

2025-2027

STRATEGIC PLAN

COASTAL RESOURCES DIVISION





Overview

Mission

To balance coastal development and protection of the coast’s natural assets, socio-cultural heritage and recreational resources for the benefit of present and future generations.

Vision

To be an agency of knowledgeable and compassionate professionals who are trusted, respected and empowered to help the public be stewards of Georgia’s natural assets and socio-cultural heritage.

Goals

- Enhanced science-based decision making
- Increase Public Awareness through Effective Constituent Interaction
- Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning
- Improve Aging Infrastructure
- Accessibility to All Georgians

Values

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| Stewardship of public trust resources as the highest priority | Intra- and inter-agency teamwork while recognizing State of Georgia sovereignty |
| Respect for and cooperation with external and internal customers | Freedom and flexibility to solve problems creatively |
| Representative decision making | Commitment to professional growth, learning, and improvement |
| Honesty, integrity, transparency, and accountability in all actions | Courage to make difficult decisions |
| Professionalism in all endeavors | Use of best available science |
| Efficient use of time and fiscal resources | |

Enhanced Goals

Enhanced Science-Based Decision Making

Science is a cornerstone for establishing environmental policies and making management decisions. Collecting valid data and using it appropriately is paramount to wise use and for the public’s acceptance of management decisions.

Initiatives

- Conduct comprehensive research and surveys of marine fishery populations. Assess current datasets and formulate new approaches to better understand the dynamics of Georgia’s flounder fishery. Focus will include characteristics of the fishery and the fish populations (e.g., Southern, Summer, Gulf Flounder species) and will include an expanded sonic array.
- Conduct 2026/2027 angler satisfaction survey to guide future research and management.
- Participate in the development and implementation of the State Wildlife Action Plan to guide conservation actions for species of greatest conservation need and their habitats.
- Quantify the economic and social benefits of commercial and recreational fishing, including artificial reefs, boat ramps and working waterfronts.
- Collaborate with other state and federal agencies to enhance the collection of recreational fishing data inclusive of private anglers and for-hire/charter captains.
- Support research on emerging issues through Coastal Incentive Grants.
- Monitor efficacy and ecosystem services created by using nature-based solutions.
- Establish monitoring protocols for mangrove range expansion in Georgia



Increase Public Awareness Through Constituent Interaction

Improving public awareness of CRD’s core mission will ensure the division maintains a positive reputation, fosters customer satisfaction, and builds strong relationships with stakeholders.

Initiatives

General Information Exchange

- Ensure information is consistently updated, relevant, accurate and readily available.
- Facilitate presentation of a unified voice by increasing internal communications within CRD through regular team meetings (leadership, sectional, work units).
- CZM fellow will develop outreach strategies for communicating coastal hazards and resiliency information to diverse audiences including the underserved and ageing.
- Host 2025 Climate Conference which will provide adaptation and resiliency strategies.
- Transitioning ‘Fishery Management Plans’ to regular ‘Status Reports.’

Regulatory Processes

- Foster relationships with other agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and conservation partners to better utilize resources and improve conservation outcomes.
- Create/refresh technical guidance/common practices (BMPs) and regulatory documents for marsh and hydrologic restoration, living shorelines, and shellfish mariculture.
- Improve connection between regulatory and non-regulatory groups to streamline processes.

- Improve process efficiency to include updating IT infrastructure (i.e. coastal permitting database)
 1. Develop paperless permitting/electronic applications, electronic filing system.
 2. Digitized retained files and organize servers.
- Fully implement electronic reporting for commercial dealers.

Outreach and Education

- Communicate CRD’s mission through social media and civic/ school presentations.
- Continue a conservation ethic consistent with sustainable use of public trust resources.
- Engage stakeholders using public forums (i.e. advisory panels, civic groups, fishing clubs.)
- Enhance experience-based programs such as Kids Fishing and Fish and Learn events.
- Recruit, retain and reactivate (R3) more participants in marine-related activities. Target audiences include underrepresented areas, schools, and special needs.
- Inform the public of coastal outdoor recreation opportunities.



Recruitment, Retention and Succession Planning

Recruitment, retention, and succession directly impact the long-term sustainability and success of the division. The failure to address these may have far-reaching consequences, affecting CRD’s ability to attract talent, retain skilled employees, and ensure leadership transition.

Initiatives

- Create a sense of ownership among the workforce (organizational synergy) by:
 - 1. Participating in Department-level initiatives for professional development that include all job titles. (e.g., Manager-In-Training Program, Mastering Management, etc),
 - 2. Identifying training opportunities for all job related and leadership functions. (ex. One-day writing seminar at CRH, MAT courses, etc.),
 - 3. Providing cross-training opportunities,
 - 4. Encouraging staff participation at career-focused events,
 - 5. Improving cross-sectional communication, and
 - 6. Implementing Emergenetics and associated tools for all team members.
- Cross-train large vessel crews to increase proficiency and promote safety.
- Continue succession planning.
- Encourage publication of research and monitoring results.
- Identify additional strategies to recruit a skilled, diverse workforce.

Accessibility to All Georgians

We must ensure the public of all ages, backgrounds, means, and abilities have access to and are aware of all Georgia’s coastal outdoor recreation areas and opportunities.

Initiatives

- Maximize access for all users by not just meeting ADA requirements but utilizing universal design principles and promoting a model for accessible outdoor recreation facilities, thus promoting Outdoors Beyond Barriers.
- Evaluate current access sites to prioritize needs including maintenance/enhancement.
- Develop new access at Honey Creek (Camden)
- Enhance recreational fishing opportunities through habitat creation to include adding oyster reefs near shore-based fishing access and MARTA cars and GDOT bridge rubble on offshore reefs.
- Rebuild/enhance Champney River (McIntosh) White Chimney Creek (Liberty) and Demeries Creek, (Bryan)



Improve Aging Infrastructure

As facilities age, our infrastructure and web-based information exchange will struggle to meet the increasing demands of a growing population and evolving technologies, resulting in unreliable services, and decreased productivity. These issues, if left unchecked, can lead to safety risks, economic stagnation, and increased costs of emergency repairs.

Initiatives

- Identify and prioritize infrastructure that has become structurally unsound, poses safety risks, and/or leads to non-use, both in the physical plant and at access points.
 - 1. CRH: main building, Marine Services Building and entry bridge.
 - 2. Access: Champney River, White Chimney, and other access points
- Streamline admin support functions to include efficiency in purchasing (paperless)
- Enhance CRD databases to support state, regional, and federal conservation.
 - 1. Coastal permitting needs an upgraded permitting database which would not only allow for paperless applications, but also efficient customer interactions with the system.
 - 2. Once a new database is established, a large volume of permit files should be scanned and attached.
- Develop electronic reporting training tools for seafood dealers and commercial fishermen
- Distribution of the remaining 2018 Shrimp Fishery Disaster Funds to support the ageing fleet and coastal infrastructure associated with commercial docks and railways.



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