe places for them to build their nests.



Flooding often causes eggs and chicks to float away or drown. Without high marsh habitat—that floods less frequently—Saltmarsh Sparrows will continue to decline.

Healthy Marshes Benefit Wildlife and People

The Saltmarsh Sparrow is a symbol of healthy salt marshes. Improving tidal marshes will save the Sparrow and the entire ecosystem—including other wildlife and people. Healthy marshes protect coastal property and infrastructure from flooding, provide clean water, and support multi-billion dollar fishery, recreation, and tourism industries. Investing in our marshes is good for Saltmarsh Sparrows and good for people.



Hope Is Here. Working Together to Protect and Restore

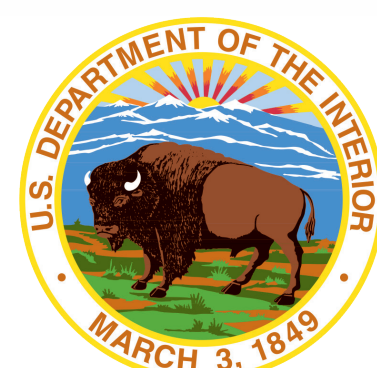
Conservation partners along the coast are using innovative management practices to restore disappearing high marsh that has been impacted by historic alterations, residential development and rising seas. Techniques to restore habitat and increase marsh elevation include removing or upgrading barriers to tidal flow, filling in human-made ditches, or other ways to improve sediment supply to marshes. The key is to quickly create and maintain “good” high marsh habitat where sparrows can successfully nest.



In the past, most salt marshes were altered for farming or ditched to try to reduce mosquitos, which was ineffective.



New approaches of remediating excessive ditching, or draining ponds forming on flooded marshes, can improve habitat conditions and increase coastal resiliency.



Atlantic Coast
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