

Coastal Current

A newsletter of the Georgia Coastal Management Program

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Stakeholders attend a Disaster Recovery and Redevelopment Plan meeting in Liberty County, hosted by CRD.

Staff focuses on resiliency

- Staff participates as State Hazard Mitigation Plan steering member and wrote the plan's section on sea-level rise. The full plan was signed by Governor Kemp in April 2019.

- In 2017, GCMP received a Regional Resilience Grant to develop comprehensive disaster recovery and redevelopment plans for several coastal counties. This project will be completed

in 2020. Once completed, Georgia will be the first state in the nation with all coastal local governments equipped with DRRPs. Camden and Liberty counties have completed their plans this year. Through FY15 Coastal Resilience Funding Charlton county completed their plan and with a GCMP CIG, McIntosh Co completed their plan as well.

See **UPDATES**, Page 2

GCMP aims for 'Green' growth with projects

GCMP staff continues to partner with The Sapelo Island National Estuarine Research Reserve Coastal Training Program to host Build Your Own Rain Barrel Workshops. Participants learn the benefits of rain water harvesting and then build their own rain barrels out of recycled Coca-Cola syrup drums.

GCMP staff continue to develop and offer trainings related to Low Impact Development Stormwater Management BMPs. Trainings include a Bioretention Training Workshop using a local demonstration site as a case study, Permeable Pavement Training and Exhibition, Bioretention Planning and Design, and Bioretention Construction and Inspection.

GCMP staff continue to implement

See **GROWTH**, Page 2

CRD partners with Corps, others for major wetlands projects

JEKYLL CREEK BENEFICIAL-USE PROJECT

The Corps of Engineers Savannah District, under the authority of the Rivers and Harbors Development Act, worked with partners to plan for alternative placement sites and beneficial uses for harbor dredge materials. Funding became available in 2017 to develop a pilot project for dredge materials in Jekyll Creek portion of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway. GCMP partnered on the first project for beneficial use by thin layer



Crews inspect the thin-layer placement site on Jekyll Island in the marsh off Jekyll Creek.

placement of sediments on top of 5-acres of existing saltmarsh that will provide sea level resiliency. Additional materials were

placed in a naturally deep hole within the Brunswick Harbor navigation channel. Construction began in 2019 and CRD participated in monitoring of the site during preconstruction and construction phases of the project. Staff will continue to monitor the site with collaborators from Georgia Southern University through 2020.

NOYES CUT

Under the Corps of Engineers' Continuing Authorities Program, CRD

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From GROWTH

the GCMP Enhancement Strategy project for 2016-2020 on “Enhancing Coastal Resilience with Green Infrastructure”. Project partners at the Polis Center at Indiana University and the University of Wisconsin completed work on modelling riverine and coastal flooding with and without green infrastructure in our two pilot communities. Partners with the University of Georgia continue to finalize planning guidance and model ordinances to accompany the results. GCMP will begin working with partners to develop visualization tools, workflow training, and general outreach.

From UPDATES

- Staff participates as a steering committee member for the Georgia Climate Research Roadmap and has been providing assistance for the upcoming Atlanta Climate Conference on November 2019. This conference has become a spin-off of the GCMP conference held in 2016 and will come back to the coast November of 2020 and refocus on coastal Climate Change.

- GCMP staff provided support for legislative changes to address the live aboard and anchorage area policy in coastal Georgia. This includes establishing DNR approved anchorage areas in coastal waters with No Discharge requirements and avoiding sensitive shellfish lease areas as well as other potential user conflict areas.

- A bill to revise and update the Georgia shellfish code section was passed and signed by the Governor during the 2019 legislative session. The new legislation revised old existing language to better reflect current industry practice and established new language to support the foundation for oyster mariculture in the state.



A CRD staff member Jordan Dodson holds a red drum inside the drop ring sampler.

From PROJECTS

and Satilla Riverkeeper were the non-federal sponsors of a \$1.2 M feasibility study to restore historic flows and salinity gradients to 10,000 acres of tidal marshland and 50 linear miles of tidal creeks in the vicinity of Dover Bluff and Umbrella Creeks in the Satilla River Estuary. Historic land cuts made in the 1910s-1930s as part of the Alternate Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway have expanded to the point of causing tidal nodes, sedimentation problems, and mixed salinity cues in this area and the feasibility study recommends plugging all 3 of the cuts modeled to provide the greatest benefits to the resources. The design phase is estimated to cost \$350,000 and unexpended funds from the feasibility study will cover CRD's cost-share amount. The Corps and CRD are expected to sign a project partnership agreement this summer that will allow the Corps to compete for their share of the design funding. Satilla Riverkeeper will continue to provide technical expertise and remain on the project development team, though are not expected to be co-sponsors of this portion of the project. Actual construction, estimated at \$7.25 M, could begin in 2021 if additional funding becomes available.

OTHER NEWS

- Biologists successfully continued tidal creek edge sampling along Georgia coastal

tidal river systems with a drop-ring sampler to document the utilization of marsh vegetation edge habitat by nekton along a salinity gradient. This project will allow stakeholders to better understand which species are utilizing marsh edge habitat.

- Biologists have developed a draft site suitability tool for Living Shorelines. Staff will continue to refine and train permitting staff on how to use and promote the tool.

- Staff continues to organize quarterly meetings with a Living Shoreline Workgroup that consists of internal partners, academic institutions, and property managers along the coast.

- GCMP staff began work on projects evaluating the effectiveness of the ACOE Savannah district SOP and how well it calculates ecological lift from restoration projects and values saltwater tidal wetlands by assessing the functions of impacted, restored, and reference wetlands along the Georgia coast.

- Biologists began development of methodology for the prioritizing of impacted or pristine tidal salt marshes along the Georgia coast for restoration and or protection. This methodology will aid state and federal regulatory programs requiring wetland conservation and or restoration as compensatory mitigation for permitted damages as well as aid in the subjective analysis of impacts from permitted projects.

