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

as the highest priority
Respect for and cooperation with external and internal customers
Representative decision making
Honesty, integrity, transparency, and accountability in all actions
Professionalism in all endeavors
Efficient use of time and fiscal resources

Stewardship of public trust resources

Intra- and inter-agency teamwork while recognizing State of Georgia sovereignty

Freedom and flexibility to solve problems creatively

Commitment to professional growth, learning, and improvement

Courage to make difficult decisions
Use of best available science

## **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 naturebased 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 marinerelated 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.),

**Accessibility to All Georgians** 

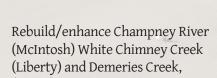
- 3. Providing cross-training opportunities,
- 4. Encouraging staff participation at careerfocused events.
- 5. Improving cross-sectional communication, and
- 6. Implementing Emergenetics and associated tools for all team members.
- Encourage publication of research and monitoring results.
- Identify additional strategies to recruit a skilled, diverse workforce.

- Cross-train large vessel crews to increase proficiency and promote
- Continue succession planning.

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.
- (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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