

- Include a natural bar, Ogeechee Bar, as closed seasonally between March 1st and October 15th. Ogeechee Bar is the most important site in GA for the federally threatened Red Knot and provides significant nesting and feeding habitat for many other shorebirds and seabirds during Spring, Summer, and Fall.
- Updating the name of Williamson Island to Little Tybee Natural Area as this clarifies naming confusion and shifting beach zones within the natural area. Boat landing will be permitted on Little Tybee Natural Area, but people will need to stay away from roped-off nesting areas.
- Include two newly created dredge islands, Brunswick Bird Island and Cumberland Dividings, as seasonally closed between March 15th and August 31st. Since their creation, these two islands were rapidly colonized by birds and are now considered among the most important nesting sites in the southeast for several species.

As stated above, recently created dredge spoil islands, Brunswick Bird Island and Cumberland Dividings, are included in the amended Rule. An August 25, 2025, Executive Order (EO) transferred custody of Brunswick Bird Island and Cumberland Dividings from the State of Georgia to DNR. The EO clarifies that Brunswick Bird Island and Cumberland Dividings were created for the purpose of providing valuable nesting sites for State-protected beach-nesting and colonial-nesting bird species and that DNR must protect these birds from disturbance by people and dogs by supervising and controlling visitor use and access.

Ogeechee Bar, a naturally accreting bar seaward of Raccoon Key, already falls within the Department's jurisdiction as it is part of Ossabaw Island WMA. Ossabaw Island WMA was designated a Heritage Preserve in 1978, providing the highest level of protection for any public lands. According to its Heritage Preserve designation, Ossabaw Island shall only be used for natural, scientific, and cultural study, research and education, and environmentally sound preservation, conservation, and management of the island's ecosystem, under conditions carefully monitored and controlled by DNR.

Sites closed would be clearly marked with in-water signage, either piling based signs or buoy markers. In contemplating closures, DNR is striving to restrict the public as little as possible while ensuring that our conservation priority species can thrive while nesting, resting, or foraging on our coast.

This rule amendment affects a relatively small portion of the accessible beach in the State, as shown in the tables below: