



Marine Extension and
Georgia Sea Grant
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



2026 State Fellowship Program: *Gray's Reef Research and Resource Management Fellowship* Request for Proposals *(Call for Applications)*

UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant's State Fellowship Program is a unique educational and professional experience for graduate students and recent graduates who are interested in coastal and marine resources in Georgia, and the policy and management decisions affecting those resources. The program matches highly motivated students, who have recently graduated or are near completion of a graduate degree, with "hosts" in municipal, state and federal governments agencies, non-governmental partners, or industries in Georgia. Fellows acquire "hands-on" experience in planning, implementation, and management of coastal, marine, and/or watershed policies and programs in Georgia. The fellowship program serves to increase the capacity of our partners in Georgia, promote integration of diverse perspectives into problem-solving for Georgia to provide richer and more inclusive solutions and facilitate training and development of the next generation of coastal and marine leaders. This State Fellowship opportunity with Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary is a re-solicitation, please review included position description below.

Eligibility: Applications may be submitted by a graduate student close to completing their degree (Masters, Ph.D., or J.D), or within a year of their graduation, in a field related to conservation, management, protection, stewardship, public policy, or law of marine or coastal environments, or areas that impact marine and coastal environments. Applicants should address their degree of interest and experience in either marine/coastal/watershed science, natural resource management, public policy or law.

Length of the Assignment: The fellowship begins on August 1, 2026 and ends on July 31, 2027 (exact dates are determined by host and fellow).

Stipend and Expenses: State Fellows receive a stipend of \$45,000 for 12-month assignments. Additional travel or professional development funding associated with the fellowship may be covered by the host organization at their discretion.

Application Materials: A complete application will include the following items:

1. Personal and academic curriculum vitae (not to exceed 2-pages using 12-point font).
2. A statement of career goals that emphasizes the applicant's abilities and interests, and the applicant's expectations of the career development experience. (2-pages)
3. Two letters of recommendation including one from the applicant's major advisor.
4. Unofficial copies of all undergraduate and graduate student transcripts uploaded as a single PDF.

How to Submit: Applications must be submitted using UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant's online submission portal: <https://eseagrants.uga.edu>. Applicants should **read eSeaGrant instructions** before filling out their application. Late applications and applications that aren't submitted through eSeaGrant will not be accepted.

Application Deadline: Revised for this position placement: July 13th, 2026

Selection: Following an administrative review for minimum requirements, host offices review all applications and participate in virtual interviews with candidates. Following virtual interviews, both applicants and hosts rank choices for placement. Final selections are based on applicant preferences and host priorities.

Questions? For questions regarding the State Fellowship program or the application process, please contact Brooke Carney, brooke.carney@uga.edu.



POSITION DESCRIPTION 2026-2027

Host Agency: NOAA Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary

Position Title: Sea Grant State Fellow, Resource Protection and Research

Host Location: NOAA Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, 10 Ocean Science Circle, Savannah, GA

Fellowship Supervisor: Scott Kathey, Resource Protection Coordinator; Scott.Kathe@noaa.gov

Position Description: We are seeking a Georgia Sea Grant State Fellow to join our hard-working and supportive team. We offer a working environment that is welcoming, innovative, positive, fun, and growth-oriented, and we have enjoyed mentoring interns for many years. Since 2019, this partnership has hosted a year-long Sea Grant State Fellow supporting [Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary](#) (GRNMS), a federally-designated marine protected area that is administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) [Office of National Marine Sanctuaries](#). The sanctuary is located approximately 19 miles off the coast of Georgia and encompasses 22 square miles of federal ocean waters, and the office is located in Savannah, GA. A combination of warm and cool currents creates a highly productive marine ecosystem supporting live bottom habitats, a wide diversity of fish and invertebrates, sea turtles and marine mammals. The sanctuary's primary objective is to conserve, protect, and enhance the biodiversity and ecological integrity of marine resources for current and future generations. This is supported in enabling federal legislation—the [National Marine Sanctuaries Act](#).

The Georgia Sea Grant State Fellow will play a key role in advancing several policy, planning and science projects, working closely with the sanctuary's resource protection coordinator and research coordinator. The fellow will help foster productive relationships with state and federal agencies, academic institutions, and stakeholders. In this position, the fellow will gain the diverse skills and professional experience necessary to succeed in a natural resource management career. Former sanctuary fellows at other sanctuary sites within the system have become permanent or contract NOAA employees, received the Knauss and Presidential Management Fellowships, or taken research and leadership positions in the private, government, and non-profit sectors.

Working in the capacity of a Sanctuary Program Specialist, the Sea Grant State Fellow will support the following priority programs of GRNMS:

Marine Resource Management & Protection Support (approx. 65%)

National Marine Sanctuary [Management Plan Reviews \(MPRs\)](#) are conducted every ten years to assess the effectiveness of current marine resource management policies and approaches for addressing ongoing and emergent conservation needs. MPRs are developed over a multi-year process that significantly engages the public about the future of sanctuary conservation efforts, research, education, and outreach.

The fellow will support MPR by:

- Conducting literature reviews to gather and synthesize information and data on marine conservation issues, including some in-depth subject matter investigations and reporting;
- Editing and finalizing the results of a 2021 workshop on ecological connectivity of live bottom habitats in the South Atlantic Bight;
- Assisting with public scoping meeting preparation, outreach, and implementation, including public speaking and meeting facilitation; Assimilating and summarizing written and verbal public comments and ideas; and
- Assisting with sanctuary advisory council meeting and subcommittee/working group meeting preparation and implementation.

General ArcGIS knowledge, analyzing management and policy questions, report writing, spreadsheet, information database, and Google Workspace skills will be beneficial.

Science and Monitoring (approx. 30%)

GRNMS is developing a comprehensive long term monitoring plan that includes living resources, habitat, oceanographic monitoring and other relevant actions. The document serves the purpose of guiding research and science projects for the next several years and ensures close alignment with the GRNMS management plan. The fellow will assist with project planning, implementation and reporting as it pertains to this effort, affording interaction and collaboration with a wide range of researchers and collaborators, gaining a broad and detailed knowledge of science, management, resource allocation and prioritization processes. The fellow will participate in sanctuary monitoring and applied science activities including helping with data acquisition and processing, summarizing information for presentation and reporting and presenting that information, and occasional trips aboard NOAA research vessels. The fellow may also participate in planning and executing a mini-science symposium for GRNMS research partners to present recent research and monitoring and assist with the science symposium summary.

General ArcGIS knowledge and familiarity with protocol implementation will be beneficial.

Additional Opportunities (approx. 5%)

The fellow will have the opportunity to engage in personal career development planning; participate in internal office meetings; contribute to superintendent reports and weekly activity reports; represent the sanctuary at select meetings, conferences and public outreach events; and assist with other work as needed.

The fellow will benefit most from this opportunity if they bring these skills, experiences and interests: a natural self-starter approach to work; strong organizational, communication and writing skills; a personable approach and comfort working with a variety of constituencies in public and occasionally contentious settings; a strong ability to effectively manage multiple projects and deadlines; and enthusiasm for ocean stewardship and conservation. This is an on site position and will require working from the Gray's Reef NMS Office in Savannah Ga.