Chapter 6: Natural and Cultural Resources

6.1 Overview

In the Town of Edisto Beach Comprehensive Plan, the natural resources element and the cultural resources element are combined into one due to the small size of the town. Because the Town of Edisto Beach is located on a barrier island, the most important focus of this section will be the cataloging and management of natural resources, especially coastal resources including beach front and estuarine features.

The natural resources element of a comprehensive plan addresses such features as coastal resources, topography, plant and animal habitats, unique park and recreation areas, scenic views and sites, wetlands, soils, flood plains, and any other prominent natural features of an area. The cultural resources element of a comprehensive plan contains information on historic sites and buildings in the area, as well as unique commercial and residential areas. A summary table of the current status of the resources and recommended future initiatives is located at the end of this section.

6.2 Natural Resources

Topography

The topography of the Town of Edisto Beach is typical of barrier islands along the coast of South Carolina, with a narrow beach on the ocean front, thick "jungle-like" vegetation (that gave the Town's Jungle Road its name) in the interior and salt water marshes that separate the barrier island from Edisto Island. Those marshes make up approximately 25 percent of the Town's total land area.

The juxtaposition of beaches, surf, rolling sand dunes, and tranquil lagoons gives barrier islands such as the Town of Edisto Beach their distinctive character. Barrier islands are the outermost coastal landforms, separating the mainland and lagoons from the ocean. They serve as the first line of defense against storm tides and encroaching waves. The barrier island offers a unique and beautiful setting for its population, but it also presents, by its very nature, many natural hazards, including flooding and erosion.

The Town of Edisto Beach is located in what is known as the "central beaches" area of South Carolina. On South Carolina's northern beaches erosion is primarily wave-

driven, while on the southern beaches erosion is primarily tide-driven. Between these two zones, including the beaches of the Town, erosion is strongly affected by both waves and tides. Studies indicate that the beach is rotating around a point at Marianne St. North of this point the beach is eroding, while to the south it is relatively stable (although still experiencing some erosion). Beachfront erosion impacts the properties on the seaward side of Palmetto Boulevard, as well as the Boulevard itself.

The entire area of the Town of Edisto Beach lies within the 100-year flood plain, as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Property owners within this area must obtain flood insurance to qualify for mortgage financing. For the protection of life and property, the Town has adopted a Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, and the first floor of all new construction must be elevated to one foot above the 100-year flood level for each particular flood zone.

In 2002, the Town of Edisto Beach contracted with LCOG, which completed a flood mitigation plan to meet FEMA requirements because of repetitive losses from flooding in the Town. The plan is now part of the SC Statewide Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Town of Edisto Beach had been working for nearly a decade before the passage of the flood mitigation plan to reduce losses from flood, and the flood mitigation plan re-enforced their earlier work. Once adopted, the flood mitigation plan has helped Edisto Beach to reduce repetitive losses, to lessen the economic effects of flooding on people and property within the Town, to guide future development in flood-prone areas, to identify possible funding sources to implement flood mitigation activities and to reduce costs of flood disaster response and recovery. The floodplain ordinances (both state and local) have had no amendments since their most current updates and adoptions.

Climate

The Lowcountry Region experiences a marine subtropical climate characterized by mild winters and hot, humid summers. Air temperatures range from the low 50s in the winter to the high 80s in the summer. The area receives approximately 50 inches of rain annually, and is subject to severe tropical storms (including hurricanes) in the summer and fall, and bitter, beach-eroding “nor’easters” in the winter months. In general,

however, the Gulf Stream keeps temperatures moderate and breezes from the ocean keep the climate pleasant.

Soils

The Town of Edisto Beach contains the following four soil mapping units as described by the U.S. Department of Agriculture:

- Coastal beaches and dune land (Co)
- Capers (Cg) - a silty clay loam
- Crevasse-Dahoo Complex (CvC)
- Tidal marsh - Soft (TS)

Map 6.1, USDA soil survey, showing general locations of different soils in

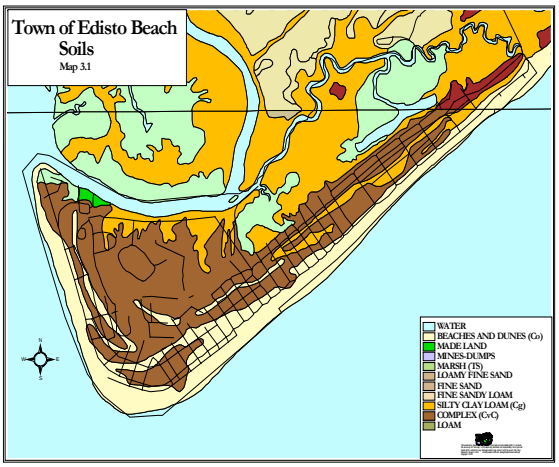


Table 7. Soil Limitations in the Town of Edisto Beach

Soil Series	*Septic Limitations*	*Foundation Limitations*	*Recreational Site Limitations*
Coastal beaches & dune land	**Severe**: low filtering very frequent flooding high water table	**Severe:** very frequent flooding	**Severe:** poor traffic flow
Capers	**Severe:** very frequent flooding continuous high saline water table	**Very Severe:** very frequent flooding continuous saline water table low bearing valve high shrink-swell potential	**Very Severe:** very poor trafficability
Crevasse-Dahoo Complex	**Severe:** low filtering action	**Slight**	**Slight**
Tidal marsh – Soft	**Severe:** very frequent flooding continuous high water table flooded daily by salt water	**Very Severe:** very frequent flooding continuous saline high-water table low bearing valve high shrink-swell potential	**Very Severe:** very poor trafficability

Source: USDA - Soil Conservation Service, Soil Survey, 1996

The soil limitations in the Town are problematic across the entire island at the broad level of the soil survey. Most of the septic limitations are due to high water table. However an appropriate area for a septic drainfield can often be found. In addition, many of the lots at in the Town were platted in the 1950s and 1960s, and given their letters of approval for septic suitability at that time. Under state law, these approvals will still be honored.

The least limited soils for building foundations are found in the interior of the Town. This is also the area where the most intensive development (the Fairfield Ocean Ridge Resort) is found, while the rest of the Town is primarily low density, single-family development.

Edisto River Basin Project

The Edisto River is one of the longest free flowing blackwater rivers in the United States and, as such, contains a wealth of natural resources, from upland forests to coastal marshes. The ACE (Ashepoo Combahee Edisto) Basin Project is an on-going community based effort designed to evaluate and plan for the future of the river's assets; the Town of Edisto Beach and surrounding areas are included in this data because the Town is located at the mouth of the Edisto River.

In 1996, the Edisto River Basin Task Force completed a resource assessment of the natural and cultural sites and developed a list of 176 recommendations for improving and conserving the Edisto River Basin. Most of the recommendations addressed specific management issues related to economic development, wildlife and fisheries habitat, sensitive species, water resources, boating, hunting, fishing or cultural resources. The major themes that flow throughout the recommendations include the promotion of conservation and wise management of riparian and river habitats, water quality, wetlands, habitats and recreational activities. Today, the ACE Basin Project is ongoing, and groups such as "Friends of the Edisto" continue to improve and preserve the overall quality of the Edisto River Basin.

Vegetation

Because of the intensive development erosion along the beach front, very little natural vegetation remains on the dunes other than scattered areas of sea oats, sand spurs, and broomsedge. The majority of the vegetated inland area consists of maritime forest complex with slash and loblolly pine, live oak, magnolia, cabbage palm, dwarf palmetto, and red bay. This vegetation currently can be found on numerous vacant lots, but is not protected from future building activities, except as designated by the Town's tree ordinance. The high marsh behind the beach is a mixture of cordgrass, needlerush,

yaupon and sea myrtle. The low marsh complex extending to Scott Creek consists of smooth cordgrass. Non-native species such as oleander have been introduced to the island in landscaped areas.

Wildlife

The Town of Edisto Beach is part of the Edisto River Basin, one of the most important communities of wildlife species in the state (Map 6.2). In particular, populations of least terns, wood storks, and eagles populate the area. Loggerhead turtles use the beaches of the town as nesting sites, and these areas are perhaps the most ecologically sensitive areas within the town.

The loggerhead nesting sites on the beach, and estuarine waters on the inland side of the island shown in Map 6.2 are classified as "Value Class 1" by the Edisto Basin Project. This means that these areas are among the most important to the region, and should be protected accordingly. The Town's beachfront management plan details turtle protection strategies such as prohibiting automobiles and unleashed dogs on the beach during nesting season, and limiting seaward lights on beachfront housing during nesting and hatching seasons. Since the 2003 update, the Town has continued to enforce artificial light restriction ordinances for the protection of the sea turtles.

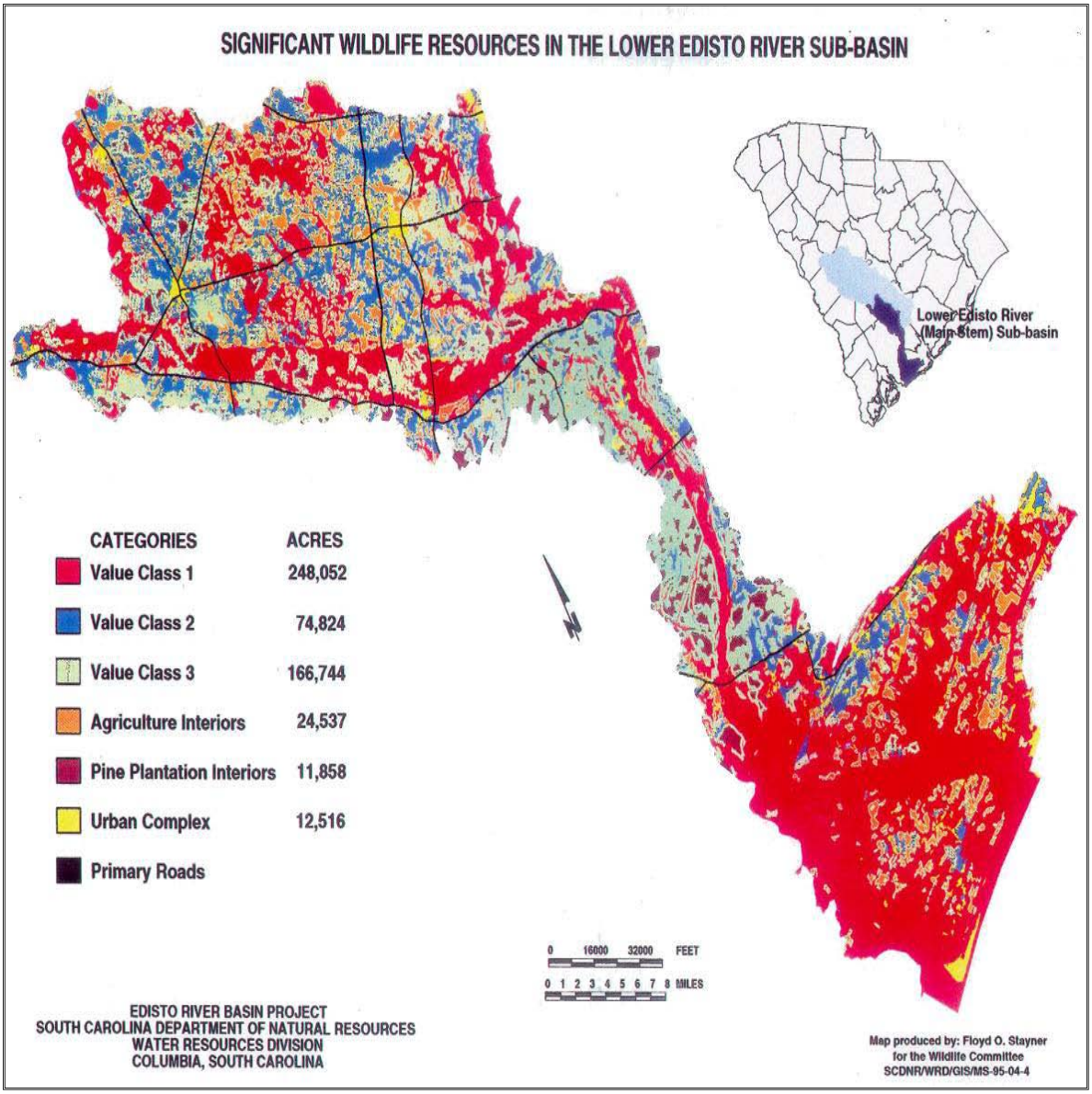
The Beach

The ocean and beach front are the original reason for the town's development, and are still the primary draw of the community. As such, the beach front deserves serious attention. Stretching the entire length of the town, the beach wraps around the west end of the island into the South Edisto River. As is the nature of barrier islands, the beach has been eroding over time. While this is a natural process, it is threatening not only the existence of the beach, but the integrity of the built environment on Edisto Beach, especially the buildings along Palmetto Boulevard and the boulevard itself.

The Beachfront Management Plan was adopted by the Town Council in 1991 and has twice been amended; the Town continues to use the plan and related zoning to direct development away from the beach. The Plan addresses public beach access and parking,

beachfront structures, turtle nesting and habitats, erosion control, drainage, post-disaster recovery and a beach retreat strategy to encourage new construction to locate as far landward as possible.

Map 6.2 Significant Wildlife Resources In The Lower Edisto River Sub-Basin



Since the implementation of the 1996 Comprehensive Plan, the Town has successfully implemented a beach retreat and storm hazard mitigation policy by requiring that new construction and reconstruction in the beach management overlay district meet the following set back requirements as noted in §86-145 (d) of the Code of the Town of Edisto Beach:

1. New construction and the reconstruction of roofed structures within this overlay district shall have a minimum rear setback measured from the roof line which equals the greatest distance resulting from application of each of the following three methodologies

a. Ten feet from the South Carolina Office of Coastal Resource Management baseline;
b. The average of the distance between the seaward most building roof line of the closest three existing habitable structures to the lot containing the new or reconstructed structure and the South Carolina Office of Coastal Resource Management baseline; and
c. The average of the distance of the seaward most building roof line of the closest three existing habitable structures to the lot containing the new or reconstructed structure and the edge of the adjacent highway right of way.

To remedy some of the problems caused by erosion, in 1995, the Town of Edisto Beach undertook a $1,500,000 beach renourishment project. It included the placement by hydraulic dredge of 101,000 cubic yards of sand and the repair of groins, many of which dated back to the previous renourishment project in 1954. The 2006 Renourishment cost $8 million, and 877,647 cubic yards (of which 181,728 were placed along the park [north of Groin 1] and 695,919 cubic yards were placed between Groins 1 and 27) of sand was added. The island-wide volume change between July 2007 and July 2008 was a gain of 38,500 cubic yards.

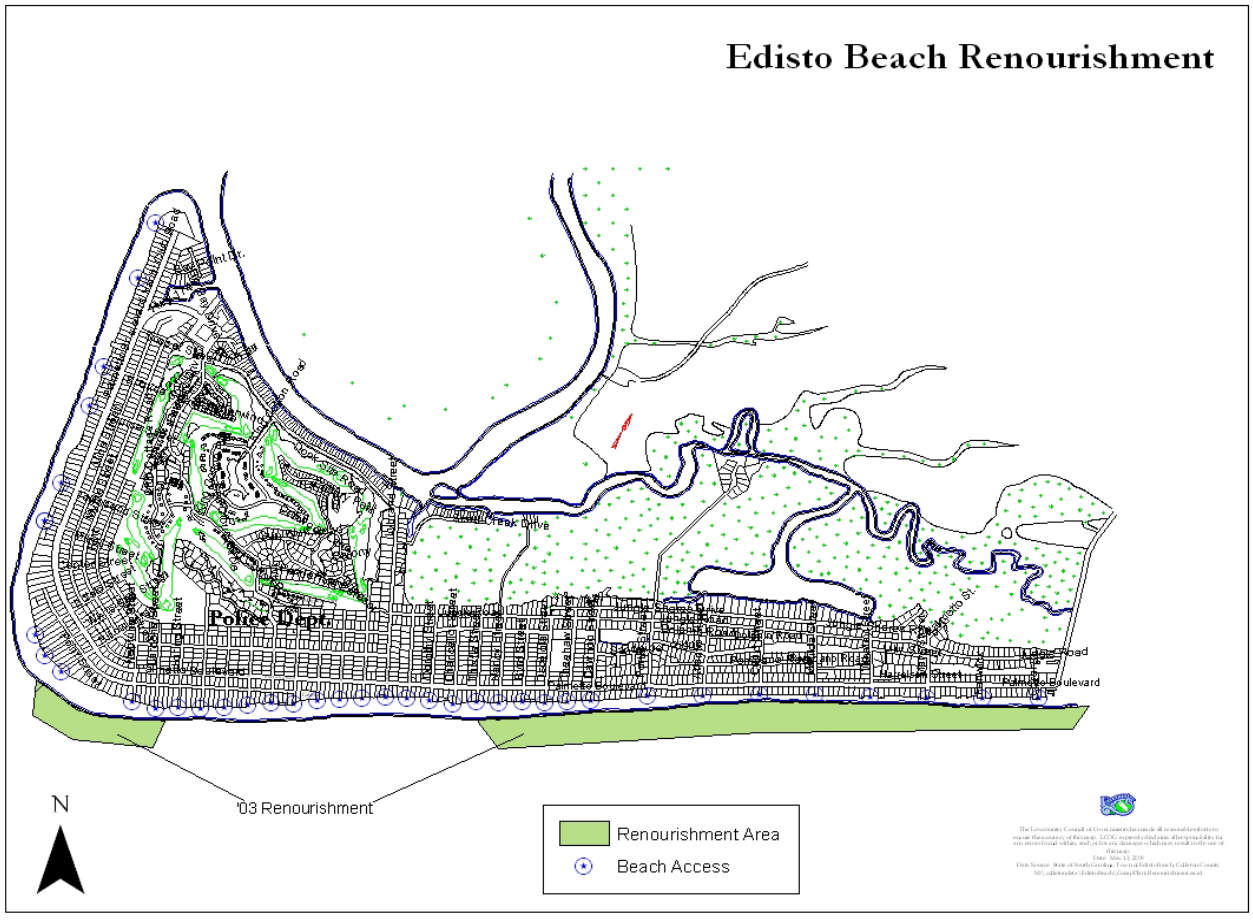
The results of the project were monitored by Coastal Science & Engineering LLC (CSE) for six years after completion. At the end of the period they concluded that the renourishment had been generally successful, commenting, “The groin field along Edisto

Beach has reduced the long-term erosion rate to a fraction of the pre-groin rate in the area encompassed by most of the groin field…the groin field has been relatively efficient in trapping sand and reducing erosion rates to minimal quantities." They cautioned, "However, the amount trapped is a function of groin length which, in most instances, is inadequate to provide a protective beach and dune system seaward of houses."

In spite of the relatively good results, the 1995 project represents approximately 30 percent of the long-term plan recommended by CSE (1992, 1993). Therefore, the 1995 project and subsequent groin repairs should be considered only a partial solution." The report made a number of recommendations in 2001, chiefly that the Town:

a. Initiate detailed planning and design for additional improvements to the groin field and larger scale nourishment compared to 1995.
b. Establish a budget for repairs around which the project engineer can seek to optimize the scale and scope of repairs.
c. Set, as a goal, improvements that provide a certain minimum level of protection for properties in the most vulnerable areas.

Map 6.3 shows the extent of the 1995 beach renourishment project.



State of Edisto Beach and Edisto Beach State Parks

In March 2003, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control completed the *South Carolina Annual State of the Beaches Report* and categorized Edisto Beach as "very vulnerable to beach erosion" with areas that "are among the most critical in the state." The following is an excerpt from the report detailing the areas of concern:

> "Edisto Beach is a barrier island situated between the South Edisto River and Jeremy Inlet. The northeastern portion of Edisto Beach is a state park, a 1,255 acre site that includes camping sites and trails, while the remainder of the island is primarily single-family residential. An extensive groin field on the island serves to stabilize the shoreline position. South of station 2160 (Marianne St.), the island is classified as an unstabilized inlet zone and is slightly accretional. The rest of the island, including the state park, is a standard zone and is fairly stable in the long term. There are 27 beach survey monuments on Edisto Beach, which were surveyed in May 2000 and September 2001.
>
> Stations 2110-2130 are located along the South Edisto Inlet shoreline. These stations are sheltered from the open ocean and generally experience only modest seasonal changes on the intertidal beach. A localized erosion hotspot developed in this reach between Mikell and Edisto Streets in 2000, but stabilized in 2001. Stations 2135 at Edisto Street and 2140 at Billow Street are located on The Point, the shoreline curve between the South Edisto River and the Atlantic Ocean. With judicious management of the groin field design, the Point can be a stable or accreting section.
>
> The oceanfront southern half of Edisto Beach, from stations 2145 to 2165, has the widest oceanfront beach on Edisto. Most stations here experienced only minor volume changes for the year. The northern half of developed Edisto Beach, from station 2170 to station 2200 at the Pavilion, remains one of the most critically eroded sections of beach anywhere in the state. The beach here was fairly stable from May 2000 through September 2001, as shown on the example plot from station 2180, but suffers from a considerable sand deficit and has virtually no beach at high tide and no protective dune between the ocean and the development. Several wooden bulkheads and houses here were damaged by a strong northeast storm in November 2001.
>
> Stations 2200 to 2230 in Edisto Beach State Park are comparable to the northern half of developed Edisto Beach. With a sand shortage the coastline and park infrastructure, including campsites and access roads, are very vulnerable to erosion."

Officials at the Edisto Beach State Park have attempted to reduce the degradation to the dunes by roping off sections of the beach and increasing educational programs. Areas of the beach on the park site have used only limited fencing because the dunes are loggerhead sea turtle nesting areas.

The Town has made recent strides toward renourishing the beach Sand fencing and plantings have been performed. The island-wide volume change between July 2007 and July 2008 increased by 38,500 cubic yards. In early May 2008, tilling was completed in the project area. The project permit requires compaction tests be performed prior to turtle nesting. Despite all success, Edisto Beach still has several issues to address, as damaged timber piles and displaced rocks have been noted. The Town continues to monitor the renourishment plan as it evolves.

The Marsh

The salt marsh found along the northern side of the Town not only provides stunning vistas for residents and visitors, but also offers food and shelter for a variety of life forms. Rich in nutrients, the salt marsh is one of the most productive habitats in the world. Most marine life is either directly or indirectly dependent on the salt marsh. Some, such as the shrimp, live and spawn in the sea as adults but come into the shallow, protective waters of the salt marsh to mature. Others spawn in the marshes, and the young swim out to sea to mature. Many animals spend their entire lives in the marsh, while others visit for food. The salt marsh not only serves as a nursery ground for much important sea life, it also filters out pollutants from surface water and protects the mainland from the shock of wave action from the ocean.

Marshes encompass approximately 25 percent of the land area within the Town of Edisto Beach, and offer a visual alternative to the beach front. In addition, the marshes offer Town residents and visitors opportunities for fishing, shrimping, crabbing, and wildlife viewing. As such, they are an important tourist resource as well as a vital component of the ecosystem and should be protected by means of a Wetlands Protection district in the Town's Zoning Ordinance. Encouraging open space, and the modification of open space requirements, may lead to more wetland preservation.

Surrounding Waters

The waters surrounding the Town of Edisto Beach are one of its greatest resources. These waters are included in the classification system of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). Big Bay Creek, running from approximately the center of the northern edge of the island out to the South Edisto River, is classified as an Shellfish Harvesting Water (SFH). Outstanding Resource Water (ORW) is the highest designation a water body can receive, and SFH is the second highest. Big Bay Creek was downgraded from an Outstanding Resource Water recently, and should be monitored to stop future downgrades. These designations impact what can and cannot be discharged into these waters (such as sewage plant effluent). Furthermore, land use decisions concerning the surrounding areas should be made with an understanding of the impacts development and its attendant run-off have on the water, and with the intent of protecting these waters.

The Edisto River Basin Project classifies all of the waters surrounding the Town of Edisto Beach as "Value Class 1 Fisheries Habitat." This suggests that these areas are especially fertile and important to the ecosystem and the people who derive their living from that system.

South Carolina Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO)

The NEMO project is a three year project of the SC Sea Grant Extension Program, the Clemson University Extension Service, the University of South Carolina Institute of Public Affairs Center for Environmental Policy and University of South Carolina Earth Science and Resources Institute. The NEMO project is primarily a consortium of educational entities focused on helping local decision makers understand nonpoint source water pollution runoff. In 2002, the Town of Edisto Beach was awarded NEMO for a grant to assist in dealing with this issue locally; the grant will also provide Sea Grant staff for educational and technical assistance training to protect water quality. In January 2003, NEMO staff provided input and recommendations on the best management practices for reducing polluted runoff. These recommendations included information on the newest types of pervious and semi-pervious surfaces and how to best address the issues of erosion controls, subdivision regulations, maintenance of roads and storm drains, open space plans and buffer requirements; these recommendations can be

located under the new development regulations and water quality recommendations. For this update to the comprehensive plan, there is no new activity regarding the NEMO project.

6.3 Cultural and Historical Resources

Historical Sites

While there are no structures within the Town limits that are listed in a historical register, the surrounding island offers many glimpses of the long and colorful history of this region. These sites are important to the history of the Town and should be remembered and recorded.

The historical perspective offered by the Town itself is perhaps younger but no less important. The development patterns of the Town of Edisto Beach are an example of the type of development found in the 1920s, when resort communities were envisioned as a complete unit. In addition, the nature of the building stock on the island is a testament to the difficulties of protecting structures against the day-to-day wear of coastal weather, the salt spray and sun, as well as the periodic tropical storms that occasionally sweep the area.

The beachfront strip in the Town is classified as "Value Class 1" for Historic Site probability by the ACE Basin Project. This means that in this area there are likely to be sites or structures of historical significance to the town and the region. The history section of this plan goes into much more detail about the need and benefit of historic preservation.

It is especially important to catalog and record structures of historical significance in the Town because of the likelihood of damage to those structures from natural hazards. The marsh-front edge of the island, on the other hand, is classified as "Value Class 1" for probability of archaeological sites by the ACE Basin Project. While some sites might remain on the mainland, it is likely that any sites actually within the Town have already been disturbed by development.

Edisto Beach State Park

The eastern end of the barrier island lies with Edisto Beach State Park, with access from Highway 174 on Edisto Island, as well as directly from the Town. The park encompasses 1,255 acres, and Offers Ocean and marsh side camping sites as well as cabins, picnic areas, and nature and hiking trails. Edisto Beach State Park boasts the highest campground occupancy in the South Carolina State Park Service with over 380,000 recorded visitors in 2005. The Park was developed in the 1930s by the Civilian Conservations Corps (CCC), a program which provided work to many people during the "Great Depression".

Edisto Beach State Park, rich in Indian history, is home to some of the tallest palmetto trees in the Palmetto State. Visitors can observe life in the salt marsh and comb the beach for seashells while enjoying a stay in a cabin or at the beach front campground. The Park offers nature programs, a four-mile nature train that wind through the maritime forest with beautiful vistas overlooking the salt marsh and an Interpretative Center that features interactive displays. The nature trail leads to an archeological site commonly referred to as the Indian Shell Mound. The Indian Shell Mound is a prehistoric shell midden that has been dated between 220 and 1800 BC. This shell midden was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in August of 1974.

Environmental Learning Center

The inland portion of Edisto Beach State Park has received significant attention in the plans of the State Park Service. An Environmental Learning Center on Park property opened to the public in 2004. Funded by a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the DNR National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) the Center provides management of research and educational projects for the marshes, island and tidal creeks. The theme of this center is "Choosing to Protect Our Coast". The Environmental Learning Center promotes sustainable management and ways the public can help in the protection of our fragile coastal environment. Services,

programs, and exhibits promote the ACE Basin and include interactive displays which help visitors understand the fragile resources of the ACE Basin (which is the largest natural reserve of its type on the East Coast). Located behind the Center is the Bache Marker which has been added to the National Register of Historic Places. The Marker was located on Edisto as part of the mapping of the Eastern Seaboard in the 1840s. Another one is located at Botany Bay Plantation.

War Between the States Era

According to the information in the book *Edisto Beach South Carolina*, written by Whitson Brooks, a piece of War history was found at Edisto Beach in 1971. David Lybrand discovered an old fort as he was surveying for the new golf course. Research by the Lybrand brothers, revealed that the fort was built in or about 1812 but was never used. When the War Between the States began General Beauregard came to Edisto to see the fort but determined that it was not of any value to the War effort. The cannons were considered antiques even in that day. Various agencies contacted in 1971 did not consider the fort to have any historical significance therefore the golf course was allowed to be built over the fort. However, one of the two cannons, which is dated 1765, does stand in front of Edisto Sales and Rental Realty.

Goal

- Conserve, protect, and enhance the critical and sensitive natural and cultural resources of the Town of Edisto Beach

Recommendations

Major Recommendations

- Determine the physical and environmental abilities of Edisto Beach's natural resources to accommodate future development.
- Establish development standards to protect natural resources in the Town's most vulnerable areas.

- Adopt regulations that discourage excessive noise, traffic, outdoor lighting and storage of solid waste and limit intrusions into the islands environmentally-sensitive habitats.

- Add a Wetlands Protection district to the Town's Zoning Ordinance that expands on the Town's 01 zone and encourages green open space near sensitive wetlands.

Beach/Dunes Protection and Access

- Inventory and evaluate each beach access to determine ways to limit damage or negative environmental impacts. Evaluate pedestrian access including foot traffic only, walkover development, handicap access and/or on and off street parking, litter containment and signage. Clemson Study completed in 2004; recommendations made for each access; grant funds available for improvements to be made 2006 and 2007.

- Continue planning, design, and budgeting for additional improvements to the groin field and larger scale renourishment. Groin field improvements in 2005/06 pre nourishment 2006. $8 million renourishment was completed May 2006.

- Develop a program to stabilize, maintain, and enlarge the dunes. Sand Fencing began post nourishment Sept 2006 with planting planned for 2008.

- Strictly enforce the rule of not walking or climbing on the dunes. Additional walkovers are detailed in the Clemson Study and two are authorized in the LWCF grant 2007/08.

- Plant sea oats and other vegetation and replace walkways through dunes with wooden walkovers. Planting is planned in 2008 as funding is available; trash receptacles in place; parking improved. This goal was combined with others by Council.

New Development Regulations

- Identify and provide development standards sensitive to the natural environment and the community's objectives.

- Continue to strictly enforce FEMA codes by periodically reviewing policies and updating to conform to the most current FEMA requirements regarding flooding. The Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance was reviewed and amended and approved by TC November 2005. It is under review at the FEMA level.

- Provide incentives for the use of porous materials in new construction and redevelopment.

- Ensure that the Tree Ordinance and its enforcement reflect current community needs. The ordinance has been amended four times: 2003, 2004, 2005, and 2007.

- Encourage or require developers to use innovative Best Management Practices such as improved storm water and water quality management through the use of more pervious surfaces to keep storm water on site. An example of this is the implementation of the impervious substances ordinance and the stormwater management plan.

- Either through requirements or incentives, developers should be encouraged to use the following non-point-source recommendations:
    - Discourage the use of biocides and fertilizer.
    - Discourage the removal or disturbance of soil, placement of fill, the use of grassed lawns, gardens or fences
    - Use grassed swales in place of curb and gutters

- Continue to implement all recommendations from studies (such as the BP Barber Study and the NEMO project) in order to address issues of erosion control, storm drainage and buffer requirements.

Water Quality

- Create a program to prohibit, and methods to eliminate, collection systems that directly discharge storm water to surface waters. This is addressed in the proposed Storm water Management Plan.
- Create a program to ensure that drainage from land use activities has a rate of flow and volume characteristics as near to predevelopment conditions as possible to provide for the protection of water quality. This is addressed in the proposed Stormwater Management Plan.

- Continue to participate in the Areawide Water Quality Management Plan.
- Define the management requirements of a program that monitors water quality.
- Develop a monitoring and reporting process for maintaining water quality.
- Define the enforcement process.

(DHEC periodically tests the safety of the recreational waters around Edisto Beach.)

On Site Treatment Facilities (Septic Tanks)

- Install public sewer along beach front (one study indicates public sewer along the first twenty blocks of Palmetto Boulevard would cost $5 million) where the occurrence of septic failure is increased due to higher occupancy rates and seasonal occupancy.
- Educate and inform all the property owners of the Town Edisto Beach of the need for proper maintenance of septic systems to insure public awareness and acceptance.

- Educate homeowners and renters about not parking, paving, or placing structures on the drainage field.
- Encourage the removal of any existing construction or obstruction over the septic tank for inspection and/or pumping.
- Investigate mandatory testing of septic systems for rental houses.
- Implement recommendations of engineering study regarding onsite sewer for homes along the beachfront.

Historic and Cultural Resources

- Request that the Environmental Learning Center continue to assist in conducting an inventory of species, habitats, peak wildlife usage, and corridors of native plant and wildlife populations in the Town.
- Set up a committee to identify historic elements of the community, which will allow the Town to preserve its history and to define what is considered "historic" in Edisto Beach. A committee was implemented with work done that is available on 6 cassette tapes. The tapes contain conversations with several people who are familiar with the history of Edisto Beach. Also available is a file of old photographs some of which are not identified. The tapes have not been transcribed. The former chairperson of the committee recommends Whitson Brooks' book *Edisto Beach South Carolina* and *Edisto Island: A Family Affair* for a history of the Beach. Although a history of the area is important, there needs to be an assessment of the value of the information as well as how it can be best collected, used and kept updated as time moves on.

Summary

The topography of the Town of Edisto Beach is typical of barrier islands along the coast of South Carolina, with a narrow beach on the ocean front, thick "jungle-like" vegetation in the interior and salt water marshes that separate the barrier island from Edisto Island. The ocean and beach front are the original reason for the Town's development. With its enticing climate, topography, wildlife and vegetation, the barrier island offers a unique and beautiful setting for its population, but it also presents, by its very nature, many natural hazards, including flooding and erosion. The entire area of the Town of Edisto Beach lies within the 100-year flood plain as determined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In 2002, the Town of Edisto Beach contracted with the LCOG to complete a flood mitigation plan. The purpose of the *Flood Mitigation Plan* is to recommend, encourage and support the implementation of activities aimed at lessening the severity of flooding in Edisto Beach.

To protect the fragile community, a Beachfront Management Plan was adopted by the Town Council in 1991 and has twice been amended; the Town continues to use the plan and related zoning to direct development away from the beach.