

# Jekyll Island: Georgia's Jewel

A WEALTH OF NATURAL BEAUTY & RESOURCES

Coastal birds, live whelks, dolphins and sea turtles await discovery...

*Walk through the Maritime Forest. View hundreds of palmetto bushes and rare plants overhung by a canopy of live oaks draped with Spanish moss. Visit Nature's Gallery of driftwood sculptures, unique to the island at Driftwood Beach.*

Governor Melvin Thompson purchased Jekyll Island for the state and set it aside expressly for the "plain people" of Georgia. According to state law, Jekyll Island State Park is to be affordable for the average income Georgia resident. The original plan declares Jekyll Island facilities be developed at the lowest rates reasonable and possible for the people of Georgia. Commonly called "Every Man's Island," Jekyll is under threat from proposed development.



*As rich in history as in beauty, Jekyll Island is a gift to the people of Georgia.*

[www.savejekyllisland.org](http://www.savejekyllisland.org)



*Make plans soon to experience the unspoiled, natural beauty and resources of Jekyll Island before condos rise on the beach. Help make a difference to protect natural resources and encourage positive development in Georgia.*



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There is great concern for the protection of the ecosystem and traditional character of Jekyll Island State Park. Proposed development could destroy part of the maritime forest, including rare plants. According to Jekyll Island Authority (JIA) Board Member, Ed Boshears, a "Conservation Plan has never been approved or enacted." Plans to build condos along the beach are in close proximity to sea turtle nesting areas. An average of 12 loggerhead turtle nests occur annually along the beach where a Jekyll "town center" is now being proposed. A preponderance of high end hotels and half-million dollar condos could severely limit the ability of "the plain people" of Georgia to vacation on the island.

As concern for the island grows, signs are popping up on local lawns around the state calling for people to "Defend Jekyll Island State Park." To date, more than 10,000 people have registered their opposition to development along Jekyll's remaining open beach; however, the JIA recognizes only residents of the island and a few "tree huggers" as opposing the project. Of particular concern is the proposed 63-acre oceanfront town center which would reside on more than twice the acreage of the Jekyll village recommended in the 2004 Jekyll Island Master Plan, encroach on the park's maritime forest, and more than double the number of condos and hotel rooms presently on the island. If you are in opposition to this plan, please contact State Senator Mitch Seabaugh with your concerns at 770.304.0652.

Georgia residents as well as people from 49 states have responded to the Initiative to Protect Jekyll Island State Park (IPJIS), an organization that represents the island's visitors. IPJIS Founder David Egan points out that most of Jekyll's visitors are in favor of island improvements but want development to be limited to the reconstruction of Jekyll's existing oceanfront hotels and convention center, and the renovation of its retail center. "The JIA should capitalize on Jekyll's natural assets to draw more visitors rather than try to compete with the more developed coastal resorts by adding condos and time-shares to the island," Egan said. A network of nature trails and the addition of a Nature Center as a sister institution to the Georgia Sea Turtle Center would be good initial steps to take in this direction, according to Egan. For more information, visit [www.savejekyllisland.org](http://www.savejekyllisland.org).