

Awards for Special Projects G Competition: Emerging Contaminants (2022)

Great Lakes Region PFAS Scoping and Competitive Research

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant

Carolyn Foley, Tomas Hook, Sarah Zack

Federal funding: \$494,022

The purpose of this project is to conduct socio-economic research on the impact of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in Great Lakes states to better understand the risk, exposure and remediation of these environmental contaminants. The recipients will first partner with State and Tribal agencies to directly inform development of a Great Lakes region research competition request for proposals. Anticipated research scopes could, for example, identify how to effectively communicate risk of PFAS exposure in vulnerable communities, identify behaviors that limit risk of PFAS exposure or negative impacts, or quantify economic impacts of suggested PFAS remediation practices. Successful proposals will then be required to partner with at least one Great Lakes region Sea Grant partner to support outreach activities and will be expected to engage with underserved communities and/or State or Tribal agencies. The recipients will monitor funded research activities, particularly through communication with each project's Sea Grant partner, to ensure adequate engagement of underserved communities and/or partnership with State or Tribal agencies is taking place and ensure research results are shared across the Great Lakes region and beyond. Funded research projects will generate new information related to social and economic aspects of PFAS risk, exposure and remediation, which will be disseminated for integration into state management and/or mitigation plans.

Building a Regional Network to Study the Influence of Climate Change on Contaminants of Emerging Concern

South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium

Susan Lovelace, Brooke Saari, Matthew Gorstein, Stephanie Showalter Otts (National Sea Grant Law Center), Katy Smith (Georgia Sea Grant)

Federal funding: \$411,148

The purpose of this project is to investigate the drivers of aquatic contaminants of emerging concern in southeastern coastal states, specifically South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, and inform the development of potential mitigation solutions. The recipients will first work with graduate and law students to conduct literature and policy reviews and a legal scan to identify how contaminants of emerging concern are addressed in the southeast. The literature review will form the basis of a gap and network analysis to help assemble an advisory committee of community leaders and experts. The advisory committee will engage in the process of identifying community needs and refining research questions to address through a competitive research program. A study group model, blending faculty members and students with state agency representatives, community leaders and extension specialists, will be used to carry out research and outreach activities. Research may focus on topics such as those related to contaminants of emerging concern and prevalence, transport, interactive effects, climate change impacts, and human health concerns from seafood consumption. In year three, the

recipients will hire three Community Engaged Interns, one for each state, to participate in the development and implementation of education and outreach activities for stakeholders identified and represented by the advisory committee. The knowledge gained throughout this project will be widely distributed and will help support environmental, regulatory and health priorities of southeastern coastal states.