

Of the 213 cases, the average age of victims, by percentage:

5 to 25	12%
25 to 35	15%
35 to 45	12%
45 to 65	35%
over 65	12%
unknown	13%

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT'S SUPPORT OF COASTAL FISHERIES**

*by*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Law enforcement and Coastal Fisheries have as their goal, the maximum production and utilization of Georgia's natural resources.

How this is accomplished on Georgia's coast is an inneraction with Coastal Fisheries providing the technical knowledge for legislation and management which is necessary to insure the biological understanding of growth and reproduction of the resource and its environment, and to recommend that which will insure maximum returns. Law enforcement's part in achieving this goal is to provide the professional law enforcement that will insure that those laws enacted to protect our natural resources are complied with and as an end result, through coordination and cooperation with Coastal Fisheries, this goal is achieved.

### **COASTAL FISHERIES RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

Within the Coastal Fisheries Section are Sports Fisheries. Coastal Fisheries and Resource Management all of which are conducting research in separate areas of Georgia's coastal resources. Only since 1954 has Georgia been in the field of marine research, however, through adequate funding and staffing, major contributions have been made toward understanding, managing and improving our coastal resources. (See appendix A for organizational chart.) The Sports Fisheries Section has an artificial reef project that has been undertaken to develop and enhance Georgia's marine fishery resource through habitat improvement. Reefs are being constructed using discarded automobile tires and concrete in offshore areas of virtually no bottom relief and very little marine life. As part of this project a large steel tug was sunk during July of this year which has shown tremendous success in attracting marine life. Construction of 14

reefs, each developing approximately three acres of ocean floor in water depths varying from 35 to 82 feet are planned for over the next five years. Research using SCUBA techniques primarily will be conducted on selected reefs for evaluation of feasibility, effectiveness as to marine life habitat, and accessibility of the artificial fishing areas along the Georgia coast.

Within Coastal Fisheries is Resource Management which is responsible for shrimp and other fisheries. This requires the gathering of current data on sizes, density and location along the entire Georgia coast. Resource Management also cooperates with the Public Health Department and the Water Quality Control Board of the Department of Natural Resources securing samples of water for pollution control and other purposes relating to fisheries resource.

Also a part of the Coastal Fisheries Section is Coastal Fisheries which is presently conducting an ecological study of Georgia's coast.

Georgia's estuarine environment is a rich habitat supporting many species of fish, crustaceans and mollusk. However, only a few — shrimp, crab and oysters — are the subject of substantial commercial fishing. Shrimp, and to a lesser degree, oysters have been the subject of most of the research on commercial species.

This ecological study is designed to determine in the various sectors of the estuarine environment, including inshore ocean waters, the following:

1. Composition of principal species of commercial fish and other organisms inhabiting or utilizing the several sectors.
2. Distribution, relative seasonal abundance, and size composition of fauna in various sectors.
3. Ecological and biological factors apparently influencing these.
4. Monitoring for unusual environmental or biological factors which might influence availability of principal commercial species.

In addition the Coastal Fisheries is supporting the research by the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography on the nutritional, physiological and economical requirements for the production of channel catfish in an intensive running water culture.

## ECONOMICS OF COASTAL FISHERIES

Economically speaking the commercial fishing industry in Georgia is only a small part of the states entire economy. However, in the six coastal counties commercial fishing figures significantly in total income, either through catching and wholesaling or manufacturing of fish products. The major landings in Georgia include the shellfish species of shrimp, blue crab, and oysters, and the finfish species of shad and king whiting. Shrimp, being the most important, making up, in most years, over 80% of the value of all species landed. Blue crab ranks second in importance averaging about 12% of the value of all landings. All other species amount to less than 8%

During the year of 1972 there were 7,257,484 pounds of shrimp\* sold ex-vessel\*\* in Georgia for a value of \$5,670,147. 9,058,980 pounds of blue crab were sold ex-vessel for \$824,215, along with 152,122 pounds of oyster meat for \$87,512. All species of finfish totaled 1,072,545 pounds at \$280,183. Total value of both shellfish and finfish were ex-vessel valued at \$6,862,057. This is about 1% of the total U.S. production; however, it is relatively more significant in that it may represent as much as 25% of the total employment in the mostly rural county of McIntosh.

\*heads on

\*\*direct from boat

Processing of seafood products and services that are connected with the commercial fishing industry, though not documented, compound the effects of this industry on the coastal economy.

In addition to the significance of the industries immediate economic impact in the coastal area, also to be considered is that revenue realized by the State through the sale of commercial fishing license. During the year of 1972, 4,976 personal license were sold for \$10,588.00, and revenue from the sale of boat license amounted to \$51,630.50.

A macroeconomic analysis indicates that approximately \$50,000,000 annually stems from Georgia's coastal fisheries, whereas \$25,000,000 results from hunting within the State and from fresh water fishing; \$125,000,000.

## COASTAL LAW ENFORCEMENT ORGANIZATION AND FUNCTION

Within the Coastal Law Enforcement District there are two sectors. (See appendix B for organizational chart.) The northern sector encompassing the three northern coastal counties of Chatam, Long and Bryan and Georgia's three mile territorial waters. The southern sector is made up of the three remaining coastal counties of McIntosh, Glynn and Camden and territorial waters. Within each of the two sectors is one conservation captain who has the responsibility of administering Department policy. He is supervised by a conservation major, who not only has the coastal district, but also four additional law enforcement districts in the southern region.

Three sergeants are assigned each sector and have primary responsibility for law enforcement operations — scheduling patrols, coordinating activities that require additional organization, insuring proper service and maintenance of boats, vehicles and equipment as well as direct supervision of the county and the saltwater patrol rangers.

Three corporals are also assigned each sector. Although without supervisory capacity, they function in very much the same manner as do the rangers with the exception that they are normally appointed the responsibility of insuring proper patrol techniques, O.J.T. for new personnel and compliance with Department field procedures.

There are seven rangers in each sector, three of whom are assigned to the counties of each sector and function as "hill" rangers. (Coastal elevation is from 10 to 25 feet.) Four rangers for each sector are left, constituting the nucleus of the patrol units. These rangers, plus the corporals have the responsibility of enforcing the state's Game and Fish laws and regulations. They are the ones that make the early morning launches, the all night patrols; the sixteen hour days.

These patrol units are deployed in the counties along the coast and are able to respond immediately to a reported violation in their respective area. They are provided with radio-equipped boats designed for coastal patrolling and are within twenty minutes of most coastal areas. (See appendix C for deployment of units.)

Daily patrol techniques of these units are so that there is an overlap of territories, and adequate coverage is insured in most areas on a daily basis with the aid of aircraft support. Day patrols are manned by two men whenever possible for security and for the necessity of boarding the large trawlers. Night patrols are always manned by two or more men.

Supporting personnel for these units consist of one pilot who has both sectors as well as additional flying assignments within the state. We are currently adding one additional fixed wing and one rotary wing aircraft to provide additional coverage.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS

Police powers of Georgia's conservation officer are: to enforce all Game and Fish and boating safety laws and regulations, to enforce all laws on property controlled by the Department of Natural Resources, and to enforce all laws where life or property is endangered. Conservation officers are fully constituted peace officers of this state.

The Game and Fish Coastal Patrol's law enforcement role rest with the professional enforcement of those mentioned laws and particularly those laws regulating the commercial fishing and boating safety in Georgia's coastal waters and within the state's three mile territorial limit. Most appreciable of these laws are those that regulate the areas of commercial fishing. Protected year-round are those tidal creeks and rivers that are so essential in sustaining the life cycle of marine life at its more vulnerable stages. Also designating legal hours between 6:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M. serves to insure that commercial fishing is done within the bounds of law. Although there are additional laws regulating commercial fishing those mentioned are of major significance.

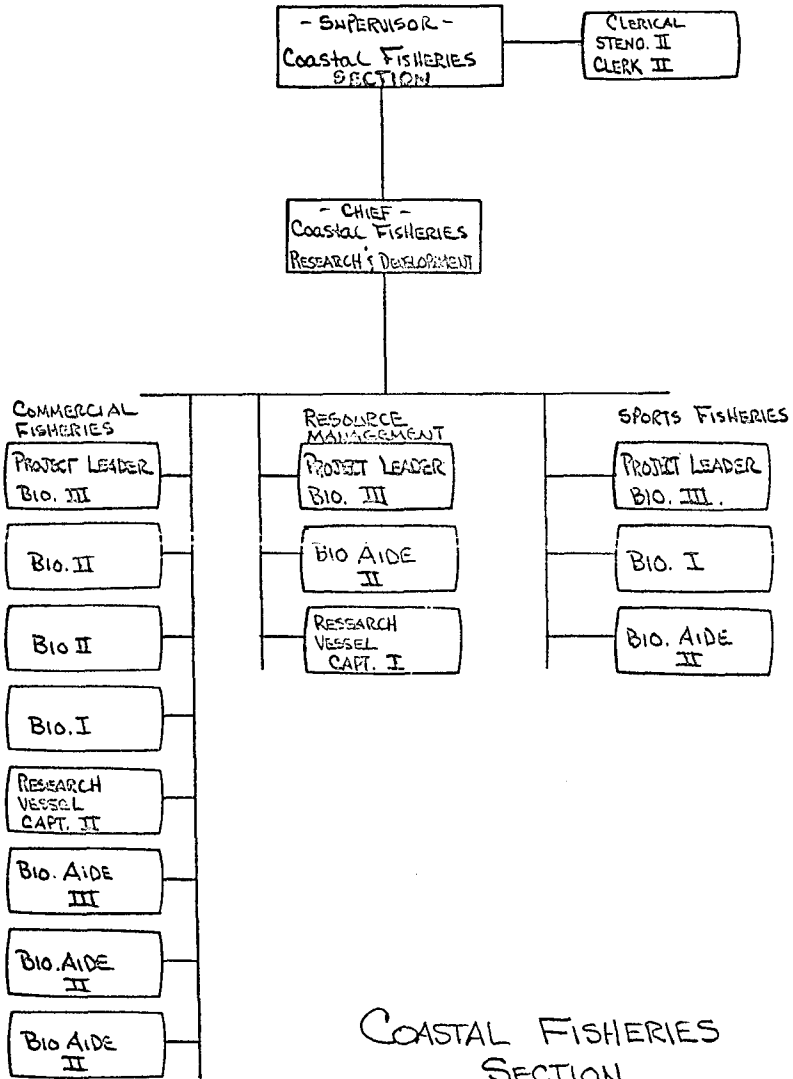
Law enforcement also plays a vital role in the functions of Georgia's Marshland Protection Agency. Its primary function and purpose is to insure against exploitation and unnecessary destruction of the marshes which are the dominant life support system for the entire coastal estuary as well as possibly the entire east coast marine economy.

The Marshland Protection Agency is organized within the Department of Natural Resources and thusly all laws enacted to protect Georgia's marsh becomes the responsibility of Game and Fish law enforcement.

Another service provided is support of the Department of Commerce, National Marine Fisheries Service. Our Department is under contract to provide enforcement of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972. This contract provides \$1500.00 per month for this service.

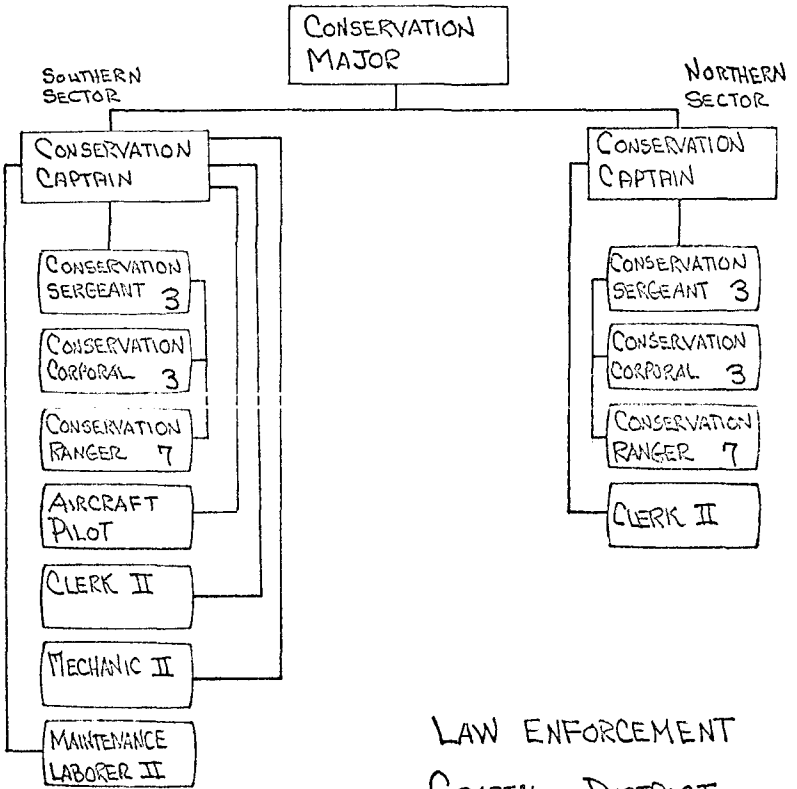
Boating safety along the Georgia coast also requires considerable time for checking the thousands of sports fishermen and sailboaters for safety equipment and registration as well as providing help for lost or distressed boats. In addition, an active public boating safety program is carried on. To support this program one ranger in each sector is designated boating safety officer and is responsible for the Departments boating safety program for that sector.

Though there are several laws regulating the use of Georgia's coastal resources, and the diversification of responsibility are being extended constantly, the theme of law enforcement has and continues to be, quality enforcement through proper supervision, formal education and in-service training.



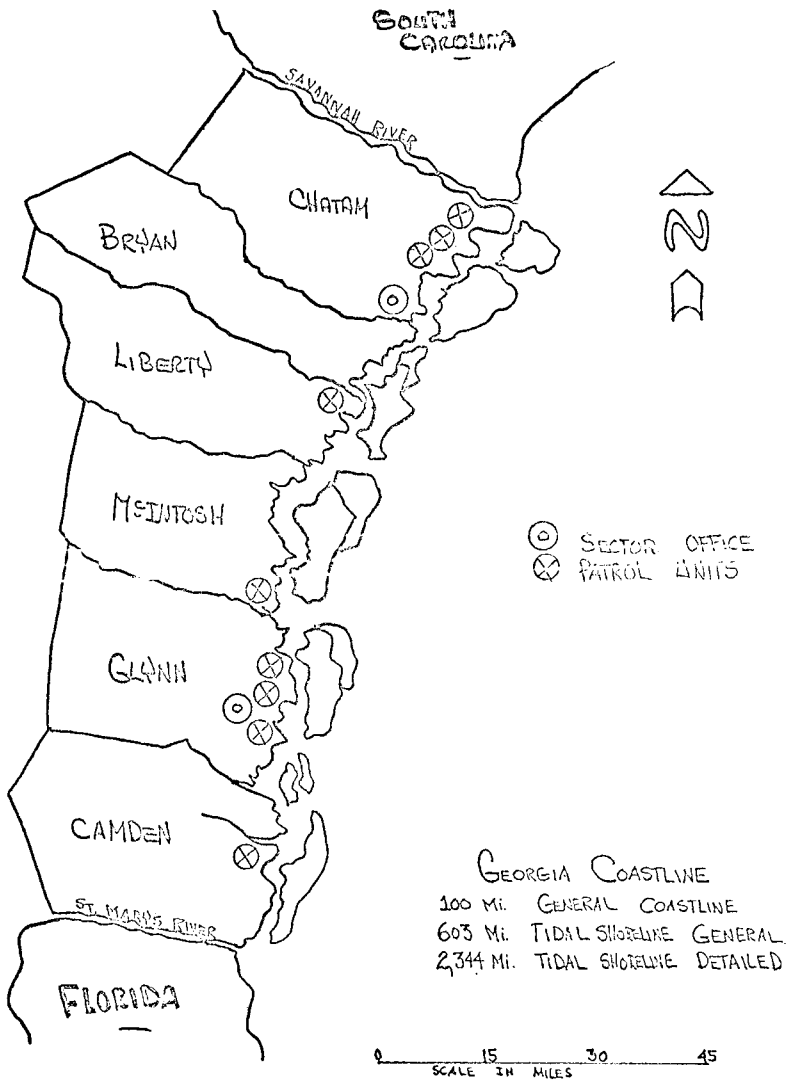
COASTAL FISHERIES  
SECTION

APPENDIX A



LAW ENFORCEMENT  
COASTAL DISTRICT

APPENDIX B



APPENDIX C