

# Southeast Conservation Blueprint Summary

for Georgia

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Created 11/27/2023

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The Southeast  
Conservation  
Adaptation Strategy

SECAS



The Southeast Conservation Blueprint 2023

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# About the Southeast Blueprint

The Southeast Conservation Blueprint is the primary product of the [Southeast Conservation Adaptation Strategy](#) (SECAS). It is a living, spatial plan to achieve the SECAS vision of a connected network of lands and waters across the Southeast and Caribbean. The Blueprint is regularly updated to incorporate new data, partner input, and information about on-the-ground conditions.

The Blueprint identifies priority areas based on a suite of natural and cultural resource indicators representing terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems. A connectivity analysis identifies corridors that link coastal and inland areas and span climate gradients.

For more information:

- Visit the [Blueprint webpage](#)
- Review the [Blueprint 2023 Development Process](#)
- View and download the Blueprint data and make maps on the [Blueprint page of the SECAS Atlas](#)

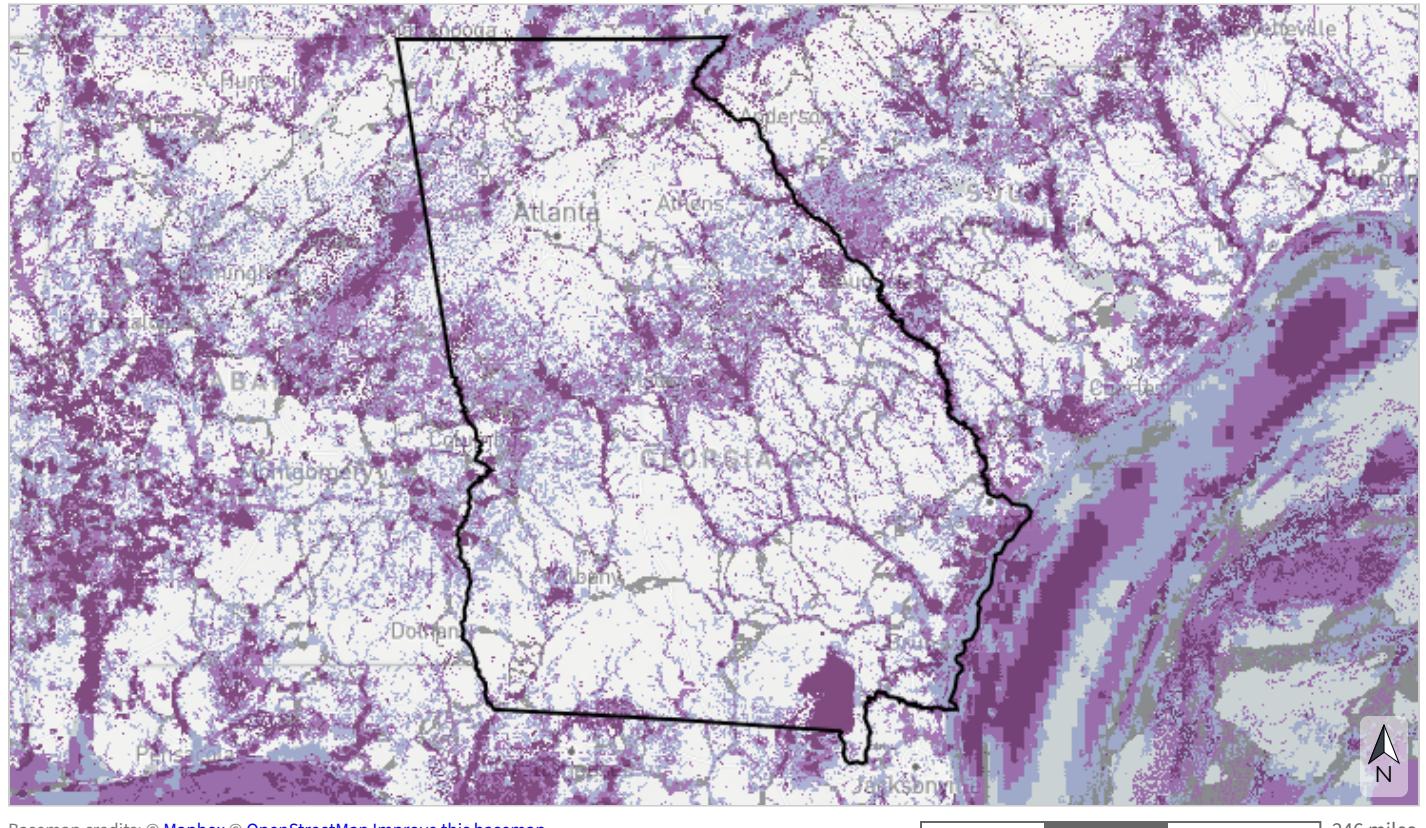
## We're here to help!

- Do you have a question about the Blueprint?
- Would you like help using the Blueprint to support a proposal or inform a decision?
- Do you have a suggestion on how to improve the Blueprint? The Blueprint and its inputs are regularly revised based on input from people like you.
- Do you have feedback on how to improve the Simple Viewer interface?

If you need help or have questions, [contact Southeast Blueprint staff](#) by reaching out to a member of the user support team.

We're here to support you. We really mean it. It's what we do!

# Southeast Blueprint Priorities



## Priorities for a connected network of lands and waters

- Highest priority
- High priority
- Medium priority
- Priority connections

## Priority Categories

### For a connected network of lands and waters

In total, Blueprint priorities and priority connections cover roughly 50% of the Southeast Blueprint geography.

#### Highest priority

Areas where conservation action would make the biggest impact, based on a suite of natural and cultural resource indicators. This class covers roughly 10% of the Southeast Blueprint geography.

#### High priority

Areas where conservation action would make a big impact, based on a suite of natural and cultural resource indicators. This class covers roughly 15% of the Southeast Blueprint geography.

#### Medium priority

Areas where conservation action would make an above-average impact, based on a suite of natural and cultural resource indicators. This class covers roughly 20% of the Southeast Blueprint geography.

#### Priority connections

Connections between priority areas that cover the shortest distance possible while routing through as much Blueprint priority as possible. This class covers roughly 5% of the Southeast Blueprint geography.

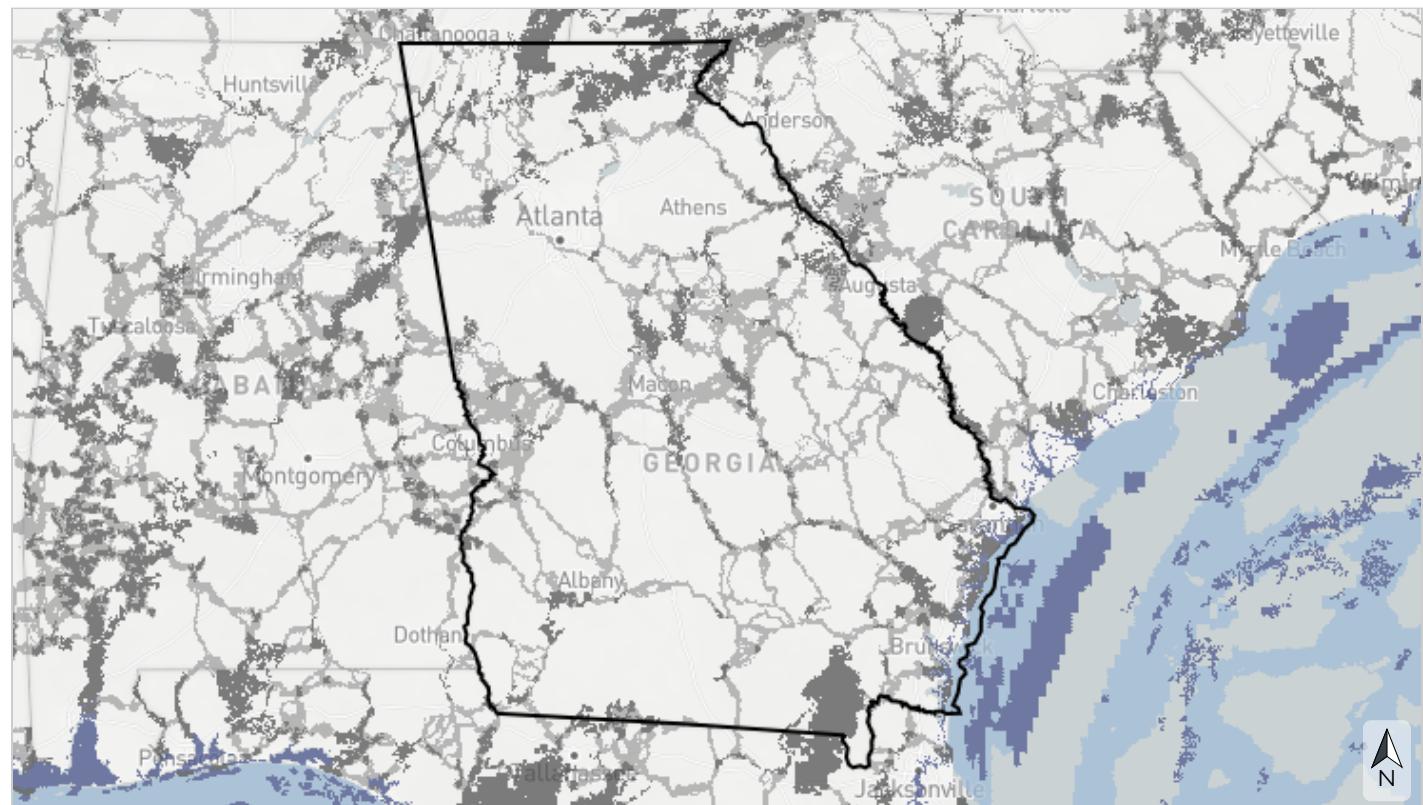
Table 1: Extent of each Blueprint priority category within Georgia.

Priority Category	Acres	Percent of Area
Highest priority	3,020,003	7.9%
High priority	5,345,602	14.1%
Medium priority	7,134,275	18.8%
Priority connections	1,578,978	4.2%
Lower priority	20,951,835	55.1%
<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Hubs and Corridors

The Blueprint uses a least-cost path connectivity analysis to identify corridors that link hubs across the shortest distance possible, while also routing through as much Blueprint priority as possible.

Inland hubs are large patches (~5,000+ acres) of highest priority Blueprint areas and/or protected lands, connected by inland corridors. Marine and estuarine hubs are large estuaries and large patches (~5,000+ acres) of highest priority Blueprint areas. Marine and estuarine corridors connect those hubs within broad marine mammal movement areas.



- Inland continental hubs
- Inland continental corridors
- Marine & estuarine continental hubs
- Marine & estuarine continental corridors
- Not a hub or corridor

*Table 2: Extent of hubs and corridors within Georgia.*

Type	Acres	Percent of Area
Inland continental hubs	3,388,220	8.9%
Inland continental corridors	5,330,477	14.0%
Marine & estuarine continental hubs	182,380	0.5%
Marine & estuarine continental corridors	270,086	0.7%
Not a hub or corridor	28,859,530	75.9%
<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Indicator Summary

Table 3: Terrestrial indicators.

Indicator	Present
<a href="#">East Coastal Plain open pine birds</a>	✓
<a href="#">Equitable access to potential parks</a>	✓
<a href="#">Fire frequency</a>	✓
<a href="#">Greenways &amp; trails</a>	✓
<a href="#">Intact habitat cores</a>	✓
<a href="#">Interior Southeast grasslands</a>	✓
<a href="#">Resilient terrestrial sites</a>	✓
<a href="#">South Atlantic amphibian &amp; reptile areas</a>	✓
<a href="#">South Atlantic forest birds</a>	✓
<a href="#">South Atlantic low-urban historic landscapes</a>	✓
<a href="#">Urban park size</a>	✓

Table 4: Freshwater indicators.

Indicator	Present
<a href="#">Atlantic migratory fish habitat</a>	✓
<a href="#">Gulf migratory fish connectivity</a>	✓
<a href="#">Imperiled aquatic species</a>	✓
<a href="#">Natural landcover in floodplains</a>	✓
<a href="#">Network complexity</a>	✓
<a href="#">Permeable surface</a>	✓

Table 5: Coastal &amp; marine indicators.

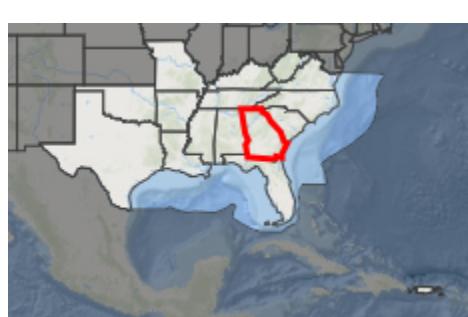
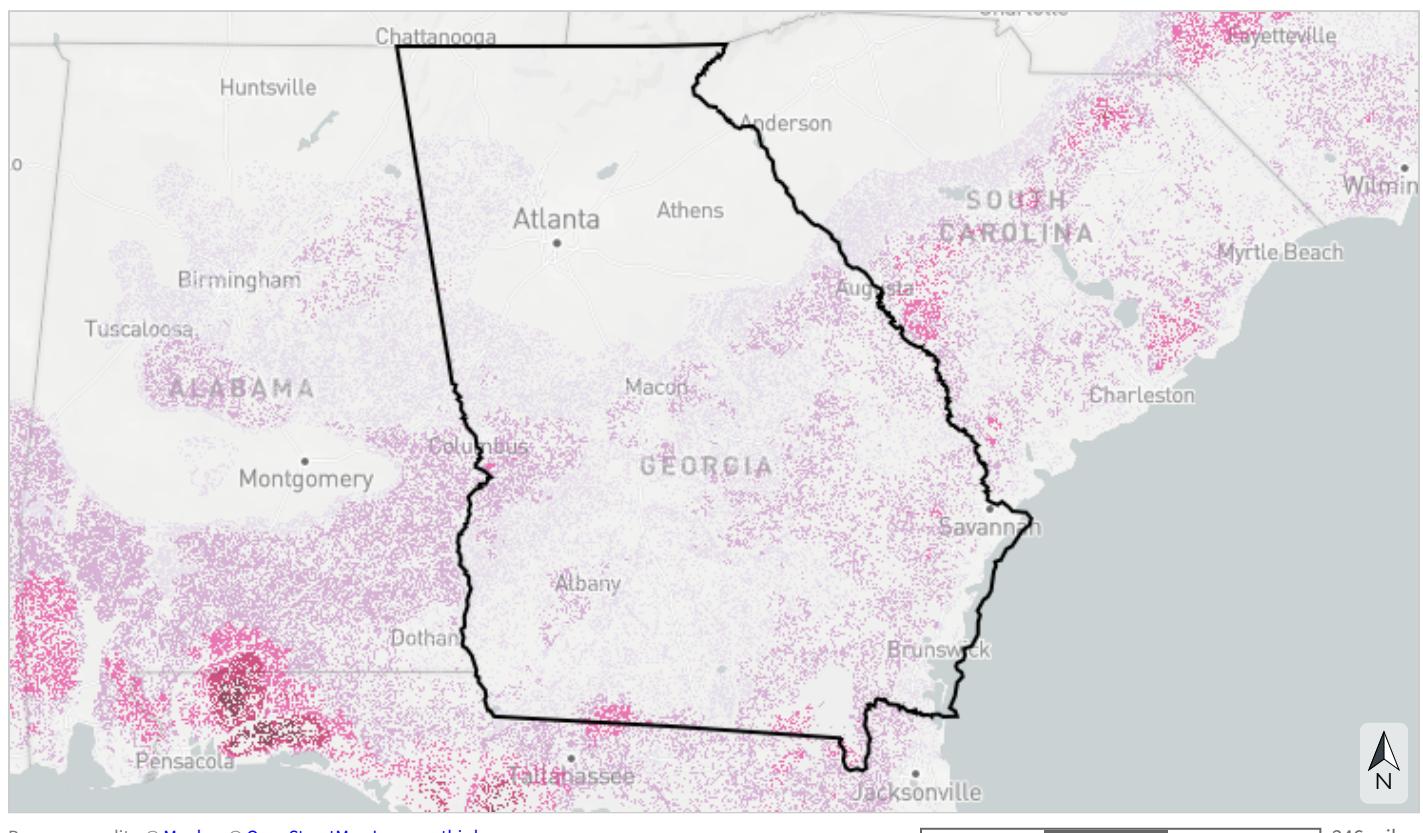
Indicator	Present
<a href="#"><u>Atlantic coral &amp; hardbottom</u></a>	✓
Atlantic deep-sea coral richness	-
<a href="#"><u>Atlantic estuarine fish habitat</u></a>	✓
<a href="#"><u>Atlantic marine birds</u></a>	✓
<a href="#"><u>Atlantic marine mammals</u></a>	✓
<a href="#"><u>Coastal shoreline condition</u></a>	✓
<a href="#"><u>Estuarine coastal condition</u></a>	✓
Gulf coral & hardbottom	-
Gulf marine mammals	-
Gulf sea turtles	-
<a href="#"><u>Island habitat</u></a>	✓
<a href="#"><u>Marine highly migratory fish</u></a>	✓
<a href="#"><u>Resilient coastal sites</u></a>	✓
Seagrass	-
<a href="#"><u>South Atlantic beach birds</u></a>	✓
<a href="#"><u>South Atlantic maritime forest</u></a>	✓
<a href="#"><u>Stable coastal wetlands</u></a>	✓



Terrestrial

## East Coastal Plain open pine birds

This indicator identifies areas within the historic longleaf pine range east of the Mississippi River where creating or maintaining open pine habitat would most benefit six focal species of birds (Bachman's sparrow, red-cockaded woodpecker, Henslow's sparrow, red-headed woodpecker, Northern bobwhite, brown-headed nuthatch). It prioritizes areas for open pine conservation based on suitability for longleaf pine, feasibility of prescribed burning, proximity to protected lands, habitat suitability for focal bird species, and proximity to bird source populations. It originates from the East Gulf Coastal Plain Joint Venture's prioritization of areas for open pine ecosystem restoration.



### Priority for open pine conservation for focal bird species

- High priority (score >80-100)
- Medium-high priority (score >60-80)
- Medium priority (score >40-60)
- Medium-low priority (score >20-40)
- Low priority (score 0-20)
- Not a priority (not identified as upland pine)

Table 6: Indicator values for east coastal plain open pine birds within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.

	<b>Indicator Values: Priority for open pine conservation for focal bird species</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	High priority (score >80-100)	0	0%
	Medium-high priority (score >60-80)	0	0%
	Medium priority (score >40-60)	138,560	0.4%
	Medium-low priority (score >20-40)	2,931,974	7.7%
	Low priority (score 0-20)	4,882,702	12.8%
↓ Low	Not a priority (not identified as upland pine)	19,940,517	52.4%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	10,136,938	26.7%
	<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

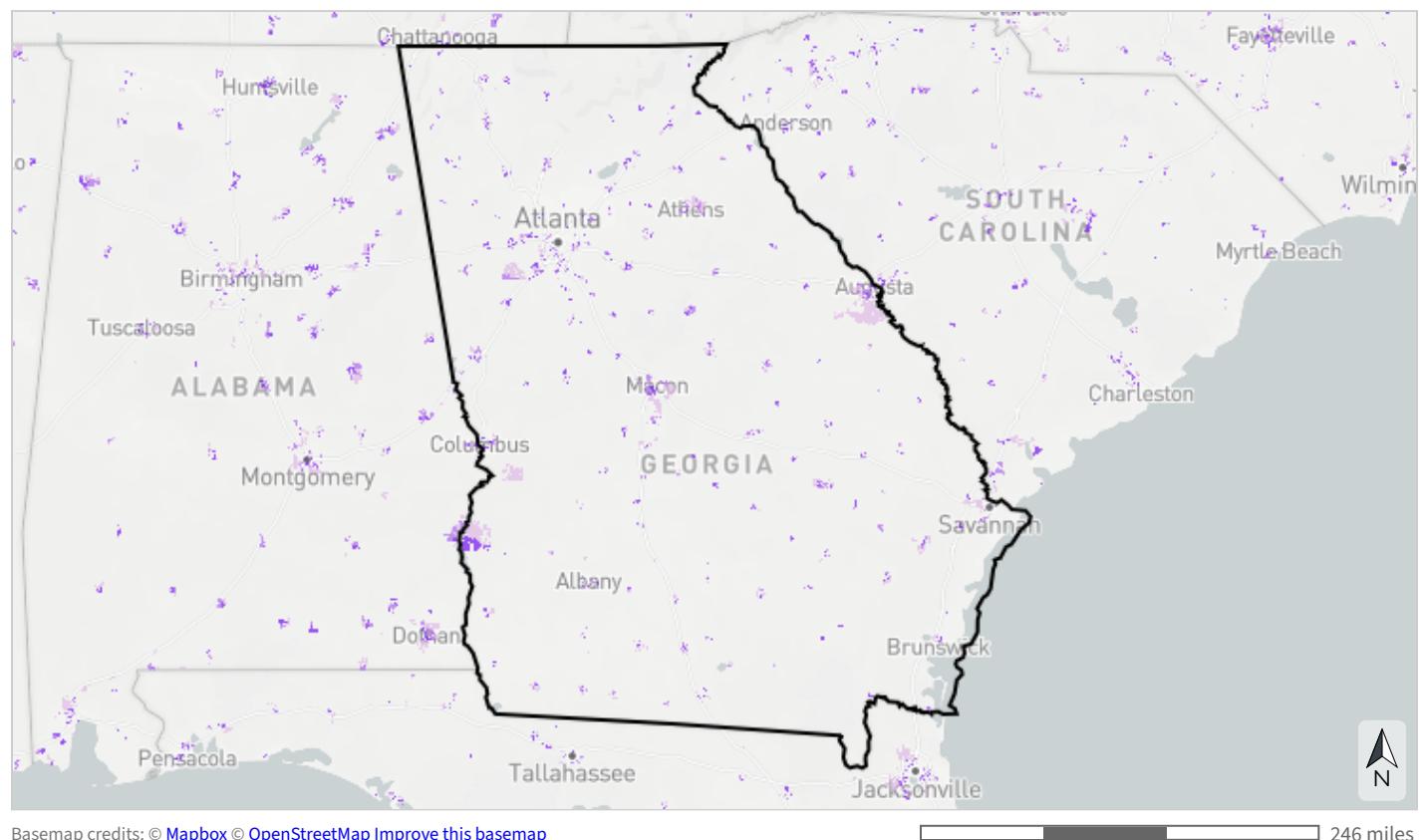
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Terrestrial

## Equitable access to potential parks

This cultural resource indicator prioritizes places to create new parks that would fill gaps in equitable access to open space within socially vulnerable communities in urban areas. It identifies areas where residents currently lack access to parks within a 10-minute walk (accounting for walkable road networks and access barriers like highways and fences), then prioritizes based on park need using demographic and environmental metrics. Parks help improve public health, foster a conservation ethic by providing opportunities for people to connect with nature, and support critical ecosystem services. This indicator originates from the Trust for Public Land's ParkServe park priority areas and the Center for Disease Control's Social Vulnerability Index.



### Priority for a new park that would create nearby equitable access

- Very high priority
- High priority
- Moderate priority
- Not identified as a priority (within urban areas)

Table 7: Indicator values for equitable access to potential parks within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.

<b>Indicator Values: Priority for a new park that would create nearby equitable access</b>		<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Very high priority	189,201	0.5%
	High priority	203,262	0.5%
	Moderate priority	395,097	1.0%
↓ Low	Not identified as a priority (within urban areas)	36,917,723	97.1%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	325,409	0.9%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

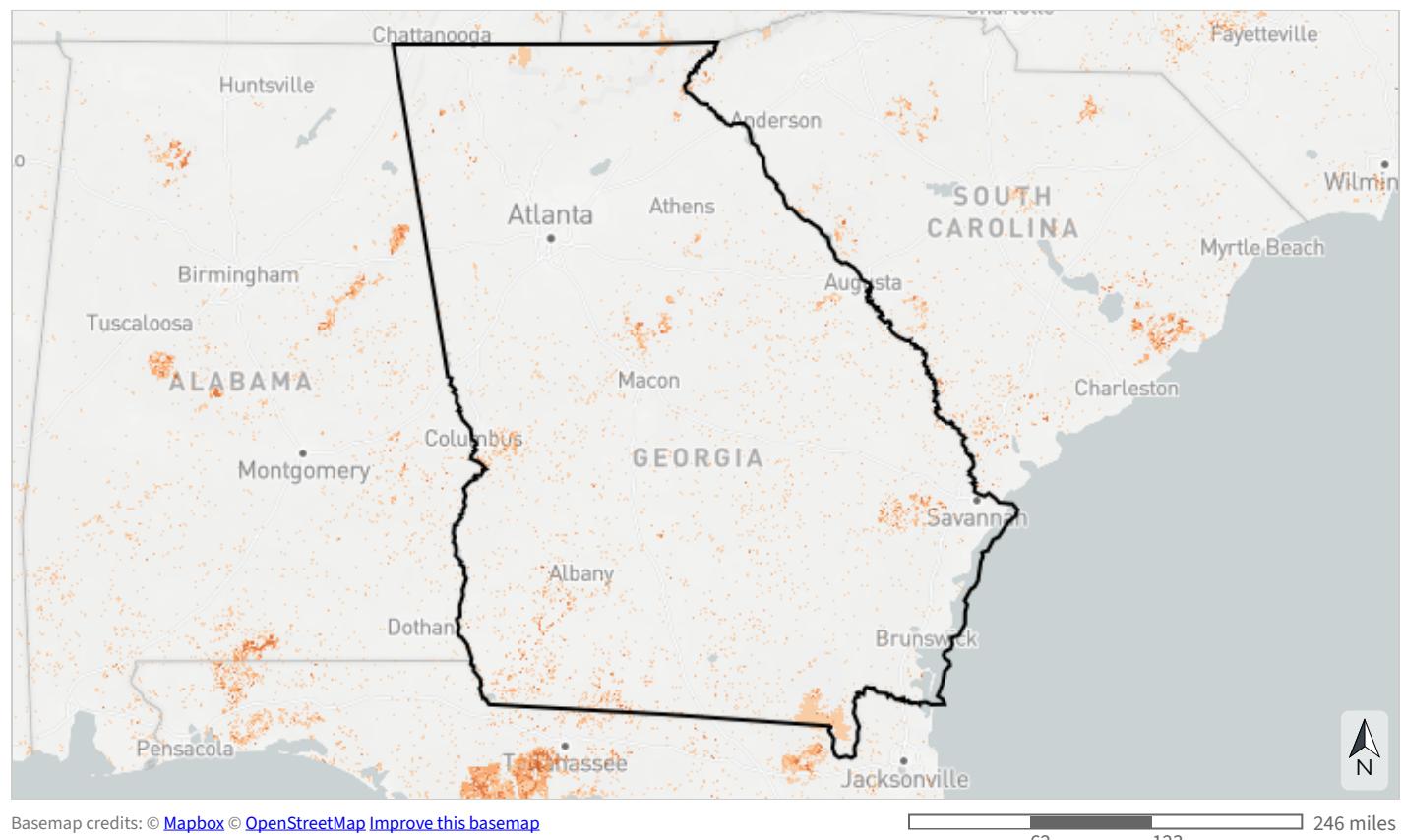
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Terrestrial

## Fire frequency

This indicator uses remote sensing to estimate the number of times an area has been burned from 2013 to 2021. Many Southeastern ecosystems rely on regular, low-intensity fires to maintain habitat, encourage native plant growth, and reduce wildfire risk. This indicator combines burned area layers from U.S. Geological Survey Landsat data and the inter-agency Monitoring Trends in Burn Severity program. Landsat-based fire predictions within the range of longleaf pine are also available through [Southeast FireMap](#).



*Table 8: Indicator values for fire frequency within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.*

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Burned 3+ times from 2013-2021	43,861	0.1%
	Burned 2 times from 2013-2021	195,872	0.5%
	Burned 1 time from 2013-2021	1,304,005	3.4%
↓ Low	Not burned from 2013-2021 or row crop	36,476,951	95.9%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	10,004	<0.1%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

↑ In good condition

↓ Not in good condition

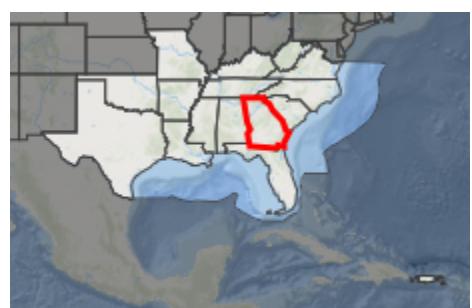
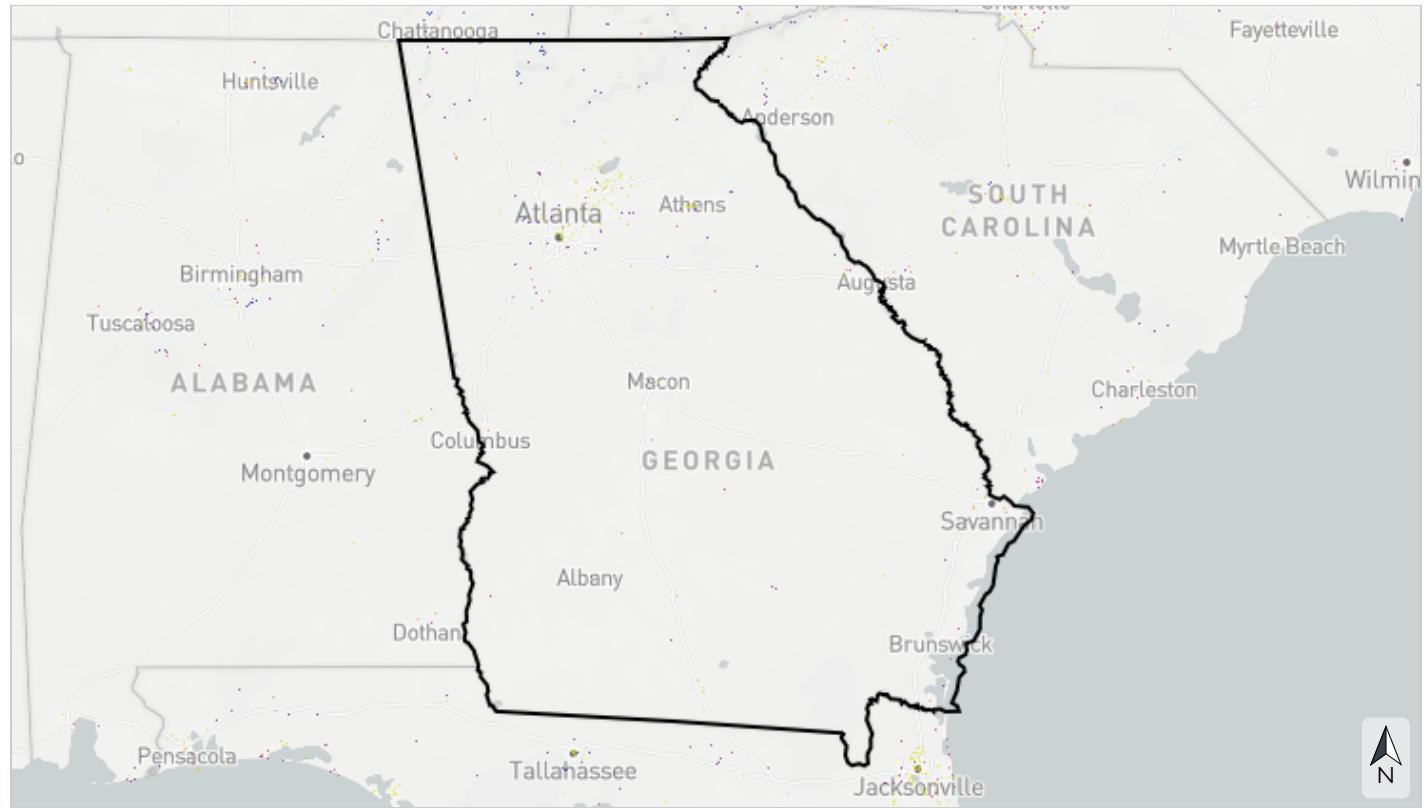
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Terrestrial

## Greenways & trails

This cultural resource indicator measures both the natural condition and connected length of greenways and trails to characterize the quality of the recreational experience. Natural condition is based on the amount of impervious surface surrounding the path. Connected length captures how far a person can go without leaving a dedicated path, based on common distances for walking, running, and biking. This indicator originates from OpenStreetMap data and the National Land Cover Database.



- Mostly natural and connected for  $\geq 40$  km
- Mostly natural and connected for 5 to  $< 40$  km or partly natural and connected for  $\geq 40$  km
- Mostly natural and connected for 1.9 to  $< 5$  km, partly natural and connected for 5 to  $< 40$  km, or developed and connected for  $\geq 40$  km
- Mostly natural and connected for  $< 1.9$  km, partly natural and connected for 1.9 to  $< 5$  km, or developed and connected for 5 to  $< 40$  km
- Partly natural and connected for  $< 1.9$  km or developed and connected for 1.9 to  $< 5$  km
- Developed and connected for  $< 1.9$  km
- Sidewalk
- Not identified as a trail, sidewalk, or other path

Table 9: Indicator values for greenways & trails within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Mostly natural and connected for $\geq 40$ km	10,327	<0.1%
	Mostly natural and connected for 5 to $< 40$ km or partly natural and connected for $\geq 40$ km	17,769	<0.1%
	Mostly natural and connected for 1.9 to $< 5$ km, partly natural and connected for 5 to $< 40$ km, or developed and connected for $\geq 40$ km	13,472	<0.1%
	Mostly natural and connected for $< 1.9$ km, partly natural and connected for 1.9 to $< 5$ km, or developed and connected for 5 to $< 40$ km	9,968	<0.1%
	Partly natural and connected for $< 1.9$ km or developed and connected for 1.9 to $< 5$ km	5,887	<0.1%
	Developed and connected for $< 1.9$ km	7,218	<0.1%
	Sidewalk	36,308	<0.1%
	Not identified as a trail, sidewalk, or other path	37,929,716	99.7%
↓ Low	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	26	<0.1%
	<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

↑ In good condition

↓ Not in good condition

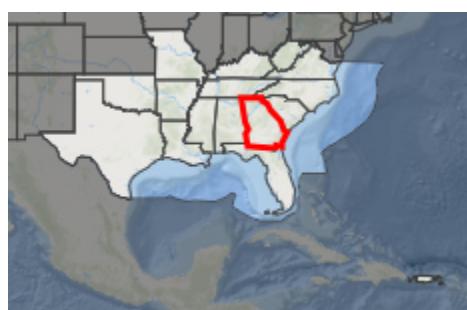
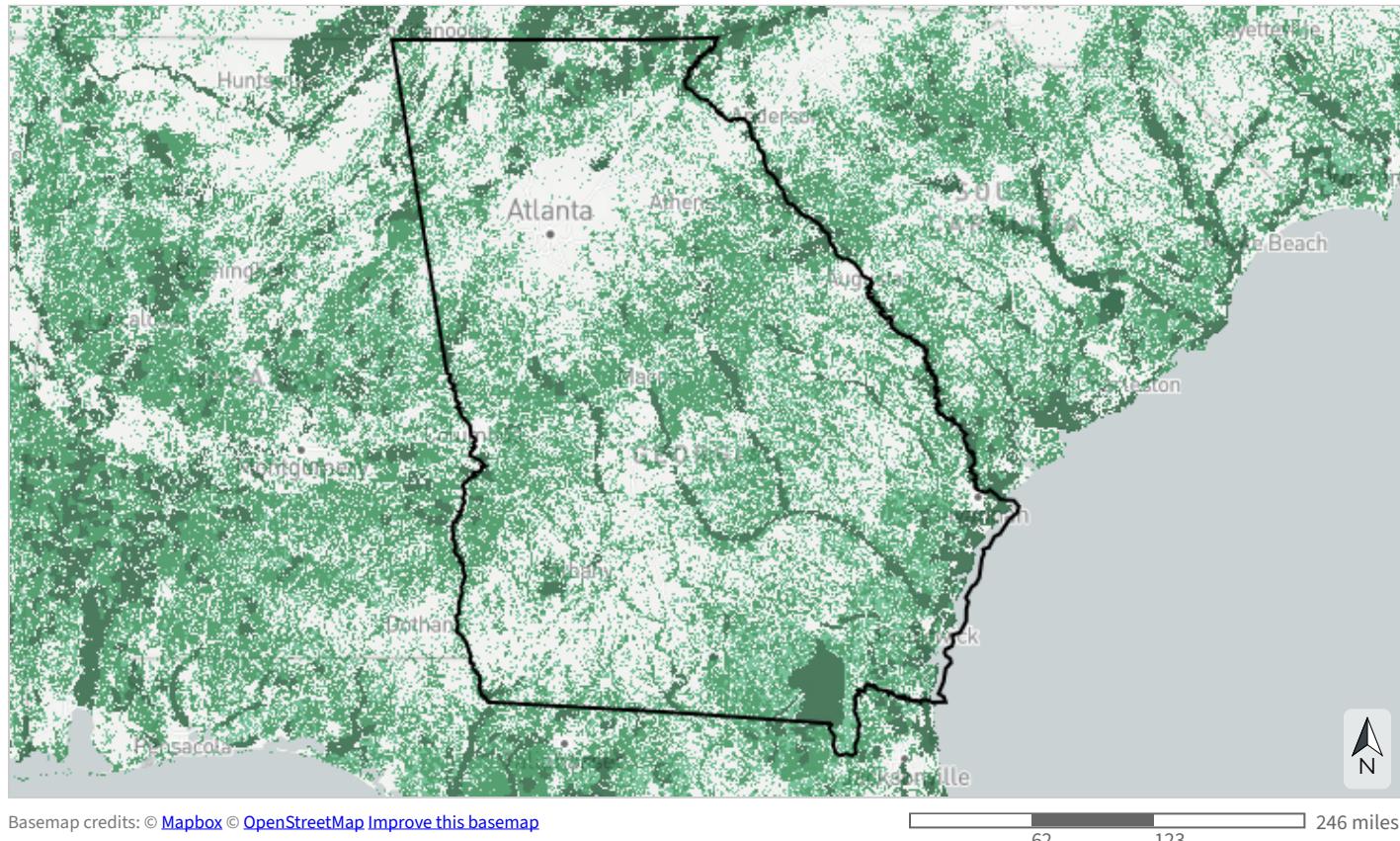
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Terrestrial

## Intact habitat cores

This indicator represents the size of large, unfragmented patches of natural habitat. It identifies minimally disturbed natural areas at least 100 acres in size and greater than 200 meters wide. Large areas of intact natural habitat are important for many wildlife species, including reptiles and amphibians, birds, and large mammals. This indicator originates from Esri's green infrastructure data.



- Large core (>10,000 acres)
- Medium core (>1,000-10,000 acres)
- Small core (>100-1,000 acres)
- Not a core

*Table 10: Indicator values for intact habitat cores within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.*

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Large core (>10,000 acres)	3,365,471	8.8%
	Medium core (>1,000-10,000 acres)	9,848,543	25.9%
	Small core (>100-1,000 acres)	6,323,348	16.6%
↓ Low	Not a core	18,493,303	48.6%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	26	<0.1%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

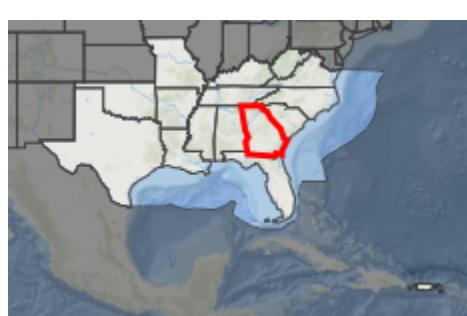
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Terrestrial

## Interior Southeast grasslands

This indicator represents grasslands in the interior southeastern United States, which support important plants, birds, and pollinators. It includes grasslands with and without trees that are historically maintained by geology (e.g., outcrops, glades, and barrens), fire (e.g., Piedmont prairies), and/or the regular violent flooding on the banks of high-energy rivers known as “riverscour” (e.g., riverscour prairies). Known grasslands receive the highest scores, followed by bumble bee habitat buffers around known sites, areas in potentially compatible management, and restoration opportunities within grassland geology. This indicator combines data from multiple sources, including the Southeastern Grasslands Institute, Central Hardwoods Joint Venture, Rangeland Analysis Platform, and more.



- Known grassland
- Known grassland buffer
- Potentially compatible management within grassland geology (undeveloped powerline right-of-way or perennial forbs and grasses)
- Potentially compatible management outside of grassland geology (undeveloped powerline right-of-way or perennial forbs and grasses)
- Grassland geology
- Grassland less likely

*Table 11: Indicator values for Interior Southeast grasslands within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.*

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Known grassland	2,906	<0.1%
	Known grassland buffer	26,730	<0.1%
	Potentially compatible management within grassland geology (undeveloped powerline right-of-way or perennial forbs and grasses)	293,370	0.8%
	Potentially compatible management outside of grassland geology (undeveloped powerline right-of-way or perennial forbs and grasses)	1,426,204	3.8%
↓ Low	Grassland geology	1,930,381	5.1%
	Grassland less likely	11,001,144	28.9%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	23,349,957	61.4%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

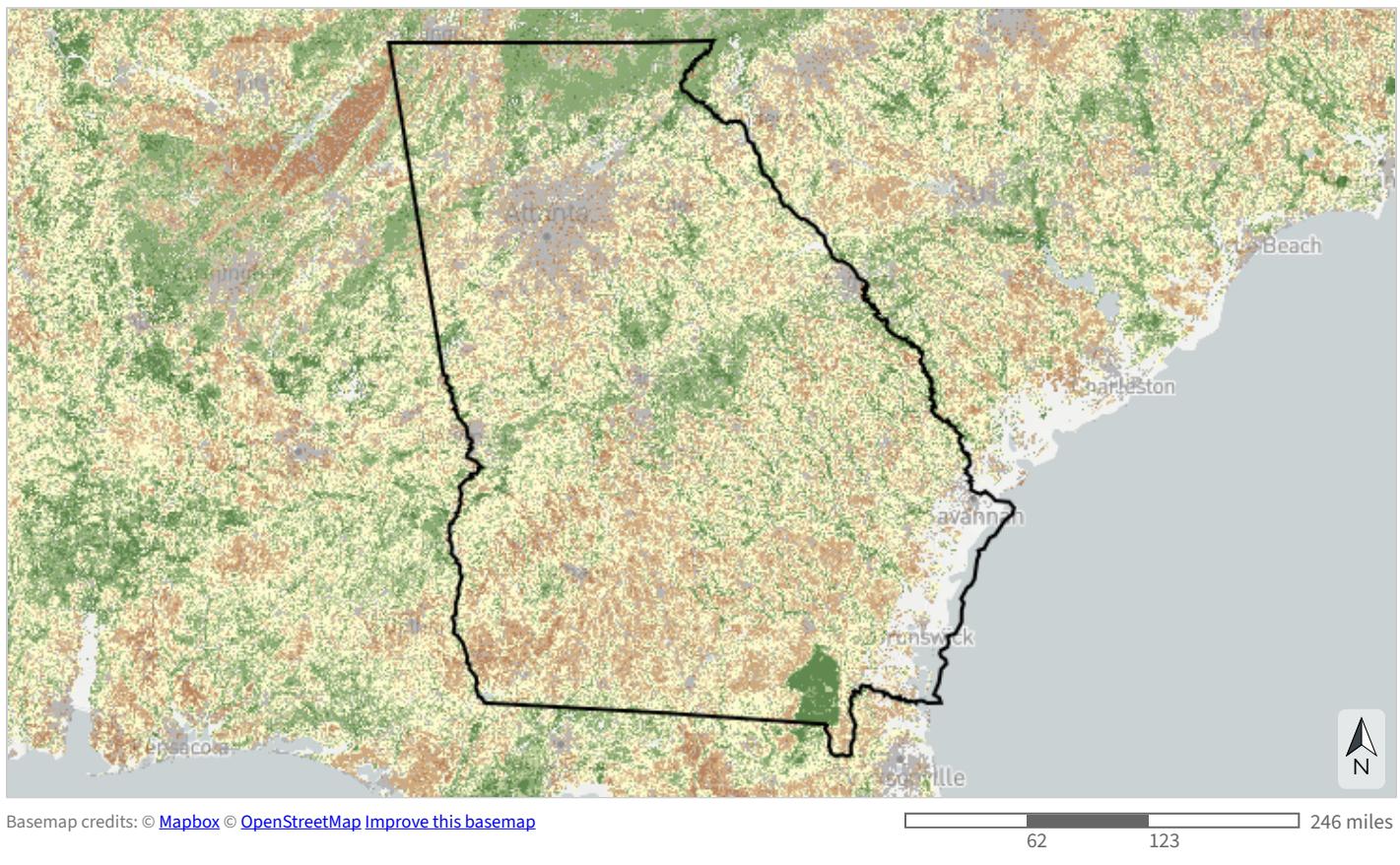
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Terrestrial

## Resilient terrestrial sites

This indicator depicts an area's capacity to maintain species diversity and ecosystem function in the face of climate change. It measures two factors that influence resilience. The first, landscape diversity, reflects the number of microhabitats and climatic gradients created by topography, elevation, and hydrology. The second, local connectedness, reflects the degree of habitat fragmentation and strength of barriers to species movement. Highly resilient sites contain many different habitat niches that support biodiversity, and allow species to move freely through the landscape to find suitable microclimates as the climate changes. This indicator originates from The Nature Conservancy's Resilient Land data.



- Most resilient
- More resilient
- Slightly more resilient
- Average/median resilience
- Slightly less resilient
- Less resilient
- Least resilient
- Developed

*Table 12: Indicator values for resilient terrestrial sites within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.*

		<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Most resilient		910,665	2.4%
	More resilient		4,505,234	11.8%
	Slightly more resilient		4,428,908	11.6%
	Average/median resilience		11,103,941	29.2%
	Slightly less resilient		5,137,885	13.5%
	Less resilient		4,597,852	12.1%
	Least resilient		706,274	1.9%
	Developed		4,688,478	12.3%
↓ Low		<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	1,951,455	5.1%
		<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

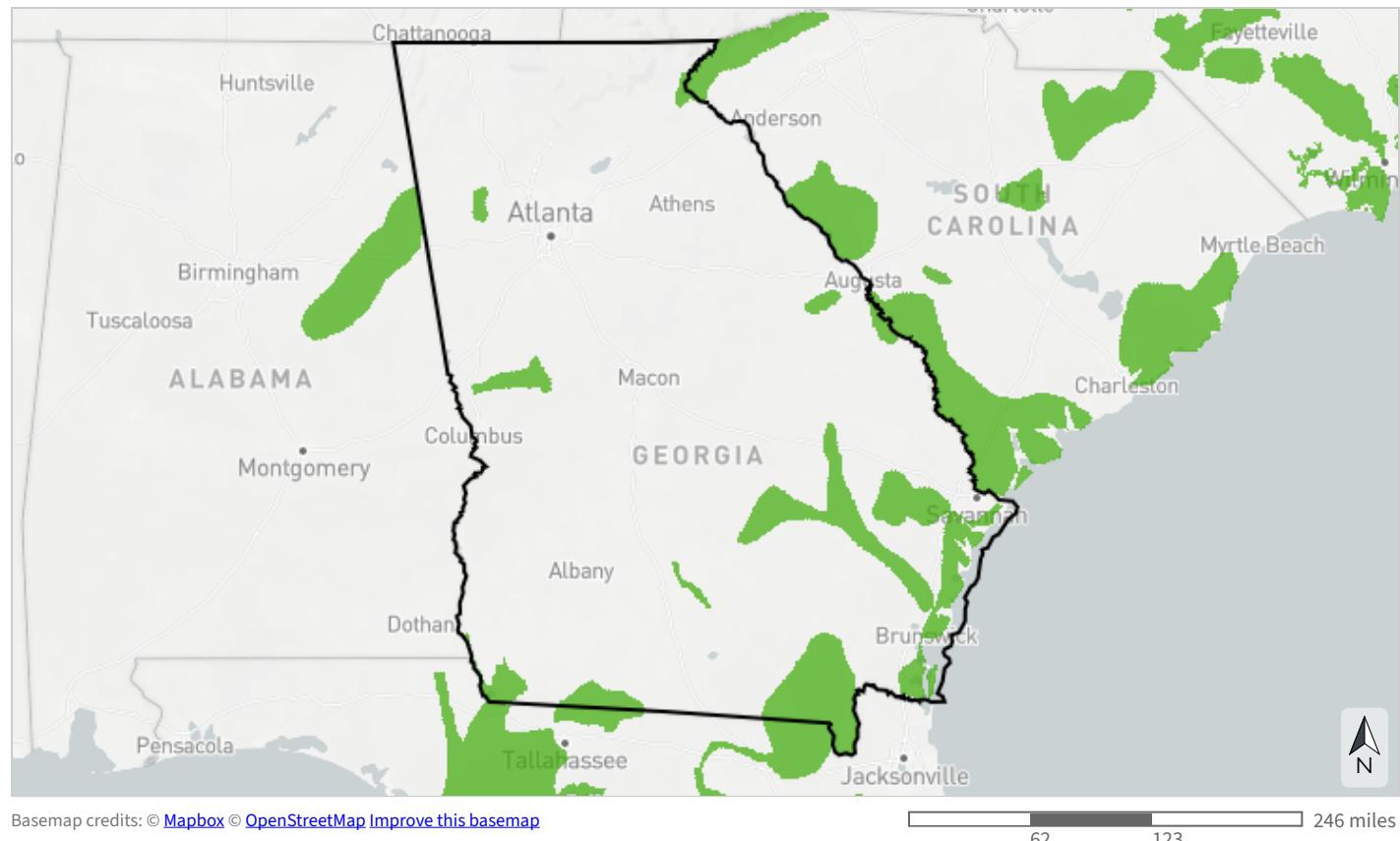
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



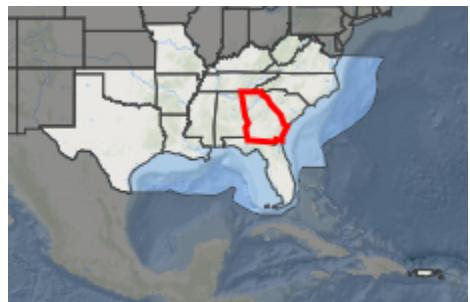
Terrestrial

## South Atlantic amphibian & reptile areas

This indicator represents Priority Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Areas (PARCAs) in the South Atlantic. PARCA is an expert-driven, nonregulatory designation that includes places capable of supporting viable amphibian and reptile populations, places occupied by rare or imperiled species, and places rich in biodiversity or species unique to that geographic area (i.e., endemism). Reptiles and amphibians are a critical part of the Southeast region's rich biodiversity and many populations are declining in the face of threats like habitat loss, invasive species, and climate change.



█ Priority Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Area (PARCA)  
█ Not a Priority Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Area (PARCA)



*Table 13: Indicator values for South Atlantic amphibian & reptile areas within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.*

	Indicator Values	Acres	Percent of Area
↑ High	Priority Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Area (PARCA)	3,474,702	9.1%
↓ Low	Not a Priority Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Area (PARCA)	31,288,329	82.3%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	3,267,661	8.6%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Priority Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Areas:

### Alapaha River and Sandhills

Aeolian sandhills on the east side of the river offer habitat for gopher tortoises, eastern indigo snakes, pine snakes, and eastern diamondback rattlesnakes. Embedded isolated wetlands serve as breeding habitat for striped newts and tiger salamanders, and possibly gopher frogs. Alapaha River is inhabited by the Suwannee drainage form of the alligator snapping turtle, which is likely a distinct taxon and a rarer form than the taxon found in other drainages.

### Altamaha Ocmulgee Ohoopee River Corridors

Aeolian sandhills on the north and east sides of these rivers and adjacent summer habitat retreats harbor the best remaining populations of eastern indigo snakes in the state, if not in their entire range. Gopher tortoises, spotted turtles, pine snakes, and eastern diamondback rattlesnakes also thrive here.

### Apalachicola

Extensive areas of longleaf pine savannas and sandhill habitat with a variety of wetlands, rivers, and streams; frosted flatwoods salamander (largest population with ca. 60 ponds), gopher frog, striped newt (once known from 20 ponds, but populations have seriously declined), gopher tortoise, Apalachicola dusky salamander, Barbour's map turtle, alligator snapping turtle, coal skink, Apalachicola kingsnake, southern copperhead.

### Florida Red Hills

Upland pine forest with gopher tortoises, primarily on quail plantations. It's not clear what is important about this area – no indigo records, one extinct striped newt pond, no gopher frog records; it is good for diamondback rattlesnakes, but they occur almost everywhere in Florida.

### Fort Gordon

Uplands support gopher tortoises and southern hognose snakes, as well as the Georgia endemic Savannah slimy salamander. Streams contain excellent populations of dwarf waterdogs.

### Fort Stewart

Largest contiguous old-growth longleaf pine-dominated ecosystem in the state that harbors the only

known extant population of frosted flatwoods salamanders in the state. Many other rare or unique herps thrive here, including gopher tortoises, spotted turtles, eastern diamondback rattlesnakes, pine snakes, southern hognose snakes, gopher frogs, carpenter frogs, tiger salamanders, many-lined salamanders, and striped newts. The most recently documented mimic glass lizard was found at Fort Stewart.

### **Georgia Barrier Islands and Marshes**

Nesting (island beaches) and/or foraging habitat (estuaries and nearshore waters) for four marine turtles (green, loggerhead, Kemp's ridley, and leatherback). Estuaries and embedded marsh islands are habitat for diamondback terrapins. Other rare species found in upland areas in this region include island glass lizards and dense populations of eastern diamondback rattlesnakes.

### **Georgia Red Hills**

Premier longleaf pine-wiregrass region of Georgia, some of which contains virgin forest. Well-managed, primarily for the benefit of bobwhite quail and red-cockaded woodpeckers, but benefitting all longleaf pine herp specialists. Species of note include gopher tortoises, eastern diamondback rattlesnakes, pine snakes, one-toed amphiumas, tiger salamanders. The included Ochlocknee River contains a healthy alligator snapping turtle population.

### **Lake Seminole Region**

Longleaf pine communities and embedded isolated wetlands provide habitat for gopher tortoises and eastern diamondback rattlesnakes. The Lower Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers, as well as Spring Creek, are inhabited by good populations of Barbour's map and alligator snapping turtles. Apalachicola dusky and Chamberlain's dwarf salamanders are found in seepages in this region. This area is underlain by the Floridan aquifer, which is home to the Georgia blind salamander.

### **Okefenokee Swamp**

This is the largest wetland in Georgia and includes both embedded (islands) and adjacent upland habitats. Striped crayfish snakes and Florida red-bellied turtles, found in very few other places in Southeast Georgia, thrive here. Frosted flatwoods salamanders, striped newts, gopher frogs, many-lined salamanders, dwarf sirens, carpenter Frogs, gopher tortoises, spotted turtles, eastern indigo snakes, eastern diamondback rattlesnakes, Florida green watersnakes, and perhaps mimic glass lizards all occur here.

### **Paulding Forest**

A uniquely intact Piedmont region with ridgetops characterized by montane longleaf habitats, and the only Georgia PARCA representing the true Piedmont ecoregion. Locally occurring mountain chorus frogs are among the interesting herps here. Threats include loss of canopy and drainage of temporary wetlands.

### **Pine Mountain/Flint**

An isolated Appalachian-origin ridge in the lower Piedmont that harbors species more characteristic of montane regions, such as wood frogs and spring and seepage salamanders, as well as species typically found in the Coastal Plain, such as eastern coral snakes. The largest populations known for Webster's salamander are found here. Barbour's map and alligator snapping turtles are found in the river.

### **Savannah River Valley Lower Piedmont**

The lower Piedmont region of the Savannah River Valley is characterized by low rolling hills and small streams dissecting mixed pine and hardwood forests. This region contains the only known populations of the state endangered Webster's salamander in South Carolina. This rare species occurs in extremely disjunct populations primarily in western Georgia and eastern Alabama. The populations in South Carolina are the easternmost known for this species.

### **South Carolina Blue Ridge Escarpment**

South Carolina's Blue Ridge Escarpment is a region where the Blue Ridge Mountains meet the Atlantic Piedmont region. This region is characterized by high rainfall, lush cove forests, bare rocky cliffs, and numerous small streams and rivers. All of the known locations for the newly described patchnose salamander and dwarf blackbelly salamander, green salamander, federally threatened bog turtle, state endangered coal skink, timber rattlesnake, shovelnose salamander and seepage salamander are contained within this region.

### **Southern Savannah River Valley Southern Coastal Plain**

This large region comprises a wide variety of habitats including longleaf pine flatwoods, mesic savannas and sandhills, blackwater and brownwater rivers and streams, a variety of isolated freshwater wetlands, including Carolina bays and maritime communities such as maritime forest, beach dune and swale, and hammocks. This region is home to a significant number of rare and declining amphibian and reptile species, including the federally threatened flatwoods salamander, the state endangered gopher tortoise, the state endangered gopher frog, the state threatened southern hognose snake, the state threatened spotted turtle, pine snake, eastern diamondback rattlesnake, pine woods snake, bird-voiced treefrog, tiger salamander, and others. This region of South Carolina is one of the most herpetofaunally diverse areas of the state.

### **Suwannee/Santa Fe/Osceola**

Extensive pine flatwoods and swamps (Osceola) and sandhill habitat (along the Suwannee and Santa Fe Rivers). Species of note include the easternmost population of the alligator snapping turtle (may be a separate taxon), Suwannee cooter, indigo snake, tiger salamander, gopher tortoise, southern hognose snake, and Florida pine snake along the Suwannee and Santa Fe rivers, in addition to the many-lined salamander, carpenter frog, timber rattlesnake, spotted turtle, and possibly the last remaining population of the frosted flatwoods salamander on public land in the peninsula (Osceola).

### **Talladega**

Largely forested and, although fragmented, still has nice deciduous forest habitats.

### **Tugaloo**

Second highest salamander species richness in Georgia, especially in the genus *Desmognathus* (five species). Includes all but one known population (in South Carolina) of the locally endemic patch-nosed salamander, as well as green salamanders.

### **Yuchi/Vogtle**

Pleistocene beach dune-origin sandhills that are a stronghold for southern hognose and pine snakes. Gopher tortoises are also present, though depleted from past human collection for food.

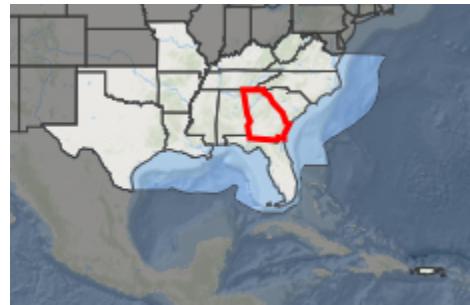
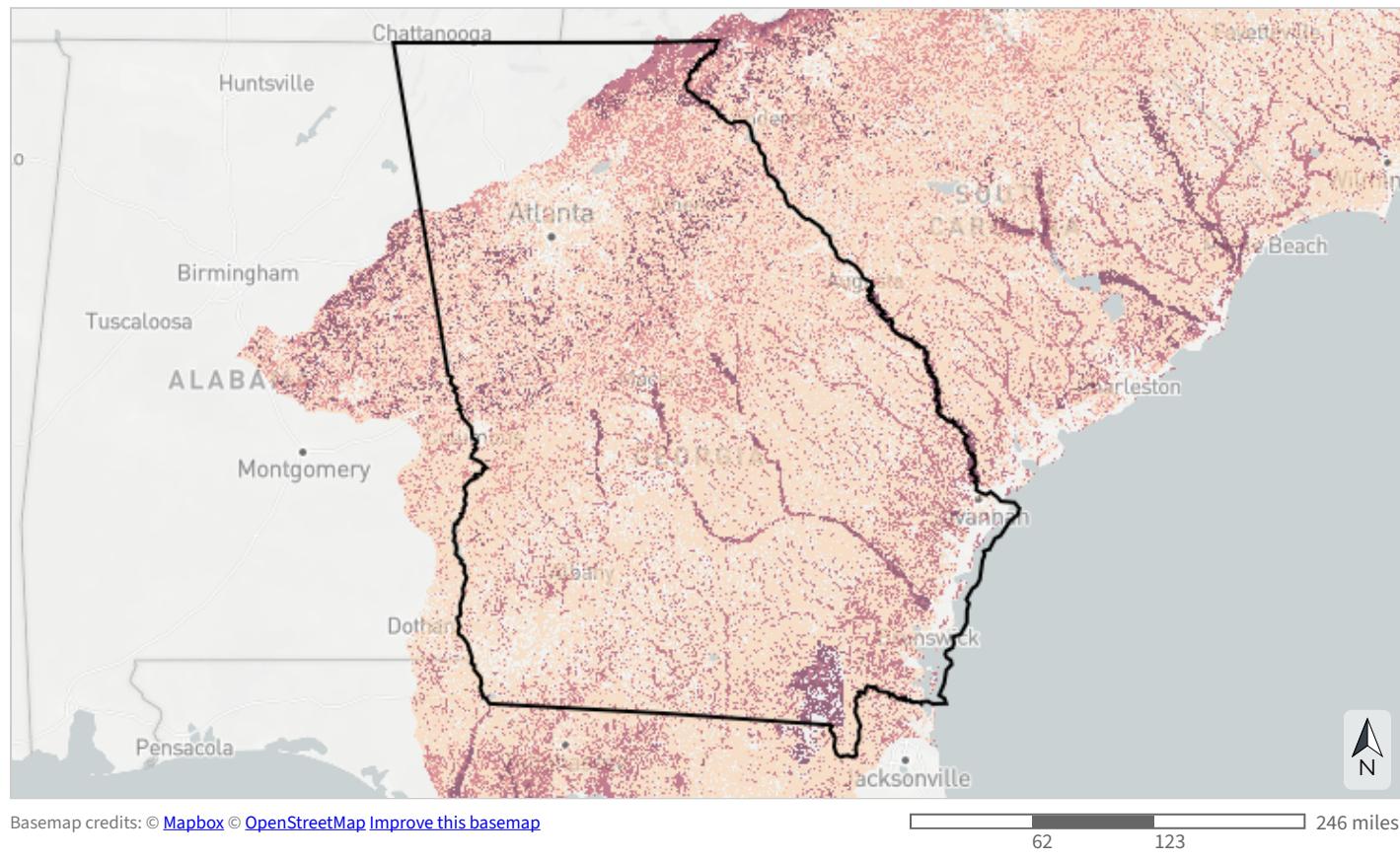
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas.](#)



Terrestrial

## South Atlantic forest birds

This indicator is an index of habitat suitability for twelve upland hardwood and forested wetland bird species (wood thrush, whip-poor-will, American woodcock, red-headed woodpecker, Chuck-will's widow, hooded warbler, Kentucky warbler, Acadian flycatcher, Northern parula, black-throated green warbler, prothonotary warbler, Swainson's warbler) based on patch size and other ecosystem characteristics such as proximity to water and proximity to forest and ecotone edge. The needs of these species are increasingly restrictive at higher index values, reflecting better quality habitat. It originates from Southeast Gap Analysis Program and Designing Sustainable Landscapes bird habitat models.



- Very large patches near water (potential for presence of Swainson's warbler)
- Large patches often near water (potential for presence of Northern parula, black-throated green warbler, or prothonotary warbler)
- Medium patches (potential for presence of Acadian flycatcher)
- Small patches often near water (potential for presence of hooded warbler or Kentucky warbler)
- Very small patches or near open areas (potential for presence of wood thrush, whip-poor-will, red-headed woodpecker, Chuck-will's widow, or American woodcock)
- Less potential for presence of forest bird index species

Table 14: Indicator values for South Atlantic forest birds within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Very large patches near water (potential for presence of Swainson's warbler)	1,345,981	3.5%
	Large patches often near water (potential for presence of Northern parula, black-throated green warbler, or prothonotary warbler)	3,130,773	8.2%
	Medium patches (potential for presence of Acadian flycatcher)	2,530,659	6.7%
	Small patches often near water (potential for presence of hooded warbler or Kentucky warbler)	930,086	2.4%
↓ Low	Very small patches or near open areas (potential for presence of wood thrush, whip-poor-will, red-headed woodpecker, Chuck-will's widow, or American woodcock)	20,346,926	53.5%
	Less potential for presence of forest bird index species	6,471,137	17.0%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	3,275,130	8.6%
	<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Terrestrial

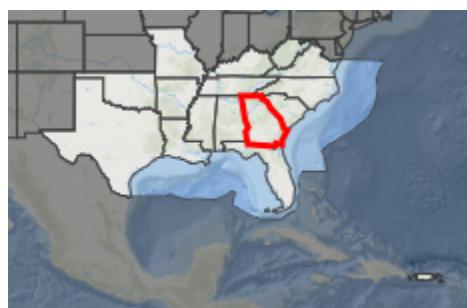
## South Atlantic low-urban historic landscapes

This cultural resource indicator is an index of sites on the National Register of Historic Places surrounded by limited urban development. It identifies significant historic places that remain connected to their context in the natural world. It uses the National Land Cover Database and historic places data from the National Park Service and various state historic resource agencies.



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62 123 246 miles



- Historic place with nearby low-urban buffer
- Historic place with nearby high-urban buffer
- Not in the National Register of Historic Places

*Table 15: Indicator values for South Atlantic low-urban historic landscapes within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.*

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Historic place with nearby low-urban buffer	1,942	<0.1%
	Historic place with nearby high-urban buffer	6,500	<0.1%
↓ Low	Not in the National Register of Historic Places	34,346,096	90.3%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	3,676,155	9.7%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

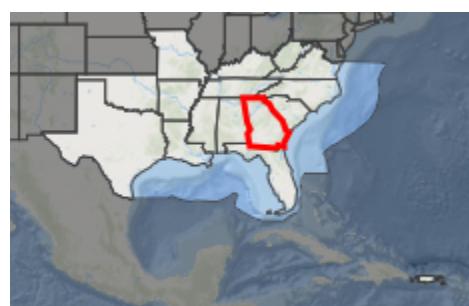
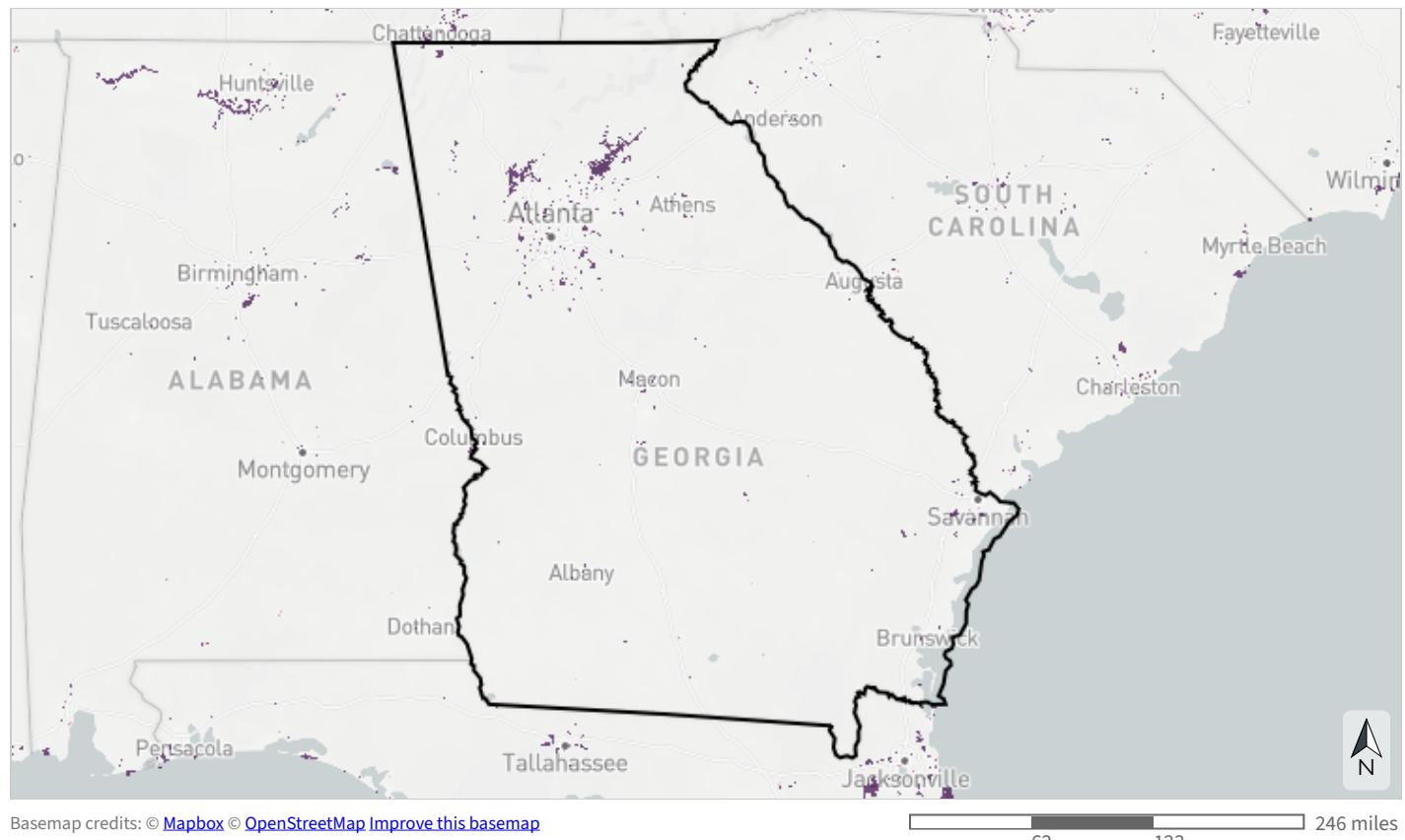
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Terrestrial

## Urban park size

This cultural resource indicator measures the size of parks larger than 5 acres in the urban environment. Protected natural areas in urban environments provide urban residents a nearby place to connect with nature, and offer refugia for some species. This indicator complements the equitable access to potential parks indicator by capturing the value of existing parks. It originates from the Protected Areas Database of the United States, Census urban areas, and the National Land Cover Database.



- 75+ acre urban park
- 50 to <75 acre urban park
- 30 to <50 acre urban park
- 10 to <30 acre urban park
- 5 to <10 acre urban park
- <5 acre urban park or not identified as an urban park

*Table 16: Indicator values for urban park size within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.*

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	75+ acre urban park	234,639	0.6%
	50 to <75 acre urban park	9,732	<0.1%
	30 to <50 acre urban park	11,504	<0.1%
	10 to <30 acre urban park	16,103	<0.1%
	5 to <10 acre urban park	4,969	<0.1%
	<5 acre urban park or not identified as an urban park	37,753,718	99.3%
<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>		26	<0.1%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

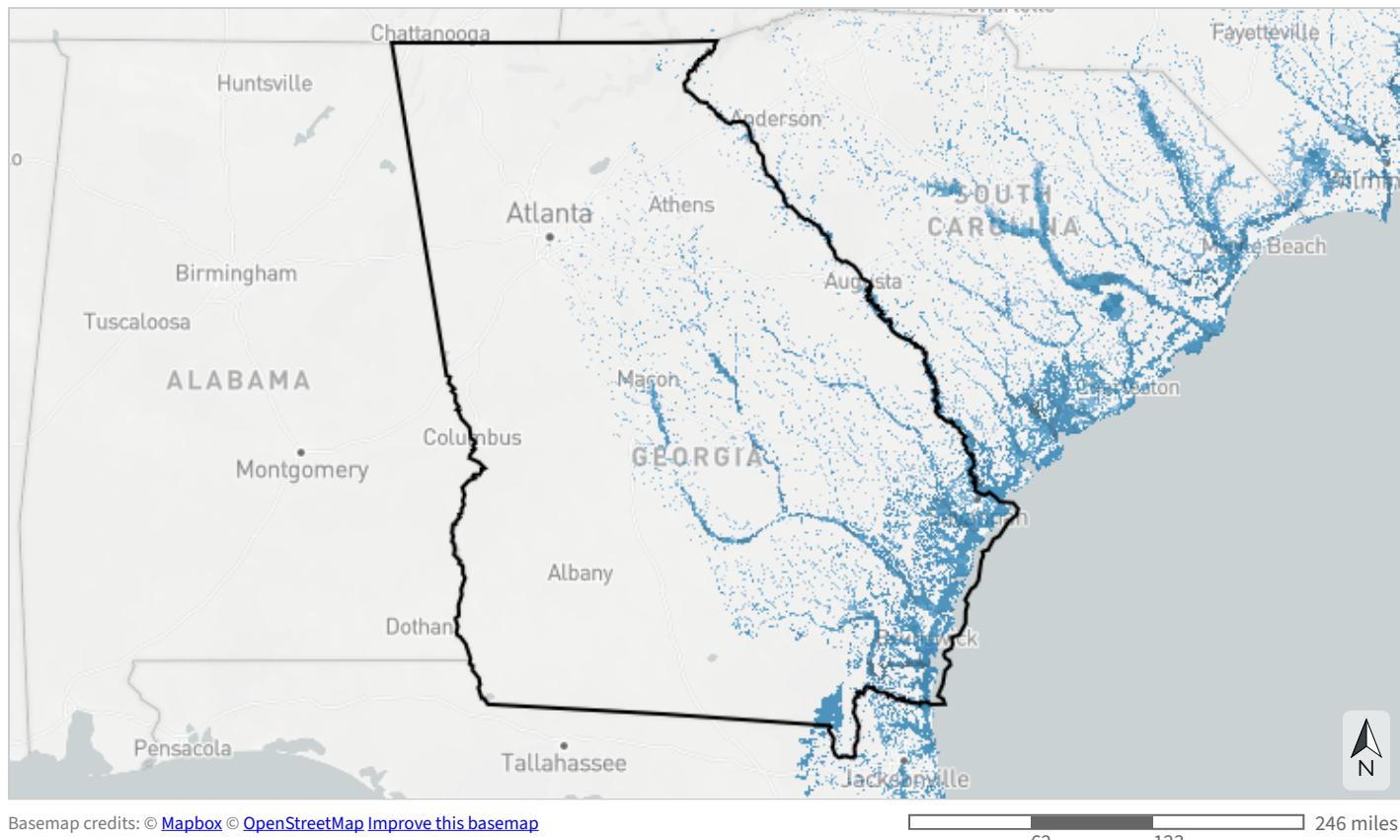
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Freshwater

## Atlantic migratory fish habitat

This indicator measures the condition of migratory fish habitat along the Atlantic coast within each catchment, using metrics of water quality, aquatic connectivity, habitat fragmentation, flow alteration, and more. Areas of excellent fish habitat are already in good condition and face few threats. Restoration opportunity areas are doing well in some respects, but restoration projects could significantly improve them. Degraded areas of opportunity face many challenges, and restoration projects are unlikely to increase available fish habitat unless particularly large in scope and scale. This indicator originates from the Atlantic Coast Fish Habitat Partnership's fish habitat conservation area mapping and prioritization project.



- Final score of 80 (areas of excellent fish habitat)
- Final score of 70 (areas of excellent fish habitat)
- Final score of 60 (restoration opportunity areas)
- Final score of 50 (restoration opportunity areas)
- Final score of 40 (restoration opportunity areas)
- Final score of 30 (restoration opportunity areas)
- Final score of 20 (restoration opportunity areas)
- Final score of 10 (degraded areas of opportunity)
- Final score of 0 (degraded areas of opportunity)

*Table 17: Indicator values for Atlantic migratory fish habitat within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.*

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High ↓ Low	Final score of 80 (areas of excellent fish habitat)	57,497	0.2%
	Final score of 70 (areas of excellent fish habitat)	228,695	0.6%
	Final score of 60 (restoration opportunity areas)	1,178,953	3.1%
	Final score of 50 (restoration opportunity areas)	563,259	1.5%
	Final score of 40 (restoration opportunity areas)	437,278	1.1%
	Final score of 30 (restoration opportunity areas)	389,798	1.0%
	Final score of 20 (restoration opportunity areas)	118,565	0.3%
	Final score of 10 (degraded areas of opportunity)	24,259	<0.1%
	Final score of 0 (degraded areas of opportunity)	1,029	<0.1%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	35,031,358	92.1%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

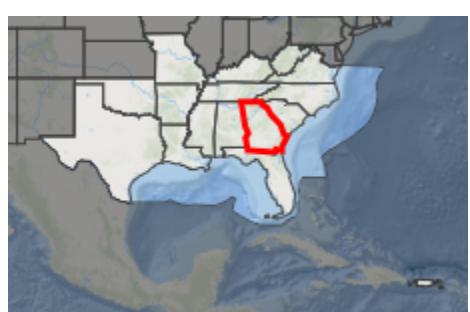
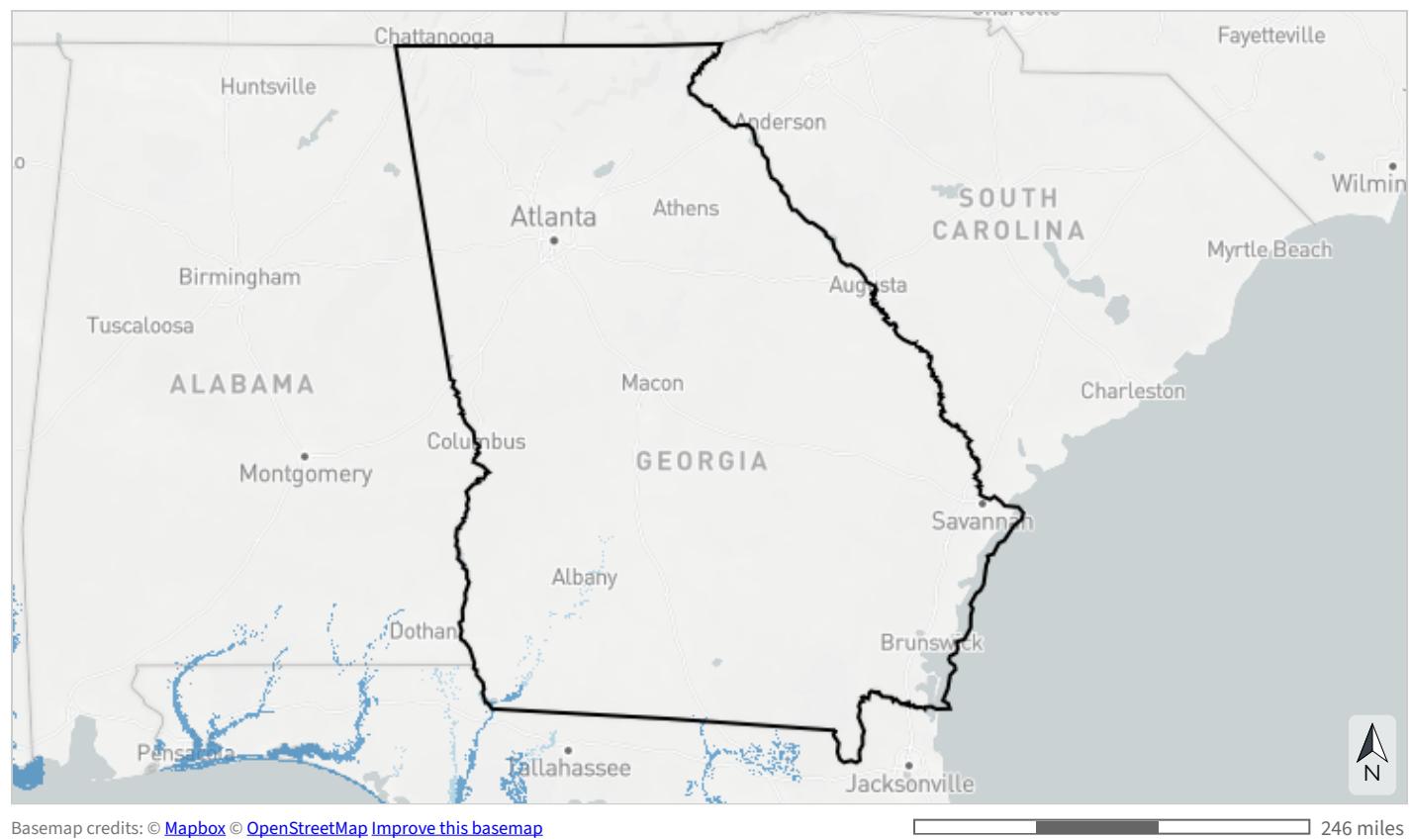
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Freshwater

## Gulf migratory fish connectivity

This indicator captures how far upstream migratory fish in the Gulf of Mexico have been observed. How far upstream migratory fish can travel reflects not just the presence of dams and other barriers, but also the presence of measures like fish ladders that allow specific species to access habitat upstream of dams. This indicator originates from The Nature Conservancy's Southeast Aquatic Connectivity Assessment Project and applies to the Environmental Protection Agency's estimated floodplain, which spatially defines areas estimated to be inundated by a 100-year flood (also known as the 1% annual chance flood).



- Presence of Gulf sturgeon
- Presence of Alabama shad, American shad, or striped bass
- Not identified as Gulf migratory fish habitat (east of the Mississippi River)

*Table 18: Indicator values for Gulf migratory fish connectivity within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.*

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>	
↑ High	Presence of Gulf sturgeon	26,519	<0.1%	↑ In good condition
	Presence of Alabama shad, American shad, or striped bass	52,339	0.1%	
↓ Low	Not identified as Gulf migratory fish habitat (east of the Mississippi River)	17,077,083	44.9%	↓ Not in good condition
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	20,874,751	54.9%	
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>	

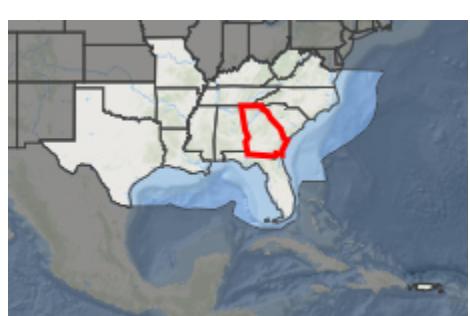
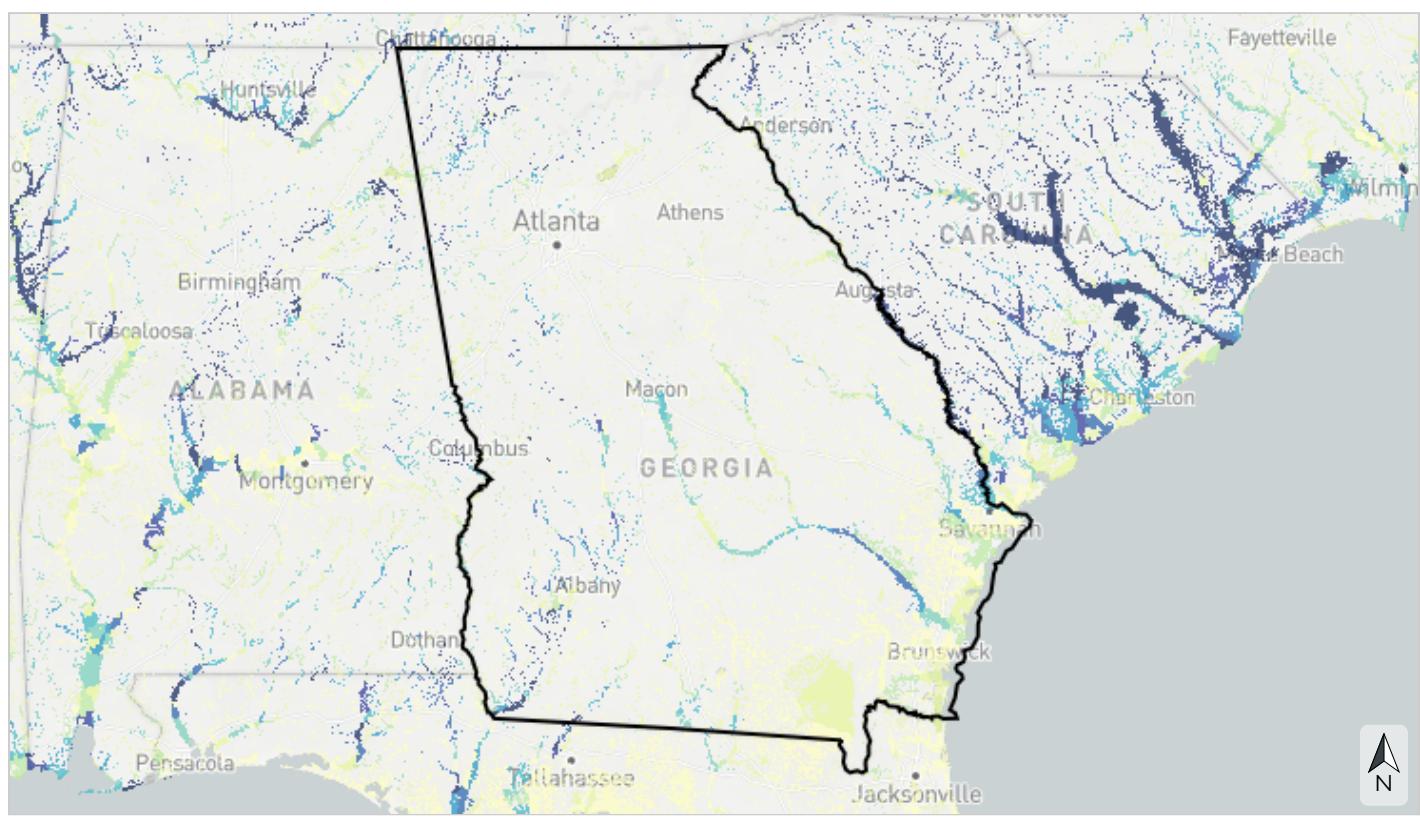
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Freshwater

## Imperiled aquatic species

This indicator measures the number of aquatic animal Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) observed within each 12-digit HUC subwatershed, including fish, mussels, snails, crayfish, and amphibians. SGCN are identified in State Wildlife Action Plans as most in need of conservation action. This indicator captures patterns of rare and endemic aquatic species diversity. It originates from state Natural Heritage Program data collected by the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership and applies to the Environmental Protection Agency's estimated floodplain, which spatially defines areas estimated to be inundated by a 100-year flood (also known as the 1% annual chance flood).



### Number of aquatic animal Species of Greatest Conservation Need observed

8+ species
7 species
6 species
5 species
4 species
3 species
2 species
1 species
0 species
Not identified as a floodplain (excluding West Virginia)

*Table 19: Indicator values for imperiled aquatic species within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.*

<b>Indicator Values: Number of aquatic animal Species of Greatest Conservation Need observed</b>		<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	8+ species	181,787	0.5%
	7 species	54,366	0.1%
	6 species	143,770	0.4%
	5 species	140,524	0.4%
	4 species	240,058	0.6%
	3 species	327,483	0.9%
	2 species	669,228	1.8%
	1 species	1,268,192	3.3%
	0 species	2,599,744	6.8%
	Not identified as a floodplain (excluding West Virginia)	32,065,048	84.3%
↓ Low	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	340,492	0.9%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

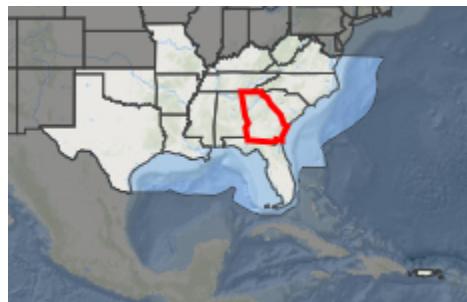
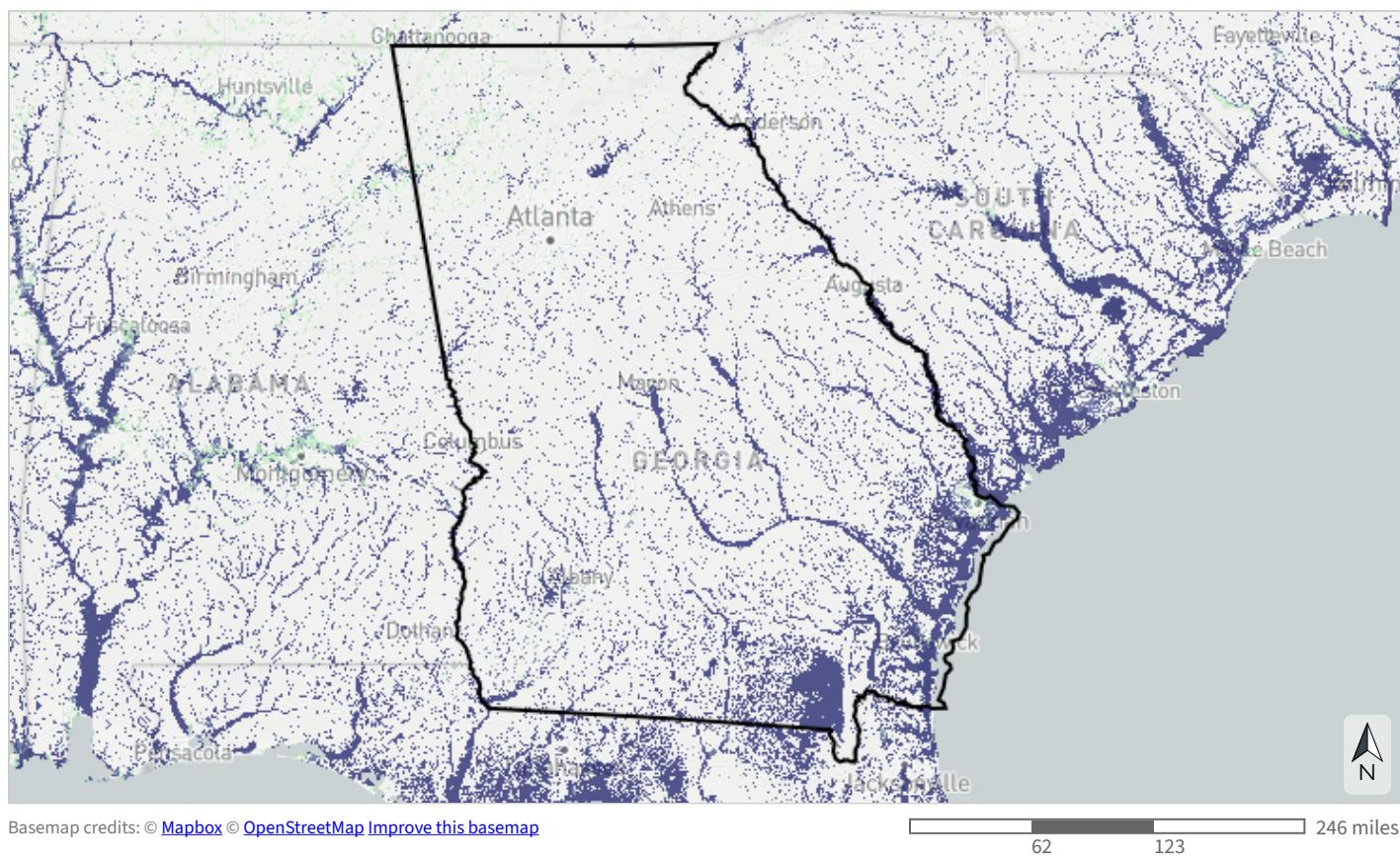
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Freshwater

## Natural landcover in floodplains

This indicator measures the amount of natural landcover in the estimated floodplain of rivers and streams within each catchment. It assesses the stream channel and its surrounding riparian buffer, measuring the percent of unaltered habitat like forests, wetlands, or open water (rather than agriculture or development). Intact vegetated buffers within the floodplain of rivers and streams provide aquatic habitat, improve water quality, reduce erosion and flooding, recharge groundwater, and more. This indicator originates from the National Land Cover Database and applies to the Environmental Protection Agency's estimated floodplain, which spatially defines areas estimated to be inundated by a 100-year flood (also known as the 1% annual chance flood).



### Percent natural landcover within the estimated floodplain, by catchment

- >90% natural landcover
- >80-90% natural landcover
- >70-80% natural landcover
- >60-70% natural landcover
- ≤60% natural landcover
- Not identified as a floodplain

Table 20: Indicator values for natural landcover in floodplains within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.

	<b>Indicator Values: Percent natural landcover within the estimated floodplain, by catchment</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	>90% natural landcover	4,803,983	12.6%
	>80-90% natural landcover	311,750	0.8%
	>70-80% natural landcover	142,924	0.4%
↓ Low	>60-70% natural landcover	90,689	0.2%
	≤60% natural landcover	275,805	0.7%
	Not identified as a floodplain	32,065,073	84.3%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	340,467	0.9%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

↑ In good condition

↓ Not in good condition

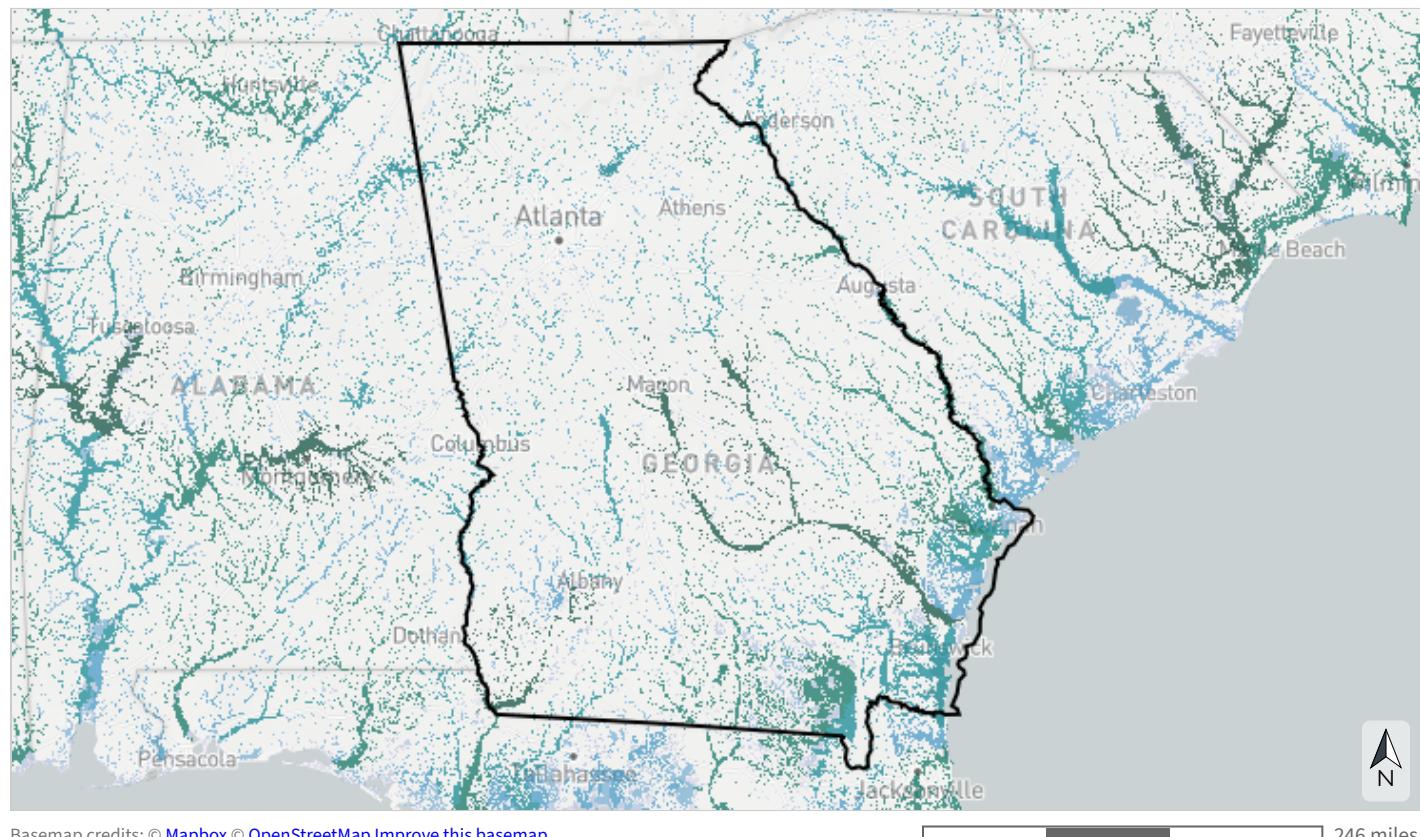
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Freshwater

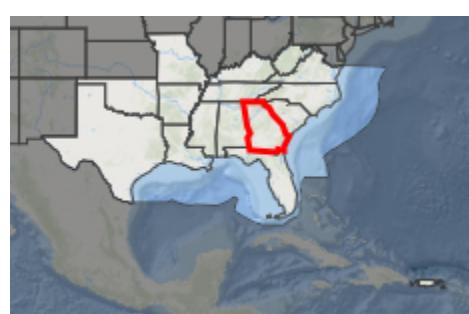
## Network complexity

This indicator depicts the number of connected stream size classes in a river network between dams or waterfalls. River networks with a variety of connected stream classes help retain aquatic biodiversity in a changing climate by allowing species to access climate refugia and move between habitats. This indicator originates from the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership and applies to the Environmental Protection Agency's estimated floodplain, which spatially defines areas estimated to be inundated by a 100-year flood (also known as the 1% annual chance flood).



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### Number of connected stream size classes

- 7 size classes
- 6 size classes
- 5 size classes
- 4 size classes
- 3 size classes
- 2 size classes
- 1 size class
- Not identified as a floodplain

Table 21: Indicator values for network complexity within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.

	<b>Indicator Values: Number of connected stream size classes</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	7 size classes	773,481	2.0%
	6 size classes	1,516,122	4.0%
	5 size classes	1,772,200	4.7%
	4 size classes	456,126	1.2%
	3 size classes	340,920	0.9%
	2 size classes	470,037	1.2%
	1 size class	293,611	0.8%
	Not identified as a floodplain	32,065,776	84.3%
↓ Low	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	342,419	0.9%
	<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

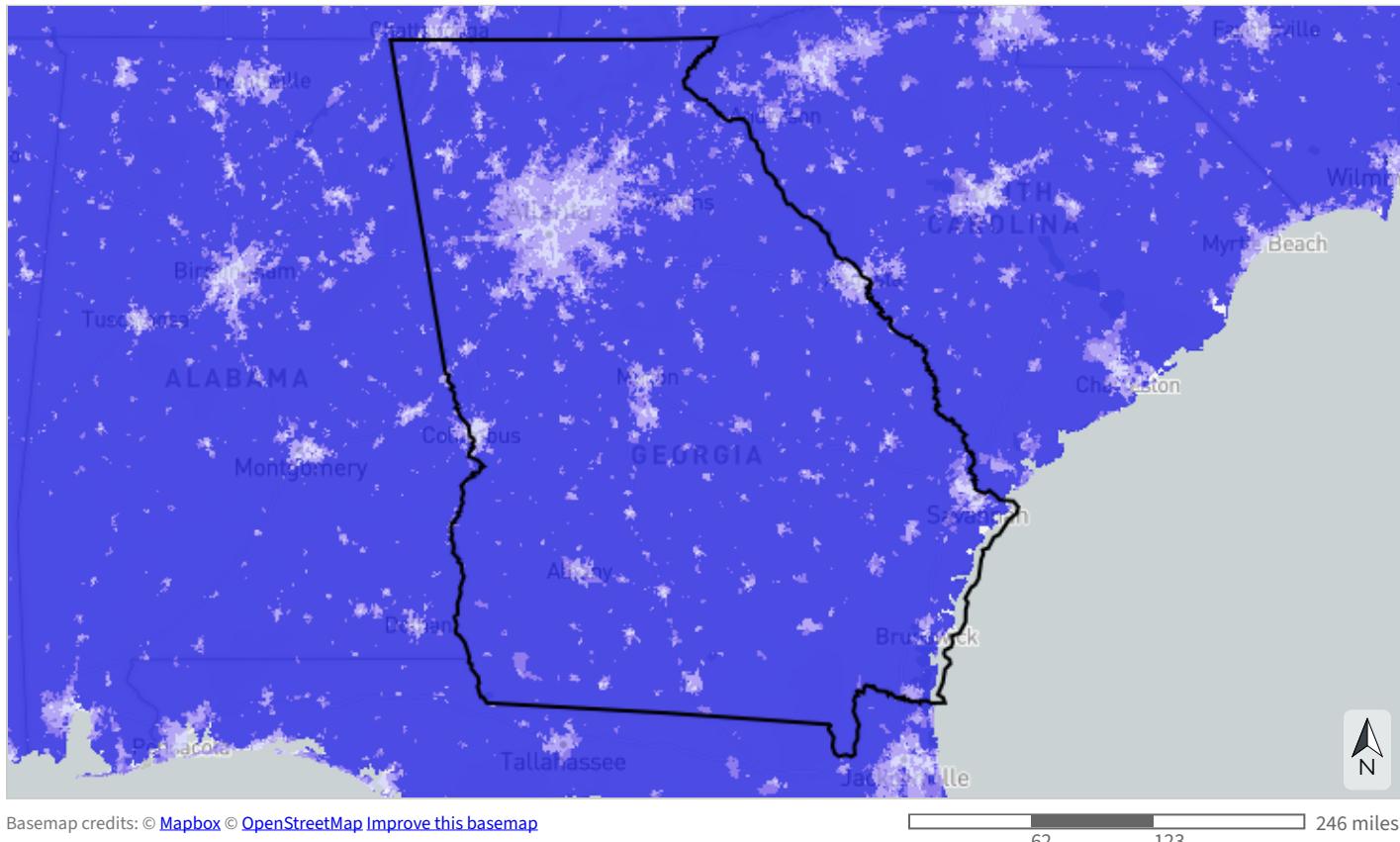
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Freshwater

## Permeable surface

This indicator measures the average percent of non-impervious cover within each catchment. High levels of impervious surface degrade water quality and alter freshwater flow, impacting both aquatic species communities and ecosystem services for people, like the availability of clean drinking water. This indicator originates from the National Land Cover Database.



### Percent of catchment permeable

- >95% permeable (likely high water quality and supporting most sensitive aquatic species)
- >90-95% permeable (likely declining water quality and supporting most aquatic species)
- >70-90% permeable (likely degraded water quality and not supporting many aquatic species)
- ≤70% permeable (likely degraded instream flow, water quality, and aquatic species communities)

*Table 22: Indicator values for permeable surface within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.*

	<b>Indicator Values: Percent of catchment permeable</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>	
↑ High	>95% permeable (likely high water quality and supporting most sensitive aquatic species)	33,000,881	86.8%	↑ In good condition
	>90-95% permeable (likely declining water quality and supporting most aquatic species)	1,815,314	4.8%	↓ Not in good condition
↓ Low	>70-90% permeable (likely degraded water quality and not supporting many aquatic species)	2,280,579	6.0%	
	≤70% permeable (likely degraded instream flow, water quality, and aquatic species communities)	593,426	1.6%	
<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>		340,492	0.9%	
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>	

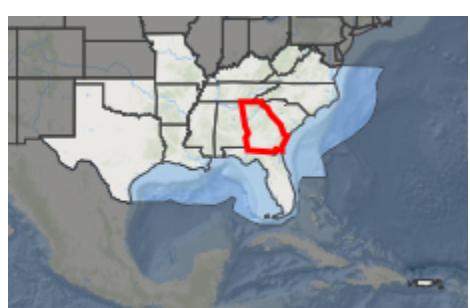
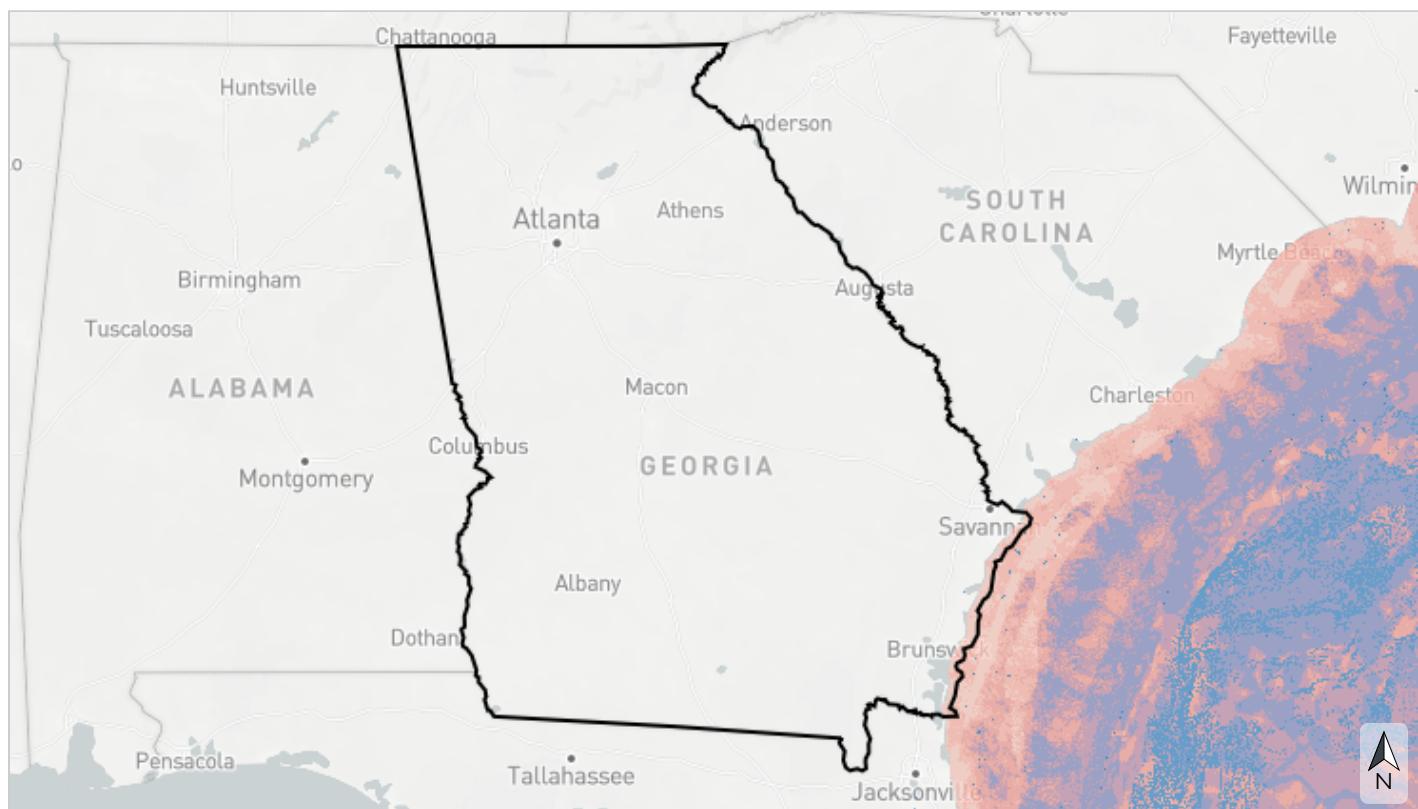
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Coastal &amp; marine

## Atlantic coral & hardbottom

This indicator predicts the presence of coral and hardbottom in the Atlantic ocean based on direct observations, known locations of human-created structures like artificial reefs, and predictive models. The models use hardbottom observations and a suite of environmental predictors including measures of depth, seafloor topography and substrate, oceanography, and geography. Hardbottom provides an anchor for important seafloor habitats such as deep-sea corals, plants, and sponges, providing valuable structure that supports a wide range of invertebrate and fish species. This indicator combines data from The Nature Conservancy's South Atlantic Bight Marine Assessment and multiple National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration datasets (deep-sea coral observations, shipwrecks, artificial reefs, and two projects predicting hardbottom distribution).



- Confirmed coral
- Confirmed natural or human-created hardbottom (shipwrecks, artificial reefs)
- Predicted cold water coral mounds (Blake Plateau)
- Highest probability of hardbottom (>80th percentile)
- High probability of hardbottom(>60th-80th percentile)
- Medium probability of hardbottom (>40th-60th percentile)
- Low probability of hardbottom (>20th-40th percentile)
- Lowest probability of hardbottom (<=20th percentile)
- Not identified as hardbottom

*Table 23: Indicator values for Atlantic coral & hardbottom within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.*

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Confirmed coral	0	0%
	Confirmed natural or human-created hardbottom (shipwrecks, artificial reefs)	1,673	<0.1%
	Predicted cold water coral mounds (Blake Plateau)	0	0%
	Highest probability of hardbottom (>80th percentile)	0	0%
	High probability of hardbottom(>60th-80th percentile)	0	0%
	Medium probability of hardbottom (>40th-60th percentile)	232	<0.1%
	Low probability of hardbottom (>20th-40th percentile)	57,915	0.2%
	Lowest probability of hardbottom ( $\leq$ 20th percentile)	228,940	0.6%
↓ Low	Not identified as hardbottom	5,365,107	14.1%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	32,376,826	85.1%
	<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

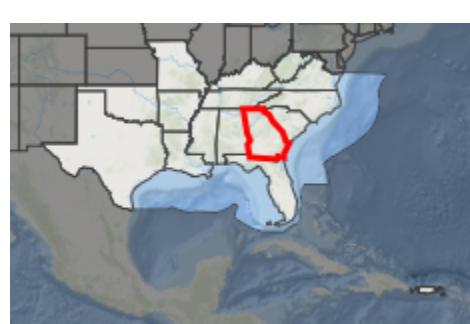
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Coastal &amp; marine

## Atlantic estuarine fish habitat

This indicator measures the condition of estuarine fish habitat along the Atlantic coast using metrics of water quality, marsh edges, seagrass and oyster reefs, fragmentation, human development, and more. Areas of excellent fish habitat are already in good condition and face few threats. Restoration opportunity areas are doing well in some respects, but restoration projects could significantly improve them. Degraded areas of opportunity face many challenges, and restoration projects are unlikely to increase available fish habitat unless particularly large in scope and scale. This indicator originates from the Atlantic Coast Fish Habitat Partnership's fish habitat conservation area mapping and prioritization project.



- Final score of 80 (areas of excellent fish habitat)
- Final score of 70 (areas of excellent fish habitat)
- Final score of 60 (restoration opportunity areas)
- Final score of 50 (restoration opportunity areas)
- Final score of 40 (restoration opportunity areas)
- Final score of 30 (restoration opportunity areas)
- Final score of 20 (restoration opportunity areas)
- Final score of 10 (degraded areas of opportunity)
- Final score of 0 (degraded areas of opportunity)

Table 24: Indicator values for Atlantic estuarine fish habitat within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Final score of 80 (areas of excellent fish habitat)	2,952	<0.1%
	Final score of 70 (areas of excellent fish habitat)	15,300	<0.1%
	Final score of 60 (restoration opportunity areas)	59,683	0.2%
	Final score of 50 (restoration opportunity areas)	169,394	0.4%
	Final score of 40 (restoration opportunity areas)	287,312	0.8%
	Final score of 30 (restoration opportunity areas)	161,177	0.4%
	Final score of 20 (restoration opportunity areas)	57,145	0.2%
	Final score of 10 (degraded areas of opportunity)	11,643	<0.1%
	Final score of 0 (degraded areas of opportunity)	0	0%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	37,266,086	98.0%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

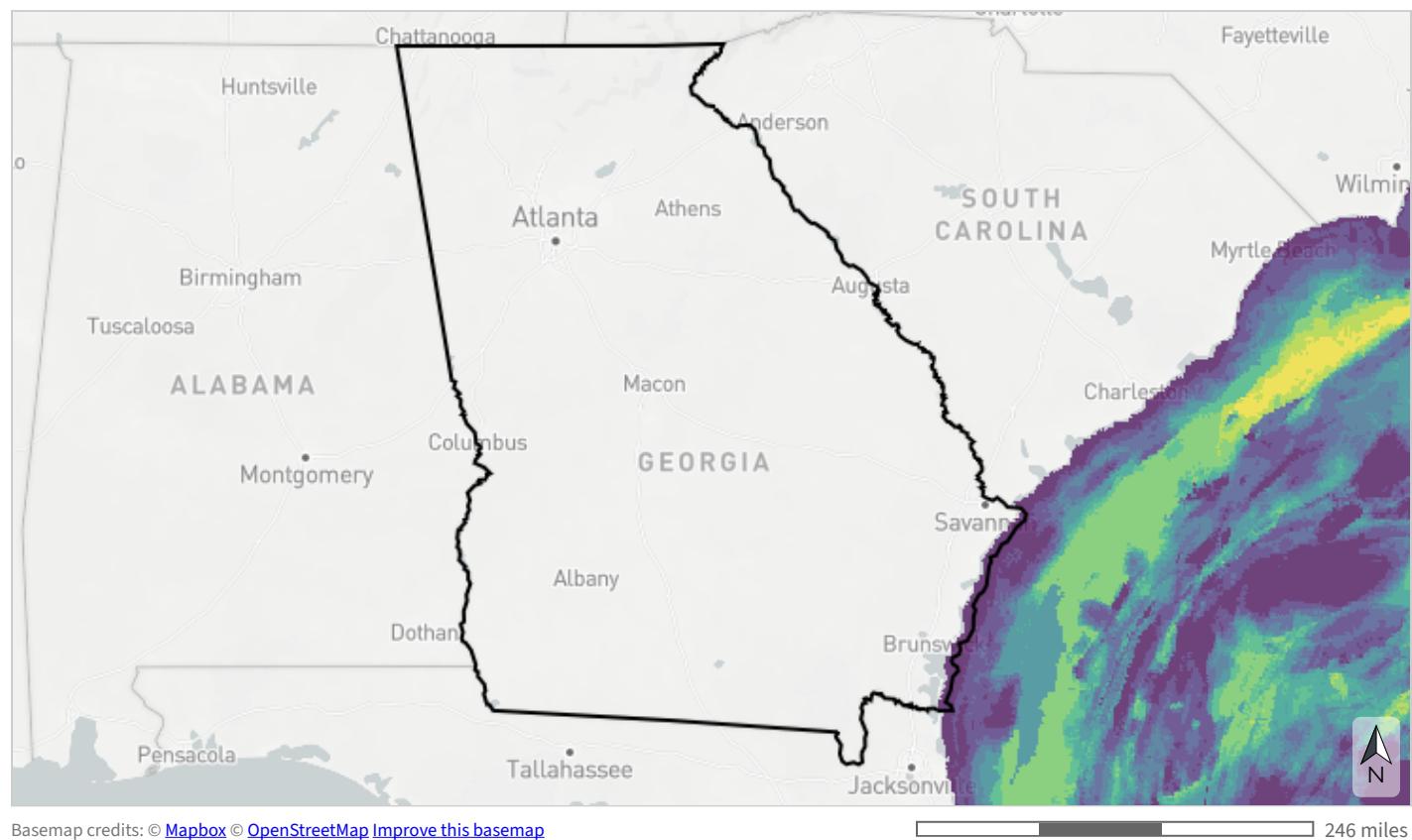
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Coastal &amp; marine

## Atlantic marine birds

This indicator identifies important areas in the Atlantic Ocean for birds that feed exclusively or mainly at sea. It uses seasonal predictions of relative abundance for 19 species of marine birds (Audubon's shearwater, band-rumped storm petrel, black-capped petrel, black scoter, Bonaparte's gull, bridled tern, brown pelican, common loon, common tern, Cory's shearwater, great shearwater, Manx shearwater, Northern gannet, parasitic jaeger, red-throated loon, royal tern, sooty shearwater, sooty tern, white-winged scoter) based on sightings from boat-based surveys and marine environmental data like fronts, primary productivity, and ocean currents. This indicator originates from Duke University's Marine-life Data and Analysis Team marine bird models.



### Percentile of importance for marine bird index species (across the full East Coast study area)

- >90th percentile
- >80th-90th percentile
- >70th-80th percentile
- >60th-70th percentile
- >50th-60th percentile
- >40th-50th percentile
- >30th-40th percentile
- >20th-30th percentile
- >10th-20th percentile
- ≤10th percentile
- Land

Table 25: Indicator values for Atlantic marine birds within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.

	<b>Indicator Values: Percentile of importance for marine bird index species (across the full East Coast study area)</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	>90th percentile	256,989	0.7%
	>80th-90th percentile	0	0%
	>70th-80th percentile	0	0%
	>60th-70th percentile	0	0%
	>50th-60th percentile	0	0%
	>40th-50th percentile	0	0%
	>30th-40th percentile	0	0%
	>20th-30th percentile	0	0%
	>10th-20th percentile	0	0%
	≤10th percentile	0	0%
↓ Low	Land	2,155	<0.1%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	37,771,548	99.3%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

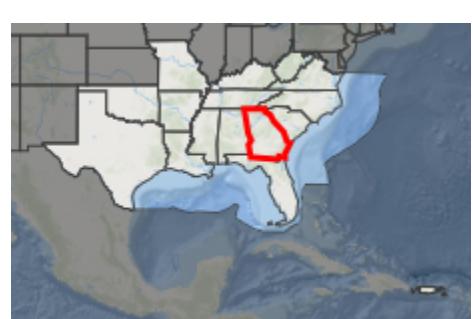
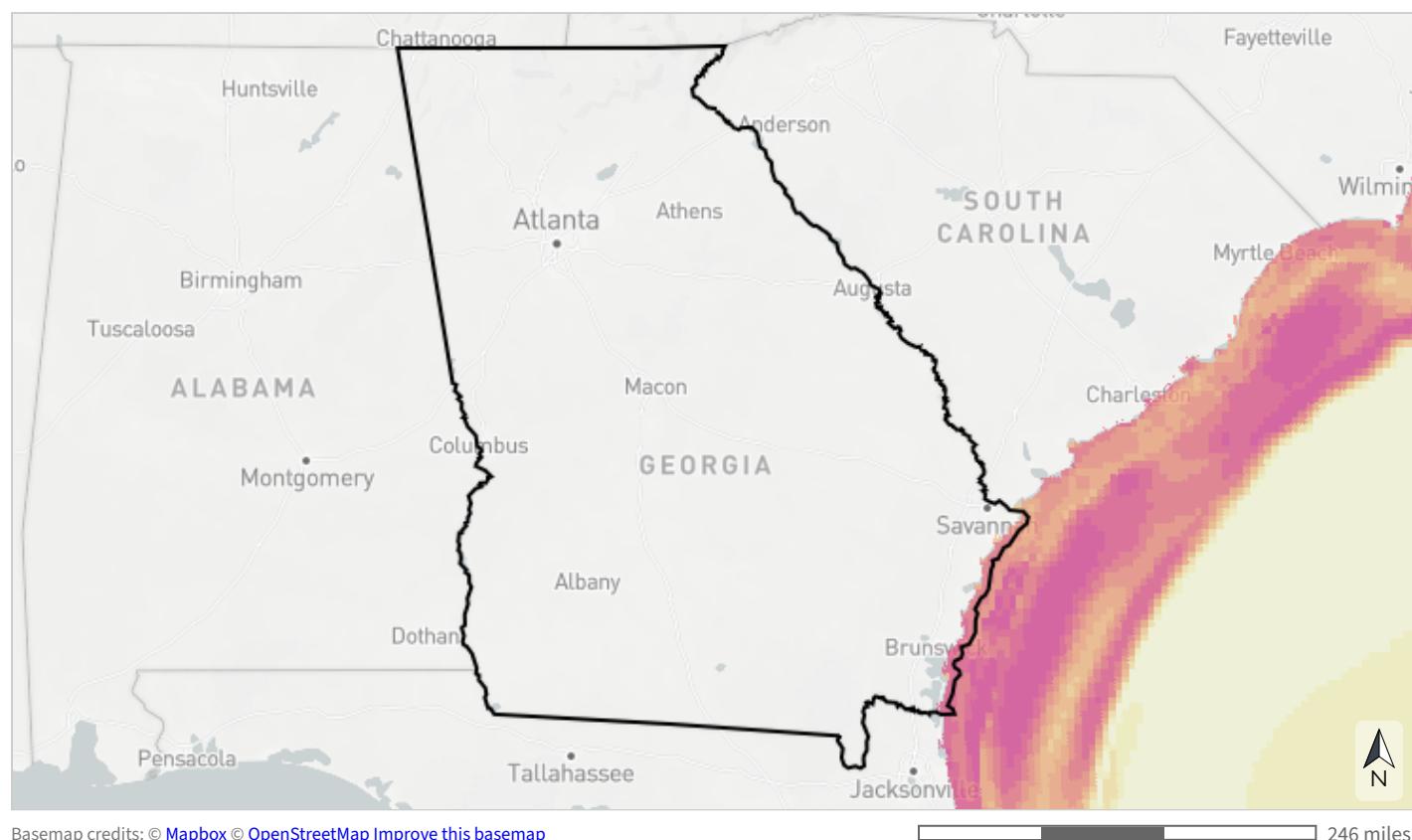
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Coastal &amp; marine

## Atlantic marine mammals

This indicator identifies important areas in the Atlantic Ocean for dolphins, whales, and seals. It incorporates density predictions for 20 marine mammal species or species groups (Atlantic spotted dolphin, Atlantic white-sided dolphin, Clymene dolphin, common bottlenose dolphin, Cuvier's beaked whale, dwarf and pygmy sperm whales, fin whale, harbor porpoise, humpback whale, mesoplodont beaked whales, North Atlantic right whale, pantropical spotted dolphin, pilot whales, Risso's dolphin, rough-toothed dolphin, seals, short-beaked common dolphin, sperm whale, striped dolphin, unidentified beaked whales) based on sightings from boat-based and aerial surveys and data on oceanographic conditions. It uses marine mammal models developed by the Duke Marine Lab.



**Percentile of importance for marine mammal index species (across the full East Coast study area)**

- >90th percentile
- >80th-90th percentile
- >70th-80th percentile
- >60th-70th percentile
- >50th-60th percentile
- >40th-50th percentile
- >30th-40th percentile
- >20th-30th percentile
- >10th-20th percentile
- ≤10th percentile
- Land

Table 26: Indicator values for Atlantic marine mammals within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.

	<b>Indicator Values: Percentile of importance for marine mammal index species (across the full East Coast study area)</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	>90th percentile	0	0%
	>80th-90th percentile	103,262	0.3%
	>70th-80th percentile	149,568	0.4%
	>60th-70th percentile	42,779	0.1%
	>50th-60th percentile	6,749	<0.1%
	>40th-50th percentile	8,039	<0.1%
	>30th-40th percentile	1,060	<0.1%
	>20th-30th percentile	0	0%
	>10th-20th percentile	0	0%
	≤10th percentile	0	0%
	Land	50,804	0.1%
↓ Low	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	37,668,432	99.0%
	<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

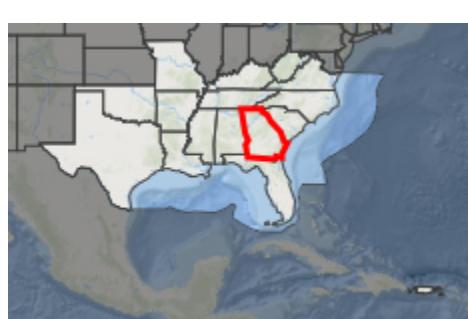
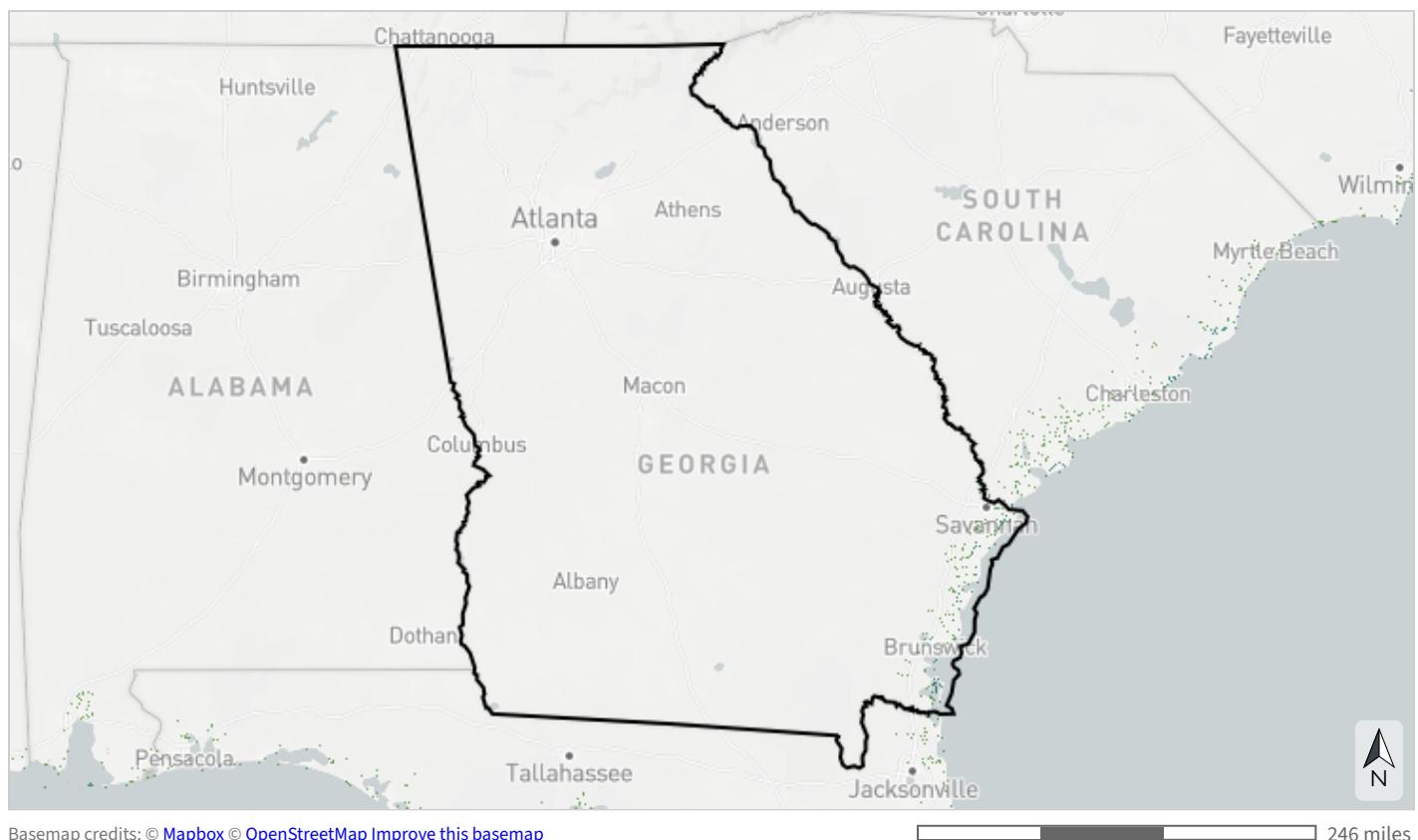
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Coastal &amp; marine

## Coastal shoreline condition

This indicator assesses shoreline condition based on the presence of hardened structures like jetties, groins, and riprap, as well as other human development. By restricting the natural movement of sediment, shoreline armoring increases erosion, prevents the inland migration of coastal ecosystems in response to sea-level rise, and degrades habitat for birds, sea turtles, fish, plants, and other species both on and offshore. Natural shorelines in harder-to-develop coastal areas receive the highest shoreline condition scores, while hardened shorelines receive the lowest scores. This indicator originates from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Environmental Sensitivity Index dataset.



- Natural and harder to develop
- Natural
- Partially armored and harder to develop
- Partially armored
- Armored

Table 27: Indicator values for coastal shoreline condition within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>	
↑ High	Natural and harder to develop	24,347	<0.1%	↑ In good condition
	Natural	53,558	0.1%	
	Partially armored and harder to develop	33	<0.1%	
↓ Low	Partially armored	331	<0.1%	↓ Not in good condition
	Armored	949	<0.1%	
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	37,951,475	99.8%	
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>	

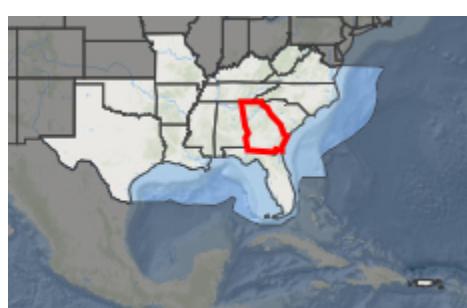
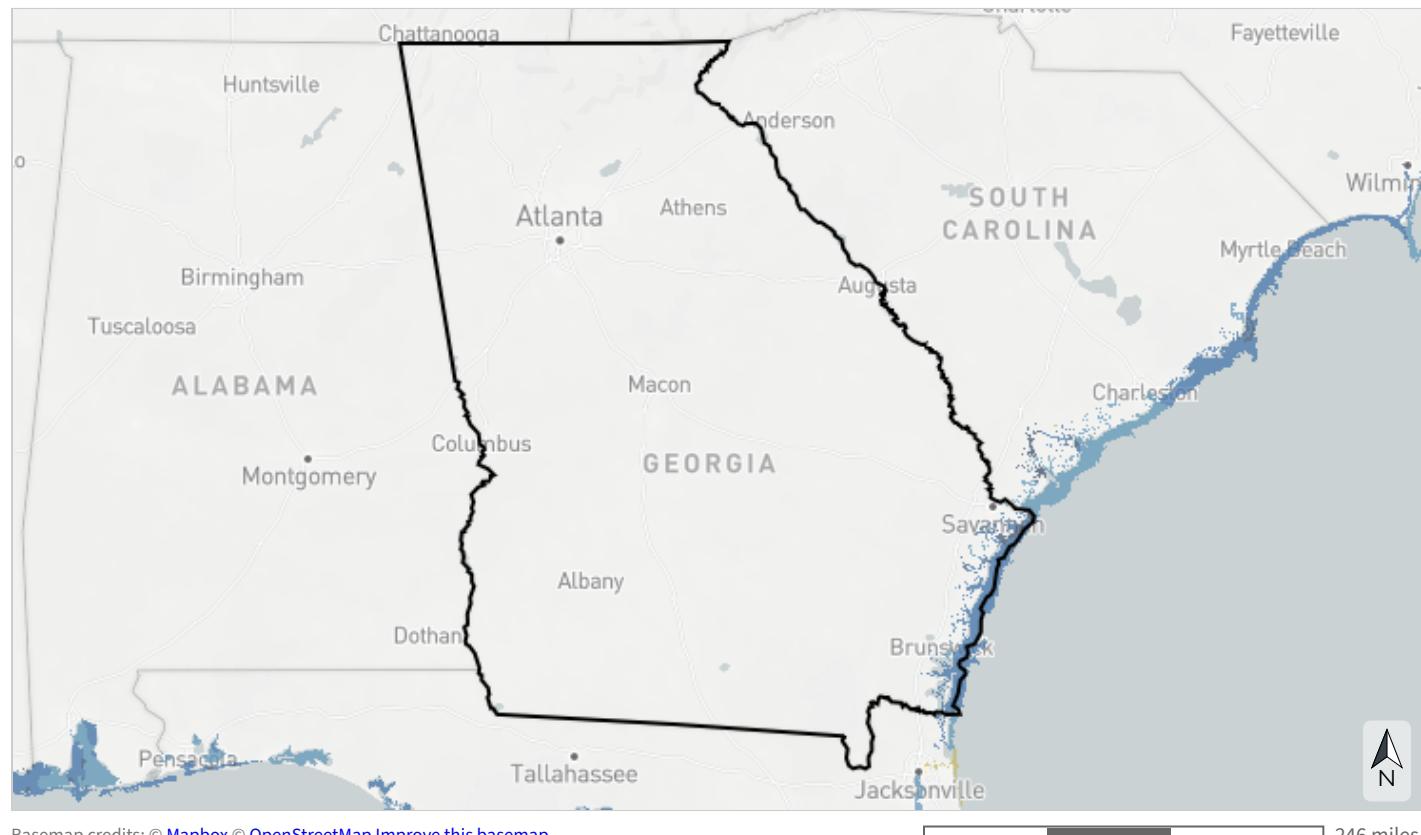
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Coastal &amp; marine

## Estuarine coastal condition

This indicator combines measures of water quality, sediment quality, contaminants in fish tissue, and benthic community condition to create an overall index of coastal estuarine condition. Estuaries serve as important nursery habitat for wildlife, including many species of fish and shellfish eaten as seafood. They also improve water quality by filtering out sediments and pollutants, provide recreational opportunities, and support coastal economies. This indicator originates from the Environmental Protection Agency's National Coastal Condition Assessment data.



- Good
- Fair to good
- Fair
- Poor to fair
- Poor
- Shallow estuary not assessed for condition

Table 28: Indicator values for estuarine coastal condition within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Good	39,971	0.1%
	Fair to good	371,624	1.0%
	Fair	20,884	<0.1%
	Poor to fair	570	<0.1%
	Poor	0	0%
	Shallow estuary not assessed for condition	22,187	<0.1%
↓ Low	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	37,575,457	98.8%
	<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

↑ In good condition

↓ Not in good condition

To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



## Coastal & marine Island habitat

This indicator represents important habitat for coastal island-dependent species across the Southeast. Because the isolation of islands can make them ecologically unique and protect them from disturbance and mainland predators, they often serve as important habitat for many species of mammals, plants, and insects, as well as breeding coastal birds and sea turtles. The highest scores go to island critical habitat for six threatened and endangered animal and plant species: piping plover, loggerhead sea turtle, Cape Sable thoroughwort, Florida semaphore cactus, silver rice rat, and Bartram's hairstreak butterfly. This indicator uses U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service critical habitat data and island boundaries from the U.S. Geological Survey and Esri.



- █ Island critical habitat for any of six threatened and endangered species (piping plover, loggerhead sea turtle, Cape Sable thoroughwort, Florida semaphore cactus, silver rice rat, or Bartram's hairstreak butterfly)
- █ Other island area
- █ Not a coastal island

Table 29: Indicator values for island habitat within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Island critical habitat for any of six threatened and endangered species (piping plover, loggerhead sea turtle, Cape Sable thoroughwort, Florida semaphore cactus, silver rice rat, or Bartram's hairstreak butterfly)	11,021	<0.1%
	Other island area	234,499	0.6%
↓ Low	Not a coastal island	2,835,804	7.5%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	34,949,368	91.9%
	<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

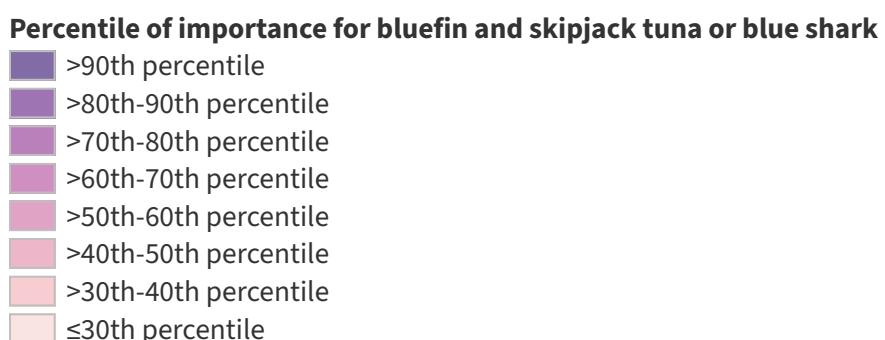
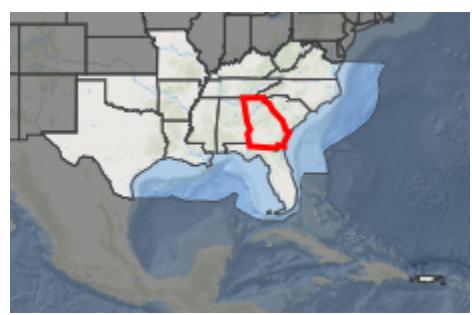
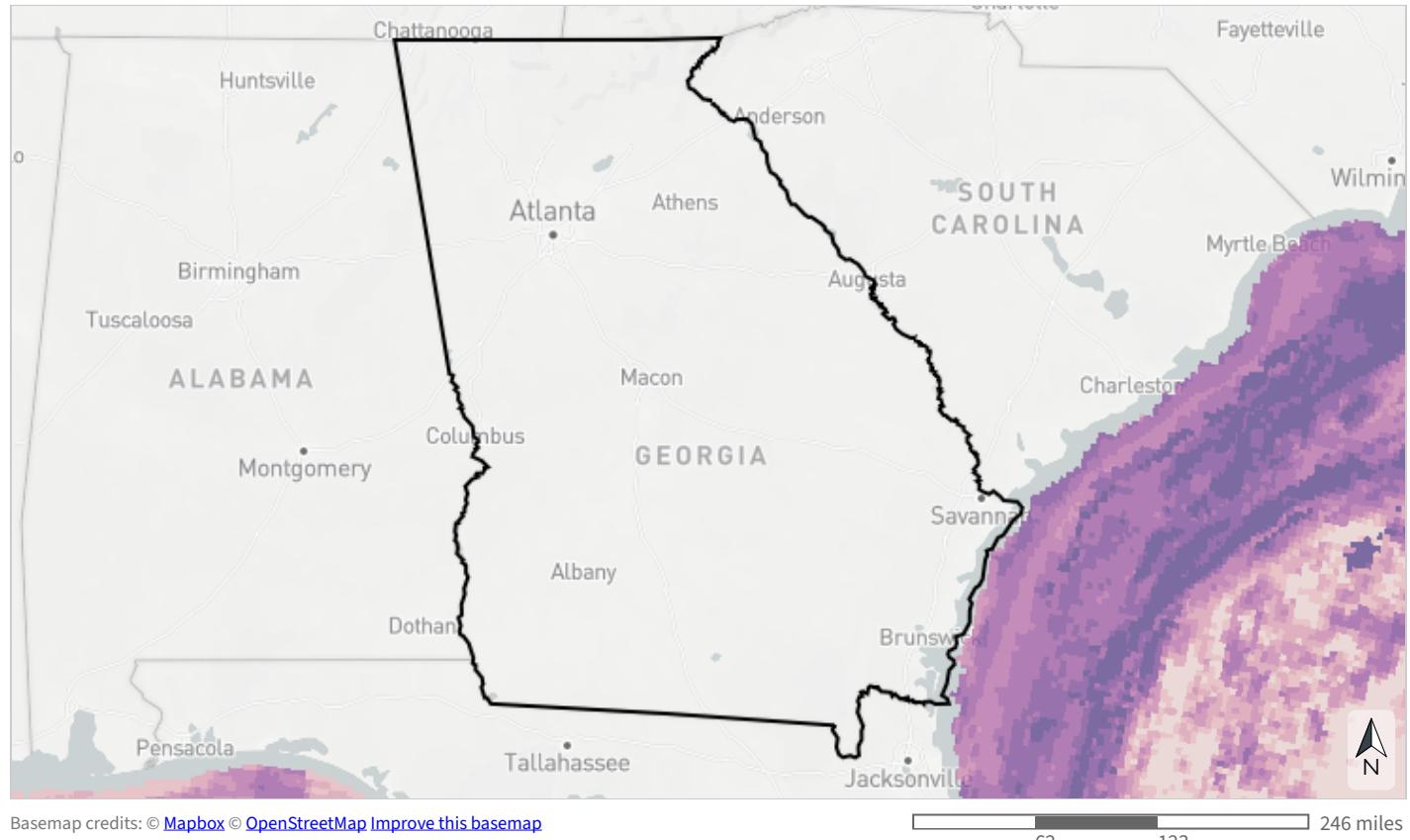
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Coastal &amp; marine

## Marine highly migratory fish

This indicator identifies important foraging and spawning areas for highly migratory fish in the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of Mexico. It uses physical capture and satellite tag observations, remote sensing of environmental variables, and physical oceanographic data to analyze the habitat preferences of three species (skipjack tuna, bluefin tuna, and blue shark) at various life stages. It originates from European Commission Joint Research Centre global fish models.



*Table 30: Indicator values for marine highly migratory fish within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.*

<b>Indicator Values: Percentile of importance for bluefin and skipjack tuna or blue shark</b>		<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	>90th percentile	0	0%
	>80th-90th percentile	0	0%
	>70th-80th percentile	0	0%
	>60th-70th percentile	1.3	<0.1%
	>50th-60th percentile	0	0%
	>40th-50th percentile	0	0%
	>30th-40th percentile	0	0%
	≤30th percentile	0	0%
<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>		38,030,691	100.0%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

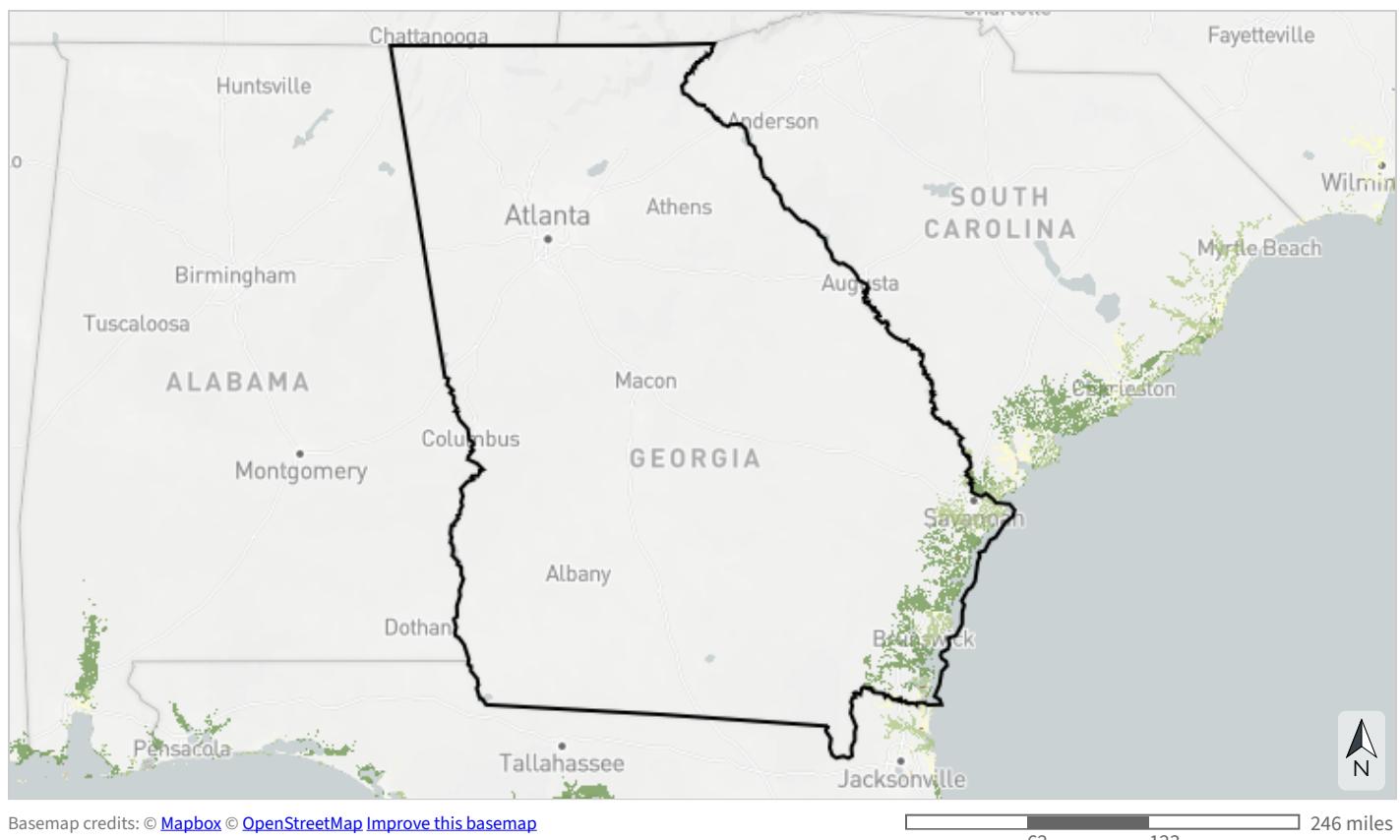
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Coastal &amp; marine

## Resilient coastal sites

This indicator depicts the capacity of coastal habitats to migrate to adjacent lowlands in order to sustain biodiversity and natural services under increasing inundation from sea-level rise. It is based on the physical and condition characteristics of current tidal complexes, their predicted migration space, and surrounding buffer areas. These characteristics include marsh complex size, shared edge with migration space, sediment balance, water quality, natural landcover, landform diversity, and more. This indicator originates from The Nature Conservancy's Resilient Coastal Sites project.



- Most resilient
- More resilient
- Slightly more resilient
- Average/median resilience
- Slightly less resilient
- Less resilient
- Least resilient

*Table 31: Indicator values for resilient coastal sites within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.*

		<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Most resilient	0	0%	
	More resilient	512,349	1.3%	
	Slightly more resilient	212,783	0.6%	
	Average/median resilience	26,495	<0.1%	
	Slightly less resilient	548	<0.1%	
	Less resilient	1,108	<0.1%	
	Least resilient	3,110	<0.1%	
↓ Low		<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	37,274,299	98.0%
		<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Coastal &amp; marine

## South Atlantic beach birds

This indicator is an index of habitat suitability for four shorebird species (American oystercatcher, Wilson's plover, least tern, piping plover) in the South Atlantic, based on observed abundance. It assesses beaches and nearby onshore habitats. Shorebirds' relative use of beaches and neighboring habitats for nesting, foraging, and breeding is an indicator of ecosystem health and quality. This indicator combines bird data from the U.S. Geological Survey and state waterbird biologists in FL, GA, SC, and NC.



### Percentile of importance for beach bird index species

- >80th percentile
- >60th-80th percentile
- >40th-60th percentile
- >20th-40th percentile
- ≤20th percentile
- Open water or not identified as a priority

Table 32: Indicator values for South Atlantic beach birds within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.

	<b>Indicator Values: Percentile of importance for beach bird index species</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	>80th percentile	8,720	<0.1%
	>60th-80th percentile	9,870	<0.1%
	>40th-60th percentile	5,503	<0.1%
	>20th-40th percentile	6,352	<0.1%
	≤20th percentile	3,435	<0.1%
↓ Low	Open water or not identified as a priority	1,427,753	3.8%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	36,569,059	96.2%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

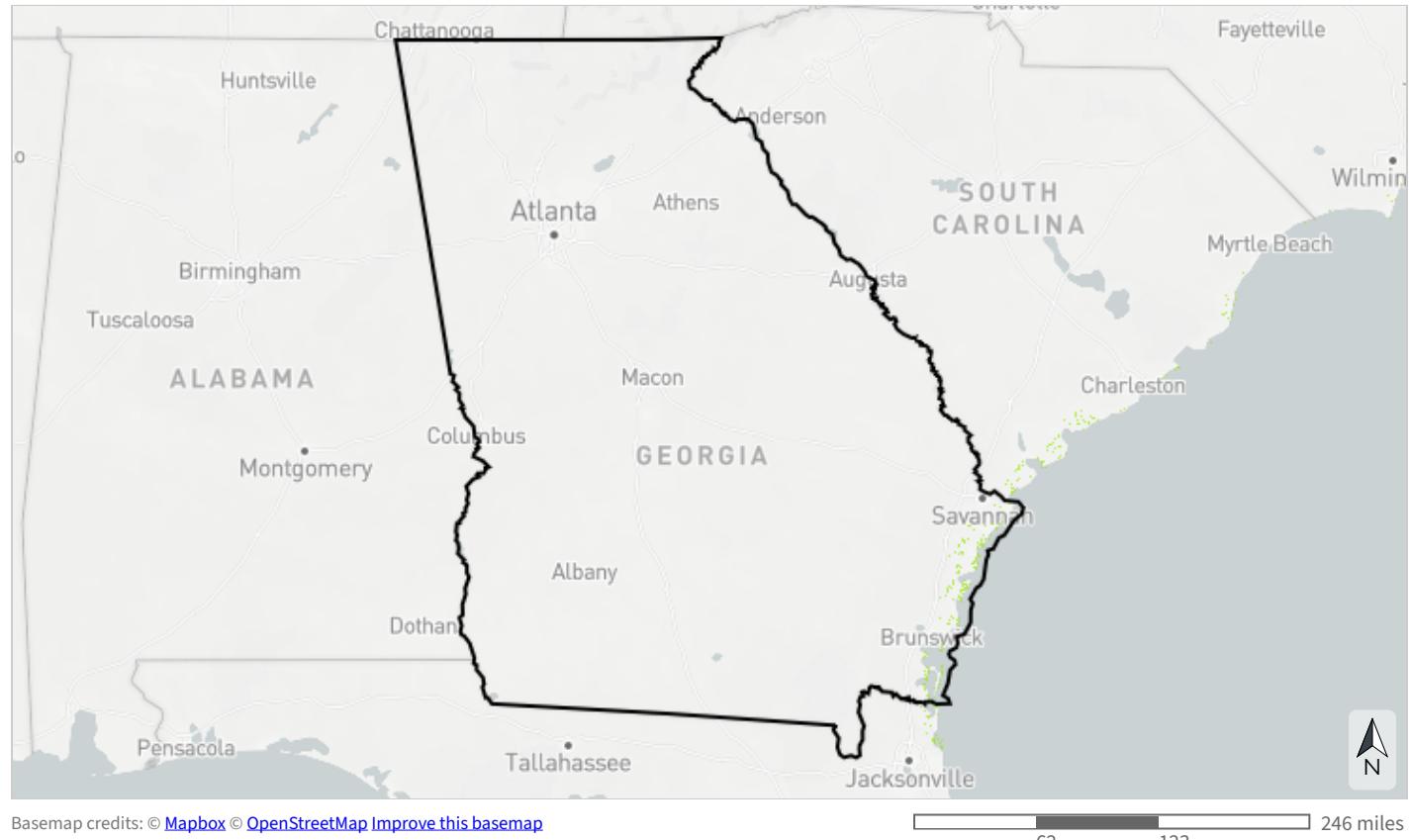
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Coastal &amp; marine

## South Atlantic maritime forest

This indicator depicts the maritime forest currently present in the South Atlantic. Since maritime forest has been substantially reduced from its historic extent, protecting the remaining acreage is particularly important. This ecosystem supports a unique suite of plants that tolerate wind, salt, and flooding, as well as many species of birds, mammals, and reptiles. It also helps buffer the coastline from storms. This indicator originates from LANDFIRE landcover.



Maritime forest  
 Not identified as maritime forest

Table 33: Indicator values for South Atlantic maritime forest within Georgia. A good condition threshold is not yet defined for this indicator.

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Maritime forest	69,189	0.2%
↓ Low	Not identified as maritime forest	1,332,141	3.5%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	36,629,362	96.3%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).



Coastal &amp; marine

## Stable coastal wetlands

This indicator uses remote sensing to calculate the unvegetated-vegetated ratio of tidal wetlands, which compares how much of a wetland is not covered by plants (e.g., sediment, rocks, open water) to how much is covered by plants. Marshes that maintain a higher proportion of vegetation tend to be more stable and resilient to threats like sea-level rise, erosion, and coastal development. This ratio, and how it changes over time, is a good surrogate for salt marsh degradation processes like sediment loss and conversion to open water. This indicator originates from a U.S. Geological Survey project on an unvegetated to vegetated ratio for coastal wetlands.



- █ Stable coastal wetlands
- █ Other coastal wetlands
- █ Not identified as coastal wetlands

Table 34: Indicator values for stable coastal wetlands within Georgia. Good condition thresholds reflect the range of indicator values that occur in healthy, functioning ecosystems.

	<b>Indicator Values</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
↑ High	Stable coastal wetlands	216,532	0.6%
	Other coastal wetlands	283,501	0.7%
↓ Low	Not identified as coastal wetlands	1,336,848	3.5%
	<i>Area not evaluated for this indicator</i>	36,193,811	95.2%
<b>Total area</b>		<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

↑ In good condition

↓ Not in good condition

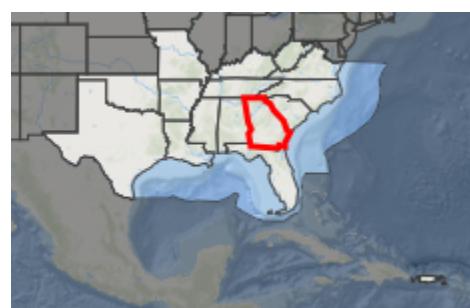
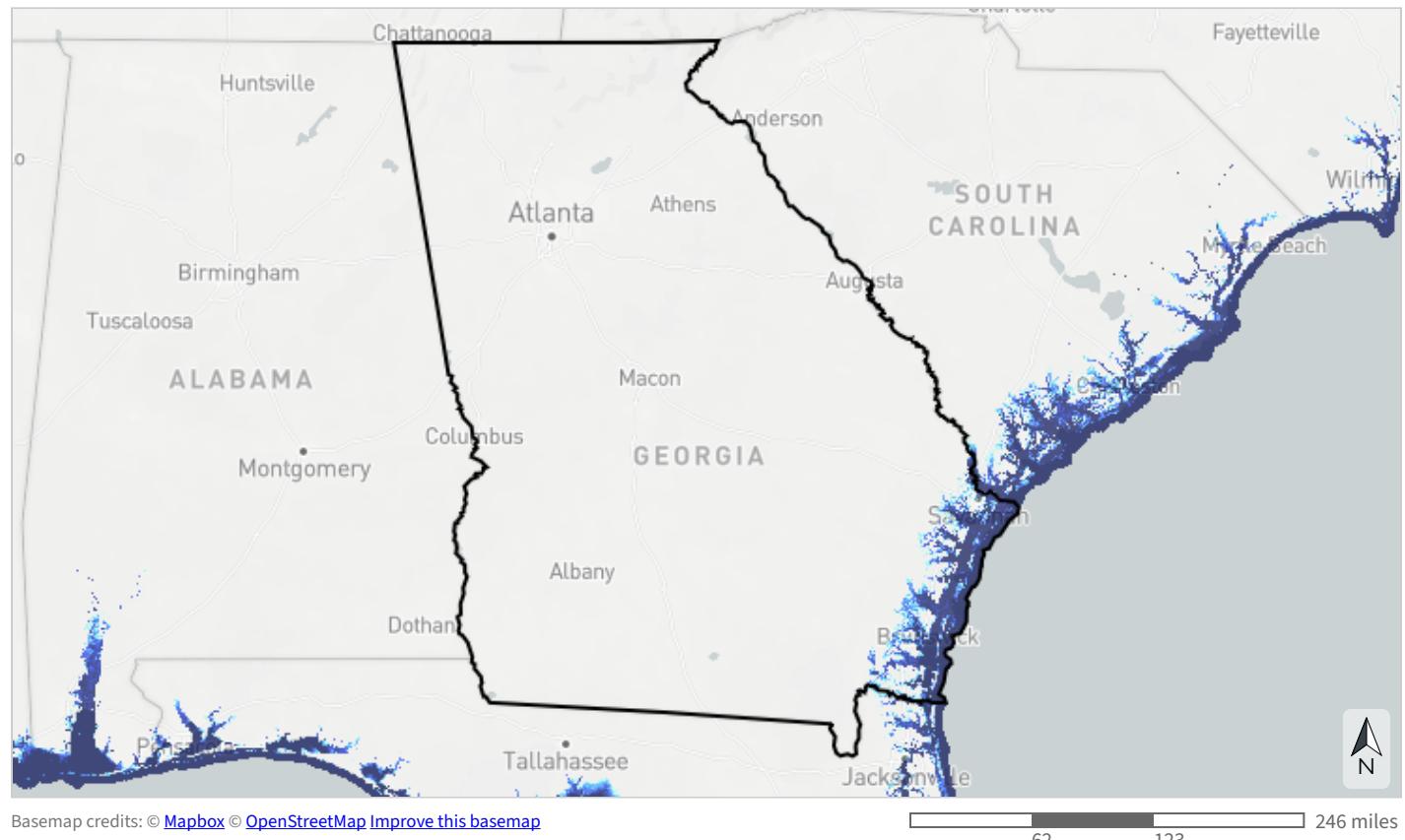
To learn more and explore the GIS data, [view this indicator in the SECAS Atlas](#).

# Threats

## Sea-level rise

NOAA's sea-level rise (SLR) inundation models represent areas likely to experience flooding at high tide based on each foot of inundation depth above current levels. These inundation depth models are not linked to a future timeframe; see the projections below. NOAA calculates the inundation depth at "mean higher high water", or the average highest daily tide. The area covered by each inundation depth level includes areas projected to be inundated at lower levels. For example, areas inundated by 4 ft of SLR also includes areas inundated by 3 ft, 2 ft, 1 ft, and current inundation levels.

To explore additional SLR information, please see NOAA's [Sea Level Rise Viewer](#).



Flooding extent by projected sea-level rise (ft)

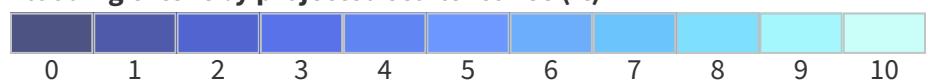


Table 35: Extent of flooding by projected average highest daily tide due to sea level rise within Georgia. Values from the [NOAA sea-level rise inundation data](#).

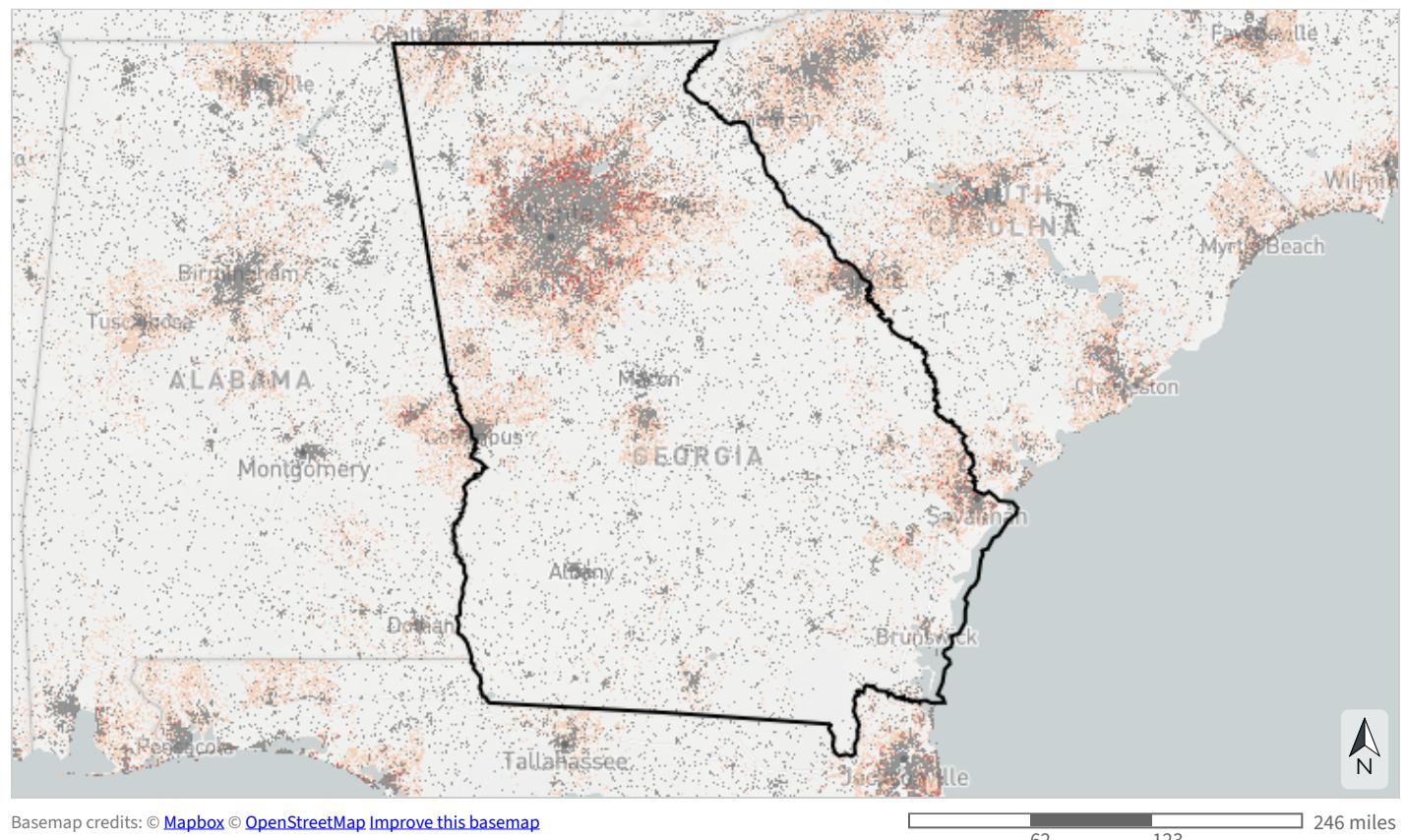
<b>Feet of sea-level rise</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
0 feet	800,264	2.1%
1 foot	914,499	2.4%
2 feet	979,825	2.6%
3 feet	1,016,910	2.7%
4 feet	1,057,462	2.8%
5 feet	1,102,857	2.9%
6 feet	1,146,645	3.0%
7 feet	1,197,235	3.1%
8 feet	1,253,629	3.3%
9 feet	1,318,750	3.5%
10 feet	1,394,629	3.7%
<i>Not projected to be inundated by up to 10 feet</i>	2,417,411	6.4%
<i>Sea-level rise unlikely to be a threat (inland counties)</i>	34,218,651	90.0%
<i>Sea-level rise data unavailable</i>	2	<0.1%
<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 36: Projected sea level rise by decade within Georgia. Values are based on area-weighted averages of decadal projections for 1-degree grid cells that overlap this area based on [NOAA's 2022 Sea Level Rise Report](#). 2060 corresponds to the [SECAS goal](#): a 10% or greater improvement in the health, function, and connectivity of Southeastern ecosystems by 2060.

<b>SLR Scenario</b>	<b>2020 (ft)</b>	<b>2030 (ft)</b>	<b>2040 (ft)</b>	<b>2050 (ft)</b>	<b>2060 (ft)</b>	<b>2070 (ft)</b>	<b>2080 (ft)</b>	<b>2090 (ft)</b>	<b>2100 (ft)</b>
Low	0.32	0.51	0.7	0.87	1	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.5
Intermediate-low	0.34	0.57	0.8	1	1.2	1.4	1.7	1.9	2.1
Intermediate	0.35	0.58	0.84	1.1	1.5	1.8	2.3	2.9	3.6
Intermediate-high	0.36	0.61	0.93	1.3	1.9	2.5	3.3	4.2	5.1
High	0.37	0.64	1	1.5	2.2	3.2	4.3	5.5	6.7

## Urban growth

The FUTURES urban growth model predicts the likelihood that an area will urbanize at every decade from 2020 to 2100. Developed areas from the 2021 National Landcover Database serve as the baseline for current urban areas. The model simulates landscape change based on trends in population growth, local development suitability factors, and an urban patch-growing algorithm. It considers environmental drivers like distance to floodplain, slope, and available infrastructure, and even socio-economic status. The probability of urbanization for each area reflects how many times it urbanized out of 50 model runs.



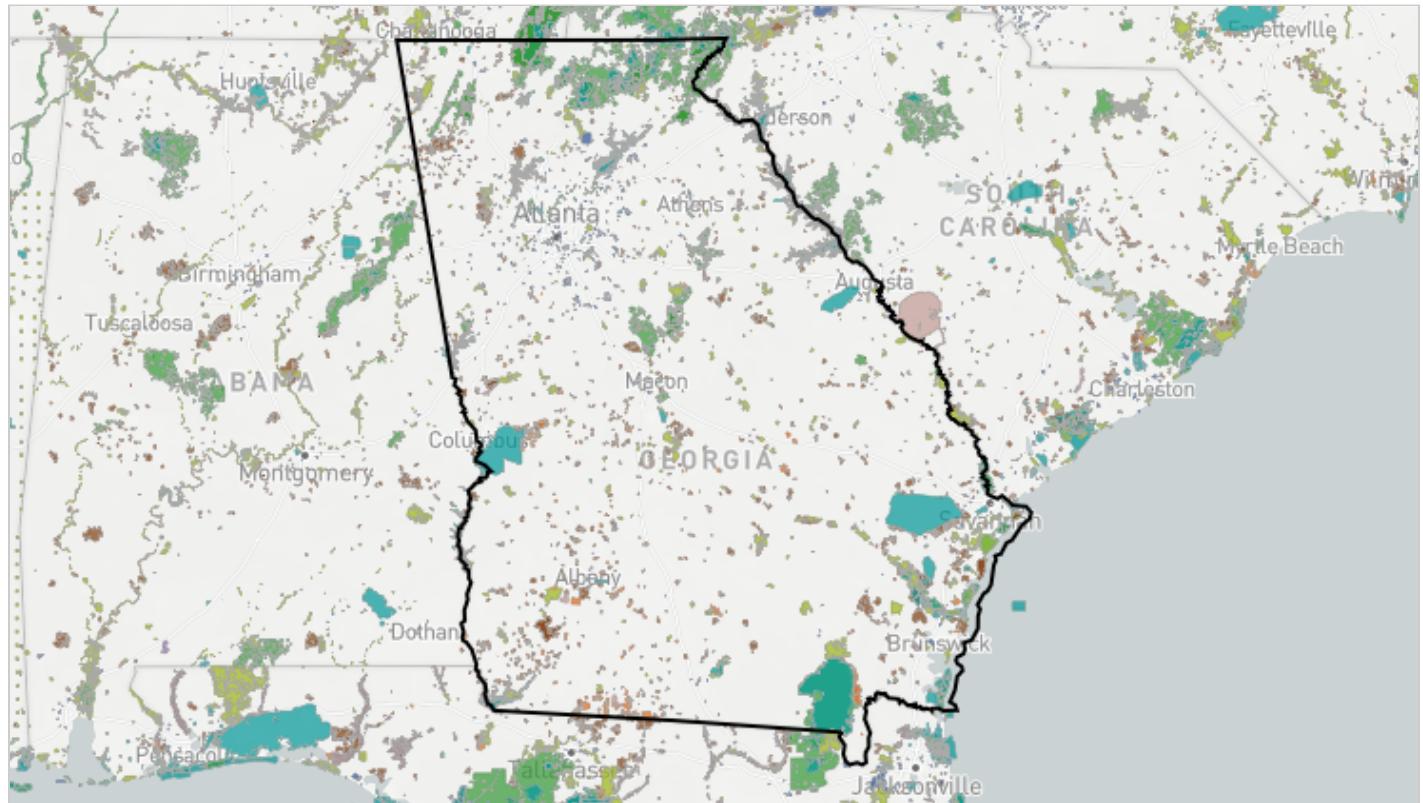
10.8% of this area is already urban in 2021, and an additional 12.1% has at least a moderate probability of urbanizing by 2060.

*Table 37: Extent of projected urbanization by decade within Georgia. Values from [FUTURES model projections for the contiguous United States](#) developed by the [Center for Geospatial Analytics](#), NC State University. 2060 corresponds to the [SECAS goal](#): a 10% or greater improvement in the health, function, and connectivity of Southeastern ecosystems by 2060.*

<b>Decade</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
Urban in 2021	4,098,589	10.8%
2030 projected extent	4,274,303	11.2%
2040 projected extent	4,391,944	11.5%
2050 projected extent	4,486,641	11.8%
2060 projected extent	4,567,901	12.0%
2070 projected extent	4,641,388	12.2%
2080 projected extent	4,697,619	12.4%
2090 projected extent	4,733,113	12.4%
2100 projected extent	4,756,417	12.5%
<i>Not projected to urbanize by 2100</i>	28,705,412	75.5%
<b>Total area</b>	<b>38,030,692</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Ownership and Partners

## Conserved lands ownership



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62 123 246 miles

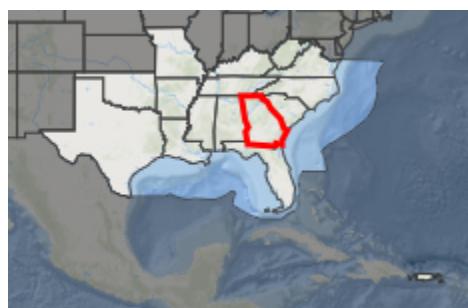
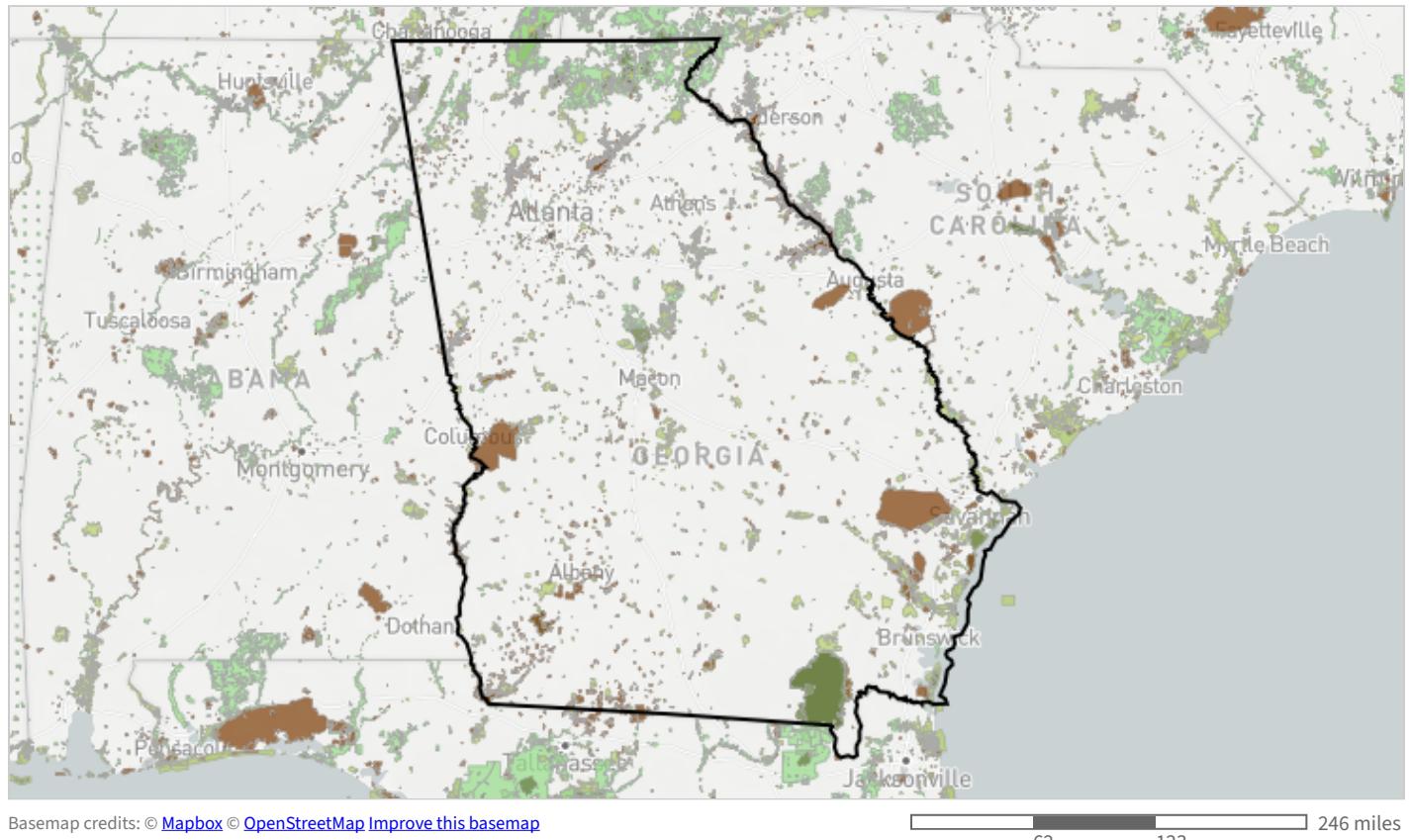


- |                |                                    |
|----------------|------------------------------------|
| Federal        | Joint                              |
| State/province | Private non-profit conserved lands |
| Territorial    | Private conservation land          |
| Regional       | Tribal                             |
| Local          | Designation                        |
|                | Ownership unknown                  |

*Table 38: Extent of ownership class within Georgia. Protected areas are derived from the [Protected Areas Database of the United States](#) (PAD-US v3.0) and include Fee, Designation, Easement, Marine, and Proclamation (Dept. of Defense lands only) boundaries. Note: areas are based on the polygon boundary of this area compared to protected area polygons, rather than pixel-level analyses used elsewhere in this report. Also note: PAD-US v3.0 includes protected areas that may overlap within a given area; this may cause the area within and between the following categories to be greater than the actual ground area.*

<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Area</b>
Federal	2,132,485	5.6%
State/province	627,655	1.7%
Regional	104	<0.1%
Local	139,320	0.4%
Joint	1,041	<0.1%
Private non-profit conserved lands	201,404	0.5%
Private conservation land	795,335	2.1%
Designation	1,638,770	4.3%
Ownership unknown	374,936	1.0%

## Land protection status



- Managed for biodiversity (disturbance events proceed or are mimicked)
- Managed for biodiversity (disturbance events suppressed)
- Managed for multiple uses (subject to extractive uses such as mining or logging, or OHV use)
- No known mandate for biodiversity protection

*Table 39: Extent of land protection status within Georgia. Protected areas are derived from the [Protected Areas Database of the United States](#) (PAD-US v3.0) and include Fee, Designation, Easement, Marine, and Proclamation (Dept. of Defense lands only) boundaries. Note: areas are based on the polygon boundary of this area compared to protected area polygons, rather than pixel-level analyses used elsewhere in this report. Also note: PAD-US v3.0 includes protected areas that may overlap within a given area; this may cause the area within and between the following categories to be greater than the actual ground area.*

Land Protection Status	Acres	Percent of Area
Managed for biodiversity (disturbance events proceed or are mimicked)	1,150,443	3.0%
Managed for biodiversity (disturbance events suppressed)	1,973,684	5.2%
Managed for multiple uses (subject to extractive uses such as mining or logging, or OHV use)	1,030,446	2.7%
No known mandate for biodiversity protection	1,756,475	4.6%

## Protected Areas

- Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests (USDA FOREST SERVICE; 867,496 acres)
- OKEFENOKEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (Fee; 404,153 acres)
- OKEFENOKEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (349,916 acres)
- Fort Stewart (279,404 acres)
- Cohutta Wildlife Management Area (U.S. Forest Service (USFS); 181,869 acres)
- Fort Benning (169,298 acres)
- J. STROM THURMOND (Unknown; 100,445 acres)
- TBR Main (83,442 acres)
- Cedar Creek Wildlife Management Area (U.S. Forest Service (USFS); 75,766 acres)
- Redlands Wildlife Management Area (U.S. Forest Service (USFS); 64,429 acres)
- SIDNEY LANIER (Unknown; 56,718 acres)
- Fort Gordon (55,509 acres)
- Johns Mountain Wildlife Management Area (U.S. Forest Service (USFS); 49,386 acres)
- J. Strom Thurmond Lake (47,909 acres)
- Chattahoochee Wildlife Management Area (U.S. Forest Service (USFS); 46,957 acres)
- Blue Ridge Wildlife Management Area (U.S. Forest Service (USFS); 42,034 acres)
- Lake Sidney Lanier (40,928 acres)

- Chestatee Wildlife Management Area (U.S. Forest Service (USFS); 39,385 acres)
- SEMINOLE (Unknown; 38,470 acres)
- ALLATOONA (Unknown; 38,047 acres)
- Swallow Creek Wildlife Management Area (U.S. Forest Service (USFS); 36,961 acres)
- Cumberland Island National Seashore (Unknown; 36,431 acres)
- Dixon Memorial Wildlife Management Area (Georgia Forestry Commission; 35,916 acres)
- Cohutta Wilderness (35,313 acres)
- Rich Mountain Wildlife Management Area (U.S. Forest Service (USFS); 35,114 acres)
- ... and 5,169 more protected areas ...

## Nearby land trusts

[Click here](#) to search for land trusts within 250 miles of this area on the Land Trust Alliance website.

# Credits

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## Data credits

Land ownership and conservation status is derived from the [Protected Areas Database of the United States](#) (PAD-US v3.0).

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Sea level rise data are derived from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's [Sea Level Rise Inundation Depth Data](#) and the [2022 Sea Level Rise Technical Report](#).