

SOUTH CAROLINA SEA GRANT CONSORTIUM



MISSION

Generate and apply science-based information on issues and opportunities to enhance the practical use and conservation of coastal and marine resources to foster a sustainable economy and environment.

BRIEFING MATERIALS

For the
FY20-21 Budget Hearing
Economic Development and Natural Resources Subcommittee
House Ways and Means Committee

KEY OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE

Mr. James E. Clark
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January 15, 2020



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FACT SHEET

Authority

The South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium (www.scseagrant.org), created as an independent state agency in 1978 through Act No. 643, Code of Laws of South Carolina, is charged with managing and administering the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program and similar programs for the State of South Carolina and regionally.

Mission

“Generate and apply science-based information on issues and opportunities to enhance the practical use and conservation of coastal and marine resources to foster a sustainable economy and environment.”

Approach

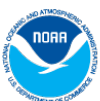
The Consortium develops and supports balanced and integrated research, education, and extension programs for the state that provide for future economic opportunities, improve the social well-being of its citizens, and ensure wise use and development of its marine and coastal natural resources.

Organization

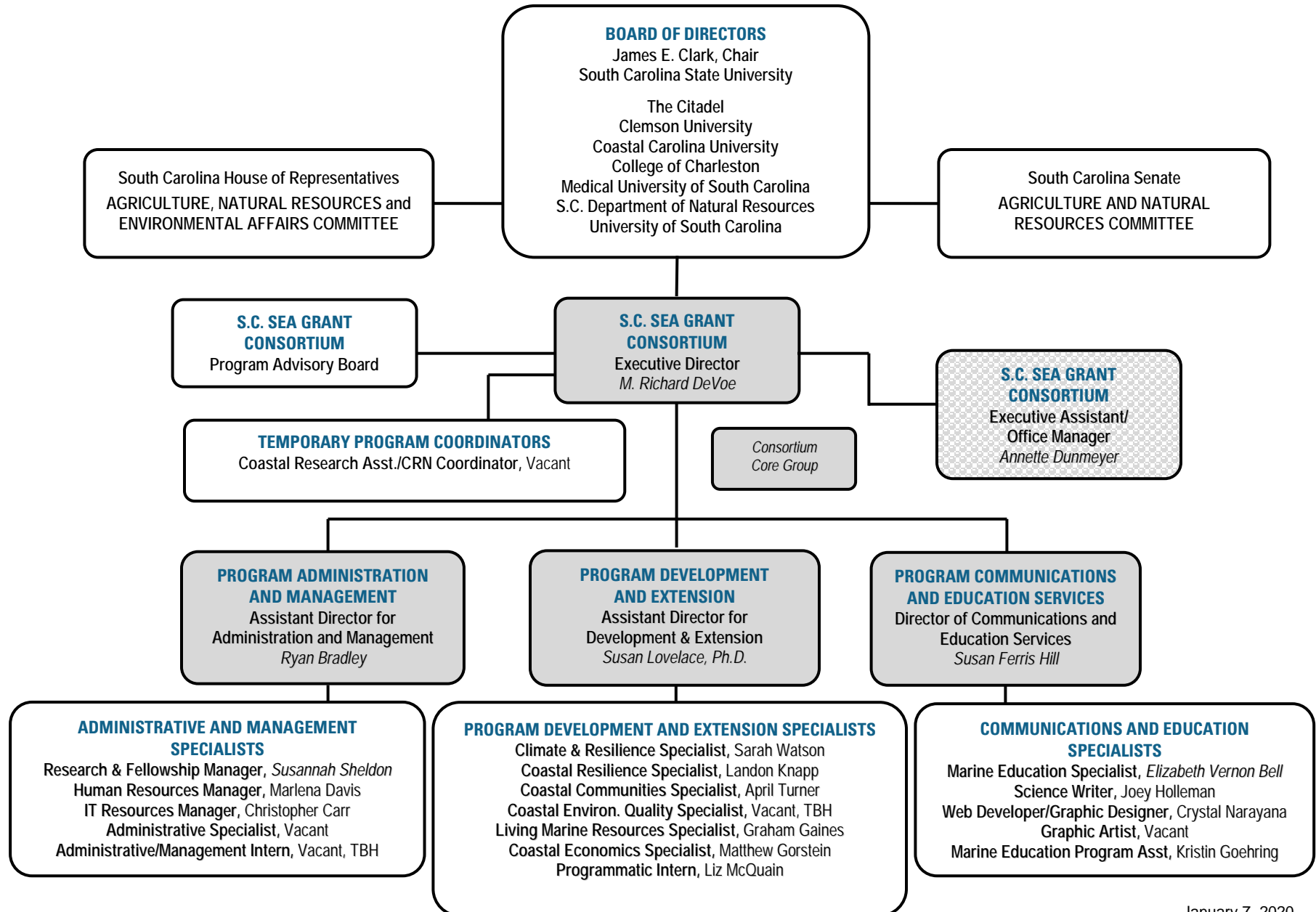
- The Consortium is a **nationally certified** Sea Grant College Program under the auspices of the National Sea Grant College Program, NOAA, U.S. Department of Commerce.
- Consortium member institutions are Clemson University, Coastal Carolina University, College of Charleston, Medical University of South Carolina, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, South Carolina State University, The Citadel, and University of South Carolina.
- The Consortium Board of Directors consists of the CEOs of the Consortium’s member institutions:
 - James E. Clark, President, South Carolina State University – *Chair*
 - Dr. James P. Clements, President, Clemson University
 - Dr. David DeCenzo, President, Coastal Carolina University
 - Dr. Andrew T. Hsu, President, College of Charleston
 - Dr. David J. Cole, President, Medical University of South Carolina
 - Robert H. Boyles, Jr., Interim Director, S.C. Department of Natural Resources
 - General Glenn M. Walters, President, The Citadel
 - Dr. Harris Pastides, President Emeritus, University of South Carolina

Program Priorities and Impacts

- The Consortium’s most recent listing of 50+ programmatic **impacts and accomplishments** located at <https://www.scseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/FY18-19-Impacts-and-Accomplishments.pdf> span five themes:
 - Healthy coastal ecosystems
 - Sustainable coastal development and economy
 - Weather and climate resilience
 - Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture
 - Scientific literacy and workforce development
- The Consortium focuses its programmatic efforts on addressing critical issues and opportunities. The Consortium’s 2018-21 **strategic plan**, titled *The Changing Face of Coastal South Carolina: Building A Resilient Future*, can be found at www.scseagrant.org/strategic-plan.
- The Consortium employs a number of **stakeholder mechanisms** to ensure that program efforts are relevant and timely, including a 30-member Program Advisory Board and five program-specific advisory committees.



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SOUTH CAROLINA SEA GRANT CONSORTIUM
~ FTE BREAKDOWN BY FUNDING SOURCE ~

Fiscal Year 2019-20					
Funding Sources	State	Earmarked	Other	Federal	Total
Authorized FTE Levels	7.26	0.00	0.00	6.74	14.00
Utilized FTE Levels (as of 12.31.19)	5.35	0.00	0.00	4.65	10.00

SOUTH CAROLINA SEA GRANT CONSORTIUM
~ PREVIOUS VS. CURRENT FISCAL YEAR BUDGET OVERVIEW ~

Fiscal Year 2018-19		
Funding Sources	Budget	Expenditures (end of year)
General Fund Appropriations, Recurring (as ratified)	\$ 727,461	\$ 696,251
General Fund Appropriations, Non-recurring**	\$ 12,131	\$ 5,557
General Fund Appropriations, Carry-forward	\$ 67,746	\$ -
Earmarked Funds Authorization	\$ 450,000	\$ 71,696
Other (Restricted) Funds Authorization	\$ -	\$ -
Federal Funds Authorization	\$ 4,550,000	\$ 1,722,837
TOTALS	\$ 5,807,338	\$ 2,496,341

*** FY2014-15 Special Projects Proviso 118.16 carry-forward balance from Stormwater Pond Research Initiative*

Fiscal Year 2019-20		
Funding Sources	Budget	Expenditures (as of 12.31.19)
General Fund Appropriations, Recurring (as ratified)	\$ 736,496	\$ 355,642
General Fund Appropriations, Non-recurring**	\$ 6,574	\$ -
General Fund Appropriations, Carry-forward	\$ 73,650	\$ -
Earmarked Funds Authorization	\$ 450,000	\$ 17,523
Other (Restricted) Funds Authorization	\$ -	\$ -
Federal Funds Authorization	\$ 4,550,000	\$ 1,103,255
TOTALS	\$ 5,816,720	\$ 1,476,420

*** FY2014-15 Special Projects Proviso 118.16 carry-forward balance from Stormwater Pond Research Initiative*

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PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium is committed to optimizing the balance among economic, social, and environmental potential of the state's coastal and marine resources through the support of integrated research, education, and extension programs. The Consortium is also interested in addressing the uncertainty that change brings with it to the coastal region, and how we as a state and as a society can adapt and prosper. It does so by engaging the talents and expertise found at South Carolina's leading academic and research institutions to increase our knowledge about the natural, cultural, and social environments of South Carolina and the region, and to use it to inform the decision-making process.

Strategic and Implementation Planning

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium is currently operating under its FY2018-21 Strategic Plan titled "The Changing Face of South Carolina: Building a Resilient Future" (<https://www.scseagrant.org/Strategic-Plan>). The agency's strategic plan has specific performance measures and target metrics for its three administrative and management areas, which include (1) Planning, Program Management, and Overall Performance, (2) Connecting with Users, and (3) Human Resources. In addition, the Consortium has outlined specific vision statements, goals, objectives, strategies, performance measures, and metrics for each of the agency's five programmatic focus areas: (1) Healthy Coastal Ecosystems, (2) Sustainable Coastal Development and Economy, (3) Weather and Climate Resilience, (4) Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture, and (5) Scientific Literacy and Workforce Development.

The Consortium's 2018-21 Strategic Plan was vetted through the agency's Program Advisory Board and formally approved by the Consortium Board of Directors on January 30, 2017. The Consortium's plan was then submitted to the NOAA National Sea Grant Program Office (NSGO) on February 8, 2017 for review, and approval was received from the NSGO on April 7, 2017. Programming related to the agency's updated plan was initiated February 1, 2018 with the receipt of our quadrennial Sea Grant omnibus program award from NSGO. This four-year plan includes a number of changes to the agency's goals, objectives, and metrics, which are reflected in our FY18-19 State Accountability report.

Performance Measures and Metrics

The Consortium's current Strategic Plan includes several dozen performance measures and metrics which are tracked on an annual basis. The Consortium's FY18-19 State Accountability Report is focused on the goals and objectives, and the resultant outputs and outcomes, which make up its three strategic administrative and management areas. Updates on these metrics are presented to the Consortium Board of Directors (at its Board meeting), the State of South Carolina (through the agency's State Accountability Report), and the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program (through formal reporting) on an annual basis.

Impacts and Accomplishments

Consortium research, extension, education, and communications activities conducted through its five strategic program focus areas have resulted in more than 50 economic, natural resource, policy and management, and social impacts and accomplishments in the state and region during FY18-19, but are too numerous to include in this report. However, they can be viewed at <https://www.scseagrant.org/wp-content/uploads/FY18-19-Impacts-and-Accomplishments.pdf>.

Information Delivery

The Consortium has become a primary source of information for coastal and marine information and assistance. As an example, the Consortium's website (<http://www.scseagrant.org/>) statistics continue to significantly increase. During FY18-19, the Consortium website received 2,642,331 hits (a 33.3%

increase from FY17-18), 502,432 unique visits (a 27.4% increase from FY17-18), and 347,434 downloads (a significant decrease from FY17-18 due to a change in the methods of calculation). The Consortium's communications and education specialists produce award-winning and relevant products and services (e.g., *Coastal Heritage* magazine, the Consortium's website, etc.). And the Consortium continued its successful e-news brief called *CoastalScience@Work* to keep key state leaders and decision-makers aware of Consortium programs, activities, and impacts.

Agency Staffing

The Consortium holds 14 state FTE positions, two of which were vacant as of June 30, 2019. In addition, the Consortium currently possesses five temporary grant positions.

Two recent staffing developments related to our efforts to build the capacity of the Consortium staff and the faculty and students of our member institutions to meet the ever-increasing demands by our constituents for our products and services are of note:

1. The agency recently hired Landon Knapp in a newly created position of Coastal Resilience Program Specialist. This was made possible through a modest increase in core Sea Grant funding provided by the National Sea Grant Office, which we leveraged into a joint position with the College of Charleston's School of Sciences and Mathematics.
2. The agency also recently hired Matthew Gorstein as our Coastal Economics Program Specialist, which is supported with recurring state funding in its FY18-19 budget to support a position, which is matched with core Sea Grant funding.

The Consortium's current agency organization chart is included at the end of this Report Submission Form.

Budget Situation and Future

The Consortium continues to foster efficiencies in its staffing. The agency has brought in young talent and fresh thinking (to fill key staff vacancies created due to retirements), who have complemented the remaining veteran staff, and the Consortium is providing more formal graduate student internship experiences to assist its administrative and professional staff with programming and projects. The Consortium has recently been able to secure budget increases in state recurring funds to leverage federal Sea Grant funding to enhance its capabilities and expertise in coastal resilience and resource economics. The Consortium's state appropriation (recurring funds) increased from \$671,118 in FY17-18 to \$727,461 in FY18-19 (reflecting a budget increase to support the coastal economist position and employee pay plan and insurance adjustments).

Agency leadership recognizes that the state budget situation for future years will be limited by resource availability, and thus discussions about means by which Consortium support can be sustained, increased, and diversified will continue with the Consortium's Board of Directors, Program Advisory Board, and the S.C. General Assembly.

Extramural Funding and the State Budget

The Consortium continues to demonstrate its ability to secure competitive extramural funding for its programs, which tempers its need to approach the S.C. General Assembly for state funding. At the federal level, the NOAA National Sea Grant College program received a FY19 appropriation of \$80 million, \$3.5 million more than its FY18 appropriation. Of that amount, Congress directed Sea Grant to allocate \$12 million to aquaculture research and outreach.

Total extramural support secured by the Consortium during FY16-17 was \$2.27 million. The Consortium's modest but significant increases in its extramural support and growth is expected to continue.

Return-on-Investment

The Consortium continues to be successful in securing additional state recurring funds over the past five years which enables it to meet both the administrative and programmatic needs of the agency, and thus address the growing needs of its diverse constituencies. Over the last 10 years, the Consortium has secured ~\$27,183,000 in non-state competitive funding from a state investment of ~\$5,216,000, a 521% return to the state.

Over the last five years, the Consortium’s annual Return-on-Investment is as follows (*FY14-15 state recurring appropriation; does not include \$100,000 in non-recurring programmatic funds received that year):

<i>FISCAL YEAR</i>	<i>STATE</i>	<i>NON-STATE</i>	<i>TOTAL RETURN-ON-INVESTMENT</i>	
2014-15	\$ 559,288*	\$2,138,346	\$2,797,634	382%
2015-16	\$ 611,881	\$2,649,008	\$3,260,889	433%
2016-17	\$ 651,881	\$2,212,493	\$2,864,374	339%
2017-18	\$ 671,118	\$2,271,354	\$2,966,037	338%
2018-19	\$ 727,461	\$1,802,795	\$2,530,256	248%

External Evaluation of the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium was last evaluated by the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program, which consisted of a Site Visit by five external evaluators, September 1-2, 2015 in Charleston, SC. This was followed by a programmatic review of the Consortium (and the other 33 state Sea Grant College programs) by a set of five National Program Review Panels in the Spring of 2016. A summary of the outcomes of these reviews has been provided in previous accountability reports.

During this reporting period, the Consortium was preparing for its next National Sea Grant College Program quadrennial external evaluation, which was held on August 6-8, 2019. (See separate one-pager for further information.)

Risk Assessment and Mitigation Strategies

The Consortium is constantly engaged in short-term and long-term analyses of its programs and activities, in part as a result of its experience with gubernatorial vetoes earlier this decade and more recently with federal administration proposals to “zero-out” the NOAA National Sea Grant College Program. Through these experiences, the agency has been building awareness among state and national leaders to the Consortium’s numerous, extremely diverse, and supportive cast of stakeholders, constituents, and communities, including the state’s General Assembly and our U.S. Congressional delegation, with whom we partner, serve, and depend. It is this support that enables the National Sea Grant College Program and the Consortium to survive these recent challenges, and it has made the agency much stronger and certainly more accountable.

What the state would lose with the Consortium’s demise would be what the National Sea Grant Site Visit team stated is the Consortium’s (1) status as the “go-to” agency in the state for coastal and ocean information and assistance, (2) efforts in developing a huge reservoir of involved stakeholders, and (3) standing as a neutral party capable of brokering solutions to issues. The state and its citizens would also lose a significant return on its investment, both in financial and societal terms.

Restructuring Recommendations

We have no recommendations for restructuring at this time.



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FY 20-21 Prioritized Budget Request Summary												
Agency Name												
BUDGET REQUESTS			FUNDING						FTEs			
Priority	Request Title	Description	General - Recurring	General - NR	Capital	Other	Federal	Total	State	Other	Federal	Total
1	Establishment of an Undergraduate Resilience Research Scholars Program	The Undergraduate Resilience Research Scholars Program will support all five statewide enterprise strategic objectives as the issues of <u>undergraduate education and diversification</u> of the emerging workforce, <u>resilience</u> (including public health and safety, security, and critical infrastructure) to the threats of changing climate and weather, and the efficient delivery of sound scientific information to <u>support government decision-making and an informed citizenry</u> . More specifically, the Program will enhance agency performance efforts to meet the mission and programmatic goals of the Consortium, will address needs of the Consortium's diverse constituencies throughout the state, and will generate highly qualified and well-trained professions to enter the workforce in this emerging field. Measures of success will be generated in consultation with the undergraduate research offices of the Consortium's member institutions.	\$ 30,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 30,000	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2	Conversion of three (3) Temporary Grant Employee (TGE) positions to three (3) Full-time Employee (FTE) positions	This transition request will support the Consortium's overall mission and corresponding goals and objectives. These three TGE positions have been staffed for a number of years and their conversion to FTE positions will stabilize agency staff capabilities to support increasing demands for agency products and services. In addition, due to challenges in retaining professional staff due to relatively low compensation, transition of these TGEs into FTEs will increase the stability and marketability of these positions going forward. No funding is necessary to implement this conversion; staff in these positions will continue to be evaluated through the EPMS process as they have been evaluated in the past.	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	0.00	0.00	3.00	3.00
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**Economic Development and Natural Resources Subcommittee
Proviso Request Summary**

FY 19-20 Proviso #	Renumbered FY 20-21 Proviso #	Proviso Title	Short Summary	FY of Proviso Introduction/ # of years in budget	Recommended Action	Proviso Language
NA		Retention of accrued leave for personnel converted from Temporary Grant Employee (TGE) positions to Full-time Employee (FTE) positions	Consortium staff employed as Temporary Grant Employee (TGE) positions within our agency are hired as full-time employees, and all TGE incumbents are provided similar state benefits programs as our Full-time Employee (FTE) positions including the accrual of annual and sick leave time. Without this proviso, these TGE incumbents would forfeit all leave accrued from service at the Consortium and counteract our initial objective to provide more stability and comfort deserving of these current full-time employees.	NEW for FY20-21	ADD	<i>The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium is authorized to allow current personnel who are transitioning in FY2020-21 from Temporary Grant Employee (TGE) to Full-time Employee (FTE) status to transfer all accrued annual and sick Leave from their TGE positions to their FTE positions.</i>

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2019 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND REVIEW

Background

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium is a **nationally certified** Sea Grant College Program under the auspices of the National Sea Grant College Program, NOAA, U.S. Department of Commerce. Every 4-5 years, Sea Grant College Programs around the country are evaluated by the National Sea Grant Office, through a Site Review Team (SRT) process, to assess their (1) organization and management, (2) stakeholder engagement, (3) collaborations and partnerships, and (4) program performance. The SRT also assesses whether the state Sea Grant program meets the high standards expected of all Sea Grant College Programs. Results of the performance evaluation and review will affect the amount of base funding the Consortium will receive over a four-year period beginning in FY2021. On August 6-8, 2019, the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium was evaluated by a six-member National Sea Grant SRT which came to Charleston to evaluate the agency and its programs spanning the years 2014 through 2017.

Initial Findings

The SRT found that the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium:

1. Meets the “Standards of Excellence” expected of all Sea Grant programs, and recommends that the Consortium remain certified as a Sea Grant College Program.
2. Scored extremely well in the four national performance categories, which include Healthy Coastal Ecosystems, Sustainable Fisheries and Aquaculture, Resilient Communities and Economies, and Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development.
3. Warranted no recommendations which would have required remedial action.

In its final draft report, the SRT noted that:

- “...SCSGC is recognized as an intellectual leader within the State.”
- “SCSGC is nimble, flexible, adaptable, and relevant.”
- “The Program works seamlessly across jurisdictional boundaries to address issues of regional importance.”
- “SCSGC is recognized as an honest broker of information and assistance for coastal and ocean issues, and recognized for its non-advocacy.”
- “SCSGC is effectively partnering with its Consortium institutions to utilize joint appointments to leverage SG funding.”
- “SCSGC’s stakeholder engagement activities are robust and effective, connecting with a large variety of entities in the state and region.”
- “Early investments by the Consortium in students interested in coastal and ocean management issues has generated an impressive network of talented and committed individuals invested in the future of South Carolina’s coast.”

The SRT offered a few suggestions which they felt would enhance the effectiveness and success of the Consortium as it seeks to build diversity, work with underserved communities, expand institutional and partner engagement, employ metrics and share lessons learned regarding resilience, and establish fellowship and traineeship programs to enhance workforce and capacity building.

Next Steps

The final draft report will be reviewed by a National Sea Grant Evaluation Committee, which will be convened in Spring 2020. The National Sea Grant Advisory Board and the National Sea Grant Director must then sign off on the final Performance Report, which will also include the amount of additional funding the Consortium will receive beginning in FY21. The Consortium will receive the report in Summer 2020.



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