

# STATE OF THE GEORGIA COAST

SEPT. 21 - 23, 2023 | TYBEE ISLAND, GA



## DAY 1

**Thursday, Sept. 21**

Grandview, Hotel Tybee

9 A.M. | **Registration Opens**

9:30 A.M. | **SPECIAL SESSION**

**Managing Natural Infrastructure for Resilience and Water Resources**

ORGANIZED BY

The PEW Charitable Trusts AND UGA Institute for Resilient Infrastructure Systems

MODERATED BY

Brian Bledsoe, *UGA Institute for Resilient Infrastructure Systems*

### **Welcome and Introduction**

Kristiane Huber, *Pew Charitable Trusts*

### **Managing Water and Natural Infrastructure for Resilience**

Brian Bledsoe, *UGA Institute for Resilient  
Infrastructure Systems*

### **Coastal Regional Watershed Protection**

Jennifer Welte, *Georgia Environmental Protection Division*

### **Building Capacity to Carry Out Resiliency Planning**

Alan Robertson, *AWR Strategic Consulting*

### **Sea Level Rise and Flooding**

Kelly Hill, *Georgia Department of Natural Resources*

### **Natural Infrastructure Proving Ground**

Mark Risse, *UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant*

### **Defense Communities Resiliency Program**

Ben Carswell, *UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government*

### **What's Working in Coastal Resiliency**

Hope Warren, *South Carolina Office of Resilience*

NOON | **Lunch**

1 P.M. | **Welcome to State of the Georgia Coast**

Mark Risse, *UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant*

1:15 P.M. | **PANEL DISCUSSION 1**

**Local Officials Resilience Panel**

MODERATED BY

Shana Jones, *UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government*

**PANELISTS:**

Mark Williams, *Executive Director*  
JEKYLL ISLAND AUTHORITY

Shirley Sessions, *Mayor*  
TYBEE ISLAND

Jackie Jackson, *Resiliency Program Administrator*  
CHATHAM COUNTY

Garrow Alberson, *City Engineering and Public Works Director*  
CITY OF BRUNSWICK

2 P.M. | **PANEL DISCUSSION 2**

**Elected State Officials Panel**

MODERATED BY

Shana Jones, *UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government*

**PANELISTS:**

Senator Mike Hodges  
GOVERNOR'S FLOOR LEADER

Senator Lee Anderson  
CHAIRMAN, NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

3 P.M. | **Break**

3:15 P.M. | **Invited Leaders Session**

OVERVIEW OF BIG PICTURE AGENCY THOUGHTS ON CURRENT COASTAL ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES

Representative Buddy Carter  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Col. Ronald Sturgeon, *Commander*  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS SAVANNAH DISTRICT

Doug Haymans, *Director*  
COASTAL RESOURCE DIVISION OF GEORGIA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Stephen Clark, *Hazard Mitigation Manager*  
GEORGIA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Lee Beckmann, *Manager of Government Affairs*  
GEORGIA PORTS AUTHORITY

Ashby Worley, *Coastal Climate Adaption Director*  
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

5 P.M. | **Reception**

FEATURING LOCAL GEORGIA SEAFOOD

**DAY 2**

**Friday, Sept. 22**

Grandview, Hotel Tybee

7:30 A.M. | **Breakfast**

8:30 A.M. | **Opening Remarks**

Nina Sassano, *UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant*

8:50 A.M. | SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

**Research Presentations**

**Enhancing the South Atlantic Black Sea Bass Pot Fishery with Acoustic Subsea Buoy Retrieval Systems**

Kim Sawicki, *Sustainable Seas Technology & School for Marine Science and Technology, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth*

**The Estuarine Fish Monitoring Cooperative: Monitoring and Training for the Future**

Rachel Guy, *Sapelo Island National Estuarine Research Reserve / Georgia Department of Natural Resources*

**Using Artificial Oyster Reef Substrate and UAS Technology to Evaluate Oyster Reef Restoration and Assessment in the Southeast**

Dionne Hoskins Brown, *NOAA SEFSC Population and Ecosystems Monitoring Division, Habitat Ecology Branch*

10 A.M. | **Break**

10:15 A.M. | SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

**Research Presentations**

**Aquaculture Development in Georgia**

Amrit Bart, *UGA Animal and Dairy Science*

**Oyster Aquaculture from Hatchery to Harvest**

Tom Bliss, *UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant*

11 A.M. | **Lightning Talks**

**Monitoring Nekton Community Changes in Georgia's Estuaries**

Lauren Everett, *University of Georgia*

**The Impacts of Creek Bank Geomorphology and Submarine Groundwater Discharge on Eastern Oyster Populations in Georgia**

Jacque Kelly, *Georgia Southern University*

**Oyster Farming User Conflicts Survey Findings**

Katie Hill, *UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government*

**Dolphin-human Interactions Have Declined in the Savannah Area; Let's Keep it that Way**

Robin Perrtree, *Savannah State University*

**Experiencing Hurricane Risks in Virtual Reality: Do Community Leaders Think VR Works in Risk Communication?**

Josh Baldwin, *University of Georgia*

**The Dolphin Project in Coastal Georgia**

Jennifer Isaak-Harrington, *The Dolphin Project*

**Conserving and Managing Georgia's Underwater Park Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary**

Alison Soss, *Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary*

**Supporting a Sustainable Georgia Coast Through Research, Advocacy and Community Engagement**

Joshua Grier, *Yamaha Motor Corporation*

NOON | **Lunch**

1 P.M. | **Welcome Back**

Nina Sassano, *UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant*

1:15 P.M. | **HEALTHY COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIES  
Research Presentations**

**The 2022 Coastal Low Impact Development Inventory**

Jessica Brown, *UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant*

**Tidal Channel Migration Effects on Salt Marsh Soil Carbon**

Amanda Spivak, *UGA Department of Marine Sciences*

2 P.M. | **Break**

2:20 P.M. | **HEALTHY COASTAL ECOSYSTEMS AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND ECONOMIES  
Research Presentations**

**South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initiative in Georgia**

Courtney Reich, *Georgia Conservancy*

2:45 P.M. | **Lightning Talks**

**Building a Regional Network to Study the Influence of Climate Change on Contaminants of Emerging Concern**

Katy Smith, *UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant*

**Probiotics for Plants: Harnessing Microbiomes to Improve the Propagation of Marsh Grasses to Support Coastal Ecosystem Restoration**

Joel Kostka, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

**Measuring Successional Vegetation Changes of Reclaimed Mine Lands in Southeastern Georgia**

Joshua Billings, *UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant Coastal Ecology Lab*

**Impacts of Natural and Anthropogenic Light on Copepod Abundance of Country Club Creek, Savannah, GA USA**

Nicholas Holmes, *Savannah State University*

**Bioacoustic Surveys of Estuarine Fronts and Confluence Zones Near Savannah, GA**

Amanda Kaltenburg, *Savannah State University*

**Safe Water Together at Coastal Georgia**

Asli Aslan, *Georgia Southern University*

**Recovery of Ecosystem Functions in Response to Community-enabled Restoration of Salt Marshes Impacted by Sudden Vegetation Die-back**

Jose Rolando, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

***Spartina alterniflora* Microbial Community Response to Varying Growing Conditions**

Gabrielle Krueger, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

3:45 P.M. | **Break and Open Discussion**

4 P.M. | **Structured Networking**

5:30 P.M. | **Poster Session and Cocktail Hour**

## **DAY 3**

**Saturday, Sept. 23**

9 A.M. | **Concurrent Activities**

**Visit the Tybee Marine Science Center** between 9 a.m. - noon to enjoy a tabling event highlighting environmental literacy and workforce development efforts by organizations on the coast. Admission to the center is included with registration. Visit the Registration table on Saturday morning to collect your ticket.

**PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS:**

*Tybee Island Marine Science Center*

*One Hundred Miles*

*Savannah State University*

*Burton 4-H Center*

*The Dolphin Project*

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**Tybee Island Resilience Tours:** Learn about various adaptation measures taken by the City of Tybee Island to improve its resilience to coastal hazards. Please check in at the Registration table before Saturday to confirm which tour you signed up for. If you are interested in joining a tour and have not registered, please visit the registration table to check availability. Resilience tours will meet in the parking lot of the Hotel Tybee before boarding an Old Town Savannah Trolley.

**TOUR TIMES:**

*9 - 10 a.m.*

*Resilience Tour of Tybee (1)*

*10:30 - 11:30 a.m.*

*Resilience Tour of Tybee (2)*

NOON | **Adjourn**

## SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS

We would like to thank the following sponsors for making this event possible.



## THANK YOU TO THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

This conference would not be possible without the time, expertise and contributions of our partners on the planning committee.

Nina Sassano	Mona Behl
Mark Risse	Monét Murphy
Emily Kenworthy	Dionne Hoskins
Bonnie Klostermann	Courtney Reich
Anne Lindsay	Charles McMillan
Cynthia Lingeback	Jill Andrews
Brendan Dula	Austin Heil

## QUESTIONS?

If you have questions throughout the conference, please contact **Nina Sassano** at **732-598-7135** or email **nina.sassano@uga.edu**