

Steps should be taken for agreement on marsh protection

March 20, 2013

For years, the Center for a Sustainable Coast has been wrestling with EPD over marsh-buffer protection - in court and on the ground. Two steps must be taken to resolve critical problems that are often encountered, but seldom recognized.

First, Glynn County must consistently enforce the requirements of Georgia's Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Act, which calls for preserving a 25-foot natural buffer along all waters of the state, including tidal marshes.

Secondly, EPD should demand that all counties, like Glynn, which elect to assume responsibilities for enforcing the E&S law, meet their obligation by ensuring that buffer laws are reliably enforced. When any county defaults in administering buffer regulations, EPD should revoke that county's authority and enforce the law directly.

By allowing Glynn County to repeatedly fail to protect marsh buffers, EPD is itself breaking the law and must be taken to task. Unfortunately, the public feels powerless and too often turns a blind eye to these violations.

By being complacent, the public will only encourage further malpractice by Glynn County and EPD, and our quality of life will suffer as natural resources are degraded.

Coastal Georgians should raise these issues with their elected officials, both here in Glynn County and in the General Assembly.

Moreover, since DNR receives federal funds for coastal management, failures in marsh buffer protection should be brought to the attention of our Congressional delegation and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Threatening a prized funding source may finally get these long-disputed problems resolved.

David Kyler, Executive Director
Center for a Sustainable Coast
Saint Simons Island

www.sustainablecoast.org

On Facebook @ [facebook.com/pages/Center-for-a-Sustainable-Coast/](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Center-for-a-Sustainable-Coast/)