Chart Coverage in Coast Pilot 4—Chapter 8
NOAA's Online Interactive Chart Catalog has complete chart coverage
http://www.charts.noaa.gov/InteractiveCatalog/nrnc.shtml
80°W
81°W
81°30'W
32°N
31°30'N
31°N
30°30'N
30°N
SAVANNAH RIVER
Savannah
WASSAW SOUND
OSSABAW SOUND
ST. CATHERINES SOUND
SAPELO SOUND
11502
DOLBY SOUND
ALTAMAHA SOUND
GEORGIA
Brunswick
ST. SIMONS SOUND
ST. ANDREW SOUND
11502
ST. MARYS RIVER
Fernandina Beach
FLORIDA
NASSAU SOUND
Jacksonville
ATLANTIC OCEAN
ST. JOHNS RIVER
11488

Savannah River to St. Johns River

(1) This chapter describes the coasts of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida from Savannah River to St. Johns River and includes the deepwater ports of Brunswick, GA, and Fernandina Beach, FL. Also discussed are Wassaw, Ossabaw, St. Catherines, Sapelo, Doboy, Altamaha, St. Simons, St. Andrew, Jekyll, Cumberland and Nassau Sounds, and their tributaries, and several of the small towns along these waterways.

(2) The Intracoastal Waterway for this section of the coast is described in chapter 12.

(3)

Weather

(4) The southerly latitude and maritime exposure influence the climate of this coast. Winters are mild and short. Polar air masses are moderated although unusually strong, cold air outbreaks can cause foggy conditions along the coast. Cold spells seldom last more than 2 or 3 days. The occasional winter storm results in strong winds and rough seas from October through April. Waves of 8 feet (2.4 m) or more are reported about 20 to 30 percent of the time in deep water, but gales occur less than 1 percent of the time. However, winds of 40 to 50 knots have been recorded in all of these months.

(5) From May through September peak winds offshore are usually in the 30- to 40-knot range, although they could climb higher in a severe thunderstorm or tropical cyclone. Despite the low latitude, tropical cyclones are infrequent along this coast. They are most likely from June through October, and one can be expected to move through some part of Georgia each year, usually from the Gulf of Mexico. This fact holds coastal effects to a minimum. The most dangerous are those from the east through south. Because this portion of the coast lies parallel to the mean track of most recurving storms, the incidence of coastal crossing tropical cyclones is extremely low. In addition to strong winds, high tides and rough seas, these storms can trigger torrential rains, severe thunderstorms and even tornadoes or waterspouts. In general, however, summers are warm, but a persistent cooling sea breeze is usually present from afternoon into the early evening. Showers and thunderstorms are common along this coast and can reduce visibilities for brief periods. Obstructions to visibilities are most likely to be caused during winter and early spring by fog. This occurs when warm air moves across the cool coastal waters that lie shoreward of the Gulf Stream. Visibilities of less than 0.5 mile (0.9 km) have been observed about 3 to 5 percent of the time from December through February in these waters.

(6)

ENCs - US4GA11M, US4FL50M
Charts - 11502, 11488

(7) The coast from Savannah River to St. Johns River extends in a south-southwesterly direction for about 100 miles. Islands separated by numerous sounds and rivers constitute the entire coast. In general these islands are heavily wooded with marshy areas bordering them on their western sides. The 5-fathom curve extends about 7 miles offshore except in the vicinity of St. Simons Sound where 5 fathoms can be found as much as 12 miles offshore.

(8) Caution must be observed along this section of the coast because of the inshore sets caused by the numerous rivers and sounds.

(9) Private lighted and unlighted buoys mark several fish havens that have been established as much as 27 miles offshore along this section of the coast.

(10) This section of the coast, due to its low relief, presents no good radar targets.

(11)

COLREGS demarcation lines

(12) The lines established for this part of the coast are described in **33 CFR 80.717** through **80.723**, chapter 2.

(13)

Dangers

(14) **Danger areas** for air-to-air and air-to-water gunnery and bombing ranges are off the Georgia coast; see **33 CFR 334.490**, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.

(15)

Tybee Island to Wassaw Island

(16) From Savannah River to Wassaw Sound, a distance of about 7 miles, the coast is formed by the shores of **Tybee Island**, and **Little Tybee Island** which lie in a southwesterly direction. Dangerous shoals extend from the shores of the islands for a distance of 4.5 miles.

(17) On the north side of Tybee Island, the **South Channel** of the Savannah River extends from the main channel at the east end of **Cockspur Island** to the southwest end of Elba Island where it again joins the main channel. The east entrance is marked by lights. In 1979, the east entrance had a controlling depth of 2 feet, thence in 1975, the reported controlling depth was 5 feet to the junction with the Intracoastal Waterway. In 1983, it was reported that greater depths could be carried through the east entrance with local knowledge. **McQueens Island** is west

of Tybee Island along the south side of South Channel. **Fort Pulaski National Monument** includes Cockspur and McQueens Islands. **Fort Pulaski** on Cockspur Island was built during the period 1829–1847. **Tybee Coast Guard Station** is on the north side of Cockspur Island. The Intracoastal Waterway crosses the South Channel through Elba Island Cut. The highway bridge crossing the channel between Cockspur and McQueens Islands has a 36-foot fixed span with a clearance of 10 feet. A fixed highway bridge with a clearance of 35 feet crosses the channel between Elba Island and Savannah, 1.5 miles northwestward of Elba Island Cut. An overhead power cable with a clearance of 60 feet is immediately southeastward of the bridge.

(18) **Tybee Island**, a summer resort at the eastern end of Tybee Island, is conspicuous from seaward. An inside approach to the beach is made from South Channel through **Lazaretto Creek** and **Tybee Creek**, U.S. Route 80 highway fixed bridge crosses Lazaretto Creek just inside its entrance from South Channel; clearance is 35 feet. An overhead power cable with a clearance of 55 feet crosses the creek about 300 yards southward of the bridge. In 1979, the controlling depth in Lazaretto Creek was 6 feet from South Channel to about 0.2 mile south of Route 80 highway bridge; thence in 1983, 3 feet was reported to the junction with Tybee Creek; and thence 10 feet was reported in Tybee Creek to Tybee Island.

(19) Small craft occasionally transit the Tybee Inlet entrance. Due to breakers and dangerous, shifting shoals, caution is advised when transiting the area.

(20) In 1986, a partially submerged wreck was reported about 0.3 mile south of the bridge in about 32°00'40"N., 80°53'00"W.

(21) **Chimney Creek** extends north from Tybee Creek. A fish camp on the creek has berths with electricity, gasoline, water, ice, limited marine supplies and a 4-ton lift. In 1983, 2 feet was reported available in the creek, but local knowledge is advised.

(22) The remaining portions of Tybee and Little Tybee Islands are generally low and marshy, although they have many wooded hummocks with numerous creeks winding among them. Several creeks flow into the sea, but they are of little importance as their mouths are obstructed by shoals with crooked channels of 2 to 3 feet in depth.

(23) The southwest part of Little Tybee Island, separated from the main body by a stretch of marsh, is **Beach Hammock**. It is distinguishable by a large and heavily wooded hummock that marks the northern point of the entrance to Wassaw Sound.

(24) The entrance to **Wassaw Sound** is about 9.5 miles southward of Tybee Light (32°01'20"N., 80°50'44"W.). Shoals extend offshore a distance of 4 to 4.5 miles from the entrance, forming a shifting bar. In June 1983, the reported controlling depth was 10 feet through the marked bar channel. The entrance, used only by small boats, is marked by a lighted buoy and the bar channel by lighted and unlighted buoys. A private unlighted buoy marks a fish haven about 5 miles eastward of the entrance buoy.

(25) In 1994, a sunken wreck about 1.2 miles southeast of Wassaw Sound Buoy 9 was reported in about 31°53'00.5"N., 80°52'57.4"W. At low water, the pilot house is fully exposed.

(26)

COLREGS demarcation lines

(27) The lines established for Wassaw Sound are described in **33 CFR 80.717**, chapter 2.

(28) After crossing the bar at the entrance to Wassaw Sound, a channel with depths of 19 to 38 feet leads through the southern part of the sound and for about 6 miles up Wilmington River to the Intracoastal Waterway. The channel is marked by lights in its southern part.

(29)

Current

(30) The tidal currents in Wassaw Sound reach velocities up to 2.2 knots. See the Tidal Current prediction service at *tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov* for specific information about times, directions, and velocities of the current at numerous locations throughout the area. Links to a user guide for this service can be found in chapter 1 of this book.

(31) **Bull River** flows into Wassaw Sound from northward. It is connected with the South Channel of the Savannah River 5 miles below the city of Savannah by St. Augustine Creek, the upper part of Wilmington River and Elba Island Cut. The mouth of the river is obstructed by shoals. In 1983, the reported controlling depth was 10 feet from the mouth through St. Augustine Creek to a junction with the Intracoastal Waterway. The entrance is marked by a daybeacon. U.S. Route 80 highway bridge, 5.7 miles above the mouth, has a fixed span with a clearance of 20 feet. An overhead power cable with a clearance of 55 feet crosses the river close northwestward of the bridge. A marina on the west side of the river, close south of the bridge has berths, electricity, gasoline and diesel fuel, water, ice and some boat repairs.

(32) **Wilmington River** flows into Wassaw Sound from northwestward. The upper end of the river from the junction with Skidaway River is part of the Intracoastal Waterway. **Turner Creek**, which connects the Wilmington and Bull Rivers, had a reported controlling depth of 4.9 feet in 2004, until its junction with **Richardson Creek**. U.S. Route 80 highway bridge over Turner Creek, 1.6 miles above the mouth, has a fixed span with a clearance of 35 feet. An overhead power cable on the northeastern side of the bridge has a clearance of 55 feet. The highway bridge 3 miles above the mouth has a clearance of 34 feet. An overhead power cable on the southwest side of the bridge has a clearance of 55 feet. Boatyards and marinas on Turner Creek can handle craft to 60 feet for hull, engine and electronic repairs. Gasoline, pump-out station, wet and dry storage, water, ice and berths with electricity are available.

(33) From Turner Creek, Richardson Creek winds generally in a westward direction for about 4 miles to Wilmington River. Two highway bridges crossing

Richardson Creek about 2.3 miles from its eastern entrance have fixed spans with a minimum width of 13 feet and a minimum clearance of 5 feet. Overhead power cables at the bridges and 0.3 mile westward have reported minimum clearances of 32 feet. The velocity of the tidal current at the entrance to Wilmington River varies from 1 to 2 knots. See the Tidal Current prediction service at *tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov* for specific information about times, directions, and velocities of the current at numerous locations throughout the area. Links to a user guide for this service can be found in chapter 1 of this book.

(34) The coast between Wassaw and Ossabaw Sounds is formed by **Wassaw Island**, which is triangular in shape and has a length of about 4.5 miles and a width of about 3.5 miles in its widest part. In general, the island is low and marshy; the strip of firm land forming the coastline is only 0.3 to 0.8 mile wide. The firm land is heavily wooded and has a broad sand beach backed by sand dunes. From this shore dangerous shoals extend to a distance of 3 to 4 miles. The marshy portion of the island is cut by numerous creeks winding among the heavily wooded hummocks. **Romerly Marsh Creek**, and **Odingsell River** separate the island from the islands to the westward.

(35)

Ossabaw Sound

(36) **Ossabaw Sound**, entered between the southern end of Wassaw Island on the north and **Bradley Point** (31°49.4'N., 81°02.9'W.) on the south, is a broad opening in the coast about 15 miles southwestward of Tybee Light. Most of the sound is shallow, and shifting shoals extend seaward about 4 miles. The entrance to the sound is marked by a lighted buoy. **North Channel** and **South Channel** lead through the shoals into the sound. North Channel is marked by buoys and daybeacons, and South Channel is marked by a buoy, a daybeacon and a light. Small local fishing craft are the principal traffic seaward from the sound. Strangers are advised not to enter as breakers sometimes extend clear across the entrance. Vernon River, Ogeechee River and numerous smaller rivers and creeks enter the sound.

(37)

Fish haven

(38) A fish haven is about 2 miles east-southeastward of Ossabaw Sound Entrance Lighted Buoy OS.

(39)

Vernon River

(40) **Vernon River** enters Ossabaw Sound from the northwestward. The Intracoastal Waterway traverses a portion of this river. **Burnside River**, **Little Ogeechee River** and several creeks enter the Vernon River. **Montgomery**, a town on Vernon River 5 miles above the mouth, has highway connections with Savannah.

(41)

Ogeechee River

(42) **Ogeechee River** flows into the western part of Ossabaw Sound. The river drains an extensive area and is subject to flood conditions that continually change the channel. Navigation to the Seaboard System Railroad bridges, about 27 miles above the sound, is possible with local knowledge. The first railroad bridge has a 40-foot fixed span with a clearance of 7 feet. The second railroad bridge, parallel to and immediately northward of the first, has a lift span with a clearance of 4 feet down and 41 feet up. (See **33 CFR 117.1** through **117.59** and **117.367**, chapter 2, for drawbridge regulations.) The overhead power cable close northward of the more northerly bridge has a clearance of 50 feet.

(43) A marina, with reported depths of 19 feet alongside the berths, is just above **Fort McAllister** on the south side of the river, about 11 miles above the entrance. The marina can provide gasoline, diesel fuel, ice, marine supplies, transient berths, pump-out station, a surfaced ramp and wet and dry storage, and a 45-ton railway and 16-ton lift are available.

(44)

Current

(45) The currents in the Ogeechee River and Ossabaw Sound have considerable velocity, particularly the ebb setting out of the river. Current predictions for several locations in Ossabaw Sound and vicinity can be obtained from the Tidal Current prediction service at *tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov.* Links to a user guide for this service can be found in chapter 1 of this book.

(46)

Ossabaw Island to Timmons River

(47) The coastline between Ossabaw Sound and St. Catherines Sound is formed by the eastern shore of **Ossabaw Island**, which lies in a southwesterly direction and has a length of 8 miles and a width of 6 miles. The eastern half of the island is heavily wooded. The north end forms the south shore of Ossabaw Sound.

(48) The seaward side of the island appears unbroken by streams and shows as a white sand beach backed by heavy woods. Dangerous shoals extend offshore nearly 5 miles.

(49) The southwestern point of the island borders on St. Catherines Sound and is thickly wooded. The western half is almost entirely marshy and is cut up by numerous creeks that provide access to the higher ground to the eastward. On the west the island is separated from the marshes of the mainland by Bear River and **Florida Passage**.

(50) **St. Catherines Sound** is about 24 miles southwestward of Tybee Light. The entrance is over a shifting bar that extends 5 miles offshore. The entrance lighted buoy is about 7 miles offshore. In 1983, the reported controlling depth in the marked bar channel was

8 feet. The points on its northern and southern sides are wooded.

(51)

COLREGS demarcation lines

(52) The lines established for St. Catherines Sound are described in **33 CFR 80.717**, chapter 2.

(53) There are no towns on the sound, and strangers seldom enter. Except for light-draft fishing craft, little traffic crosses St. Catherines Bar. Channels with depths of 13 to 38 feet lead from inside the bar into the entrances of its tributaries. The main body of the sound is exposed and becomes quite rough in moderately bad weather. Protected anchorage for small vessels is in **Walburg Creek** on the south side of the entrance to the sound.

(54)

Current

(55) Tidal currents have considerable velocity at the entrance and in the tributary rivers. See the Tidal Current prediction service at *tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov* for specific information about times, directions, and velocities of the current at numerous locations throughout the area. Links to a user guide for this service can be found in chapter 1 of this book.

(56) The Intracoastal Waterway crosses St. Catherines Sound just inside the entrance and affords passage northward through Bear River and Florida Passage to Ossabaw Sound and southward through North Newport River and Johnson Creek to Sapelo Sound.

(57) Three main rivers enter the sound. **Bear River** and **North Newport River**, which form a portion of the Intracoastal Waterway, flow into the sound from the northwestward and southwestward, respectively. **Medway River** enters the sound from the westward. In 1983, there was a reported controlling depth of 10 feet to **Sunbury**, a small settlement on the western shore 7 miles above the mouth of Medway River. Water can be obtained at the wharf, which serves an oyster plant and has a depth of 6½ feet alongside.

(58) **Ashley Creek** makes into the south side of Medway River about 3 miles above the mouth. A fish camp, about 2.7 miles above the mouth of the creek at **Yellow Bluff**, has berths with electricity, gasoline, water, a 2-ton mobile lift and limited marine supplies. In 1983, a reported depth of about 3 feet could be carried to the fish camp dock.

(59) **Kilkenny Creek** empties into the west side of Bear River about 3.3 miles above the mouth. A fish camp, about 1.8 miles above the mouth of the creek, has berths, gasoline, diesel fuel, electricity, water, ice, pump-out station and wet and dry storage. In 2002, a reported depth of 10 feet could be carried to the fish camp.

(60) **Belfast**, a town on **Belfast River**, is reached by way of the Medway River and Belfast River. In 1983, the reported controlling depth in Belfast River was 4 feet to Belfast. A pile of rocks, bare about 3 feet at low water, stands in the midchannel with surrounding depths of 8½ feet off the bluff at Belfast.

(61) A marina, on the north side of North Newport River about 8.6 miles above the mouth at **Colonels Island**, has berths with electricity, gasoline, diesel fuel, water, ice, a 3½-ton mobile lift, engine repairs and limited marine supplies. In 1983, a reported depth of about 10 feet could be carried to the marina via **Timmons River**.

(62)

Fish haven

(63) A fish haven, with a minimum depth of 3 feet, is on the north side of Timmons River about 1.9 miles above its mouth; caution is advised.

(64)

St. Catherines Island

(65) **St. Catherines Island**, which forms the coast from St. Catherines Sound to Sapelo Sound, lies in a nearly north and south line and has a length of 9 miles and a width at its widest part of about 3 miles. The island is flat, and much of it is marshy with the higher part heavily wooded.

(66) When viewed from a distance seaward, only dense woods in level silhouette are to be seen on St. Catherines Island. Closer inspection reveals a white sand beach, with sand dunes 20 feet high near the center of the island that show up from some directions. A prominent sand dune, 3 miles south of the north end of the island and about 1 mile north of McQueen Inlet, is reported to show well from seaward. **McQueen Inlet**, the only break in the shoreline visible from seaward, is unimportant, as it is blocked by shoals at low water. Dangerous shoals extend offshore for 5 miles.

(67) The island is separated from the marshes lying between it and the mainland by Walburg Creek, Johnson Creek and South Newport River. The entrance to Sapelo Sound is between the south point of this island and the north point of Blackbeard Island.

(68)

Sapelo Sound to Darien River

(69) **Sapelo Sound** is about 33 miles southwestward of Tybee Light.

(70)

COLREGS demarcation lines

(71) The lines established for Sapelo Sound are described in **33 CFR 80.717**, chapter 2.

(72) A lighted buoy is 15 miles off the entrance. About 8 miles from the entrance the break in the shore can be seen on a clear day. The tower of the abandoned lighthouse is 10 miles southwestward of the sound. Vessels should stay in a depth of over 5 fathoms until the bar channel buoys are seen because shoals extend about 5 miles offshore.

(73) With the aid of the chart, and on a rising tide and a smooth sea, vessels should have no difficulty in entering during daylight by following the buoys. In 2001, a changeable area with shoaling to about 1 foot was reported in about 31°32'29"N., 81°08'01"W., 0.75

mile eastward of **Experiment Shoal**. A swash channel between Experiment Shoal and St. Catherines Island has a least depth of 1 foot. Another unmarked channel south of the main channel has a reported depth of 8 feet and is used by fishing boats.

(74) No towns of any importance are on the sound or tributaries. In northeasterly weather, anchorage can be made in the lower part of South Newport River with fair protection.

(75)

Current

(76) In the entrance to the sound the velocities of flood and ebb are 2.1 and 2.5 knots, respectively. The Tidal Current Tables should be consulted for current predictions. See the Tidal Current prediction service at *tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov* for tidal differences on Sapelo River and its tributaries. Links to a user guide for this service can be found in chapter 1 of this book.

(77) The Intracoastal Waterway enters Sapelo Sound from the northward through South Newport River and continues southward to Doboy Sound through Sapelo River, Front River, Creighton Narrows and Old Teakettle Creek.

(78) **South Newport River** flows into the sound from northward just inside the entrance. In 1983, the reported controlling depth in the river was 5 feet through **Cross Tide Creek** to its junction with North Newport River, thence 5 feet down that river to the Intracoastal Waterway. **Sapelo River**, entering the sound from westward, is used only by small fishing boats, except for the lower part below **Front River**, which forms a part of the Intracoastal Waterway.

(79) In 2014, a draft of 7.5 feet could be carried from the deeper waters of Sapelo River into the mouth of Front River, at the head of which a dredged channel through **Creighton Narrows** offers passage to Old Teakettle Creek and thence to Doboy Sound. The Intracoastal Waterway follows this route.

(80) **Mud River**, flowing into the head of Sapelo Sound from southward, is a broad shallow body of water.

(81) **Julienton River** enters Sapelo River from the northwest about 3 miles above the mouth. Shrimp boats base at **Shellman Bluff** on **Broro River**, locally known as **Shellman Creek**, which enters Julienton River about 4.5 miles above its mouth. Berths with electricity, gasoline, water, ice, two 2-ton lifts and limited marine supplies are available. In 1983, it was reported that with local knowledge 5 feet could be carried up Julienton River and Broro River to the shrimp dock. Other facilities are at **Continment Bluff** and **Dallas Bluff** on Julienton River, a short distance above Broro River. These include gasoline, diesel fuel, water, ice, provisions and lodging.

(82) **Pine Harbor** is on Sapelo River about 10.5 miles above the mouth. In 1983, the reported controlling depth was 1 foot from the junction of Sapelo River and the Intracoastal Waterway to the landing at Pine Harbor.

(83) The coastline from Sapelo Sound to Doboy Sound is formed by the shores of **Blackbeard Island** and **Sapelo Island. Blackbeard Creek**, which empties into **Cabretta Inlet**. From all directions, they appear as a single island and are described as such. Taken together they are 10 miles long in a south-southwesterly direction and 4 miles wide. Large portions of both islands are heavily wooded. These islands present no well-marked distinguishing features, except the usual sand beach backed by dense woods in level outline and the abandoned lighthouse tower near the south point of Sapelo Island. The western part of Sapelo Island consists almost entirely of broad marshes with numerous creeks. Most important of these is Duplin River, which has deep water for several miles and affords means of communication to the island. Sapelo Island is separated from the marshes lying between it and the mainland by Mud River and New Teakettle Creek.

(84) Blackbeard Island and the marshes surrounding Blackbeard Creek make up **Blackbeard Island National Wildlife Refuge.**

(85) **Grays Reef National Marine Sanctuary** has been established to protect and preserve the live bottom ecosystem and other natural resources of Grays Reef. The sanctuary comprises a 16.68-square-mile area about 18 miles east of Sapelo Island. (See **15 CFR 922**, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.)

(86) **Doboy Sound** is 45 miles southwestward of Tybee Light and 16 miles northeastward of St. Simons Light. The entrance, between Sapelo Island and Wolf Island, is about 1 mile wide and obstructed by shifting shoals extending about 4.5 miles offshore. When approaching the sound, vessels should stay in a depth of 5 fathoms or more until the entrance buoys are sighted. If there is too much sea to cross the bar, vessels are advised to enter via St. Simons Sound and the Intracoastal Waterway.

(87) A cluster of fish havens is eastward of Doboy Sound; the outermost is marked by a private unlighted buoy about 20 miles eastward of the entrance to the sound. A sunken wreck is about 6.5 miles east of the entrance to the sound in about 31°21'24"N., 81°09'06"W.

(88) The marked channel over the bar at the entrance to Doboy Sound is not considered safe for strangers except on a rising tide and a smooth sea. The bar has been changing over the past years. In 1983, the reported controlling depth was 5 feet. An unmarked swash channel with a least depth of 5 feet makes into the sound close under the south point of Sapelo Island. The channels are used by local shrimp boats.

(89) Doboy Sound extends northwestward about 5 miles from the bar with a width of about 0.8 mile.

(90)

Current

(91) Tidal currents in the sound have a velocity of 2 knots at the entrance. Predicted currents may be obtained from the Tidal Current prediction service at *tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov.* Links to a user guide for this service can be found in chapter 1 of this book.

(92)

Anchorage

(93) Good anchorage is found anywhere in the channel of the sound upstream from **Commodore Island** except in the cable area.

(94) The Intracoastal Waterway enters Doboy Sound through Old Teakettle Creek and passes southward through North River, Darien River, Rockdedundy River and Little Mud River to Altamaha Sound.

(95) **Duplin River**, entering Doboy Sound from northward, is a small stream about 5 miles long. Submerged piling extends off the northwest side of the entrance. In 1983, the reported midchannel controlling depth was 9 feet from the entrance to **Pumpkin Hammock**, thence 6 feet for another 2 miles. A ferry from the mainland docks on the eastern bank of the river, 0.3 mile upstream from the entrance. The dock has a depth of 15 feet alongside.

(96) **Sapelo Island** is locally known as **Lighthouse Creek**. The town is reached on high tide only. In an emergency some services and supplies can be obtained here. In 1983, the reported depth was less than 2 feet at the creek entrance and bare halfway to the town.

(97) **Old Teakettle Creek** enters the sound from northward about 1 mile northwestward of Duplin River and forms a part of the Intracoastal Waterway. **Shellbluff Creek**, which enters Old Teakettle Creek from the westward about 0.7 mile from its northern entrance, in 1983, had a reported controlling depth of 5 feet to the small packing plant at **Valona**. The docks are privately owned by a shrimp-boatbuilding yard with a small marine railway for hauling them out. Diesel fuel, water and ice are available.

(98) **Atwood Creek** and **Hudson Creek** are small streams emptying into the head of Doboy Sound from the northwestward. In 1983, the reported controlling depth in Atwood Creek was 5 feet for a distance of 2 miles, and 6 feet in Hudson Creek to the mouth of the small creek leading to a small shrimp-packing plant at **Meridia Landing**, which is about 1.5 miles by road from **Meridian**. Gasoline, diesel fuel, water and ice are available from the plant only in an emergency. A ferry to Sapelo Island docks in Hudson Creek. In 1981, a sunken wreck was reported in Hudson Creek about 1.4 miles above the mouth.

(99) **Carnigan River** enters the head of the sound from southwestward and is connected with North River by a branch known as **Buzzard Roost Creek**. **North River** enters Doboy Sound west of Doboy Island. It extends westward 6 miles to the town of **Ridgeville**, where it joins **May Hall Creek**, which, running southward, connects with Darien River 5 miles above its mouth. Overhead power cables with a minimum clearance of 51 feet cross May Hall Creek at Ridgeville and 0.5 mile above its junction with Darien River. A small-boat landing at the town has gasoline, diesel fuel and water. **Doboy Island** is wooded and has several buildings on its southwest end. A small private landing is on the west side of the island.

(100) **Back River**, on the southern side of Doboy and Commodore Islands, forms another seldomly used entrance from the sound to North and Darien Rivers.

(101) **South River**, also little used, empties into Doboy Sound from southwestward about 0.8 mile inside the entrance. It extends in a general westerly direction for 3 miles, where it joins **Little Mud River**, a part of the Intracoastal Waterway.

(102) **Darien River** extends southwestward for a distance of 11.5 miles, where it joins the Altamaha River. Care is necessary when navigating this river due to the shoals and numerous floating snags. Water is fresh in the river at Darien after the ebb has been running for about 3 hours. The best route from Doboy Sound to the Darien River is via the Intracoastal Waterway.

(103) **Darien** is 9 miles above Doboy Island on the north bank of Darien River. Fishing and pulpwood are the main industries. Some shrimp and shad fishermen base here. A good highway passes through the town from Savannah to Brunswick, 18 miles away. Gasoline, diesel fuel, ice, fresh water and supplies are available. Two marine railways, owned by a packing company, can haul out fishing boats up to 75 feet. The reported depth of water alongside the wharves was 8 to 15 feet in 1983. U.S. Route 17 highway bridge crossing the river at the town has a fixed span with a clearance of 31 feet. The overhead cable about 100 yards west of the bridge has a clearance of 51 feet.

(104)

Wolf Island to Buttermilk Sound

(105) Between Doboy Sound and Altamaha Sound is **Wolf Island**, which is about 2.5 miles long in a north-south direction. Wolf Island including Egg Island, part of the Wolf Island National Wildlife Refuge, are almost entirely marsh. They are designated Federal Wildlife Wilderness Areas and reported not accessible to the public.

(106) **Altamaha Sound** is 48 miles southwestward of Tybee Light and 12 miles northeastward of St. Simons Light. The entrance and the sound are obstructed by shoals that are dangerous to navigation. A shifting channel through the shoals extends 4 miles from the entrance. It is advisable to enter Altamaha Sound via the Intracoastal Waterway.

(107) **Altamaha River** is formed by the confluence of the **Oconee River** and **Ocmulgee River**, 138 miles above its mouth, and flows in a general southeasterly direction entering the western end of Altamaha Sound. The river is subject to freshets, and depths change radically. In 2016, the controlling depth to the confluence was 3 feet. Depths are less during the summer low-water period.

(108) U.S. Route 17 highway bridge over **South Altamaha River**, 2.5 miles south of Darien, has a fixed span with a clearance of 35 feet. An overhead power cable on the west side of the bridge has a clearance of 55 feet. Interstate Route 95 highway bridge crossing South Altamaha River, about 1.2 miles westward of U.S. Route 17 highway bridge, has a clearance of 35 feet. (See **33 CFR 117.1**

(118)

St. Simons Sound Entrance, Georgia
Image courtesy of United States Coast Guard (2014)

through **117.59**, **117.351**, **117.363**, and **117.365**, chapter 2, for drawbridge regulations for drawbridges crossing the Altamaha, Oconee, and Ocmulgee Rivers.)

(109) **Little Mud River** enters Altamaha Sound from northward about 2.5 miles inside the entrance. The Intracoastal Waterway passes through it. **Buttermilk Sound**, which enters Altamaha Sound from the southwestward, has an average width of 0.5 mile. At its head the sound connects with Frederica River and Mackay River; the latter connects with Back River. These three rivers enter the western end of St. Simons Sounds from northward, and Mackay River with Buttermilk Sound forms part of the Intracoastal Waterway.

(110)

ENC - US4GA11M
Chart - 11502

(111) The coast between Altamaha and St. Simons Sounds is formed by the shores of **Little St. Simons Island**, **Sea Island** and St. Simons Island. These islands are separated only by stretches of marsh traversed by small streams and from seaward appear as one body of land, although from certain points the marshes, alternating with patches of trees, give the land an unusually broken appearance.

(112) **St. Simons Island** is the main body of land between the two sounds, and in general description the other two islands may be considered as parts of it. The three taken together are 11 miles long and 6 miles wide at the northern end, diminishing gradually to 2.5 miles near the southern end. Immediately along the coast and in the central parts it is heavily wooded. Between the two wooded portions is a stretch of marsh from 1 to 1.5 miles wide extending nearly the whole length of the island, and to the westward it is separated from the mainland by extensive marshes, through which flow the Frederica and Mackay Rivers, joining Altamaha and St. Simons Sounds.

(113)

Hampton River to Blackbank River

(114) The northern portion of St. Simons Island is marshy and traversed by **Hampton River**, a sizable stream flowing in an easterly and southeasterly direction, which separates St. Simons and Little St. Simons Islands and enters the sea 5 miles below Altamaha Sound. The dangerous shoals on both sides of the channel are unmarked; strangers should not attempt entrance from seaward without local knowledge. In 2003, the reported controlling depth was 10.5 feet from Buttermilk Sound to Village Creek.

(115) **Village Creek** flows into Hampton River from the southward, about 1.5 miles above its mouth. It goes through a stretch of marsh separating Sea Island and St. Simons Island. After a crooked course of several miles, it joins the **Blackbank River**, a narrow and twisting stream

flowing to the southward between the two islands and entering the sea 4 miles south of Hampton River. In 1983, the reported controlling depth was 4 feet for about 4.6 miles above the mouth, thence 1 foot to and through the cut to Blackbank River and the Sea Island Bridge. Village Creek is dry above the cut at low water. The highway bridge crossing Blackbank River to Sea Island has a 15-foot fixed span with a clearance of 7 feet; overhead cables about 200 feet south of the bridge have a clearance of 16 feet.

(116)

ENC - US4GA11M
Chart - 11502

(117) **St. Simons Sound**, 0.8 mile wide at the entrance, is 61 miles southwestward of Tybee Light and 27 miles northward of Amelia Island Light. The sound forms a good harbor and is the approach to the city of Brunswick and Colonels Island. The entrance is obstructed by dangerous shifting shoals, forming a bar that extends for a distance of 5.5 miles offshore. A dredged channel through the bar has a federal project depth of 38 feet. A lighted buoy marks the entrance.

(119) **Brunswick** is on the eastern bank of East River and Academy Creek opposite Andrews Island, 7.5 miles above St. Simons Light. It is 4.5 miles west of the Intracoastal Waterway route, which connects it with ports to the north and south. The city is the second-largest port of commercial importance in Georgia. It is 104 miles south of Savannah and 82 miles north of Jacksonville by coastwise routes. The principal commodities handled in the port are seafood, wood pulp, wood pellets, salt, chicken feed, petroleum products, fertilizer, chemicals and roll on/roll off cargo of all types. The principal industries are seafood processing, steel fabrication, fluff and wood pulp, chemicals and roll on/roll off cargo.

(120) **Brunswick Harbor** comprises the improved channel across the bar, St. Simons Sound, Brunswick River, South Brunswick River and Turtle River.

(121) **Brunswick River** enters the sound from southwestward just inside the entrance and provides access for oceangoing vessels to the city of Brunswick. For a distance of 2.8 miles above its mouth, the river has an average width of 1.3 miles, but the deepwater channel averages only 0.3 mile in width. Above **Brunswick Point** the river has an average width of 0.7 mile to **Andrews Island**, which divides it into two branches. The southern branch is known as **Turtle River** and the northern branch, on which the city of Brunswick is situated, is known as **East River** to the mouth of **Academy Creek.**

(122)

Bridges

(123) The only bridge crossing the main channel is the Sidney Lanier (U.S. Route 17) highway bridge at Brunswick, 5.4 miles above the mouth, which has a fixed span with an authorized clearance of 185 feet. State Route 303 highway bridge, crossing Turtle River just above the head of the improvement, has a fixed span with a clearance of 35 feet at the center; the nearby overhead power cable clearance is 55 feet over the main channel. The twin fixed spans of Interstate 95 highway bridge, 0.6 mile upstream, have a clearance of 35 feet. There is little river traffic above these bridges.

(124)

Prominent features

(125) **St. Simons Light** (31°08'03"N., 81°23'37"W.), 104 feet above the water, is shown from a white conical tower attached to a brick dwelling on the north side of the entrance to the sound. The abandoned lighthouse on the north end of Little Cumberland Island, at the entrance to St. Andrew Sound, and the five tanks on Jekyll Island can be seen to the southward. Near the beach eastward and northeastward of St. Simons Light are many homes and summer residences extending to the vicinity of Hampton River. The three water tanks on St. Simons Island about 0.4 mile and 3.5 miles north of the light, the towers of the fixed bridge crossing Brunswick River and the tall stacks of the Hercules Powder Company in Brunswick and the pulpmill complex in northwestern Brunswick are prominent.

(126)

COLREGS demarcation lines

(127) The lines established for St. Simons Sound are described in **33 CFR 80.720**, chapter 2.

(128)

Brunswick Harbor navigational guidelines

(129) The Brunswick Bar Pilots, with the concurrence of various maritime interests, have established voluntary navigational safety guidelines for the Port of Brunswick. These guidelines are intended to minimize the risk of collision or grounding by vessels using the various waterways associated with the Port of Brunswick. They are not intended to supersede or contravene any law, regulation or rule promulgated by competent authority.

(130) (1) **Transiting the Sidney Lanier (U.S. Route 17) Bridge:** The advice and recommendations of the Brunswick Bar Pilots should be followed by mariners intending to transit the Sidney Lanier Bridge. Specifically:

(131) (2) **Transiting St. Simons Sound and the Intracoastal Waterway (IW):** The convergence of the deep draft ship channel of St. Simons Sound and the IW can pose significant hazards to oceangoing ships and tugs and tows transiting these waterways. To preclude unplanned encounters between vessels in these waterways, it is recommended that every transiting vessel initiate a SECURITE call on VHF-FM channel 13 at the following locations:

(132) (a) Inbound-upon passing the St. Simons Lighted Buoy STS;

(133) (b) Upon departing any dock in the Port of Brunswick;

(134) (c) Northbound on the IW - upon passing Jekyll Creek Light 19:

(135) (d) Southbound on the IW - upon transiting the fixed bridge over the Mackay River at Lanier Island (IW statue

mile 674.5). The context of the SECURITE call should include: The identity of the vessel, its destination, expected ETA to the aforementioned converging waterways and any special information concerning its maneuverability.

(136) (3) **Docking or undocking vessels at Colonels Island:** The Georgia Ports Authority facility on Colonels Island is a major terminal for automobile importation. This terminal has three berths, each parallel to the south bank of the South Brunswick River, and is accessed from the Turtle River via a 0.9-mile channel approximately 400 feet in width. Vehicle carriers calling at this facility are brought up the full length of the channel stern first with tug assistance. Docking and undocking from either berth should not be attempted whenever the wind is from the northeast at 25 knots or greater.

(137) (4) **Meeting and passing on narrow waterways:** Oceangoing vessels over 400 feet LOA or drawing more than 20 feet and tug and tows with a combined tonnage of over 500 GRT should not meet or pass vessels of like size on the following narrow waterways in the Port of Brunswick area:

(138) (a) Cedar Hammock Range

(139) (b) Turtle River Lower Range

(140) (c) Colonels Island Terminal Access Channel

(141) (d) The St. Simons Outer Bar.

(141.001) (5) **Stability discipline while entering/departing:** It is advised that masters ensure vessels arriving at the Port of Brunswick have an adequate safe margin of stability in accordance with the stability handbook provided by the shipbuilder and/or approved by class. Every vessel shall be able to answer any helm or telegraph order at any time during the transit into, out of, or within the port in accordance with Federal Navigation Regulations. Mariners are advised that this periodic shoaling in the channel has the potential to reduce safety margins in the event vessels have reduced draft prior to arrival to meet draft restrictions. Masters are advised to keep vessels well within safe margins of stability if draft is reduced to prevent the deterioration of navigational safety.

(142)

Channels

(143) A federal project provides for a channel 38 feet deep through the bar, thence 36 feet deep in Brunswick River and East River; and 30 feet deep in Turtle River to the LCP Chemicals-Georgia Wharf. For detailed channel information and minimum depths as reported by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), use NOAA Electronic Navigational Charts. Surveys and channel condition reports are available through a USACE hydrographic survey website listed in Appendix A.

(144) The channel through the bar is marked by lighted buoys, two **303°** directional lights and a **285°** lighted range. The channels inside the sound are marked with lighted ranges, lights and lighted buoys.

(145)

Dangers

(146) An unmarked wreck, covered 25 feet, is in 31°03'10"N., 81°13'45"W., about 1.4 miles eastward of the entrance to the bar channel. Several fish havens are north, south and east of the approach to the bar channel. Sediment traps, designed to trap advancing littoral material, are on the north side of the entrance channel. These traps may shoal at a rapid rate, spilling over into the adjacent navigation channel; mariners should exercise caution when operating near them.

(147) A rock ledge, about 600 to 800 feet long and covered 23 feet, is parallel to the south side of Cedar Hammock Range in about 31°06'27"N., 81°25'53"W.

(147.001) The entire shoreline of the Brunswick River is subject to strong surges. Using the minimum speed necessary to safely steer large commercial vessels, there will be potential to create some adverse effects in the waterway on or near both the Georgia riverbanks, particularly in the areas between the East River turning basin at the Turtle River junction. This area is subject to increased cross current that puts boats, and any other property, potentially in danger from passing commercial ships. Mariners are strongly advised to always maintain situational awareness in all parts of the river, especially in the vicinity of large commercial ships.

(148)

Anchorages

(149) There is good anchorage anywhere along the sides of the channel off the range lines in St. Simons Sound or Brunswick River. Depths of 22 to 79 feet may be found in the sound between Jekyll Island and St. Simons Islands and depths of 17 to 30 feet in the Brunswick River directly westward of Jekyll Island. In the area westward of the Brunswick Harbor Range, across the channel from Brunswick, anchorage is only for small craft.

(150)

Current

(151) Tidal currents normally follow the general direction of the dredged channel across the bar with a velocity of 2 knots. During northeasterly weather there is a strong southerly set across the bar channel and in southeasterly weather a strong northerly set. Current predictions for a number of locations in the vicinity of St. Simons Sound may be obtained from the Tidal Current prediction service at *tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov*. Links to a user guide for this service can be found in chapter 1 of this book.

(152)

Weather, Brunswick and vicinity

(153) The effect of the Atlantic on Brunswick is reflected in warmer winter-minimum and cooler summer-maximum temperatures than inland locations. There is even a slight, but noticeable, difference between the immediate coast and the city. On St. Simons Island temperatures are a few degrees cooler than in Brunswick, particularly in summer. This results in more 90°F (32.2°C) days in the city, but this average of 78 days is still a 15- to 20-day

improvement over cities farther inland. However, St. Simons records about 16 days each year where minimums drop to freezing or below, compared to about 11 days in the city. The average high temperature in Brunswick is 76°F (24.4°C) and the average low is 59°F (15°C). July is the warmest month, with an average high of 90°F (32.2°C) and an average low of 75°F (23.9°C). January is the coldest month, with an average high of 61°F (16.1°C) and an average low of 43°F (6.1°C). Each month May through August has record temperatures at or above 100°F (37.8°C), and the all-time extreme maximum is 103°F (39.4°C), recorded in June 1985 and July 1980. Each month November through March has recorded temperatures below freezing, and the recorded minimum is 6°F (-14.4°C), recorded in January 1985.

(154) Rainfall differences between coastal and land sites are less noticeable than temperature differences, and approximately 50 inches (1270 mm) is recorded annually at Brunswick. Nearly half the annual precipitation occurs as showers and thunderstorms on about 8 to 10 days per month from June through September. September is the wettest month, averaging 7.3 inches (185.4 mm) of rainfall, while November is the driest, averaging less than 2.5 inches (63.5 mm). Snowfall is almost nonexistent but has been recorded in each month December through March. Four inches (101.6 mm) fell in December 1989. Fog is common from November through March. On the coast, visibilities drop below 0.5 mile (0.9 km) on 2 to 4 days per month. This type of fog is most frequent in the early morning hours and usually lifts by late afternoon. Any quick drop in temperature may bring fog.

(155) Since 1842, 69 tropical storms have come within 50 miles (93 km) of Brunswick, Georgia, 22 of these storms since 1950. No major hurricane has made a direct hit at Brunswick, but numerous weaker storms have made their presence known. The distribution of direction is rather uniform. Nearly as many storms have made initial landfall in the northeastern Gulf of Mexico and crossed northern Florida before affecting the Brunswick area as those that approach the city from the south or southeast.

(156)

Pilotage, Brunswick

(157) Pilotage is compulsory for all foreign vessels and U.S. vessels over 200 gross tons. Pilotage is optional for U.S. vessels in coastwise trade that have on board a pilot licensed by the Federal Government.

(158) The area is served by Brunswick Bar Pilots Association, at 8 Glynn Ave. Brunswick, GA 31527; telephone 912–280–9464 (24 hours), fax 912–280–9459. e-mail hwynn@brunswickpilots.com. The office monitors VHF-FM channels 12 and 16 between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The Brunswick Coast Guard Station on VHF-FM channel 16 will relay messages; telephone, 912–267–7999.

(159) The pilot boats are stationed in Frederica River just below the causeway bridge. The pilot boats monitor VHF-FM channels 12, 13 and 16. The pilot boats are GLYNN and BRUNSWICK, both 50 feet long, with yellow hull and superstructure, and black trim with the word PILOT on the superstructure. Both boats display the standard day and night pilot signals. The pilot boarding and cruising area is one nautical mile southeast of St. Simons Lighted Buoy STS (31°02'49"N., 81°14'25"W.). Pilots board 24 hours a day from the pilot boats. Some occasional delays may be incurred because of seasonal fog. Incoming vessels are requested to rig the pilot ladder 1.5 meters above the water, and cruise at a speed of about 8 knots.

(160) Pilotage should be arranged in advance, normally, through ships' agents; a 2-hour minimum ETA is required.

(161)

North Atlantic right whales

(162) **Recommended two-way Whale Avoidance Routes** have been established in St. Simons Sound to reduce the likelihood of ship strikes of endangered North Atlantic right whales. All vessels are encouraged to use recommended routes when traveling into or out of Brunswick Harbor. The Brunswick Bar Pilots Association participates in the North Atlantic right whale Early Warning System. (See **North Atlantic right whales**, indexed as such, in chapter 3 for more information on right whales and recommended measures to avoid collisions.)

(163) All vessels 65 feet or greater in length overall (LOA) and subject to the jurisdiction of the United States are restricted to speeds of 10 knots or less in the Southeastern United States Seasonal Management Area between November 15 and April 15. The area is defined as the waters bounded to the north by 31°27'N., to the south by 29°45'N., and to the east by 80°51.6'W. (See **50 CFR 224.105** in chapter 2 for regulations, limitations, and exceptions.) Consult USCG Local Notice to Mariners and USCG NAVTEX for information on Dynamic Management Areas that are established to protect aggregations of right whales.

(164) Approaches to St. Simon Sound lie within the WHALESSOUTH Mandatory Ship Reporting Area. Each self-propelled ship of 300 gross tons or greater entering WHALESSOUTH from November 15 through April 16 must participate in the WHALESSOUTH Mandatory Ship Reporting System (See **33 CFR 169**, chapter 2, for limits and regulations, and chapter 3 for sample reports). Sovereign immune vessels are exempt from the requirement to report but are encouraged to participate.

(165)

Towage

(166) Tugs up to 3,000 hp are available on a 24-hour basis; tugs are required for docking and undocking oceangoing vessels. Arrangements for tugs are made in advance through ships' agents.

(167)

Quarantine, customs, immigration, and agricultural quarantine

(168) (See chapter 3, Vessel Arrival Inspections, and Appendix A for addresses.)

(169) **Quarantine** is enforced in accordance with regulations of the U.S. Public Health Service. (See Public Health Service, chapter 1.) Brunswick has a city hospital.

(170) Brunswick is a **customs port of entry**.

(171) **Harbor regulations** are under the control of the Georgia Ports Authority, who can be contacted through the port authority office or by telephone 912–264–7295.

(172)

Wharves

(173) Only the major deepwater port facilities at Brunswick are described. These include the facilities along the southwest side of the city that are owned and operated by the Georgia Ports Authority, and one privately operated facility on the east side of Turtle River above Brunswick. These facilities have rail and highway connections, and water and electrical shore power connections. Cargo is generally handled by ship's tackle; special handling equipment, if available, is mentioned in the description of the particular facility. The alongside depths given for each facility described are reported depths. (For information on the latest depths, contact the operator.) The remainder of the facilities along the Brunswick waterfront and on the east side of Turtle River are used for servicing commercial fishing vessels and small craft and for handling seafood and barge traffic; these are not described.

(174) **East side of East River:**

(175) **Brunswick Lanier Terminal** (31°07'42"N., 81°29'33"W.): 250 feet of berthing space with dolphins; deck height, 13 feet; pipeline to three storage tanks with 310,000 barrels capacity; railway and highway connections; receipt and shipment of petroleum products, bunkering vessels; owned by Georgia Ports Authority and operated by Blackwater Terminals.

(176) **Brunswick Lanier Dock** (31°07'48"N., 81°29'34"W.); 500 feet of berthing space; deck height, 13 feet; portable conveyor with 20,000-ton capacity to open storage area; covered storage area to 46,000 tons; railway and highway connections; receipt of dry bulk commodities including gypsum rock, cement, fertilizer and perlite; owned by Georgia Ports Authority and operated by Marine Port Terminals, Inc., Division of Logistec Stevedoring U.S.A., Inc.

(177) **Brunswick East River Terminal, Berths 1, 2, and 3** (31°07'56"N., 81°29'36"W.): 1,665 of berthing space; deck height, 13 feet; 46-ton gantry crane, 156-ton pedestal crane, full portal ship-unloading tower with 750 tons per hour rate, 18-ton mobile crane, receiving hopper to covered storage to 100,000 tons, open storage to 40,000 tons, forklifts to 30 tons; railway and highway connections; receipt and shipment of conventional, break-bulk, and roll-on/roll-off general cargo and dry bulk commodities; owned by Georgia Ports Authority and operated by Marine Port Terminals, Inc., Division of Logistec Stevedoring U.S.A., Inc.

(178) **Brunswick Oil Wharf** (31°10'26"N., 81°31'15"W.): 200 feet of berthing space with dolphins; 20 feet alongside; deck height, 12 feet.

(179) **South side of South Brunswick River:**

(180) **Colonels Island Terminal RO/RO Berths 1, 2 and 3** (31°07'55"N., 81°32'12"W.): 1,850 feet of berthing space; 36 feet alongside; deck height, 14.5 feet; 650 acres paved open storage; auto cargo and import roll-on/roll-off facility; owned and operated by the Georgia Ports Authority. There are five major vehicle processing centers operating at this facility.

(181)

Supplies

(182) Provisions and some marine supplies are available at Brunswick. Oceangoing vessels can obtain oil by barge and diesel oil by truck. Gasoline and diesel fuel are available to commercial fishing vessels and recreational craft.

(183)

Repairs

(184) There are no drydocking or major repair facilities for oceangoing vessels in the port; the nearest such facilities are at Jacksonville, FL, or Savannah, GA. Machine, welding and electrical shops off the waterfront can make limited above-the-waterline repairs.

(185) There are no special facilities at the port for use in wrecking or salvage operations. Such equipment can be obtained from Savannah or Jacksonville.

(186)

Communications

(187) The port is served by the several bus, rail and truck lines and by Interstate I-95, U.S. Highway Routes 17, 82 and 341. Commercial flights operate out of the Brunswick Golden Isles Airport in Brunswick and the airport on St. Simons Island, about 6 miles east of Brunswick.

(188)

Small-craft facilities

(189) Gasoline, diesel fuel, water, ice, a pump-out station, marine supplies and lift to 50 tons and hull, engine and electronic repairs are available at Brunswick. Facilities along the Intracoastal Waterway, eastward of the city, are described in chapter 12.

(190) **St. Simons Island** and **St. Simons** are summer resort towns on the southeast and south sides of St. Simons Island, respectively. The concrete T-head fishing pier at St. Simons had reported depths of 14 to 21 feet alongside in 1983.

(191) **Frederica River** joins St. Simons Sound from the northward about 1 mile inside the entrance. Above its junction with Mackay River at the north end of Lanier Island, Frederica River extends northeastward for about 7 miles and rejoins Mackay River. This section is an alternate route of the Intracoastal Waterway. In

2004–2007, the reported midchannel controlling depth in Frederica River was 4.4 feet.

(192) The fixed highway bridge crossing Frederica River from St. Simons Island to Lanier Island has a clearance of 9 feet. A strong east-to-west ebb current sets across the channel.

(193) During flood tide, the current flows northward in the direction of the channel and is very strong. Vessels should exercise great caution while passing through this bridge, especially with a light tow proceeding south. When proceeding with the tide, tows should stop at the dolphins to await favorable current or be broken up and taken through singly.

(194) On **Lanier Island**, just south of the highway bridge, there is a marina with a 420-foot pier with reported approach depth of 15 feet in 2013. The marina can provide berths, electricity, gasoline, diesel fuel, water, ice, marine supplies, pump-out station, launching ramp and wet and dry storage; full repairs can be made.

(195) A **special anchorage** is close southwest of the highway bridge. (See **33 CFR 110.72b**, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.)

(196) **Mackay River**, which enters the sound from northward, is crossed about 1.5 miles above the mouth, at Lanier Island, by a fixed highway bridge with a clearance of 65 feet. The overhead power cables near the bridge have a least clearance of 97 feet. Mackay River joins Frederica River at the north end of Lanier Island; the rivers then join St. Simons Sound close southward of the island. Mackay River is part of the Intracoastal Waterway.

(197) **Little River** is west of Mackay River and flows into Back River. A highway bridge about 0.7 mile above the mouth has a 30-foot fixed span with a clearance of 6 feet. An overhead power cable immediately south of the bridge has a clearance of 33 feet.

(198) **Back River,** an alternate route of the Intracoastal Waterway, enters St. Simons Sound from northward. In 2004, the channel in Back River had a midchannel controlling depth of 2.5 feet to its junction with Mackay River. The fixed highway bridge about 1.5 miles above the mouth has a clearance of 40 feet. Above the bridge the channel to the head of the improvement is marked by daybeacons.

(199) **Terry Creek** flows into Back River 0.5 mile above the highway bridge and leads westward 1.5 miles to the city of Brunswick and to a basin on the east side of the city. The channel through Terry Creek has been dredged for a distance of about 1.1 miles from Back River, at which point it junctions with a dredged section that leads northwestward into **Dupree Creek** for about 0.35 mile. In 2004, the reported midchannel controlling depth in Terry Creek was 2.6 feet; thence in 1995 depths of less than 1 foot were in Dupree Creek. About 1.3 miles above the mouth, Terry Creek is crossed by a highway bridge with 30-foot fixed span and a clearance of 6 feet. The overhead power cable close southward of the bridge has a clearance of 26 feet. The basin is within the city limits of Brunswick and offers good protection from storms. There is a small boat-launching ramp available.

(200) **Plantation Creek** and **Clubbs Creek** offer a protected short cut between Back River and Brunswick River and can be used safely by small craft on a rising tide. In 2004, the reported midchannel controlling depth was 3.3 feet in Plantation Creek and 1.5 feet in Clubbs Creek.

(201) **South Brunswick River** enters Turtle River from westward opposite Andrews Island. The I-95 highway bridge, 2.8 miles above the mouth, has twin spans with a clearance of 15 feet. State Route 303 highway bridge, 3 miles above the mouth, has a 36-foot fixed span with a clearance of 15 feet. Overhead power cables on the east and west sides of the latter bridge have a least clearance of 30 feet.

(202) **Fancy Bluff Creek,** a tug and barge route from Little Satilla River, enters South Brunswick River from the southwest 1.3 miles above the mouth. U.S. Routes 17 and 84 highway bridge, about 2.3 miles from the north entrance, has a fixed span with a clearance of 18 feet. The overhead power cable close southwest of the bridge has a clearance of 44 feet. A railroad bridge with a 20-foot fixed span and a 10-foot clearance is about 0.2 mile northward of the highway bridge. The reported controlling depth through the creek to Little Satilla River was 4 feet in 1983.

(203) **Cedar Creek** enters Brunswick River from the south, about 1.2 miles from Brunswick Point. State Route 50 highway bridge, 1 mile above the entrance, has a 30-foot fixed span with a clearance of 10 feet. An overhead power cable immediately west of the bridge has a clearance of 35 feet. In 2005, the reported controlling depth was 1.0 foot.

(204) **Jekyll Creek** enters Brunswick River from southward about 2.5 miles above its mouth. With Jekyll and St. Andrew Sounds, it forms part of the Intracoastal Waterway to Fernandina Beach. (See chapter 12.)

(205)

Jekyll Island to Cumberland River

(206) From St. Simons Island to St. Andrew Sound the coast is formed by the shores of **Jekyll Island** which extends nearly north and south for a distance of 6.5 miles and has a width of 2 miles. Jekyll Island is a State Park; several large park buildings, formerly private homes, are on the west side of the island, and on the east side are large motels and recreational buildings, bath houses and the large prominent Aquarama (a large indoor swimming pool and auditorium). The island is wooded all along its eastern shore, and dark woods that are quite level in silhouette stand out in the background. Several fish havens are within 13 miles eastward and southeastward of Jekyll Island. Shoals extend 3 to 5 miles offshore. Three conspicuous gold spherical water tanks on top of slender green standpipes are about 2.2, 3.1 and 4.6 miles from the north end of the island. The towers of the lift

bridge over the Intracoastal Waterway on the west side of the island can be seen offshore.

(207) The western portion of Jekyll Island at the north and south ends is marshy, bordered by Brunswick River, Jekyll Creek and Jekyll Sound. A marina on the Intracoastal Waterway on the west side of the island is described in chapter 12.

(208) **St. Andrew Sound**, between Jekyll Island and Little Cumberland Island, is about 7 miles southward of St. Simons Sound and 17 miles northward of St. Marys Entrance.

(209)

COLREGS demarcation lines

(210) The lines established for St. Andrew Sound are described in **33 CFR 80.720**, chapter 2.

(211) The entrance to the sound is over a shifting bar that extends about 5 miles offshore. Vessels should stay in 5 fathoms or more until the outer buoy is sighted. The channel into the sound is marked by buoys. Vessels with a draft of about 10 feet should have little difficulty entering the sound. In 1983, the reported controlling depth was 12 feet in the buoyed entrance channel. The entrance is used only by local shrimp boats. An abandoned lighthouse is on the north end of Little Cumberland Island.

(212) In 1985, a sunken wreck was reported about 1.9 miles eastward of the abandoned lighthouse in about 30°58'32"N., 81°22'37"W.

(213) In the sound are extensive shoals, between which channels lead to the principal tributaries: Jekyll Sound on the north, Satilla River on the west and Cumberland River on the south.

(214)

Current

(215) The current velocity is about 2 knots in the entrance. See the Tidal Current prediction service at *tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov* for specific information about times, directions, and velocities of the current at numerous locations throughout the area. Links to a user guide for this service can be found in chapter 1 of this book.

(216) The best anchorage in the sound is in the channel on the western side of Little Cumberland Island. The anchorage has depths of 17 to 27 feet with good holding ground. Good anchorage is also found in the entrance of Jekyll Point.

(217) The Intracoastal Waterway, which crosses the sound, enters from the northward through Jekyll Creek and Jekyll Sound and passes southward through Cumberland River to Cumberland Sound and into Amelia River.

(218) **Jekyll Sound**, which enters St. Andrew Sound from northward just inside the entrance, has many shoals. Three channels lead to its three principal tributaries.

(219) Good anchorage is found in the entrance to Jekyll Sound westward of Jekyll Point. **Jekyll Creek** enters the sound from northward, forming a part of the Intracoastal Waterway. Its northern part connects with Brunswick River. **Jointer Creek** enters Jekyll Sound from northwestward. It is crooked and has several narrow branches, all of which except Cedar Creek are blocked by the Jekyll Island Highway. A small boat can navigate from Brunswick River to Jekyll Sound by way of Cedar and Jointer Creeks, or through Turtle River, South Brunswick River, Fancy Bluff Creek and Little Satilla River.

(220) **Little Satilla River** enters Jekyll Sound from westward. In 1983, it was reported that with local knowledge about 10 feet could be taken from the entrance to Fancy Bluff Creek. Small craft going to landings on the river enter from South Brunswick River through Fancy Bluff Creek.

(221) **Satilla River** enters St. Andrew Sound from the westward through a narrow channel in the shoals. In 1963 and 1975, shoaling to 1 foot was reported to exist just below the bend 9 miles above the entrance. **Satilla River Marsh Island Natural Area**, a Marine Protected Area (MPA), is about 1.5 miles upstream of St. Andrews Sound on the south bank of the Satilla River. Shrimp boats going to **Woodbine**, 22 miles above the mouth, use Bailey Cut, which was reported to have a controlling depth of about 4 feet, in 1983, at its eastern entrance. The river is crossed by twin fixed highway bridges with clearances of 44 feet about 19.2 miles above the mouth. U.S. Route 17 highway bridge at Woodbine has a fixed span with a clearance of 43 feet. A railroad bridge adjacent to the westward has a swing span with a clearance of 5 feet. (See **33 CFR 117.1** through **117.59** and **117.369**, chapter 2, for drawbridge regulations.) Overhead power cables are 0.8 mile and 0.5 mile east of the bridges. The easternmost cable has a clearance of 57 feet, and clearance for the other cable is not known. The overhead power cable between the bridges has a clearance of 61 feet. Traffic in the area consists mainly of sand tows and shrimp fishermen. A boatyard and shrimp dock on the south bank about 0.4 mile east of the highway bridge has a marine railway that can haul out craft up to 70 feet. There is 8 to 10 feet of water at the 90-foot T-head pier. Diesel fuel and freshwater are on the dock, and gasoline can be obtained by truck. Hull and engine repairs can be made in an emergency. Food, lodging and marine supplies can be obtained in the town. The water is brackish at Woodbine with no worms and fresh water above Burnt Fort. In 1963, the controlling depth was about 6 feet from Woodbine to **Burnt Fort**,45 miles above the mouth of the river. State Route 252 highway bridge at Burnt Fort has a fixed span with a clearance of 17 feet.

(222) The mean range of tide is 6.7 feet about 5 miles above the mouth and 3.2 feet at Burnt Fort. The freshet variation at **Waycross**, 142 miles above the mouth, is about 12 feet. There is reported to be no appreciable rise at Woodbine during freshets.

(223) **Cumberland River** enters St. Andrew Sound from southward just inside Little Cumberland Island. Its general direction is southerly for a distance of 11 miles, where it joins Cumberland Sound. The Intracoastal Waterway follows this route, which is well marked by ranges in the more difficult sections.

(233)

St. Marys Entrance, Georgia/Florida
Image courtesy of United States Coast Guard (2014)

(224) **Brickhill River** branches from Cumberland River about 5 miles above the mouth and rejoins it at **Cumberland Dividings**. **Floyd Creek** enters Cumberland River from westward about 4.5 miles above the north end of Little Cumberland Island, and joins with Satilla River through a cut to form an alternate passage to the Intracoastal Waterway.

(225) **Crooked River** enters Cumberland River from the westward about 10.6 miles above the mouth. A State park boat landing is at **Elliotts Bluff**, 4.3 miles above the mouth. Local fishing boats tie up at the private piers just above the park. In 1983, the reported controlling depth was 4 feet to the boat landing.

(226)

ENC - US4GA11M
Chart - 11502

(227) Between St. Andrew Sound and St. Marys Entrance, the coastline, extending in a southerly direction for about 16 miles, is formed by the shores of Little Cumberland and Cumberland Islands. These two islands are separated only by a stretch of marsh and **Christmas Creek,** and appear as one island from seaward. The coastline shows a broad white sand beach backed by an almost continuous range of sand dunes with dense woods backing them.

(228) The north end of **Little Cumberland Island**, heavily wooded, has a prominent buff colored bluff and is marked by an abandoned lighthouse.

(229) **Cumberland Island** is almost entirely covered by woods, though somewhat marshy to the westward. The island is separated from the mainland by extensive marshes through which flow the Cumberland and Brickhill Rivers. The extreme southern point of the island, which forms the north side of the entrance to Cumberland Sound, has several conspicuous sand dunes. **Cumberland Island National Seashore**, an MPA, extends seaward about .25 mile.

(230) From the north end for about 9 miles from the entrance to St. Andrew Sound, the coast is bordered by dangerous shoals extending 3 to 5 miles offshore. For the remaining distance to St. Marys Entrance there is a depth of 3 fathoms to within 1 mile of the beach.

(231)

St. Marys Entrance and Cumberland Sound

(232) **St. Marys Entrance** and **Cumberland Sound** are 16 miles southward of St. Andrew Sound and 19 miles northward of St. Johns River. The sound is the approach to the city of Fernandina Beach, the city of St. Marys, the Naval submarine support base in Kings Bay and an inland passage to St. Andrew Sound through its connection with the Cumberland River.

(234) **Fernandina Beach**, the principal city on Cumberland Sound, is on the east bank of Amelia River, 2 miles south of the entrance. Principal cargoes exported include forest products, machinery, yachts, steel and aluminum products. Principal cargoes imported include steel rebar and wire, hardwoods, oats and containerized commodities. Some coastwise and foreign shipping serve the port. A large shrimp boat fleet operates out of Fernandina Beach.

(235)

Prominent features

(236) **Amelia Island Light** (30°40'23"N., 81°26'33"W.), 107 feet above the water, is shown from a 64-foot white conical tower 2 miles southward of the entrance to Cumberland Sound. It is reported that the light is difficult to distinguish above the surrounding tree line during the daytime. Also prominent from seaward are the homes along the beach 2 to 3 miles south of the entrance, the condominiums about 5 miles south of the entrance, and a 295-foot-high processing tower southward of the entrance, about 0.9 mile 309° from Amelia Island Light. The tower is marked at night by flashing red lights. The smoke from the stacks of the paper companies at Fernandina Beach and St. Marys make them easily visible from all directions.

(237) **Fort Clinch**, on the north end of Amelia Island, is a state park, museum, and recreation area. The old fort and a large red brick building near the inshore end of the south entrance jetty are conspicuous. Camping facilities are at the northwest end of the island on the east side of the channel to Fernandina Harbor. A public boat launch is south of the campground adjacent to the state park.

(238) The entrance to Cumberland Sound is between two stone jetties. The jetties are reported to be in very poor condition with both almost entirely submerged at mean high water. The north jetty is marked off its outer end by a lighted buoy. White buoys with orange bands worded *JETTY* mark the approximate location of the north and south jetties. Mariners are advised to exercise caution in this area, as the jetties can be a hazard to navigation when visibility is limited. Currents are strong off the ends of the jetties. The natural channel between the jetties is subject to frequent change.

(239) **St. Marys Entrance Lighted Buoy STM** (30°42'54"N., 81°14'39"W.) is 8.2 miles eastward of St. Marys Entrance. The channel through the bar and the channels inside the sound are well marked with lights, lighted buoys and ranges.

(240)

COLREGS Demarcation Lines

(241) The lines established for St. Marys River are described in **33 CFR 80.720**, chapter 2.

(242)

Channels

(243) A federal project provides for a depths of 44 to 46 feet in the entrance channel and northward through Cumberland Sound to Kings Bay. A large turning basin, marked by lighted buoys, is at the western end of the entrance channel, about 1.7 miles above the jetties, and has a project depth of 42 feet. Another channel, with project depths of 29 to 36 feet, leads southward in **Amelia River**, from St. Marys Entrance to a turning basin near Fernandina Beach. For detailed channel information and minimum depths as reported by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), use NOAA Electronic Navigational Charts. Surveys and channel condition reports are available through a USACE hydrographic survey website listed in Appendix A.

(244) Fishing vessels going northward out of the sound use the natural channel off the end of the north jetty marked by a buoy. Strangers are warned against using it as there is danger of being set into the end of the jetty.

(245)

Anchorages

(246) Commercial vessels anchor 1 nautical mile north of St. Marys Entrance Lighted Buoy 2 in about 42 to 46 feet of water, and sand and shingle bottom. Inside the entrance fair anchorage is along the sides of the channels in Cumberland Sound and in the Amelia River according to draft.

(247)

Regulated navigation areas

(248) A **security zone** is on the west side of Cumberland Sound, beginning at **Mill Creek** and continuing north surrounding the entrance to **Kings Bay** and **Crab Island** and ending at **Cherry Point**. See **33 CFR 165.1** through **165.40** and **165.731**, chapter 2, for limits and regulations. **Regulated navigation areas** are also in Cumberland Sound in the vicinity of Kings Bay. See **33 CFR 165.1** through **165.40** and, **165.730** and **165.732**, chapter 2, for limits and regulations.)

(249)

Current

(250) The tidal currents at the entrance have considerable velocity and are dangerous at times, especially on the flood, which generally sets northwestward, and on the ebb, which sets southeastward except during northeast winds when there is a strong southerly set off the end of the jetties on both tides. It has been reported that this set sometimes attains a velocity exceeding 5 knots. Maximum current velocities are reported to be 2.0 to 3.9 knots in St. Marys Entrance and 1.0 to 2.5 knots in the Cumberland Sound channel. Large vessels are cautioned not to enter the entrance channel before the pilot boards. Freshets in the St. Marys River may cause the ebb to run 7 or 8 hours. Current predictions for Cumberland Sound vicinity may be obtained from the Tidal Current prediction service at *tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov*. Links to a user guide for this service can be found in chapter 1 of this book.

(251)

Weather, Cumberland Sound and vicinity

(252) The climate features short, mild winters and warm, humid summers with fog likely on cool, clear winter

mornings. About 50 inches (1270 mm) of rain falls on some 70 days annually. Much of the precipitation occurs in showers or thunderstorms from June through September. Temperatures climb above 90°F (32.2°C) on about 55 days and drop to 32°F (0°C) or below on just 10 days, on the average. By far the biggest threat to this pleasant climate are hurricanes, which are most likely from June through November. While the area is vulnerable to this threat, direct landfalling hurricanes are rare, and those that pass offshore cause relatively minor damage.

(253) The most dangerous tropical cyclones are those that cross the coast from the east through southeast and those that approach from the south through southwest. During hurricane Dora (September 1964) winds of 85 knots or more extended from St. Augustine to Fernandina Beach. Unusually high tides were generated by prolonged onshore winds. The Amelia River tide gauge recorded readings to 10 feet (3 m) above normal. From experience it can be suggested that, when winds reach 50 knots or more and tides surge to 8 to 10 feet (2 to 3 m) above normal at the Amelia River gauge, there is a likelihood of sudden shoaling in the St. Marys River entrance. A severe threat to shipping should be anticipated when a hurricane is expected to make landfall within 90 miles (167 km) south, or 30 miles (56 km) north, or when a severe tropical storm (50-63 knots) is expected to make landfall within 60 miles (111 km) south, or 20 miles (37 km) north of the St. Marys River entrance. If adequate shelter is not available at Fernandina Beach, it is suggested that shelter be looked for in the reaches of principal rivers that are protected from the south and east by wooded high bluffs. For example, shelter can be found at Mush Bluff on Crooked River and behind the bluffs 4 miles (7 km) above St. Marys River. For more detailed information see the **Hurricane Haven Handbook for the North Atlantic Ocean** as mentioned in chapter 3.

(254)

Pilotage, St. Marys, Fernandina Beach, and Kings Bay

(255) Pilotage for St. Marys, Fernandina Beach, and Kings Bay is compulsory for all foreign vessels and U.S. vessels under register in foreign trade and drawing more than 7 feet of water. Pilotage is optional for U.S. vessels in coastwise trade that have on board a pilot licensed by the Federal Government. Sovereign vessels calling Kings Bay are served by the Navy Pilots based in Kings Bay.

(256) The area is served by the Fernandina Pilots. Pilots for the port of Fernandina are dispatched by the St. Johns Bar Pilots (Jacksonville Pilots). The office/station is manned 24/7 and monitors VHF-FM channels 14, 13 and 16 and works channel 11 for vessels calling the port of Fernandina. A 24-hour ETA lead time is requested with confirmation 2 hours prior to arrival at the pilot station. Station address is 4910 Ocean Street, Mayport, FL 32233; telephone 904–249–5631; fax 904–249–7523; dispatcher 904–246–6716. (See Pilotage, Jacksonville, indexed as such, chapter 9, for radiotelephone frequencies used by the St. Johns Bar Pilots.)

(257) The Fernandina pilot boat, PILOT 1, is 35 feet long and has a black hull, white superstructure and the word PILOT displayed on the side of the pilot house; the standard day and night pilot identity signals are displayed. The pilot boat monitors VHF-FM channels 11, 13 and 16 and works channel 11. Pilot boarding area for vessels drawing more than 36 feet is in the vicinity of St. Marys Entrance Lighted Buoy STM. Vessels with a draft of 23 feet (7 meters) or less should remain north of the buoyed entrance channel and are boarded 0.5 nautical mile north of Lighted Buoy 6. Vessels should rig their ladder 1 meter above the water, speed 6 knots.

(258) Pilots are normally obtained by telephone, by VHF-FM radiotelephone through Jacksonville Marine Operator, or by previous arrangements through ship's agents.

(259) The Fernandina Pilots participate in the North Atlantic right whale Early Warning System. (See North Atlantic right whales, indexed as such, chapter 3.)

(260)

Towage

(261) Tugs are available for docking and undocking. Arrangements for tugs are made through ships' agent or the pilots; 24-hour advance notice is requested.

(262)

Quarantine, customs, immigration and agricultural quarantine

(263) (See chapter 3, Vessel Arrival Inspections, and Appendix A for addresses.)

(264) **Quarantine** is enforced in accordance with regulations of the U.S. Public Health Service. (See Public Health Service, chapter 1.) A county hospital is at Fernandina Beach.

(265) The Port of Fernandina Beach is a seaport with cargo processing responsibilities. Customs and Border Protection enforces the import and export laws and regulations of the United States. The Port also preforms agriculture inspections. The office is located at 403 North Third Street, Fernandina Beach, FL. 32034, and the telephone number is 904–261–6154.

(266)

Harbor regulations

(267) All vessels should proceed through the harbor at slow speed, to minimize wake, as there are many craft moored along the waterfront.

(268)

Wharves

(269) The Ocean Highway and Port Authority of Nassau County owns a two-berth shipping terminal along the waterfront of the City of Fernandina Beach (30°40'42"N., 81°27'50"W.). The terminal has a total berthing space of 1,200 feet with reported alongside depths of 36 feet. The port complex is approximately 23 acres and includes open and covered storage, two gantry cranes, one mobile harbor crane, three rubber-tired gantry cranes and three

reach stackers. There are highway and a rail connections to Class I railroads.

(270) There are numerous smaller facilities along the waterfront which are used for the receipt of seafood and servicing of commercial fishing vessels and small craft; these facilities are not described. A deep-draft wharf at Kings Bay is described later in this chapter.

(271) **West Rock Wharf** (30°40'58"N., 81°27'37"W.): east side of Amelia River about 1.5 miles above the Amelia River entrance; offshore wharf with 365 feet of berthing space with dolphins; 35 feet alongside; deck height, 14 feet; hose-handling equipment; handles fuel oil for plant consumption.

(272) **Rayonier Wharf**: east side of Amelia River, about 1.3 miles southward West Rock Wharf; Rayonier Wharf is inactive except for small barge traffic.

(273)

Supplies

(274) Provisions and some marine supplies are available at Fernandina Beach. Bunker C oil and diesel oil for oceangoing vessels can be obtained by barge or truck from Jacksonville.

(275)

Repairs

(276) There are no drydocking or major repair facilities for oceangoing vessels at Fernandina Beach; the nearest such facilities are at Jacksonville, FL. Machine, welding, and electrical shops off the waterfront can make limited above-the-waterline repairs.

(277) No special facilities are available for wrecking or salvage operations. Such equipment can be obtained from Jacksonville.

(278)

Communications

(279) Fernandina Beach is served by State Route A1A which connects to I-95, a Class I railroad (freight service only), and an airport. There are bus connections to Jacksonville where there are passenger rail connections. Ferryboat service is available to Cumberland Island.

(280)

Small-craft facilities

(281) The municipal marina is on the east side of Amelia River, about 2.3 miles southward of the channel entrance and 0.5 mile northward of Rayonier Wharf. Berthage with electricity, gasoline, diesel fuel, water, ice, marine supplies, pump-out and a launching ramp are available.

(282) The Intracoastal Waterway enters Cumberland Sound from the Cumberland River and continues through the Amelia River on the south.

(283) **Beach Creek** extends northward into Cumberland Island from a point just inside the entrance to Cumberland Sound. In 1978, 2 feet was reported at the entrance, and the creek dried about 0.2 mile below Dungeness.

(284) **Kings Bay** is in the northwesterly part of Cumberland Sound, about 5 miles above its southerly entrance. A Naval submarine support base here has a floating drydock and a 2,000-foot concrete pile wharf with depths of 40 feet reported alongside in 1983; deck height is about 14 feet. A rail spur line connects the terminal with the Class I railroad; two transit sheds and two 10-ton mobile hoists are available. The facility is owned by the U.S. Government.

(285) **St. Marys River**, the principal tributary of Cumberland Sound, enters from westward and is a portion of the boundary between Georgia and Florida. It is used primarily by shrimp fishermen and tugs towing fuel oil as far as St. Marys. Above St. Marys a vessel with a draft of 10 feet or less should have little difficulty going as far as Kings Ferry, 32 miles above the mouth, on a rising tide. The river is very crooked, and some of the turns are sharp. Caution is advised when entering the river, especially in late afternoon, as the indefinite shoreline of the surrounding marshlands make the unmarked channel in the first reach difficult to negotiate. Unpredictable currents have been reported in the entrance to the river, at the junctions with Jolly and North Rivers, and along the piers at St. Marys. Refer to the table at the end of this chapter for tidal information. The water is fresh above the railroad bridge, 20 miles above the mouth. A pilot for the river is available at Fernandina Beach.

(286) The twin fixed spans of U.S. Route I-95 highway bridge with a clearance of 33 feet crosses St. Marys River about 15.2 miles above the mouth. U.S. Route 17 highway bridge at Wilds Landing, 20 miles above the mouth of the river, has a swing span with a clearance of 5 feet. The railroad bridge just upstream has a swing span with a clearance of 5 feet. (See **33 CFR 117.1** through **117.59, 117.329**, and **117.373**, chapter 2, for drawbridge regulations.) Overhead power cables close upstream of the bridge have a least clearance of 55 feet.

(287) A good haven for small vessels, particularly in northeasterly weather, can be found at the town of **St. Marys,** on the northbank of St. Marys River 4 miles above the mouth. The larger wharves here are used by fishing boats and have depths of about 13 feet alongside. Diesel fuel, electricity, water, ice and a pump-out station are available. It is reported that strong currents, the large tidal range, and the exposure to winds from all but north make mooring at these wharves hazardous for strangers.

(288) **North River** branches from St. Marys River about 2 miles above its mouth. Small craft can obtain refuge in bad weather by anchoring near the pulp mill 1 mile up the river, or near the bridges 16 miles above St. Marys on the St. Marys River.

(289) **Bells River** branches from St. Marys River about 1.5 miles above the town of St. Marys. It flows in an easterly direction to its junction with the Amelia River at Fernandina Beach. In 1983, the reported controlling depth was about 4 feet. **Chester**, a town on the river, has a number of small docks that were reported in ruins in 1983.

(290) **Jolly River** branches eastward from Bells River about 6 miles above its mouth, and empties into Cumberland Sound at the mouth of St. Marys River. In 1983, the reported controlling depth was about 7 feet.

(291) **Lanceford Creek** branches from Amelia River west of Fernandina Beach. The southern entrance where it joins Amelia River dries clear across. In 1983, it was reported that with local knowledge a depth of about 7 feet could be carried from the creek's eastern entrance, junction with Bells River, to the docks at **Black Rock**. The creek widens off the docks into tidal flats that abare at low water. Small boats cross from the creek to Amelia River at high tide through **Soap Creek**, which passes through numerous mud flats and oyster beds that bare at low tide.

(292)

ENC - US4FL50M
Chart - 11488

(293) From St. Marys Entrance to St. Johns River the coast is formed by the shores of Amelia, Talbot, Little Talbot and Fort George Islands. **Amelia Island** is nearly north and south, with a length of about 12 miles and a width varying from 1 to 2.5 miles. The island is low and gently undulating with heavy woods along the shore.

(294) From seaward no prominent natural features distinguish Amelia Island from other land in the vicinity. It shows a long line of dark woods, irregular in outline, with numerous tall trees rising conspicuously above the general level. In front of these woods a range of sand dunes, partly covered with coarse grass and scrub, backs the broad stretch of white sand beach. Several landmarks are prominent along this stretch of the coast; these were mentioned with the discussion of Fernandina Beach earlier in this chapter. About 3 miles south-southeast of Amelia Island Light is a pier extending 800 feet into the ocean.

(295) The western portion of Amelia Island is marshy. Separating the island from the mainland is a broad stretch of marsh through which flow the Amelia and South Amelia Rivers connecting Cumberland Sound and Nassau Sound.

(296) **Nassau Sound** is 10 miles southward of Amelia Island Light and 6 miles northward of St. Johns River. The entrance is obstructed by shifting shoals that extend about 1.5 miles seaward and form a shallow bar. Breakers form across the entire entrance. Small craft are advised not to attempt passage through the shoals without local information. The mean range of tide in Nassau Sound is 5.4 feet.

(297) South Amelia River and Nassau River are the principal tributaries of Nassau Sound. **South Amelia River** enters from the northward and is a portion of the Intracoastal Waterway.

(298) **Nassau River** enters Nassau Sound from the northwestward. Occasional sunken logs and numerous shoals are a menace to navigation. Two fixed bridges, with a least vertical clearance of 15 feet, cross Nassau River 1 mile above the mouth. In 1993, a partially submerged wreck was reported in the middle of the river, about 0.7 mile from the confluence with South Amelia River in about 30°31'48"N., 81°28'18"W. **Nassauville** is a small settlement on the north bank of the river, 7 miles above the entrance to the sound, with private piers adjoining private homes and a fishing camp. Local knowledge is necessary to carry the best water to Nassauville and **Christopher Creek**, where there is a private marine railway that can haul out craft up to 50 feet in an emergency.

(299) **Alligator Creek** connects South Amelia River and Nassau River. Its twisting channel leads through tidal flats and between oyster bars.

(300) **Sawpit Creek** enters the sound from the westward. Route A1A highway bridge, crossing the creek about 0.3 mile above the mouth, has a 38-foot fixed span with a clearance of 15 feet. A portion of this creek forms a part of the Intracoastal Waterway.

(301) **Talbot Island**, about 5 miles in length and 1.5 miles in width, is partly wooded and partly marshy. Along the marshy eastern shore flow several creeks thas separate Talbot and Little Talbot Islands. Talbot Island, Little Talbot Island and Fort George Island form a state park and recreation area and are connected to Amelia Island and the mainland by a paved highway and bridges. The road also leads to Jacksonville along the north bank of the St. Johns River with a ferry connection at Fort George Island to the south bank of Mayport.

(302) **Little Talbot Island,** a strip of low flat land about 4 miles long and averaging about 0.8 mile wide, lies in a north-south direction. The island is wooded along its outer coast. From seaward it shows a strip of dark woods with many conspicuous sand dunes near the beach. Its south end runs off in a low point of bare sand bordering on Fort George Inlet.

(303) **Fort George Inlet** is a narrow body of water separating Little Talbot and Fort George Islands. The inlet changes rapidly due to shifting sands at its entrance and should never be used without local knowledge. The Heckscher Drive (State Routes 105-A1A) highway bridge near the entrance to the inlet has a 38-foot fixed span with a clearance of 15 feet at the center. An overhead power cable at the bridge has a clearance of 40 feet. A fish camp is on the west bank immediately above the bridge. Limited supplies, water, ice and a launching ramp are available.

(304) **Fort George Island** is westward and southward of Fort George Inlet. Its eastern shore, forming the coastline, shows a broad strip of white sand beach backed by a range of high hills. The island is separated from the mainland by Sisters Creek. Fort George Island, formerly called Pilot Town, is a town on the St. Johns River near the south end of the island opposite Mayport.