

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary



- **Year Designated:** 1981
- **Size (area):** 22 square miles
- **Location:** About 20 miles off Sapelo Island, Georgia
- **State Waters:** None
- **Purpose:** To protect the quality of this unique and fragile ecological community, to promote scientific understanding of this live bottom ecosystem, and to enhance public awareness and wise use of this significant regional resource.
- **Fully-Protected Areas:** None
- **Date Management Plan Issued:** 1983
- **Date of Management Plan Review:** The Draft Management Plan was published on October 24, 2003. The final plan is undergoing formal clearance in December 2005.



Map credit: Gray's Reef NMS

Sanctuary Website: <http://graysreef.noaa.gov/>

Sanctuary Regulations: 15 C.F.R. § 922, Subpart I

Examples of Research and Monitoring Activities in the Sanctuary:

- Loggerhead Sea Turtle Satellite Tagging Project.
- Paleoarcheological investigations that attempt to model Gray's Reef when it was dry land (ca. 35,000 years ago).
- Studies to assess fish population size, abundance and species diversity.
- Invertebrate identification and study.

Examples of Endangered and Threatened Species in the Sanctuary:

Endangered	Threatened
Humpback Whale Northern Right Whale West Indian Florida Manatee	Loggerhead Sea Turtle



**Summary of Regulation of Activities and Uses in
Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary**
(For full regulations, see 15 C.F.R. § 922 and contact the regulating agencies)

Type of Use	Regulated by the Sanctuary (NMS)				Examples of Other Regulating Agencies, States/Territories, or Laws (may not be comprehensive list)
	Zoned (areas closed to this type of use)	Restricted	Prohibited	Comments	
Commercial Fishing		√		Only listed gears are allowed	South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Recreational Fishing		√		Only listed gears are allowed	South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Bottom Trawling			√		South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Collecting Aquarium Fish			√		South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Aquaculture				May be regulated under Discharges and Alteration of or Construction on Seafloor	Army Corps, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service
Alteration of or Construction on Seafloor		√		Only allowed for placement of navigation aids	
Seabed cables or devices				May be regulated under Alteration of or Construction on Seafloor	Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act, Army Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, FCC
Exploring for, Developing, or Producing Oil and Gas				May be regulated under Alteration of or Construction on Seafloor	Minerals Management Service, Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act
Exploring for, Developing or Producing Other Minerals				May be regulated under Alteration of or Construction on Seafloor	Minerals Management Service, Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act
Removal/Damage of Natural Resources		√		Listed species are protected	
Removal/Damage of Cultural or Historical Resources			√		Abandoned Shipwreck Act of 1987
Overflights				Not regulated by NMS regulations	Marine Mammal Protection Act
Use of motorized watercraft				NMS regulations make it an offense to use a vessel in violation of any non-NMS regulations	
Underwater Noise				Not regulated by NMS regulations	Marine Mammal Protection Act
Discharging or Depositing Material Within the NMS		√		Only listed types of discharge are allowed	U.S. Coast Guard
Discharging or Depositing Material Outside the NMS that Might Injure NMS Resources				Not regulated by NMS regulations	U.S. Coast Guard

Other Regulations: NMS regulations authorize permits for research, education, or salvage/recovery operations, even for otherwise prohibited or restricted activities.