

PRESS RELEASE



Governors' South Atlantic Alliance
North Carolina • South Carolina • Georgia • Florida

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 20, 2012

RE: Governors' South Atlantic Alliance Receives 1.06 M from NOAA
Funding to support organizational framework, coastal and ocean planning efforts

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The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has announced Regional Ocean Partnership funding of two Governors' South Atlantic Alliance (Alliance) initiatives that will support the coordinated efforts of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida to develop a multi-state framework for planning activities in the region's coastal and ocean areas. Federal funding will support ocean data-gathering and analyses for multi-use ocean planning and hazards resiliency, and the continuation of the development and organization of the Alliance. The combined award of \$1,062,431 million will be administered by the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium, on behalf of the Alliance, over an 18-month period beginning January 1, 2012.

“With this financial support from our federal partner, the Alliance will build its capacity to work across state lines and regulatory jurisdictions to transform the way we promote and manage our shared ocean and coastal resources,” said Earl Hunter, chair of the Alliance's Steering Group and commissioner of the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control.

According to Hunter, the Alliance will be working over the next 12-18 months with a number of partners, including the Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association and the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, to begin the design of a multi-state and regional framework for coastal and ocean planning and decision-making. The Alliance will engage a diverse set of partner organizations and multi-disciplinary teams of scientists and resource managers to gather existing data about the region's coastal and ocean waters, including winds, currents, fishing grounds, sea-floor depths and contours, marine mammal and turtle migratory pathways, shipping lanes, military traffic, tourism and other uses.

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The Alliance will also provide the framework for the synthesis and delivery of coastal and ocean information, enhance collaborations among users and begin development of decision tools that can be used by state and regional resource managers and local community officials as they balance ocean uses with conservation.

“This coordinated approach will help bolster our coastal economies, improve our environmental quality and preserve our shared natural heritage. I’m optimistic that we can work together to find common solutions to shared challenges and opportunities,” said Hunter.

The Governors’ South Atlantic Alliance was formally created in October 2009 by an agreement signed by the governors of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. The Alliance fosters collaboration to more efficiently manage and protect the region’s immense and diverse ocean and coastal resources, prepare and respond to natural disasters such as hurricanes and promote economic sustainability.

In December 2010, the Alliance released its Action Plan identifying four priority focus areas for the southeastern United States: healthy ecosystems, working waterfronts, clean coastal and ocean waters and disaster-resilient communities. In July 2011, the Alliance released an Implementation Plan that promotes science-based policies and solutions to enhance and protect the value of coastal and ocean resources and support the region’s culture and economy.

The mission of the South Atlantic Alliance is to significantly increase regional collaboration among South Atlantic states to sustain and enhance the environmental, natural resource, economic, public safety, social and national defense missions of the respective states and the South Atlantic region.

For more information, visit the Alliance website at www.southatlanticalliance.org.

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