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HCD South Atlantic and Caribbean Branch

SAFMC Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel Meeting

July 16, 2025

Anne.Deaton@noaa.gov

HCD South Atlantic and Caribbean Branch

Fish Passage Restoration
Fritz Rohde (Beaufort)- retired
Kevin Mack (Charleston)*
Vacant (TBD)

Coral Conservation
Jocelyn Karazsia (West Palm Beach)
Xaymara Serrano (West Palm Beach)
Dinorah Chacin (St Croix)

EFH Conservation
Vacant (Charleston)
Kurtis Gregg (Jacksonville)**
Jose A. Rivera (Puerto Rico)
Anne Deaton (Beaufort)*
Lisa Wickliffe (Beaufort)*

Branch Chief
Pace Wilber (Charleston)

*Wind, BIL, and IRA projects
**FDOT liaison

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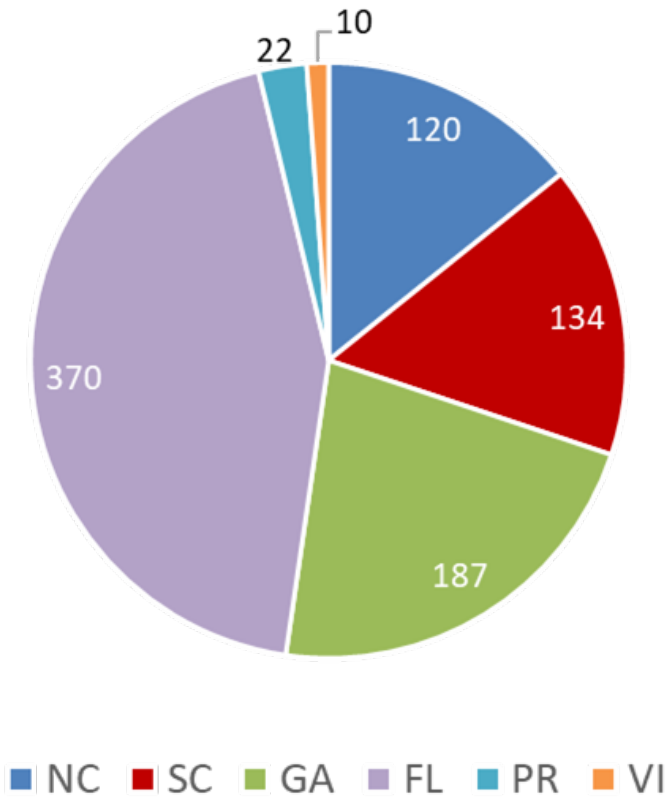
NMFS Consultations Received

By State, FY 2024



South Atlantic Region FY 2022- 2024

FY	Total
2022	832
2023	960
2024	849
2025	776

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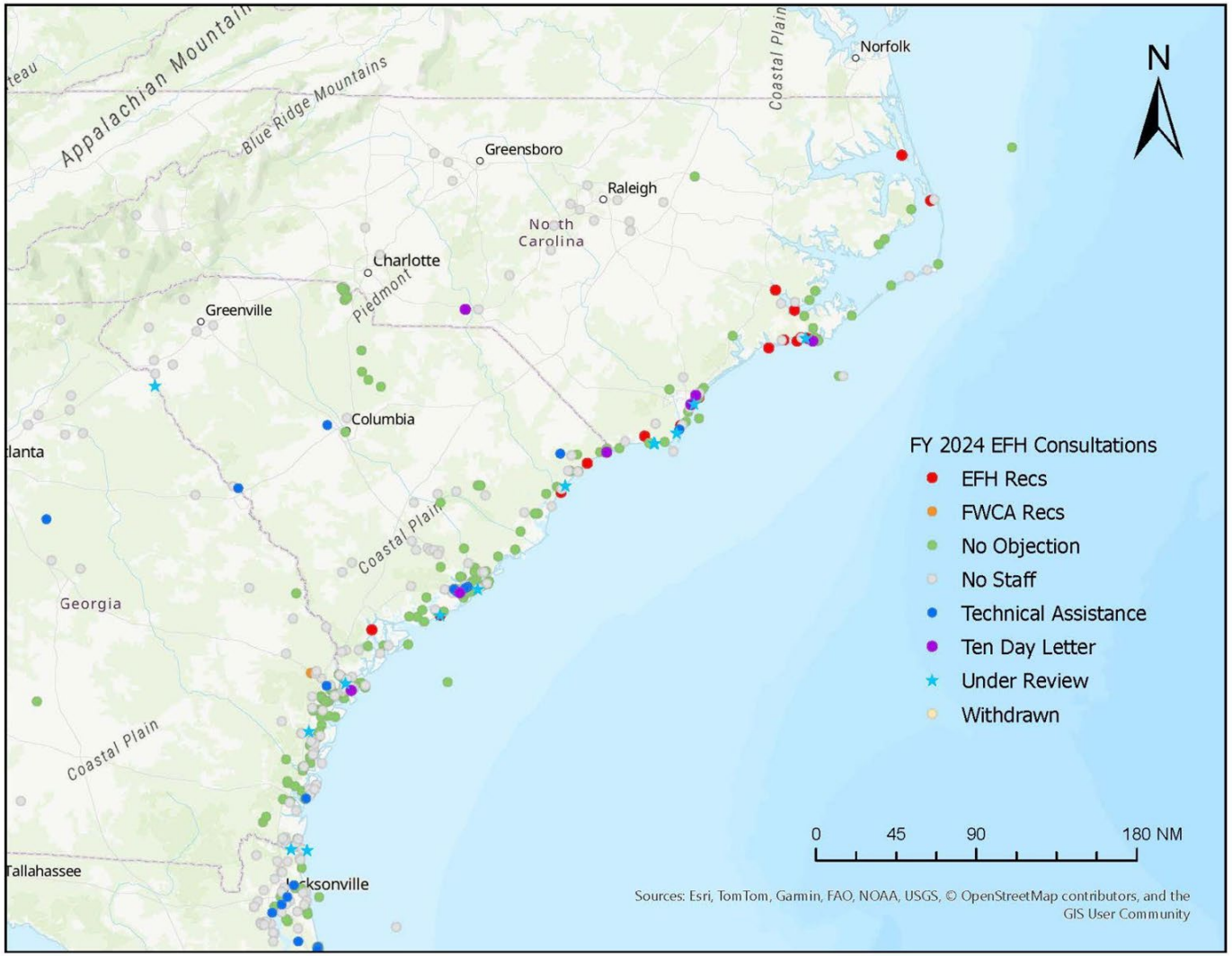
Location of projects, NC - GA, FY 2024



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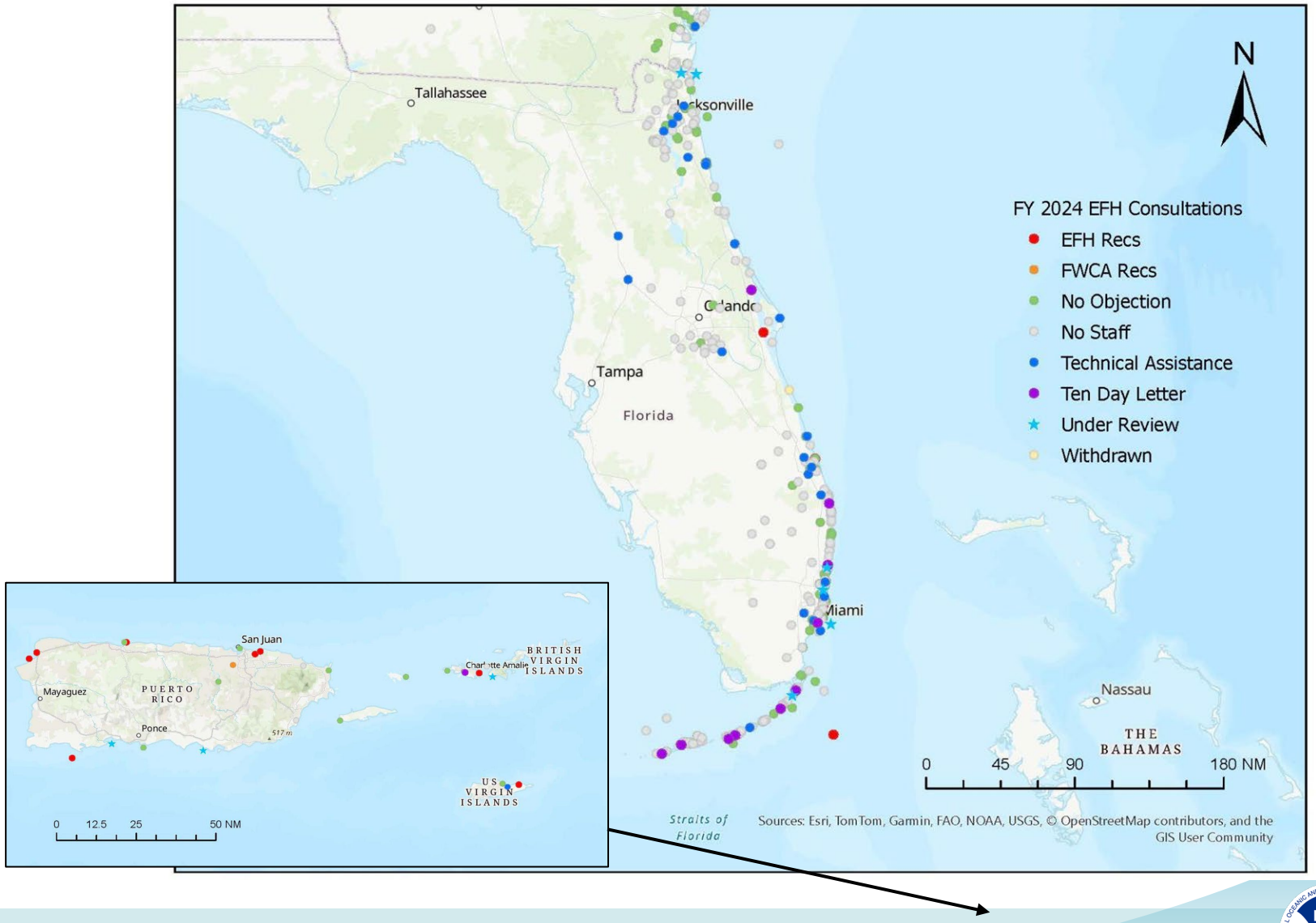
Location of projects, Fl and Caribbean, FY 2024



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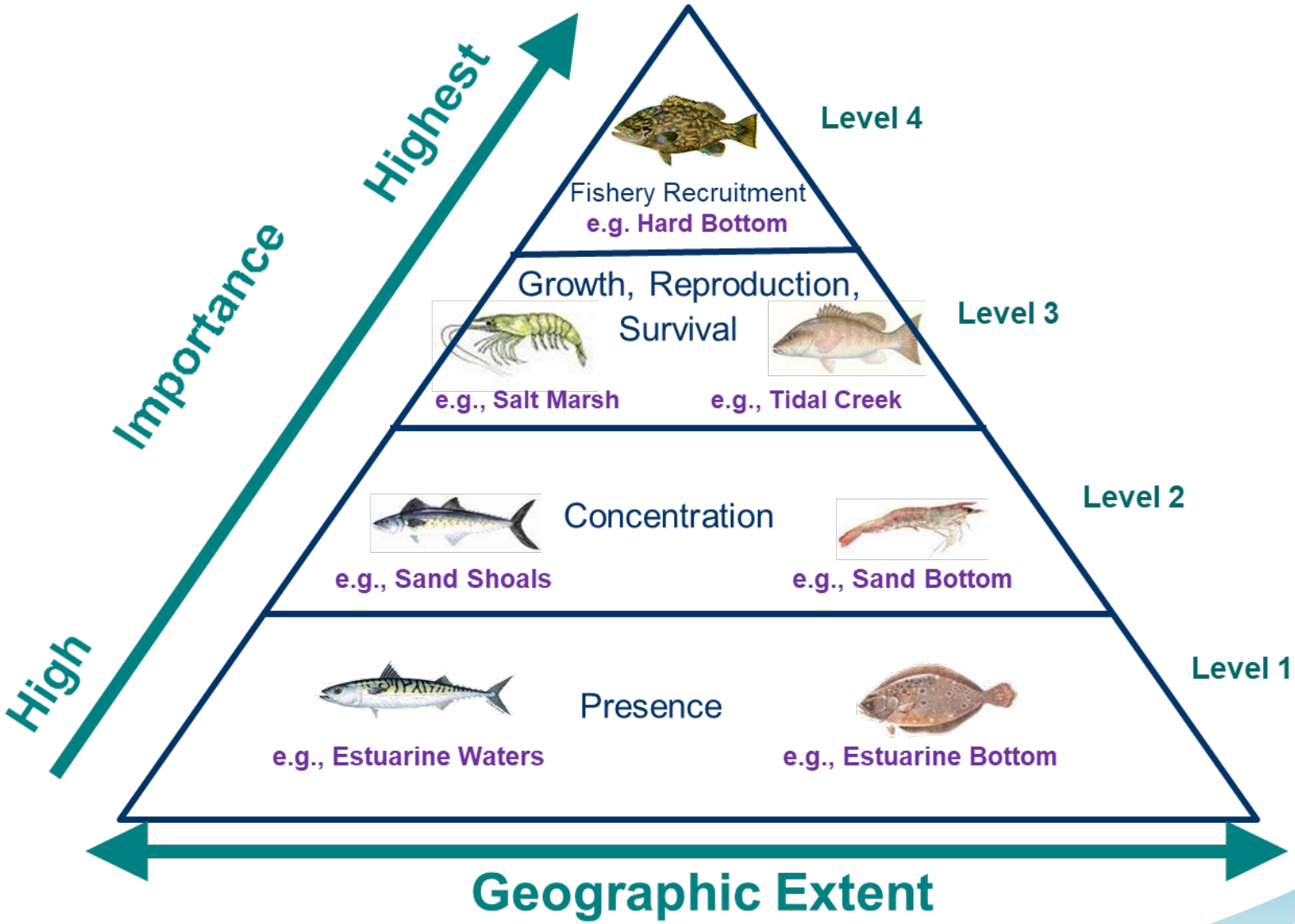
Prioritizing Essential Fish Habitat



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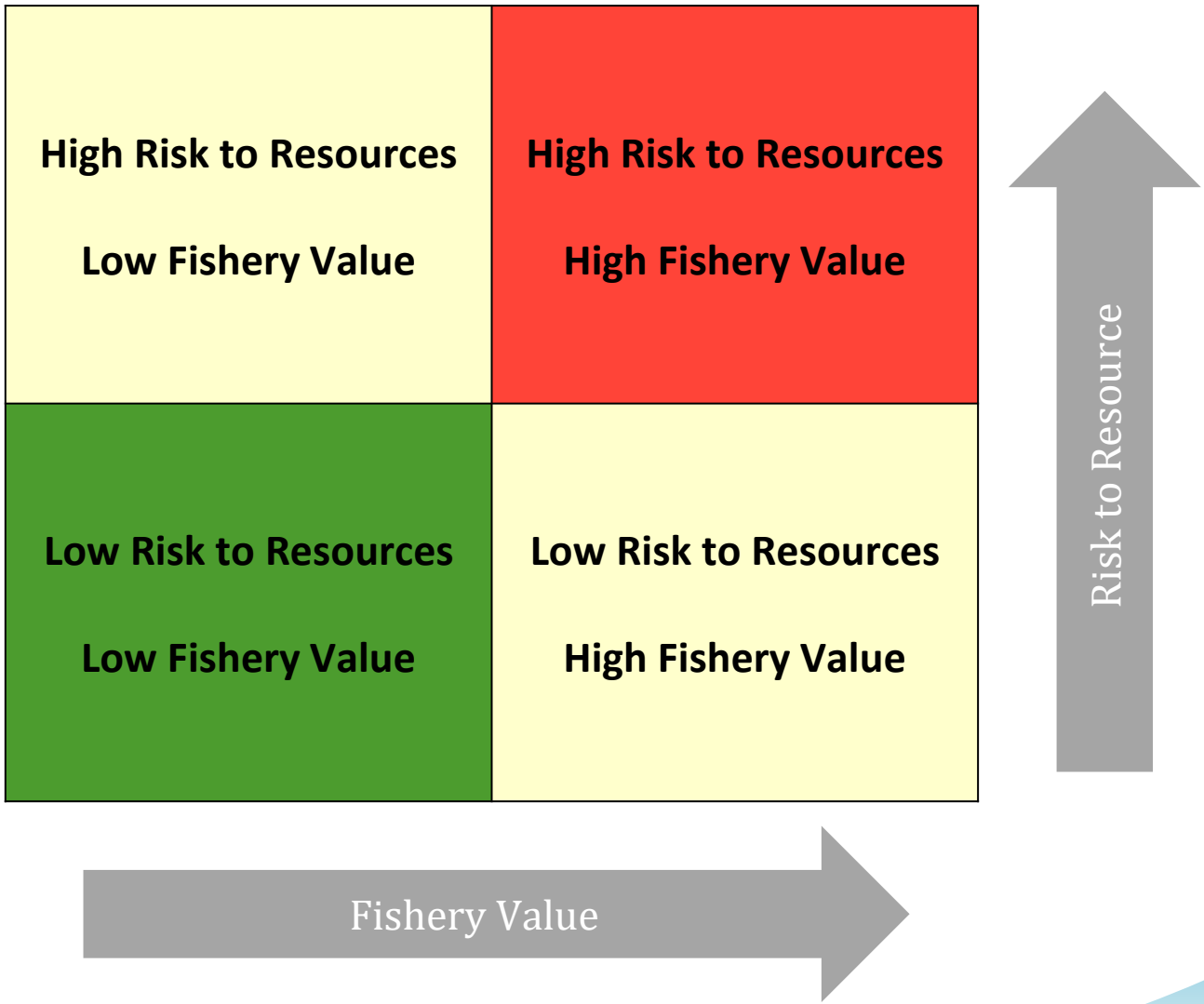
Prioritizing Project Reviews



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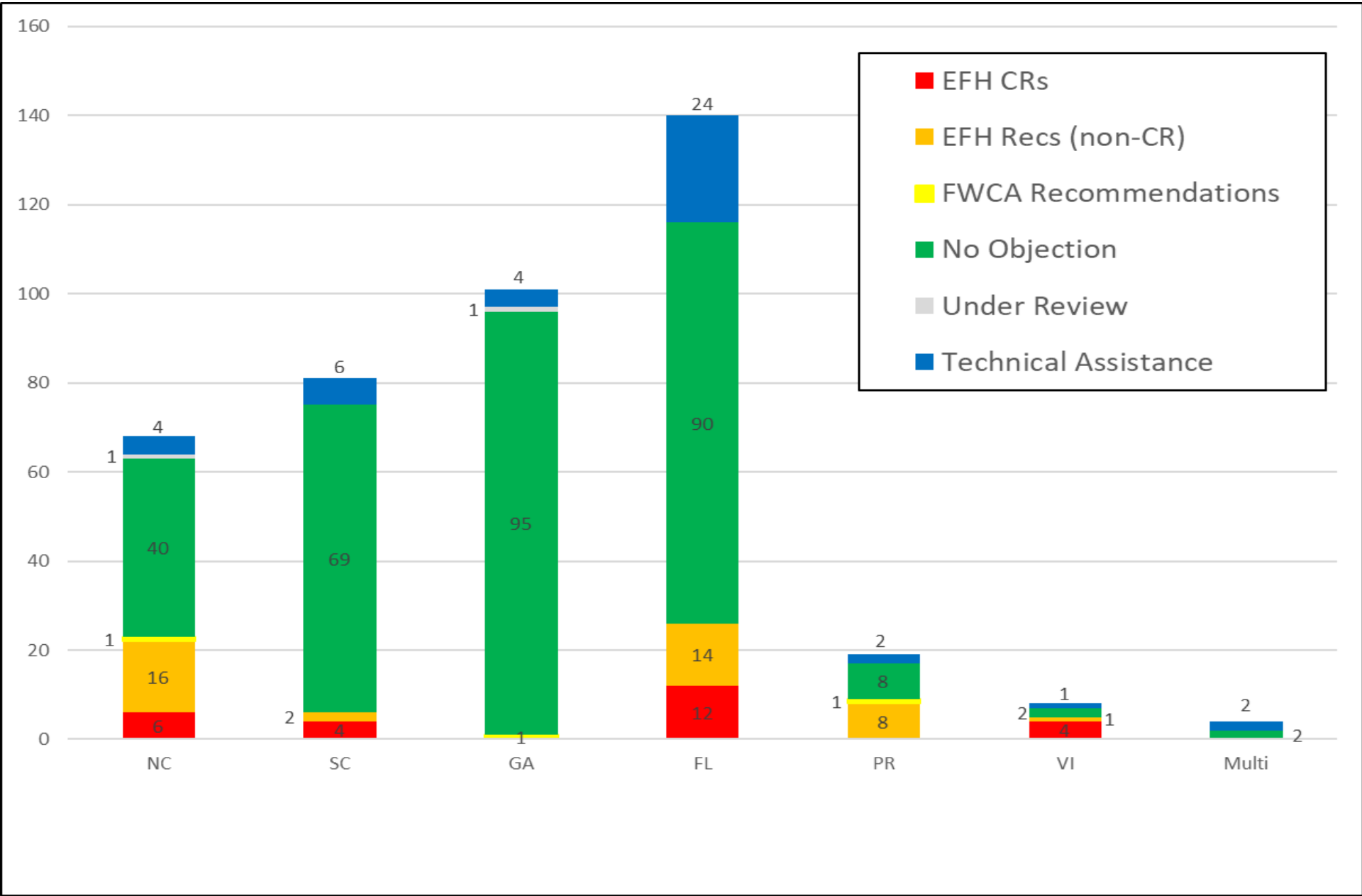
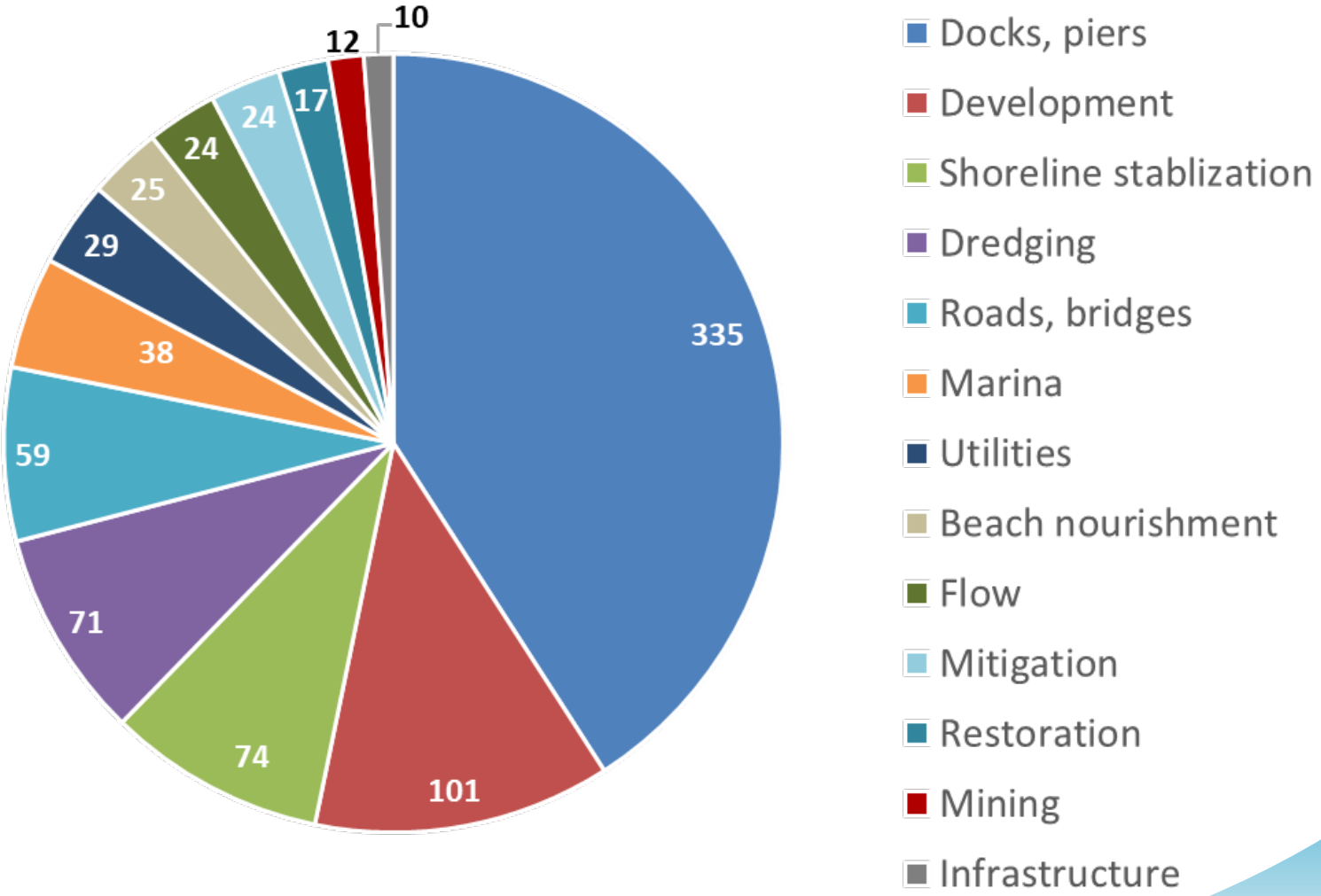
Consultation Response by State, FY 2024



Types of Projects Reviewed, FY 2024



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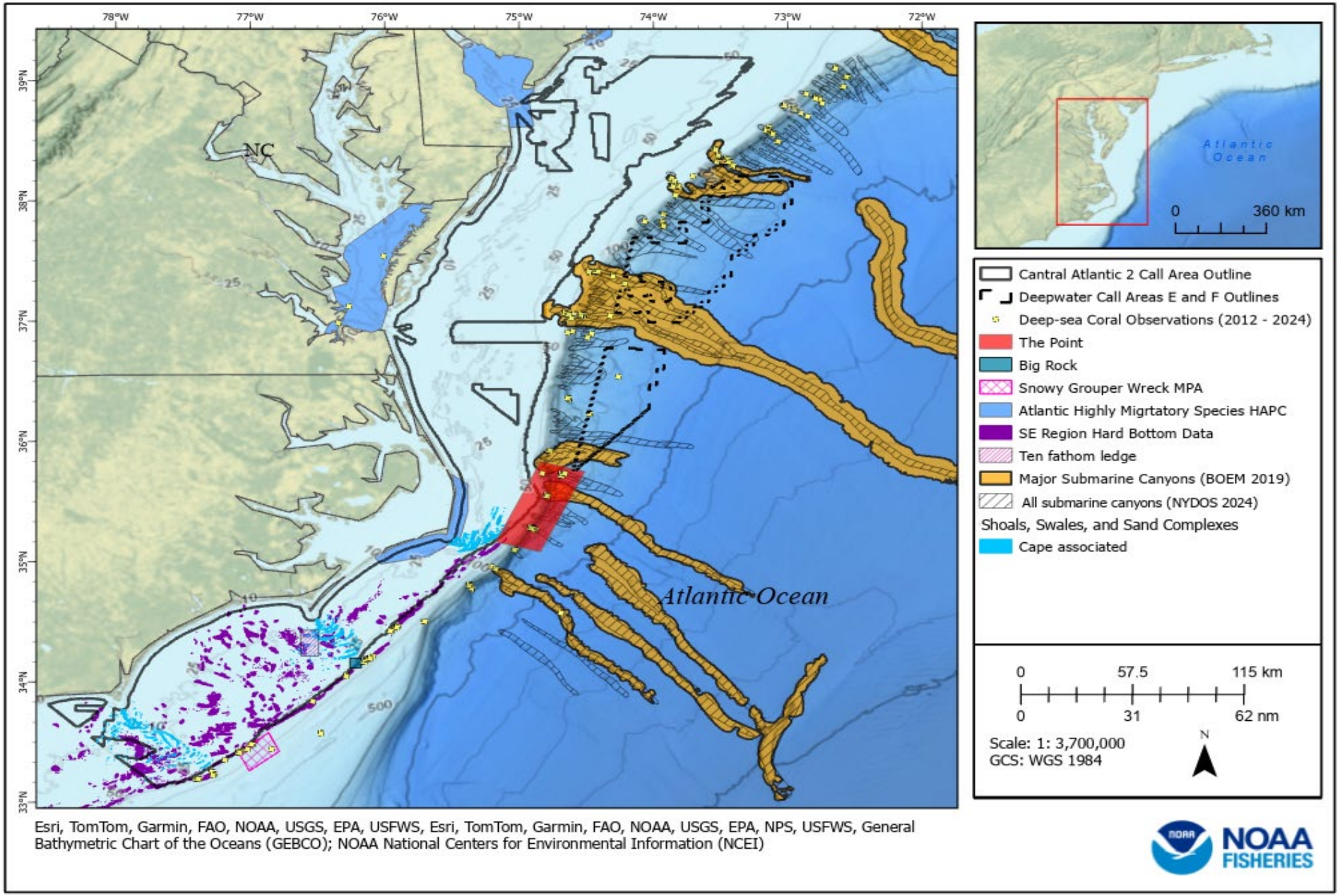
Offshore Energy



Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, USFWS, Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, NPS, USFWS, General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO); NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI)

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Time of Year Restrictions - Example

Species	Month											
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
White Shrimp	J	J	L, P	L,P	P	P, J	J	J	J	J	J	J
Brown Shrimp		L,P	L,P	P	P	J	J	J				
Gag Grouper			P	P	P, J	P, J	J	J	J	J		
Gray Snapper									L, P	P, J	P, J	P, J
Black Sea Bass			P	P	P	P, J	P, J	P, J	J	J		
Spanish Mackerel						L, P, A	P, J	P, J	P, J	J, A		
Summer Flounder	L	L, J	J,A	J,A	J, A	J,A	J,A	J,A	J,A	L,J, A	L, J	L, J
Bull shark	A	A	A	A	N,J,S, A	N,J,S, A	N, J, S, A	N, J,S, A	YOY, J,S, A	YOY, J, S	A	A
Sandbar Shark						N, J, A	N, J	N, J	N, J	J		
Scalloped Hammerhead					N, J, A	N, J, A	N, J, A	YOY, J	YOY, J	YOY, J	YO Y, J	
Lemon Shark					N, J, S, A	N, J, S, A	YOY, J, S, A	YOY, J, S, A	YOY, J, S, A	YOY, J, S, A		
Location												
Coastal Inlet - Hopper												
Inshore EFH - Hopper												

Life Stage
L- larval
P- post-larval
YOY- young of yr
N- neonate

Legend			
Species Occurrence		Time of Year Restrictions	
Ingress		In-Water Work Allowable	
Present		Avoid In-Water when practicable	
Egress		In-Water Work Restricted	

Life Stage
J- juvenile
S- subadult
A- adult

Port Everglades (PEV) Deepening Project

- Largest authorized impact to coral reefs in the US
- Will require the largest and most complex mitigation effort ever attempted
- Proposed project mitigation is larger in scale than **NOAA's Mission Iconic Reefs**

Source: portevergladesnet

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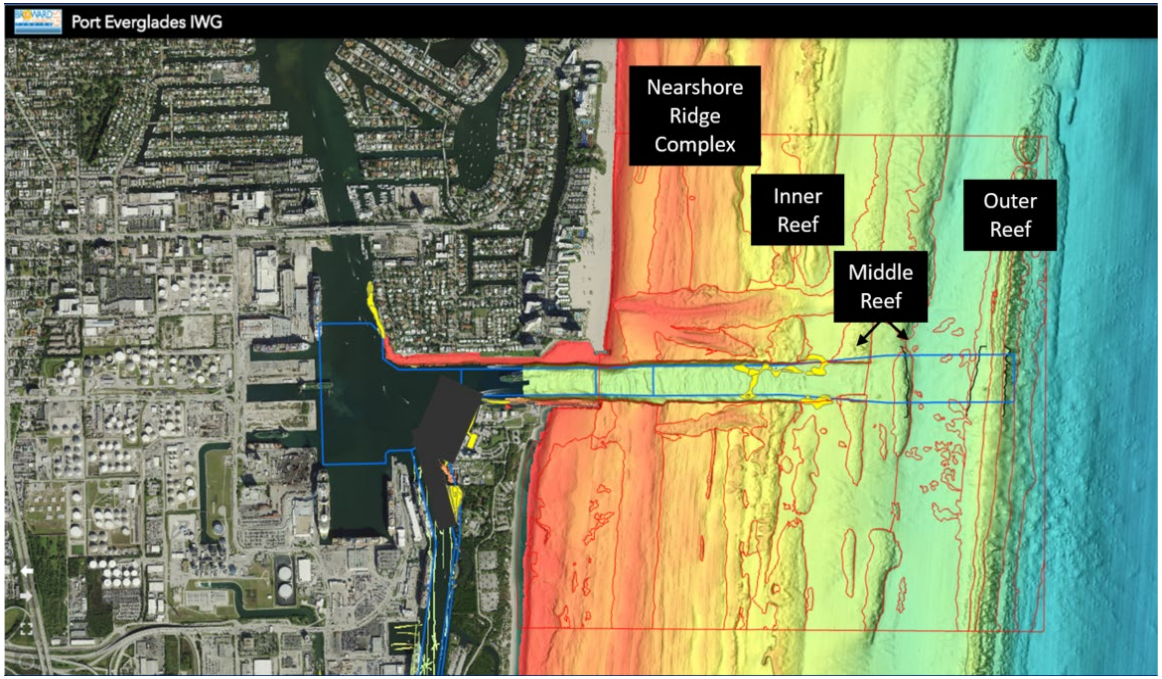
PEV Anticipated Impacts to Coral Reef Habitats

- 29 acres of anticipated direct impacts
- 197 – 564 acres of anticipated indirect impacts due to sedimentation
- Sedimentation impacts vary based on dredge type



PEV Environmental Commitments:

- Rock chopping is prohibited
- Overflow restrictions depending on location and type of dredge
- Coral time of year restrictions: no dredging in the inner and outer entrance channel July through September
- No anchoring outside outer entrance channel
- Relocate ~65,733 corals greater than 10 cm out of impact areas

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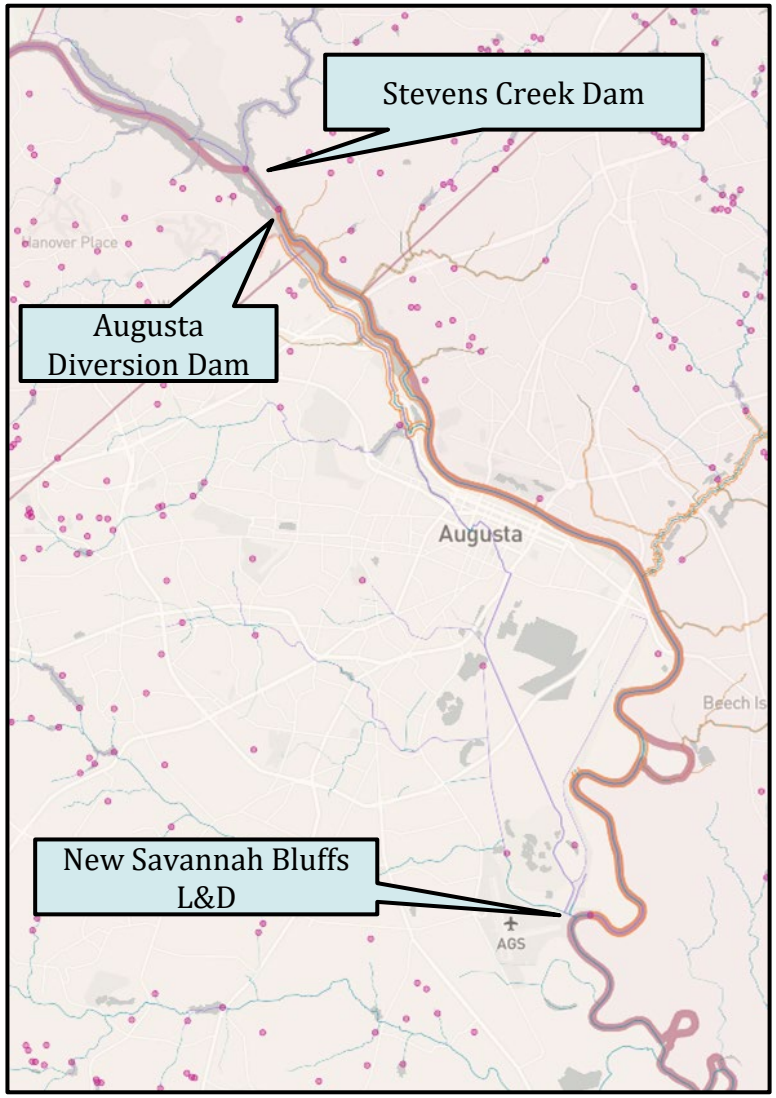
Fish Passage



Augusta Diversion Dam on Savannah River, GA/SC

- Issued Third Fishway Prescription for Augusta Diversion Dam
- Administrative hearing was dismissed
- FERC license pending

Stevens Creek, tributary of Savannah River, GA/SC

- Working to issue a Preliminary Fishway Prescription

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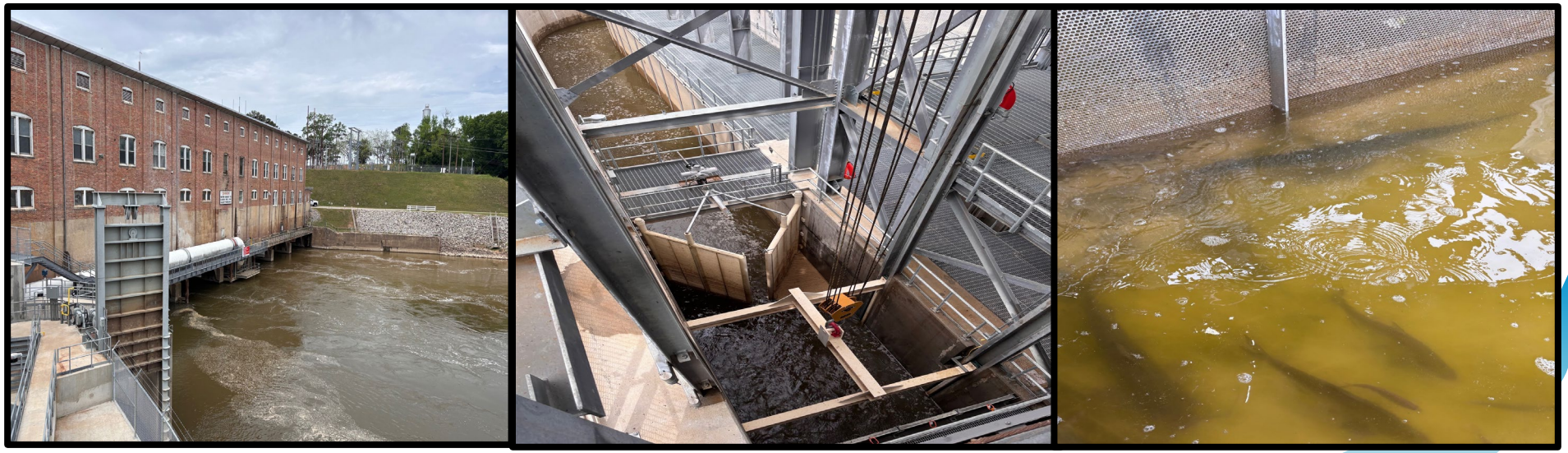
Fish Passage

Pinopolis Dam on Santee-Cooper River, SC *

- 1,236 river miles opened for American eel via eelways

Blewett Falls, Great Pee Dee River, NC *

- First year of fish passage – 969 river miles opened
- 1,398 fish passed in first year



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Tide Gates

- NMFS received no new tide gate projects in FY ’24
- Swan Quarter, NC - dike, canal, and tide gate system
- 17 mi of dike, 117 tidal gates, multiple pumping plants

Seagrass Impacts - Docks, Marinas

- Impacts from dredging, piling construction, shading
- NMFS uses dock guidelines for SAV to provide conservation recommendations
- Height and orientation difficult to implement
- Mitigation required for unavoidable impacts in Florida
- In NC, mitigation for projects with overwhelming public benefit

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Living Shorelines

HOW GREEN OR GRAY SHOULD YOUR SHORELINE SOLUTION BE?

GREEN - SOFTER TECHNIQUES ← → **GRAY - HARDER TECHNIQUES**

Living Shorelines

VEGETATION ONLY - Provides a buffer to upland areas and breaks small waves. Suitable only for low wave energy environments.

EDGING - Added structure holds the toe of existing or vegetated slope in place.

SILLS - Parallel to existing or vegetated shoreline, reduces wave energy, and prevents erosion. Suitable for most areas except high wave energy environments.

Coastal Structures

BREAKWATER - (vegetation optional) - Offshore structures intended to break waves, reducing the force of wave action, and encourage sediment accretion. Suitable for most areas.

REVETMENT - Lays over the slope of the shoreline and protects it from erosion and waves. Suitable for sites with pre-existing hardened shoreline structures.

BULKHEAD - Vertical wall parallel to the shoreline intended to hold soil in place. Suitable for areas highly vulnerable to storm surge and wave forces.

Living Shorelines

SAFMC Habitat AP Recommended Definition:

A living shoreline is a coastal management approach that **stabilizes and protects the shoreline** using a suite of options that **promote the use of natural materials**, such as native plants, sand, rocks, and oyster shells. The details of material usage and percentage of material type are determined by state management bodies. Unlike traditional hard structures such as seawalls, living shorelines should **maintain the natural connections between upland, intertidal, and aquatic environments**. This approach not only **minimizes erosion** and aims to reduce wave energy but also **provides valuable wildlife habitat**, maintains or improves water quality, and supports ecological resilience. Living shorelines should be designed to spontaneously **grow and adapt over time**, making them a dynamic, nature-based solution for coastal protection and management.

Living Shorelines: Oyster Shells

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Living Shorelines: rock sills

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Living Shorelines: Innovative Materials

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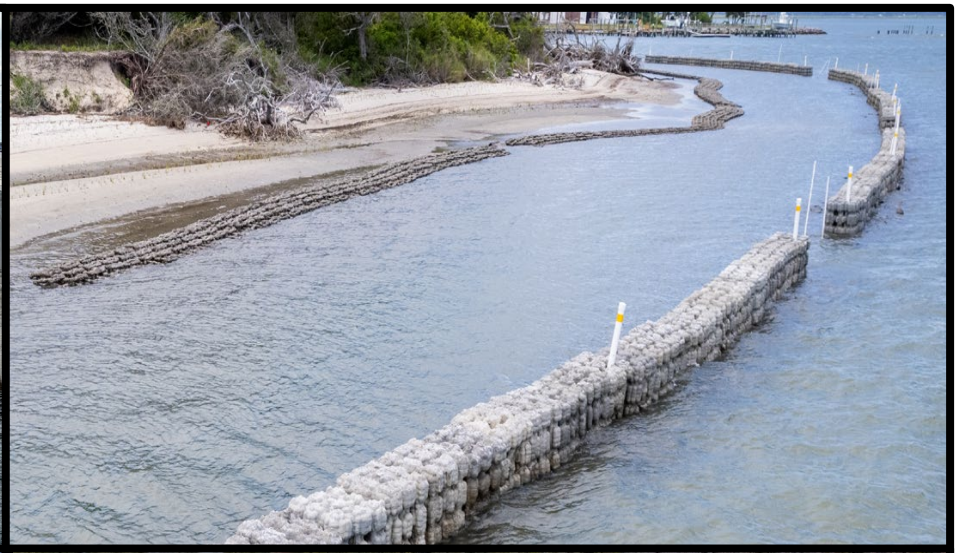
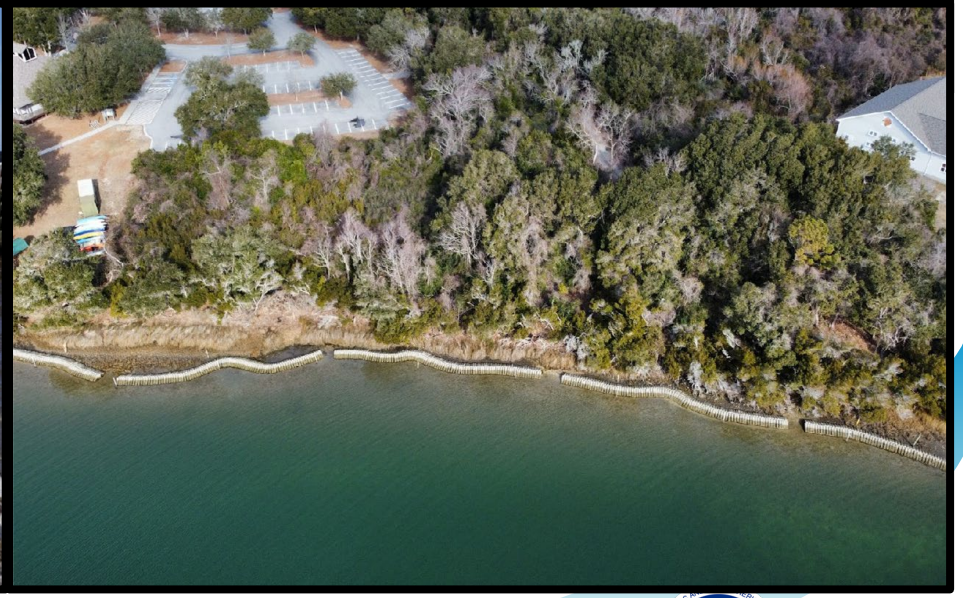
Living Shorelines: Infrastructure Projects





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Living Shorelines - QuickReef

Living Shoreline Considerations during EFH reviews

- Gap size, segment lengths - fish access
- Maximum length relative to the shoreline
- Maximum height
- Habitat conversion - footprint on bottom
- Change to fish community
- Evaluating habitat tradeoffs
- Additional monitoring needs

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Beneficial Use of Dredge Material (BUDM) Projects

- USACE Goal: increase BUDM 70% by 2030
- South Atlantic Salt Marsh Initative (SASMI)
- Private HOAs and NGOs
- Manomet BUDM Planning Workshops

NC Webapp:
https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/6562098dd80042c686ef9e9f29e454b8/
SC Webapp Tool: same except last piece=
/794a832145324b19bfe1adb811338eb0/
GA Webapp Tool: same except last piece=
/b327ad3827794f579c82eb3c683aa8b3/

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QUESTIONS?

Acknowledgements

Lisa Wickliffe
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Xaymara Serrano
Pace Wilber

Contact Information

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