



P260: S.C. Sea Grant Consortium FY26-27 Budget Request

Submitted: January 7, 2026



Sea Grant
S.C. SEA GRANT CONSORTIUM

Key Officials



Emily Osborne, Ph.D.

*Consortium Executive Director
and POC*



Ryan Bradley

*Consortium Chief of Staff/
Director of Administration*



Geoff Scott, Ph.D.

*Consortium Board Chair
Department Chair & Professor
University of South Carolina*



Darin Zimmerman, PhD.

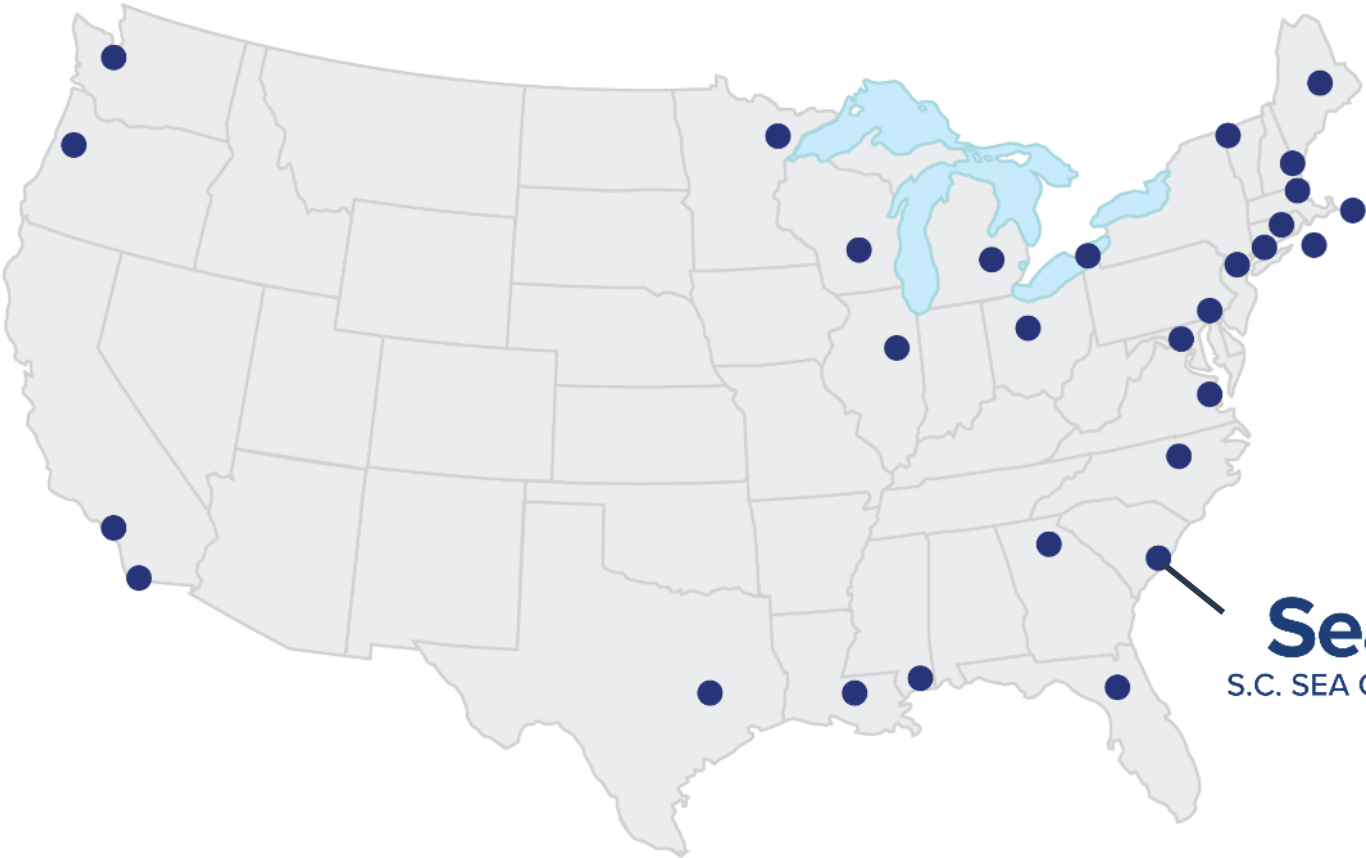
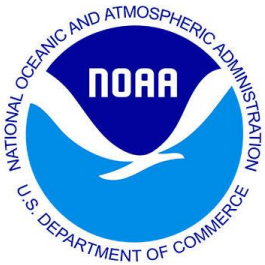
*Consortium Board Vice Cha
Dean and Traubert Chair, Professor
of Physics
The Citadel*

OUR MISSION

We generate and provide **science-based information** on issues and opportunities to improve the **social and economic well-being** of coastal residents while ensuring the optimal use and conservation of **marine and coastal natural resources**.

NATIONAL SEA GRANT COLLEGE PROGRAM

34 Programs Nationwide



S.C. SEA GRANT CONSORTIUM LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors

The Consortium is guided by the Board of Directors, the presidents of executive officers from nine of South Carolina's most prestigious **research and teaching institutions.**



Agency Overview



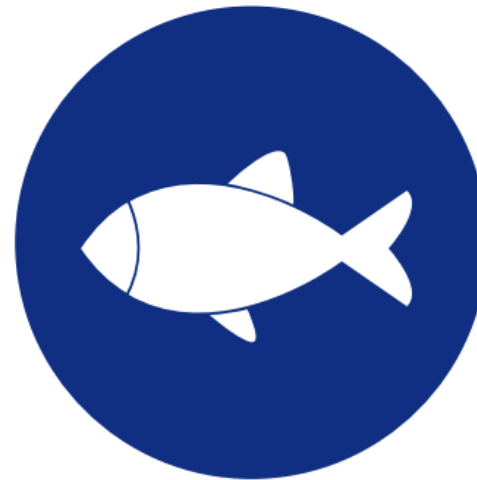
PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS



**Healthy Coastal
Ecosystems**



**Resilient
Communities &
Economies**



**Sustainable
Fisheries &
Aquaculture**



**Environmental
Literacy & Workforce
Development**

HOW WE WORK

EXTENSION
RESEARCH

EDUCATION





Commercial Seafood Apprenticeship Program

One-month, paid job training program based in McClellanville, SC addressing critical industry workforce challenges

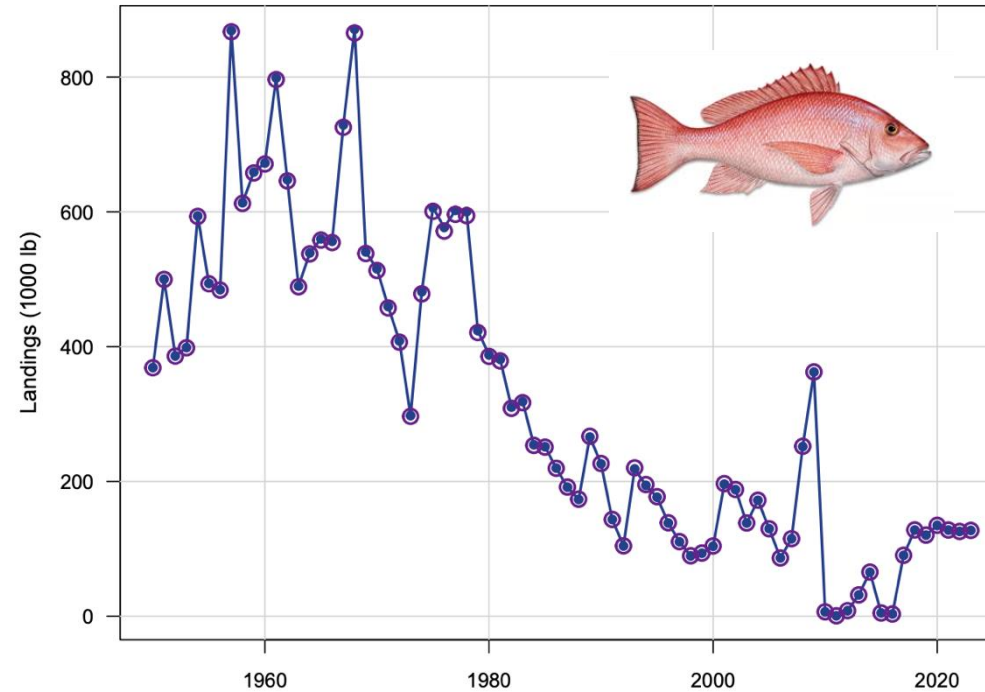


Article: National Fisherman
Sea Grant strengthens America's working waterfronts



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences

South Atlantic Red Snapper Research Program



Goal: To Evaluate the condition and health of South Atlantic red snapper to better inform future stock assessments and management.



Calling the Coast Home

providing science-based information for coastal real estate professionals



1300
Unique
Participants

\$145,743
Economic
Benefits
based on CEU savings,
travel costs, and
opportunity costs

59
Courses Offered
Since 2020

Coastal Carolinas
Association of REALTORS


CHARLESTON RIVIERA OF
REALTORS


HILTON HEAD AREA
ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®



COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
College of Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences



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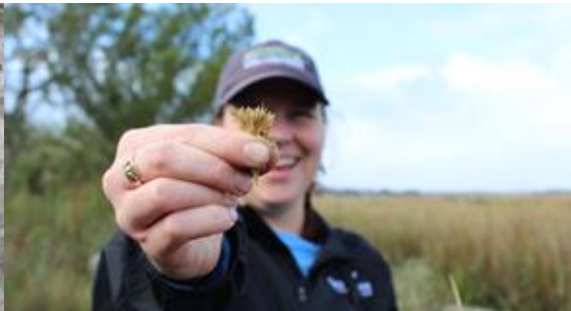


NORTH INLET - WINYAH BAY
NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE



FROM SEEDS TO SHORELINE

K-12 youth salt marsh restoration program 2011-Present



2025 Metrics of Success: 23 Schools | 600+ Students | 6,500+ *Spartina* planted





We support coastal industries
such as real estate groups and
commercial seafood producers.

267 Jobs Supported



We fund coastal science
research.

**14 Major Competitive
Projects Funded**



We bring coastal science
research to the public.

33k Residents Reached



\$9 Million
in Economic Benefits
to the State



We bring marine science to
South Carolina's teachers.

**946 Educators
Supported**

Over the past 10 years, the Consortium has **leveraged \$8.4 million** in state funding to **secure an additional \$30.6 million** in non-state support —a **364% return on investment.**



Sea Grant

S.C. SEA GRANT CONSORTIUM

Agency Priority - 1 Recurring Request

Agency Operations Package – Inflation Costs (\$85,508)

- The Consortium requests \$85,508 in state recurring funds to ensure operational capacity in FY2026-27 and out-years.
- These funds will be used to cover an increase in facility lease costs and inflation of day-to-day operational costs.
- The inflation request is calculated based on a cumulative inflation rate of 6.3% (since last inflation request in 2023 utilizing <https://www.usinflationcalculator.com/>) of the \$1,357,262 base State funding level.
- Supports a new five-year lease agreement with a 3% annual increase.

Agency Priority - 2 Recurring Request

Long-Term Establishment of a Commercial Seafood Apprenticeship Program (\$90,000)

- The Consortium requests \$90,000 in recurring state funds to sustain the South Carolina Commercial Seafood Apprenticeship Program.
- This one-month, paid training program, based in McClellanville, South Carolina, provides apprentices from across the state with both classroom instruction and on-the-job experience to prepare them for careers in commercial fishing and mariculture, such as oyster and clam farming.
- Supports South Carolina resident apprentices, local businesses (McClellanville, Charleston, Georgetown, Beaufort), and provision of safety/training services to build seafood workforce skills.
- Upon completion, graduates receive assistance in securing full-time, entry-level employment with local seafood businesses.

Agency Priority - 3 Non-Recurring Request

General Funding for Sea Grant (\$1,649,692)

- Requests \$1,649,692 in non-recurring state funds to maintain continuity in core operations, programming, research, and fiscal obligations.
- Sustains the full scope of the Consortium's mission to advance South Carolina's coastal heritage and blue economy through science-based solutions and strong partnerships among universities, agencies, and communities.
- Supports competitively selected research projects addressing flooding, water quality, fisheries sustainability, habitat restoration, and coastal resilience across South Carolina's coastal communities.
- Retains Extension staff who translate science into action through community partnerships, strengthening local decision-making, public health, resource management, and economic vitality in the state's eight coastal counties.
- Retains education and communications staff who advance education and workforce development through teacher training, student fellowships, internships, and public engagement programs that prepare the next generation of coastal professionals.
- This request can be reduced or withdrawn pending the FY26 appropriation process.

Priviso Request

None.



FTE Breakdown by Funding Source

Fiscal Year 2025-26					
Funding Sources	State	Earmarked	Other	Federal	Total
Authorized FTE Levels	12.75	0.00	0.00	11.25	24.00
Utilized FTE Levels as of 12.31.2025	11.00	0.00	0.00	9.00	20.00

Previous vs. Current Fiscal Year Budget Overview

Funding Sources	Fiscal Year 2024-25		Fiscal Year 2025-26	
	Budget	Expenditures (end of year)	Budget	Expenditures (thru 12.31.25)
General Fund Appropriations, Recurring (as ratified)	\$ 1,280,953	\$ 1,225,814	\$ 1,387,262	\$ 750,763
General Fund Appropriations, Carry-forward	\$ 112,679	\$ -	\$ 130,344	\$ -
Other (Earmarked) Funds Authorization	\$ 450,000	\$ 97,500	\$ 253,800	\$ 36,978
Other (Restricted) Funds Authorization	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Federal Funds Authorization	\$ 4,550,000	\$ 4,499,395	\$ 4,365,900	\$ 2,429,034
TOTALS	\$ 6,393,632	\$ 5,822,709	\$ 6,137,306	\$ 3,216,775



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