



Georgia Coastal NEMO Project

Project Initiated: October, 2000

How the Project Developed

Georgia's rapid coastal growth has spawned many concerns about the quality of coastal resources. Over the past five years, a grass-roots movement of commercial fishermen, recreational fishermen, environmentalists, academics, regulators, municipal officials and legislators has expressed increasing concern about degradation of water quality in coastal Georgia.

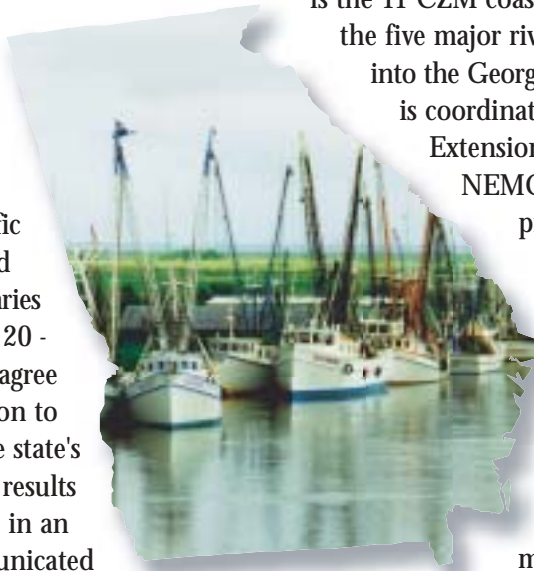
Both anecdotal and increasing scientific evidence suggests that the quality and productivity of coastal rivers and estuaries have declined markedly over the last 20 - 30 years. Major coastal stakeholders agree that Georgians need more information to quantify the current condition of the state's coastal water resources, and that the results of scientific studies should be placed in an easily understood format and communicated to the largest possible group of Georgia's decision makers and to the public.

To accomplish this task, in the fall of 2000 the University of Georgia (UGA) Marine Extension Service received funds to initiate the Coastal Georgia NEMO Project to help provide the growing body of

scientific research to local land use decision makers. Funding for the project comes from a variety of sources, such as NOAA Sea Grant's Coastal Community Development Program, EPA Section 319 funding through GA Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Coastal Zone Management (CZM) funds administered by the Coastal Resources Division of DNR.

How/Where NEMO Works

The primary focus of the Coastal GA NEMO Project is the 11 CZM coastal counties in Georgia and the five major river watersheds discharging into the Georgia Bight. Coastal GA NEMO is coordinated by UGA's Marine Extension Service and has a full-time NEMO coordinator on staff. The project has completed 20 workshops and training sessions geared to decision makers or NEMO trainers, totaling 1,440 participants. NEMO presentations or displays at coastal festivals have reached another 1,850 members of the public.



Accomplishments

The project is working directly with county and municipal staff and elected officials to tailor educational offerings directly to their needs. In Brantley County, Coastal GA NEMO staff assisted the chairman



Through the Coastal GA NEMO Project, county officials were able to consider potential sites for waste facilities that would not threaten surface or ground water resources.

of the newly formed Planning Commission to develop a series of educational presentations for new commissioners. Of particular concern to the county was the placement and location of solid waste sites with respect to their aquifer recharge zones. Through the Coastal GA NEMO Project and the geospatial expertise of their partners at the Southeast Georgia Regional Development Center, county officials were able to consider potential sites for the waste facilities

that would not threaten surface or ground water resources (*photo, lower left*).

In Glynn County, Coastal GA NEMO is working directly with the County planning and engineering staff to help develop subdivision design standards for improved stormwater management. Starting in mid-2002, the County Planning Commission began a comprehensive review and revision of the zoning and subdivision ordinances to incorporate many of the principles espoused by the NEMO Program, including a reduction in the amount of impervious surface mandated by ordinance.



Brantley County Aquifer Recharge, Pollution Susceptibility and Dumpster Locations Plan and photo of existing dump sites.

The Future

Despite these impressive accomplishments, the Coastal GA NEMO Project is still in the formative stages of development. This hasn't stopped the program from formulating grand plans for its future. Working with UGA Cooperative Extension, Coastal GA NEMO has been training county Extension agents to bring the *Linking Land Use to Water Quality* Program to local officials in their counties. Additionally, the program is working with colleagues at UGA Department of Ecology and the Natural Resources Spatial Analysis Laboratory to further spread the program to the Atlanta/Athens metro area.

Project Partners

University of Georgia (UGA)
Marine Extension Service

Georgia Sea Grant College
Program

Georgia Department of Natural
Resources Coastal Resource
Division

Sapelo Island National
Estuarine Research Reserve

Georgia DNR Environmental
Protection Division

UGA Driftmier Agricultural
Engineering Center

University of Massachusetts
at Dartmouth

UGA Department of Marine
Science

Altamaha Riverkeeper

Coastal Georgia Regional
Development Center

Center for a Sustainable Coast

Coastal District of the Georgia
Conservancy

Natural Resources Spatial
Analysis Laboratory

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On the Web at: www.uga.edu/marine_advisory/wqeducation.html

Georgia Coastal NEMO is a charter member of the National NEMO Network.

