

## 2023 Georgia Sea Grant State Fellowship Opportunity

**Host:** The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

**Host Location and Contact Information:** TNC Coastal and Marine Program Office is located on Altama Wildlife Management Area, Glynn County. 68844 GA HWY 99, Brunswick, GA 31525.

**Fellowship Mentor/Supervisor:** Christi Lambert, Coastal and Marine Conservation Director. [clambert@tnc.org](mailto:clambert@tnc.org), 912-617-0143.

### **Fellowship Description:**

*TNC GA Coast and Marine Program Long-term Vision* - a resilient network of coastal and marine ecosystems supports viable keystone, rare and foundational habitats, and species, including oyster reefs, salt marshes, estuaries, freshwater wetlands, forests, and fisheries in the face of climate and population changes and continues to provide ecosystem services essential to nature and people.

Oysters filter water, protect shorelines from wave energy and can abate erosion by serving as natural buffers against rising tides and storms and provide refuge and a place to feed for fish, crab, shrimp, and other commercial and recreational fish species. Despite the many benefits oysters provide, they are one of the most imperiled marine habitats in the world. Globally, over 85% of oyster reefs have disappeared. Multiple entities depend upon, impact, and influence the health of oysters, habitat, and economies, yet there has not been a collaborative inclusive effort to engage and develop a unified vision and plan to act together.

The primary objective of the Georgia Sea Grant Fellow (Fellow) is to support the development of an integrated oyster management plan. The Fellow will help foster productive relationships with state and federal agencies, academic institutions, fishers, organizations, and partners. The integrated comprehensive approach will result in a suite of options that when coordinated and practiced together will enhance oysters as a fishery, as habitat, as a resilient shoreline that protects the coastal communities and that supports the local communities and cultural needs. *Oyster restoration, aquaculture, living shorelines and land conservation* are priority strategies for TNC and are critical to the health of oysters and estuaries. The Fellow will assist to implement projects and will collaborate with TNC GA and TNC Global staff, and partners.

### *Fellowship Roles and Responsibilities:*

- Engage oyster related management, science, industry, agencies and community entities and potential partners to set the course and process to develop the work plan.
- Develop an understanding of 1) condition of oyster populations, their waterways and adjacent watershed, 2) status of oyster fisheries, 3) value of ecosystem services, and 4) threats to and opportunities for oyster health.
- Engage and educate stakeholders about coastal waters, oysters and the adjacent lands through education and outreach including workshops and meetings.

- Engage and support priority stakeholders and leaders in the expansion of the oyster fishery, restoration and living shorelines (fishers, restaurants, restoration practitioners, contractors, agencies, landowners and managers, and local governments).
- Prepare a Work Plan using a stakeholder driven process to develop an integrated oyster management plan with management and implementation recommendations.
- Represent TNC at select meetings and events. Assist with other work as needed.

**Preferred Qualifications:**

- Bachelor's degree in environmental or resource management, planning or related fields.
- Kind, authentic and open to learning.
- Strategic, action-oriented, resourceful & adaptable.
- Familiarity with coastal environments and communities.
- Experience organizing time and managing diverse activities to meet deadlines.
- Ability to collaborate with stakeholders across roles, disciplines, sectors, and cultures.
- Ability to analyze information for the purpose of preparing reports, coordinating activities, and solving problems.
- Ability to write and produce materials for program communications and dedicated events.
- Familiarity with best social science practices for community engagement and communication. Experience conducting informational interviews and surveys, or ability to learn.
- Committed to environmental sustainability and social impact.
- Experience with PowerPoint, and Microsoft Office. Experience with GIS desired.

**Work Schedule:** The full-time Fellow position is 40 hours per week for 12-months and will start in September. Based on the TNC Coastal Office at the Altama WMA, the Fellow will work throughout the coast, including Harris Neck Wildlife Refuge, Sapelo Island, McIntosh County, Ossabaw Island, Liberty County, Camden County, and Glynn County (St. Simons and Little St. Simons Island). Occasional evening and weekend hours may be required.

**The Nature Conservancy:** Founded in 1951, The Nature Conservancy is a global conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. Guided by science, we create innovative, on-the-ground solutions to our world's toughest challenges so that nature and people can thrive together.

TNC Values guide our values and include a commitment to diversity and respect for people, communities, and cultures. Working in 72 countries, including all 50 United States, we use a collaborative approach that engages local communities, governments, the private sector, and other partners. To learn more, visit [www.nature.org](http://www.nature.org) or follow @nature\_press on Twitter.

The Nature Conservancy is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We believe conservation is best advanced when diverse teams, partners and local communities are working together to better understand and protect our planet.