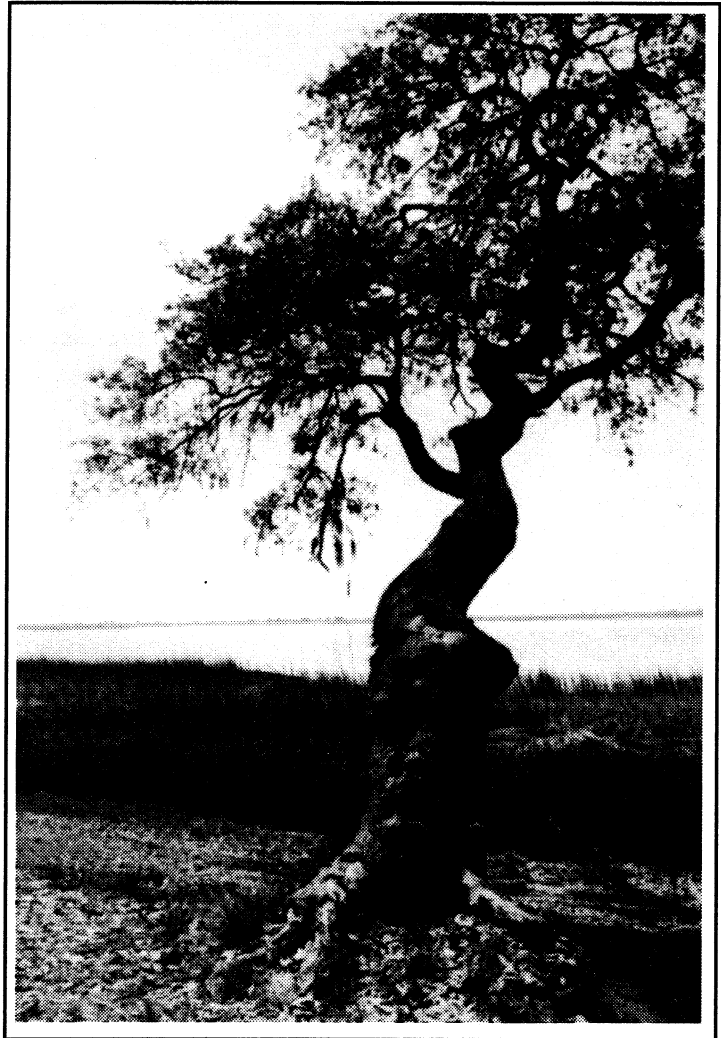


CHAPTER ONE:

OVERVIEW OF THE GEORGIA COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM



When the "study of the household" (ecology) and the "management of the household" (economics) can be merged, and when ethics can be extended to include environmental as well as human values, then we can be optimistic about the future of humankind. Accordingly, bringing together these three "E's" is the ultimate holism and the great challenge for our future.

Eugene P. Odum
Ecology and Our Endangered Life-Support Systems



Mission Statement:

It is the mission of the Georgia Coastal Management Program to balance economic development in Georgia's coastal zone with preservation of natural, environmental, historic, archaeological, and recreational resources for the benefit of Georgia's present and future generations.

**SECTION I:
THE COASTAL MANAGEMENT NETWORK**

The Georgia Coastal Management Program addresses the economic development concerns and natural resource issues identified by the citizens of Georgia. Administered by the Coastal Resources Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, the Program is a network of local, State, and federal agencies addressing coastal issues. By establishing this network, there is more coordination among agencies, better service provided to the taxpayers, and improved management of coastal resources.

A. The Coastal Area

The influence of the ocean on Georgia's coastal plain extends approximately 60 miles inland. Georgia's eight-foot tidal range pushes seawater up the coastal rivers twice daily. This salty tidal water influences the plants, fish, and ecology of the coastal rivers and, consequently, human activity. The coastal area is important economically for a number of industries, including shrimping, crabbing, recreational fishing, tourism, and manufacturing.

For effective coastal management, the Georgia Coastal Management Program encompasses all tidally-influenced water bodies and all areas economically tied to coastal resources. Georgia's coastal area therefore includes the following eleven counties: Brantley, Bryan, Camden, Charlton, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, Long, McIntosh, and Wayne. Within these eleven counties, all waters of the state including the coastal ocean to the limit of state jurisdiction (three miles), and all submerged lands are part of the coastal area. Including each of these eleven counties in the Management Program ensures that all of Georgia's coastal population, industry, and resources are addressed. Using county boundaries also simplifies the relationship with local governments and ensures that other programs and agencies in the coastal network can relate to the coastal area boundaries.

CHAPTER ONE

FIGURE 1.1: Map of the Georgia Coastal Area



B. Network Participants

Local governments create local comprehensive plans, establish zoning rules and regulations, and set overall land use guidelines. Local governments are also active in promoting the benefits of living, working, and visiting in the coastal area. The importance of local governments in planning and setting the pace of development is paramount. The Coastal Resources Division's role in the Georgia Coastal Management Program is to assist local governments by providing technical assistance and expertise in addressing planning and coastal issues, and by administering pass-through grants.

State agencies in Georgia implement a wide range of programs managing coastal resources and development. Groundwater withdrawals, energy facility regulation, regional planning, and port development are just a few activities administered at the State level. With so many programs and agencies working separately, sometimes management efforts are not coordinated or are contradictory. These problems are confusing to the public and do not effectively manage our resources. The Georgia Coastal Management Program establishes a network among State agencies to provide better and more consistent service to the public, increase coordination and communication, provide assistance in project planning, and increase monitoring and enforcement.

Through the State network and formal agreements called "Memoranda of Agreement," the Coastal Resources Division ensures that State agencies work together and coordinate their management programs. This increased coordination helps applicants during the project planning process and the permit application process. The Coastal Resources Division acts as a liaison between private individuals and the other State agencies to help identify the necessary permits required for a project, provide consultation about potential project limitations, and suggest possible alternatives.

Federal agencies conduct many projects and activities in Georgia's coastal area. The federal government also owns land, such as military bases, that are managed by federal agencies. These agencies administer federal laws and programs such as national defense, endangered species protection, the dredging of navigational channels, and setting shipping safety standards. Usually, federal projects and activities are exempt from State laws and regulations. With a federally approved Coastal Management Program, however, federal activities that are reasonable likely to affect any coastal use or resource must be conducted consistent to the maximum extent practical with Georgia's Coastal Management Program, and federal law allows the Coastal Resources Division to review federal activities for consistency with State laws. Through increased cooperation and this consistency review, federal-State coordination ensures that the State has input into federal activities in the coastal area.

C. Coastal Management Policies

The policies of the Georgia Coastal Management Program are contained in existing State laws and rules and regulations. The implementation of the policies is accomplished through a network of local, State, and federal agencies. The Coastal Resources Division has direct authority for programs that regulate activities in marsh areas, beach areas, and tidal water bottoms.

Coastal management policies are categorized to address the following issues:

Public Involvement	Public Service Facilities
Development and Manufacturing	Dredging
Transportation Facilities	Energy Facilities
Agriculture and Silviculture	Special Management Areas
Recreation and Tourism	Shorefront Access and Protection
Marine Related Facilities	Shoreline Erosion and Hazard
Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Wildlife	Mitigation Planning

Issues identified by the general public through nine task forces generated over 350 recommendations. These recommendations provide the basis for identifying existing management authorities applicable in the coastal area. These recommendations are included verbatim in this document (See Appendix VIII) and are considered when developing annual themes and funding criteria for Coastal Incentive Grants.

D. Simplifying Government

One of the main goals of the Georgia Coastal Management Program is to simplify the bureaucratic process and to serve the public more efficiently. During the development of the Program, a review of the various programs and requirements was completed. Many possibilities for improving service were identified. The simplifications listed below have already been implemented. Others are dependent upon the implementation of an approved Coastal Management Program.

Revocable License: This license is issued for private use of State-owned tidal water bottoms; all of these licenses are issued for projects in the coastal area. This license is often issued in conjunction with a Marsh Permit or Shore Permit, which are evaluated by Coastal Resources Division of the Department of Natural Resources. The Revocable License was

formerly administered in Atlanta, far from the coast, while the staff at the Coastal Resources Division reviewed similar information for Marsh and Shore permits in Brunswick. Through the coastal management evaluation process, staff discovered the Revocable License could more effectively and efficiently be administered at the Coastal Resources Division, eliminating this duplication of effort.

State Programmatic General Permit for Recreational Docks: The Army Corps of Engineers, together with local building officials, is authorized to issue general permits for construction of recreational docks in the coastal area. This process requires paperwork and review very similar to the process for Marsh Permits and the Revocable License. Since this is a duplication of effort and paperwork, a permit issued by the Army Corps of Engineers to the Coastal Resources Division allows the Division to issue this State Programmatic General Permit, thereby removing the Corps from the process and reducing the regulatory burden on the public.

Technical Assistance Initiative: The Coastal Resources Division provides guidance to local governments, property owners, and developers during the project planning stages to clarify what the regulations are, what permits may be needed, who the agency contacts are, and to provide advice on project alternatives to minimize impacts. The goal of this initiative is to create a central source of information on coastal management issues and regulations, and to simplify the permit process.

E. Public Participation

Public participation in the development and implementation of coastal management is critical to its success. Throughout the development of the Georgia Coastal Management Program, public comments were accepted and public meetings were held to seek input from the Georgia citizens. The Coastal Resources Division has an active public education and outreach program to educate the public on coastal issues. The Division utilized an appointed citizen's Coastal Advisory Committee, public Task Forces, and public meetings to solicit public comment. Additionally, a quarterly newsletter, speeches and presentations, and printed materials have been developed to educate the public on coastal issues.

SECTION II: COASTAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Georgia has a beautiful coastal area with extensive marshes and attractive beaches. Economic growth has been healthy and Georgia's coast is considered an ideal place to live, work,

CHAPTER ONE

and visit. Coastal Georgia's popularity, however, affects its resources and, potentially, the quality of life on the coast. Activities in the coastal area are not all mutually compatible. Conflicts and resource limitations are already affecting coastal communities. Coastal issues need to be addressed through a comprehensive management program that considers all aspects of coastal resource use. Issues important to Georgia's coast that have been addressed in the Georgia Coastal Management Program are listed below.

Water Supply Limitations	Declining Fishery Populations
Identification of Historic Sites	Increased Population Growth
Impacts to Endangered Species	Dredging and Material Disposal
Beach Erosion and Hazard Problems	Lack of Beach Access
Water Quality Degradation	Need for Energy Planning

As Georgia grows in population, these issues become more pressing. The Georgia Coastal Management Program is designed to provide a comprehensive management framework for addressing coastal issues by bringing together relevant private parties, agencies, and the public. Many of these issues are interrelated and are, therefore, more logically managed by a comprehensive program. Since a number of different people and programs manage the various coastal resources and sites, they must communicate and understand each other's objectives. The Coastal Management Program network establishes this communication among interested parties and provides a forum to resolve conflicts of use.

SECTION III: IMPLEMENTING THE GEORGIA COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Georgia Coastal Management Program is a networked program implemented by the Department of Natural Resources, Coastal Resources Division and other State agencies with management authority in the coastal area. As lead agency for the Coastal Management Program, the Coastal Resources Division conducts several functions including resource management, ecological monitoring, permitting, technical assistance, and federal consistency review. Local, State, and federal agencies perform their respective functions in accordance with the Georgia Coastal Management Program and coordinated with the Coastal Resources Division. Research institutions and other organizations assist in information gathering and analysis of coastal resource issues.

A. Activities Performed Directly by the Coastal Resources Division

Resource Management: The Coastal Resources Division manages marine resources by conducting research and surveys, monitoring saltwater fish stocks, enhancing marine access, constructing inshore artificial reefs, and educating coastal residents on fisheries issues. Research and monitoring activities focus on spotted sea trout and red drum. Enhancing marine access includes construction of fixed and floating docks at existing boat ramp sites, maintenance of existing boat ramps, and conversion of existing shoreside structures into public piers. Staff are actively involved in marine education with field demonstrations and presentations to school groups, civic groups, and conservation associations.

Ecological Monitoring: The Coastal Resources Division monitors coastal water quality and implements the National Shellfish Sanitation Program for the State of Georgia. These responsibilities include labelling areas open and/or closed to shellfishing, analyzing water quality, educating the public on shellfishing safety issues, and implementing other programs that monitor and improve coastal water quality. While the Coastal Resources Division has always administered the Georgia Shellfish Program, implementation of a federally-approved Coastal Management Program increases funding and staff dedicated to monitoring projects.

Direct Permit Authorities: The Coastal Resources Division administers several State authorities. With the approval of the Coastal Marshlands Protection Committee and the Shore Protection Committee, the Division issues Marsh Permits, Shore Permits, and the Revocable License. The Division also executes leases for State-owned water bottoms. In addition, the Division makes recommendations to the Environmental Protection Division on 401 Water Quality Certification issuance for projects that affect the coastal area. Marsh Permits and Shore Permits have always been administered at the Coastal Resources Division, while the Revocable License was previously administered by the Department of Natural Resources in Atlanta. Together, these programs give direct management authority over critical coastal habitats such as marshlands, beaches, navigable waters, and freshwater wetlands.

Technical Assistance: The Coastal Resources Division provides technical assistance for projects to minimize adverse impacts and coordinate the permitting process. The Division provides information on Best Management Practices; technical guidance on planning, construction, and design; and, information on habitat and endangered species. The Division also maintains a list of contacts in various agencies and institutions so that applicants and project designers can consult with local experts and design their projects appropriately. The Division serves as a liaison among agencies and provides forums for prospective applicants and developers to discuss potential issues and permit requirements with the appropriate agencies. The goals of this service are to promote quality development, to address resource issues, and to simplify the permit process and requirements for applicants. Implementation of a federally-approved Coastal

CHAPTER ONE

Management Program involves significant increases in staff time and resources devoted to pre-project consultations, interagency coordination, and local government assistance.

Federal Consistency Review: With a federally-approved Coastal Management Program, the Coastal Zone Management Act gives the State of Georgia authority to review federal permits and licenses, federal projects, and federally-funded projects that affect the coastal area. The Coastal Resources Division reviews these activities to ensure that they are consistent with the Georgia Coastal Management Program. If a federal agency disagrees with the Division's consistency decision, a formal conflict resolution process may be used to settle the dispute.

B. Activities Implemented Through the Coastal Management Network

Local Governments: Local governments assist in long-term planning, economic development, and natural resource protection through preparation and implementation of their respective comprehensive plans, local laws and zoning regulations, as well as through their chambers of commerce and economic development authorities. Through the Georgia Coastal Management Program, the Coastal Resources Division provides technical assistance to local governments to assist in their planning efforts and address natural resource issues. Local governments include the counties listed below, and the municipalities in these counties.

Brantley	Chatham	Long
Bryan	Effingham	McIntosh
Camden	Glynn	Wayne
Charlton	Liberty	

State Agencies: State agencies continue to administer their respective coastal management efforts as defined by existing Georgia State law. Memoranda of Agreement between the Coastal Resources Division and other State agencies with regulatory authority in the coastal area help ensure that all agencies act in accordance with the policies of the Georgia Coastal Management Program. The following State agencies are involved in the Georgia Coastal Management Program network.

Coastal Resources Division	Historic Preservation Division
Department of Community Affairs	Jekyll Island Authority
Department of Human Resources	Office of the Secretary of State
Environmental Protection Division	Parks, Recreation, and Historic Sites
Georgia Department of Transportation	Division
Georgia Forestry Commission	Public Service Commission
Georgia Ports Authority	Wildlife Resources Division

Federal Agencies: Federal agencies continue to administer their respective programs as they are reviewed for consistency with the Georgia Coastal Management Program. On-going coordination efforts between the Coastal Resources Division and federal agencies is conducted to ensure communication and consistency. The following federal agencies are involved in the coastal network.

Army Corps of Engineers	Federal Highway Administration
Bureau of Lands Management	Federal Law Enforcement Training
Coast Guard	Center
Department of Agriculture	Fish and Wildlife Service
Department of Defense	General Services Administration
Environmental Protection Agency	Minerals Management Service
Federal Aviation Administration	National Marine Fisheries Service
Federal Emergency Management Agency	National Park Service
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission	Nuclear Regulatory Commission

**SECTION IV:
THE FEDERAL COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

The federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 created a voluntary program for states to develop and administer coastal management programs. This Act set broad guidelines and approval criteria for states' management programs. Individual states are given the responsibility of identifying priority issues for their respective coasts, and implementing their program using State laws and regulations. General concerns such as consideration of national defense and interstate transport must be addressed to ensure that a management program does not unduly hamper these activities.

CHAPTER ONE

Almost all of the eligible states developed approved coastal management programs by 1990. Each state's program is unique -- the policies and administration reflect the state's individual priorities and laws. As one of the last coastal states to develop a coastal management program, Georgia has benefitted from the experiences of the other states with federally-approved management programs. The decision to submit Georgia's Coastal Management Program for federal approval is made by the Governor. Implementation and administration of the Georgia Coastal Management Program is performed by the State of Georgia and its agencies. States with federally-approved management programs have the option of withdrawing from the voluntary federal program at any time. The federal Coastal Zone Management Program provides Georgia with several significant benefits.

Federal Consistency: While federal agencies and activities are usually exempt from state laws, states with federally-approved coastal management programs gain review authority over federal activities. The Coastal Zone Management Act is the only law that provides this power to the states. This authority also gives states an equal voice with respect to interstate issues. Without a federally-approved coastal management program, Georgia forfeits its consistency review authority over federal projects, as well as its "seat at the table" of national coastal management.

Funding: Congress appropriates funds every year for approved coastal management programs under the Coastal Zone Management Act. Georgia is entitled to a portion of these funds with an approved program. If Georgia receives federal funding for coastal management, the funds will be used to sponsor monitoring, enforcement, technical assistance, public education, and research on coastal management issues.

Technical Assistance: The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management provides assistance to state coastal programs in the form of information, technical support, and relating coastal issues to the Administration. A uniformed service of the Administration, the NOAA Corps provides research vessels, equipment, and technical staff. The NOAA Coastal Services Center in Charleston is a regional office providing technical support and other coastal services to states participating in the national coastal management program.