

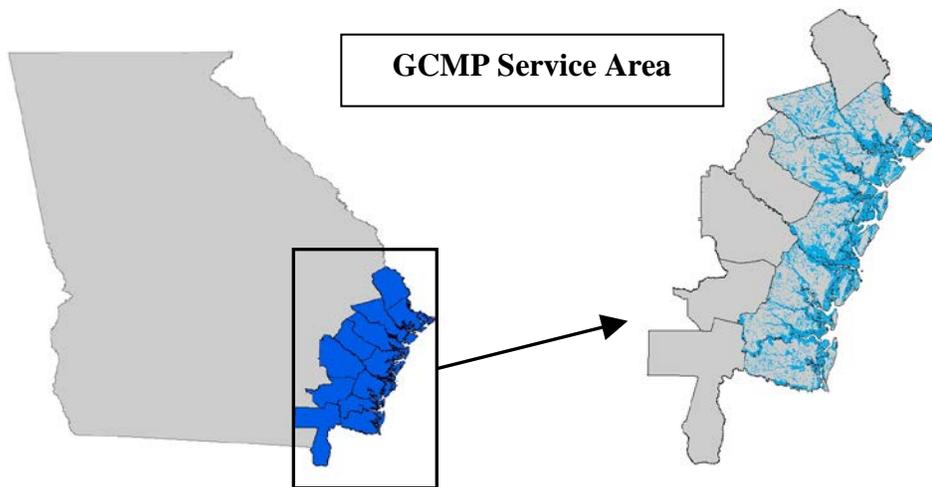
The Coastal Resources Division (CRD) is one of six divisions of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and is the state agency entrusted to manage Georgia's coastal marshlands, beaches, waters and fisheries. The Division's service area extends from the inland reach of tidal waters to three miles offshore – an area that includes eleven coastal counties and is approximately 1,000 square miles in size. The Division is composed of two sections, **Marine Fisheries** and **Ecological Services**.

The Marine Fisheries Section manages Georgia's diverse coastal fisheries through activities including scientific surveys, collection of seafood harvest information, administration of saltwater game-fish record program, construction and maintenance of boating and fishing access, and performing fish habitat assessment, restoration, and enhancement.

The **Ecological Services Section** works with local, state and federal authorities to balance economic development and population growth with protection of coastal natural, historic and recreational assets. This section also administers the Georgia Coastal Management Program (GCMP) in partnership with NOAA.

The GCMP was authorized in 1998. The Program was developed through an extensive public process, and uses existing state resource laws and establishes a network among agencies with management authority in the eleven-county coastal service area. The Georgia Coastal Management Act (O.C.G.A 12-5-320, *et seq.*) provides the authority for state agencies to network and coordinate activities, and for the state to participate in the National Coastal Zone Management Program.

The influence of the ocean on Georgia's coastal plain extends approximately 60 miles inland due to Georgia's linear eight-foot tidal range pushing seawater up the coastal rivers twice daily. For effective coastal management, the Georgia Coastal Management Program encompasses all tidally influenced water bodies and all areas economically tied to coastal resources as seen in the eleven county service area below.



Activities of the Georgia Coastal Management Program

Local Government Assistance: The Coastal Management Program offers technical assistance to local governments, property owners, developers, and the public to provide expertise on coastal issues, minimize environmental impacts, clarify regulatory requirements, and identify agency contacts. The goals of technical assistance are to promote smart development, to work with local governments to address natural resource issues, and to create a central source of information on coastal management issues. The Georgia Coastal Management Program also assists local governments by administering the **Coastal Incentive Grant Program**.

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 and Shore Permits. The Division also executes leases for state owned water bottoms and gives permission for use of state lands at the coast, which is virtually all tidal wetlands and waterbottoms. Together, these programs provide direct management over critical coastal habitats such as saltwater marshlands, beaches and the dynamic dune field, tidal waterbottoms, and navigable waters. Related, the Division also runs a **Compliance and Enforcement Program**.

Water Quality Monitoring: The Coastal Management Program monitors coastal water quality and implements the National Shellfish Sanitation Program for the State of Georgia. These responsibilities include classifying areas open and/or closed to shellfishing, analyzing water quality, issuing shellfish harvest permits, educating the public on shellfishing safety issues, and implementing other programs that monitor and improve estuarine and beach water quality.

Federal Consistency Review: With a federally approved Coastal Management Program, the Coastal Zone Management Act authorizes the State of Georgia to review federal permits and licenses, federal projects, and federally funded projects that impact the coastal area.