

Governors'
South Atlantic
Alliance



North Carolina • South Carolina • Georgia • Florida

Healthy Ecosystems 2014 Products and Progress

Anne Deaton, Denise Sanger & Amber
Whittle

NCDENR, SCDNR, & FL FWCC

September 3, 2014

Team Members

- Pat Geer (GADNR)
- Bob VanDolah (SCDNR)
- Denise Sanger (SCDNR)
- Elizabeth VonKolnitz (SCDHEC)
- Amber Whittle (FL FWCC)
- Anne Deaton (NCDENR)
- Debra Hernandez (SECOORA)
- Anna Toline (NPS)
- Christine Laporte (UGA)
- Mallory Martin (NCWildlife)
- Eddie Leonard (GADNR)
- Mark Wolff (USACE)
- Mary Conley (TNC)
- Rua Mordecai (SALCC)
- Pace Wilber (NOAA)
- Roger Pugliese (SAFMC)
- Wilson Laney (FWS)
- Michelle Duval (NCDENR)
- Jennifer Derby (EPA Region 4)
- Jennifer Dorton (SECOORA)
- Jack Thigpen (NCSU)

Team Goal

The Goal of Healthy Ecosystems is to ensure the sustainability of the diverse array of coastal and marine environments vital to the ecological and economic stability of the region by:

- enhancing and supporting ecosystem-based management of regional biological resources;
- improving ecosystem structure and function by developing and applying sound scientific data to support habitat conservation, enhancement, and restoration;
- increasing the understanding of the scope and scale of the region's human and natural resources; and
- developing communication networks, research frameworks, and outreach/education.

2014 Team Work Plan

- Action Item #1: Complete compilation of estuarine habitat, biological and coastal use spatial data layers and work with SECOORA, TNC, etc. to incorporate the priority data layers into the GSAA online **mapping tool** for management use.
- Action Item #2: Research compiling information on existing monitoring programs to create a **monitoring catalog** for the South Atlantic states, which can be used to identify gaps and common monitoring, and develop preferred monitoring plans by habitat.
- Action Item #3: Research **valuation studies** that have been done to economically quantify the benefits of ecosystem services provided by South Atlantic habitats. Summarize the available information to identify gaps and distribute existing information via the GSAA website as an aid in management decisions.
- Action Item #4: Assess how the GSAA can be most effective in preventing and/or ameliorating further **invasive species** introductions.



Upcoming Regional Spatial Data

TNC South Atlantic Assessment* (December 2014)

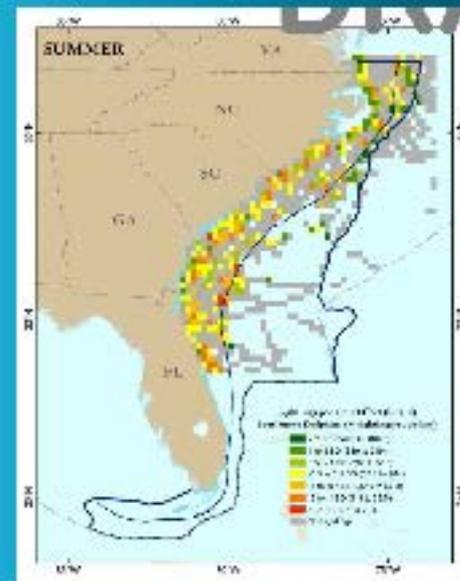
Seafloor



Coastal



Migratory



* Assessment funded in part through NOAA and the SALCC

Comparison between HE and TNC Estuarine Spatial Data Priorities

Resource	HE Priority	TNC Analysis	Comments
Biological Resources			
Oyster Reefs	High	Yes	Availability of data varies greatly across states, collected data will be available.
Benthic Communities (IBI)	Medium	No	Data may be available through EPA Coastal Conditions report (SA LCC)
<i>Finfish Fisheries</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Used blue crab to test viability of using state-specific independent fish survey data to build regional spatial data. Too much variability in monitoring methods.</i>
<i>Crustacean Fisheries</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>No</i>	
Sea Bird Nesting Locations	High	N/A	Completed by SC DNR and available on GSAA Portal , TNC linking in “important bird areas”
Sea Turtle Nesting Locations	High	N/A	Completed by DNR and available on GSAA Portal
Manatees	Low	Yes	Compiled overwintering locations and looking at other available data

Work Plan Action Item #2

Monitoring Catalogue:

- Kate Muldoon will speak to HE team tomorrow about the Florida monitoring database website (Water-CAT).
- Christine Laporte will guide the HE team through the UGA/NPS monitoring database.

Work Plan Action Item #3

Valuation Studies:

- Anne Deaton has submitted an internal NC proposal for an intern who will conduct a literature review of GSAA-area valuation studies
- HE Team (led by Anne) submitted a 1-page proposal to NOAA (future potential funding opportunities) for a GSAA-specific valuation study

Work Plan Action Item #4

Invasive Species:

- The team has punted this item until the next meeting due to lack of time.

Other Areas of Progress in 2014

- Will use seed money to fund a facilitated meeting to resolve long term maintenance of ecosystem data on portal and possible coordination with SALCC and SAFMC portals.
- Participated in the EPA Wetland Grant application and revision.
- Compiled a list of permitted and proposed living shoreline projects in FL as a precursor to EPA grant.
- Held a joint meeting with CCOW in Dec. (at GSAA-sponsored Tidal Creek Summit) and decided CCOW will take lead in duplicative Climate Change Action Items.

Resiliency

- Conducted a webinar with Dr. Lance Gunderson (Emory) to begin defining ecological resiliency per GSAA.
- Will continue the discussion and create appropriate Action Items at this meeting.

THANKS!

- Mary Conley, TNC, and SALCC for mapping assistance
- Debra Hernandez and SECOORA for supporting the portal for the next 2 years.
- Kristine Cherry for continued organization and motivation