

SEA LEVEL CHANGE IN THE SOUTHEASTERN UNITED STATES: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

RCE Greater Atlanta Higher Education Learning Community
Virtual Research Seminar

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<https://bit.ly/3Ac3ULf>



Abstract: Sea level has fluctuated, sometimes slowly and sometimes quickly (on geologic timescales), throughout time in response to changing climate, geologic reorganization of the earth's surface and astronomical forcing. The timescale of current changes is more rapid - and arguably more impactful to our society - than at any other time in the past million years. This talk examines the basic drivers of climate change to provide context for a discussion of how far sea levels have risen and fallen in the past; how fast they are rising now; what can be expected in the future; and what the direct impacts of that rise will be to the Georgia coast. Future scenarios suggest significant impacts to coastal infrastructure, shifts in the land-sea boundary, and expansion of saltwater ecosystems at the expense of freshwater ecosystems, although salt marshes appear to be resilient at least until the end of this century. A variety of online tools exist that allow coastal residents to assess their vulnerability to sea level rise, shoreline change and other coastal hazards.

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