



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

Submitted: January 7, 2026



# 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 Chair  
Dean and Traubert Chair, Professor  
of Physics  
The Citadel*

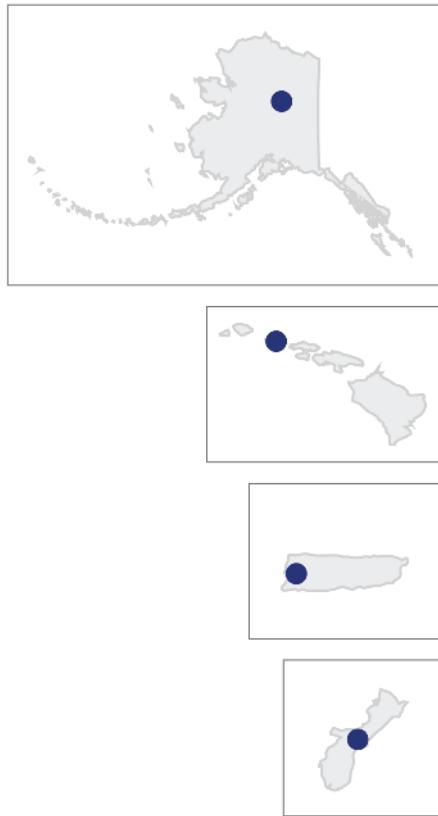


# OUR MISSION

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



 **Sea Grant**  
S.C. SEA GRANT CONSORTIUM

# 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



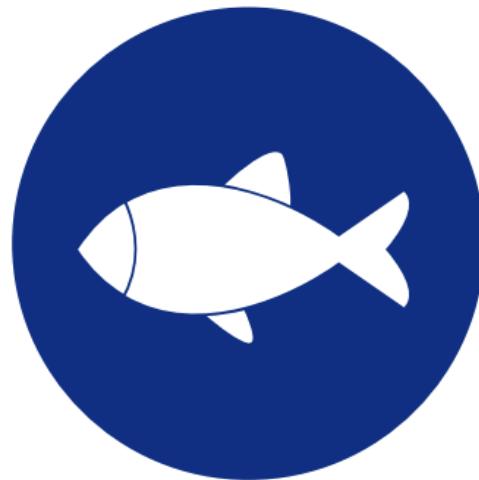
# PROGRAM FOCAL AREAS



**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*



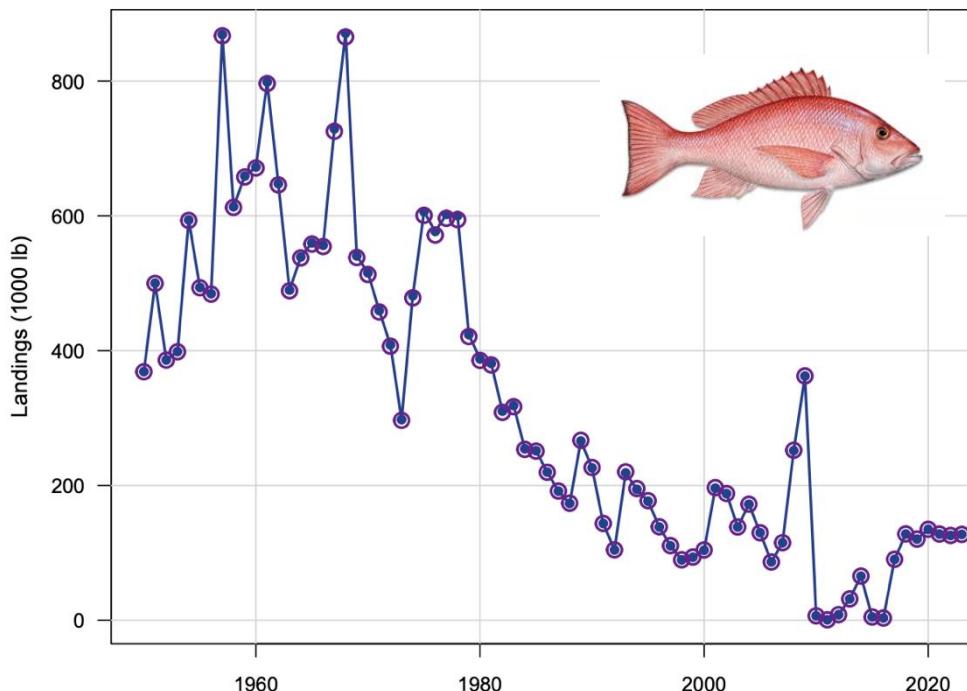
Article: National Fisherman  
**Sea Grant strengthens America's working waterfronts**



**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*



**1,559**

*Attendees to date*



HILTON HEAD AREA  
ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®



Coastal Carolinas  
Association of REALTORS

**1300**  
Unique  
Participants

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

**59**  
Courses Offered  
Since 2020



# 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 bring coastal science research to the public.

**33k Residents Reached**



We fund coastal science research.

**14 Major Competitive Projects Funded**



We bring marine science to South Carolina's teachers.

**946 Educators Supported**



A high-angle aerial photograph of the ocean, showing several large, white-capped waves crashing towards the shore. The water is a deep, dark blue-green, and the sunlight reflects off the white foam of the breaking waves.

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.



# 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.



# Prviso 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
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 6,393,632</b>	<b>\$ 5,822,709</b>	<b>\$ 6,137,306</b>	<b>\$ 3,216,775</b>



[www.scseagrant.org](http://www.scseagrant.org)



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