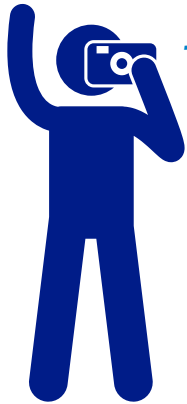


# GEORGIA RELIES ON THE DIGITAL COAST



That's because the **Digital Coast** has a lot to offer **Georgia**.

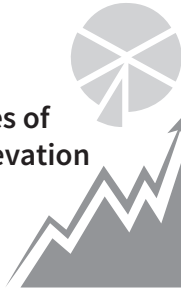
## 28,126

Georgia visitors to the Digital Coast. (763,454 nationwide)



### DATA

**4,725** gigabytes of high-resolution elevation data available for Georgia.



### TOOLS

**50+** decision-support tools applicable for Georgia challenges.



### TRAINING

**65** leaders in the state used a Digital Coast training program.



### GEOSPATIAL SERVICES

Over **\$430,000** in private-sector geospatial services awarded for the Southeast and Caribbean region.



### INFORMATION

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- Thirty-eight percent of the population in Chatham County lives in a floodplain.
- Nearly 18 percent of the state changed between 1996 and 2010, more than two times the national average.
- Tourism and recreation is the largest employer among the state's ocean-dependent economic sectors.

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**SAVING TIME AND MONEY**

**411%** was the return on investment calculated for the Digital Coast.

### IT'S A WEBSITE.

NOAA owns the Digital Coast, but the resources inside, while vetted by NOAA for applicability and quality, come from various organizations with one common but important thread: content is solely focused on coastal community needs. The site contains not only data, but also the tools, training, and information communities need to make data truly useful. Three out of four Digital Coast users surveyed say they couldn't do their jobs without this important resource!

The short report that follows highlights Digital Coast interactions with the State of Georgia.

**Digital Coast**  
[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast](http://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast)



# Georgia Recap

*NOAA and the Digital Coast are devoted to supplying Georgia with the data, tools, and information most needed by coastal communities. This report highlights the resources frequently used during this reporting period. Please visit the website ([coast.noaa.gov](http://coast.noaa.gov)) to learn more or contact NOAA ([coastal.info@noaa.gov](mailto:coastal.info@noaa.gov)) with your questions or suggestions.*

## DATA

Data represent the core component of the Digital Coast. For Georgia, data holdings include elevation, land cover, aerial imagery, and county-level socioeconomic data. Examples are highlighted below.

### Coastal Lidar

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/coastallidar](http://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/coastallidar)

Over 4,725 gigabytes of high-resolution elevation data covering Georgia's entire coastal zone are available. These types of data are critical for all types of modeling, including those that predict flooding potential.

### Land Cover

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/ccapregional](http://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/ccapregional)

This satellite imagery is used to inventory and categorize the landscape—wetlands, development, forests, agriculture use, etc. Nothing provides a big picture view of a region like land cover data. These data are used to identify high-priority landscapes for Georgia's coastal protection and restoration efforts. Comparing one year to another is also a good way to spot and document trends.

### Economics

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/enow](http://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/data/enow)

Information about the ocean-dependent economy in Georgia helps people understand how the decisions that impact the coast can also impact the bottom line.

## TOOLS

"Data alone is not enough" is a frequent Digital Coast refrain. Going the extra step and including the tools and training needed to make data truly useful is a hallmark of the Digital Coast website. Users have access to over 50 data analysis, visualization, and other decision-support tools. Examples are highlighted below.

### Coastal County Snapshots

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/snapshots](http://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/snapshots)

Pick a county and hit a button to generate easy-to-understand handouts. Behind the simple charts and graphs are complex county-level data about flooding, wetlands, and economics. Local officials use the snapshots as a planning and communication tool.

## Land Cover Atlas

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/lca](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/lca)

This tool makes land cover data easier to access and understand by eliminating the need for desktop GIS software. General trends in land cover change (such as forest losses or new development) are summarized, and specific changes (salt marsh losses to open water, for instance) can be documented. This type of information is useful for planning purposes.

Georgia's officials can use this tool to analyze marsh migration.

## Economics: National Ocean Watch Explorer

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/enow](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/enow)

Making Georgia's economic data easier to use is the goal of this tool. The economic data provided by the Digital Coast focus on six sectors that depend on the oceans and Great Lakes: living resources, marine construction, marine transportation, offshore mineral resources, ship and boat building, and tourism and recreation. This tool helps users discover which sectors are the largest contributors to Georgia's coastal economy in various parts of the state, which sectors are growing and declining, and which account for the most jobs, wages, and gross domestic product.

## OpenNSPECT

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/opennspect](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/tools/opennspect)

This tool is often used to investigate potential water quality and flooding impacts from climate change, development, and other land uses. Communities also use this information to reduce these impacts by identifying suitable areas for restoring wetlands and developing riparian buffers.

# TRAINING

Coastal officials have to stay on top of their game, which is why the Digital Coast's "training academy" provides over 125 learning resources, from online courses to training brought to your location. A few examples are provided below. To see the full suite, visit [coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/training/home](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/training/home).

## Coastal Inundation Mapping

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/training/inundationmap](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/training/inundationmap)

This classroom course provides baseline information about the various types of flooding and teaches methods for mapping current and potential flooding scenarios. The course offers 16 hours of continuing education credits for the GIS Professional (GISP) and American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), and Certified Floodplain Manager (CFM) professional certifications.

## Green Infrastructure Practices and Benefits Matrix

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/training/gi-practices-and-benefits](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/training/gi-practices-and-benefits)

Green infrastructure (also called natural infrastructure) is the way to go for communities looking to reduce flooding. This quick handout provides important information about some of the most common techniques in use.

## Seven Best Practices for Risk Communications

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/training/risk-communication](https://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/training/risk-communication)

The title alone speaks to most people—this is a skill everyone benefits from. The Digital Coast has many resources devoted to this topic, but this online training course is particularly popular.

## GEOSPATIAL CONTRACTING

Through the Digital Coast, coastal organizations in need of geospatial data or services benefit from the use of the Coastal Geospatial Services Contract ([coast.noaa.gov/idiq/geospatial.html](http://coast.noaa.gov/idiq/geospatial.html)). This contracting vehicle provides a way for local, state, and federal agencies to use a streamlined process to obtain services from the nation's top geospatial firms. In fiscal year 2017, over \$430,000 was awarded to private geospatial firms to conduct mapping projects in the Southeast and Caribbean region, including the acquisition and processing of imagery data.

## DIGITAL COAST IN ACTION

The following stories illustrate how Digital Coast users are applying geospatial information resources to address coastal issues in Georgia.

### Identifying Areas Vulnerable to Sea Level Rise in Georgia

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/stories/tybee](http://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/stories/tybee)

The City of Tybee has been experiencing the effects of sea level rise for decades. The city needed an adaptation plan and a way to visualize the effects of future sea level rise. Using the NOAA Office for Coastal Management Sea Level Rise Viewer, planners worked to identify the areas of the island most vulnerable to sea level rise. After identifying the areas, planners were able to develop a plan to deal with current problems of flooding and frequent high tides, as well as future sea level rise.

### Filling Data Gaps for Coastal Planning in Georgia

[coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/stories/georgia-tech](http://coast.noaa.gov/digitalcoast/stories/georgia-tech)

The Georgia Coastal Management Program recognized gaps in data needed for offshore energy and general planning purposes. To fulfill their “faster, friendlier, easier” motto, they sought to create a central location for all the required information. Program managers utilized data sets from *MarineCadastre.gov* as well as the cadastre's model to create a successful and efficient portal. What started as a resource for offshore energy planning has grown into a resource for multiple users and includes customized maps in addition to the data.

### Economic Scorecard Helps Coastal Communities Assess Best Places for Offshore Wind Facilities

[coast.noaa.gov/states/stories/economic-scorecard-helps-coastal-communities](http://coast.noaa.gov/states/stories/economic-scorecard-helps-coastal-communities)

Although other nations have used offshore wind facilities for decades, the technology is relatively new to the U.S. and the growth potential is large. Some communities, however, are concerned that wind facilities might have a negative impact on coastal tourism and recreation. For this reason a “scorecard” was developed that ranks potential impacts for 113 Atlantic coast geographies, primarily counties. Community profiles were also created for the 70 counties most vulnerable to negative impacts from wind energy facilities. This information is used by counties assessing the pros and cons of wind energy facilities. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management created these assessments using economic data provided through NOAA's Digital Coast and its Economics: National Ocean Watch initiative.

## The Digital Coast Partnership

One of the goals of the Digital Coast is to unify groups that might not otherwise work together. As a result, the Digital Coast Partnership is building not only a website, but also a strong collaboration of coastal professionals intent on addressing common needs. Currently, the eight members of the Digital Coast Partnership include the American Planning Association, Association of State Floodplain Managers, Coastal States Organization, National Association of Counties, National Estuarine Research Reserve Association, National States Geographic Information Council, Nature Conservancy, and Urban Land Institute. The responsiveness of these organizations and the direct lines of communication fostered by the effort have proven essential for ensuring the success and continuing relevance of the Digital Coast, and for allowing the platform to evolve and adapt to changing needs and priorities.