

# Georgia's Coastal Resources

Georgia's picturesque 100-mile coast has abundant natural resources that are critical to the state's well-being: barrier islands, beaches, marshes, estuaries, river corridors and maritime forests. Together these resources form a vital ecological system that supports countless species of plant and animal life and that provides employment for thousands of Georgians in the tourism, commercial fishing, shipping and forestry industries.

No other coastal environment in the Southeast has been better protected or more carefully preserved. The Georgia Coastal Management Program provides the framework for continued protection and effective resource management into the 21st century. With your support the Georgia Coastal Management Program will ensure that future generations have the opportunity to enjoy the beauty and benefits of coastal Georgia.



## Coastal Resources Division

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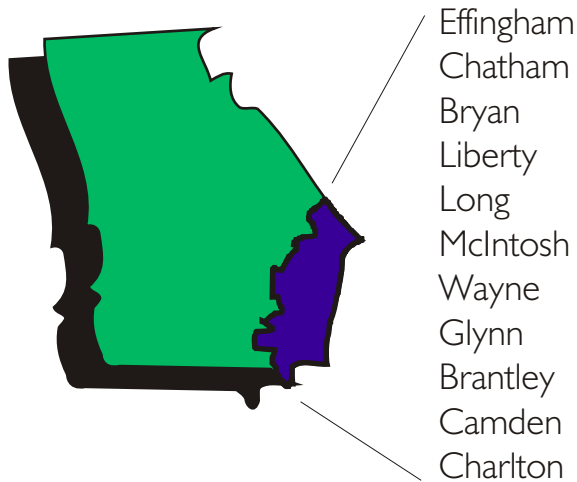
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# Georgia Coastal Management Program



## What Is The Georgia Coastal Management Program?

The coastal zone refers to the area where the water meets the land--the beaches, sounds, and wetlands. Eleven counties are included in Georgia's coastal zone, or coastal area:



Georgia joined the Federal Coastal Zone Management Program in 1998. Developed through an extensive public process, the Georgia Coastal Management Program is an integrated, networked program which uses existing state laws to manage Georgia's critical coastal resources. The goal is to balance environmental conservation with economic development in the coastal area.

## Why the Georgia Coastal Management Program?

Our coastal population is increasing at a rate of 20% per decade. A higher population puts increased pressures on our coastal resources. We need a management framework to address:

- ◆ increasing demand for fresh water
- ◆ increasing numbers of vehicles, as well as roads and parking facilities
- ◆ increasing demand for municipal services
- ◆ increasing residential and commercial construction
- ◆ increasing production of sewage and solid waste
- ◆ increasing use of existing recreational areas
- ◆ increasing storm water runoff and non-point source pollution
- ◆ competing demands for use of natural resources

State resource policies (e.g. the Coastal Marshlands Protection Act, the Shore Protection Act) protect critical natural areas but do not provide a coordinated, comprehensive management framework with which to address the above issues. The Georgia Coastal Management Program provides such a framework.

## Benefits of the Georgia Coastal Management Program

Georgia's federally-approved Coastal Management Program allows the state to:

- ◆ Provide **technical assistance** and **Coastal Incentive Grants** to local governments for projects in coastal area communities
- ◆ provide better **public education** about coastal resources and the importance of thoughtful management
- ◆ **simplify** the permitting process and improve compliance with issued permits
- ◆ exercise more control over federal projects in the coastal area through **federal consistency review**
- ◆ improve **environmental monitoring** efforts to ensure the health of our coastal ecosystems

## What the Georgia Coastal Management Program Is NOT:

- ◆ **NOT** a federal intervention in state or local actions or permits.
- ◆ **NOT** an additional cost to the public. Georgia Coastal Management Program monies are allocated at the federal level and were previously used by other coastal states.
- ◆ **NOT** additional environmental regulation.
- ◆ **NOT** an added step in the state permitting process.