



COASTAL STATES ORGANIZATION

Official Written Testimony for programs under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) for Fiscal Year 2011

Submitted To
Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
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Submitted By
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The Coastal States Organization (CSO) is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that represents the interests of the Governors of the 35 coastal states, territories and commonwealths in Washington, DC. Established in 1970, CSO focuses on legislative and policy issues relating to the sound management of coastal, Great Lakes, and ocean resources and is recognized as the trusted representative of the collective interests of the coastal states on coastal and ocean management. For fiscal year 2011, CSO supports the following coastal programs and funding levels within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA):

Coastal Zone Management Program (§§306/306A/309)	\$88 million
Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program	\$60 million
CZM and Stewardship	\$12.5 million

Every American, regardless of where he or she lives, is fundamentally connected to our coasts, oceans, and Great Lakes. These valuable resources are a critical framework for commerce, recreation, energy, environment, and quality of life. The U.S. economy is an ocean and coastal economy: though federal investment does not reflect it, the oceans and coasts provide an irreplaceable contribution to our nation's economy and quality of life. With sectors including marine transportation, tourism, marine construction, aquaculture, ship and boat building, mineral extraction, and living marine resources, the U.S. ocean-based sector alone provides \$138 billion to U.S. GDP and over 2.3 million jobs to our citizens. In addition, the annual contribution of coastal counties is in the trillions of dollars, from ports and fishing to recreation and tourism. In 2007, our nation's coastal counties provided \$5.7 trillion to the economy and were home to 108.3 million people on only 18% of the U.S. land area. If these counties were their own country, they would have the world's second largest economy. Coasts and oceans also add to the quality of life of nearly half of all Americans who visit the seashore each year; the non-market value of recreation alone is estimated at over \$100 billion.

Today, our nation's coasts are as vital for our future as they are vulnerable. As a result of their increasing draw and economic vitality, we are exerting more pressure on our coastal and ocean resources. This demand, combined with an increase in natural hazards such as sea level rise, hurricanes and other flooding events, can be proven to show that the country is in danger of losing these invaluable assets. Despite the difficult budgetary times, we need to provide more funding and support for the key programs that are on the front lines of this daily battle, the programs utilizing the advances in coastal and ocean science, research, and technology to manage our coastal and ocean resources for future generations.

Programs that are engaged in these important efforts and working to balance the protection of coastal and ocean resources with the need for sustainable development include the Coastal Zone Management Program and the Coastal and Estuarine Land Protection Program. These programs reside within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and provide *direct* funding or services to the states and territories, which account for a small portion of the total NOAA federal budget. The funding for these programs is very cost-effective, as these grants are matched by the states and are used to leverage significantly more private and local investment in our nation's coasts. Increased funding for these programs that provide on-the-ground services to our local communities and citizens is well worth the investment.

Coastal Zone Management Program (§§306/306A/309)

CSO requests that these grants be funded at a level of *\$88 million dollars*, an amount that will be shared among the 34 states and territories that have approved coastal zone management programs. Pursuant to the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), NOAA and the states partner to implement coastal zone management programs designed to balance protection of coastal and ocean resources with the need for sustainable development of coastal communities. States have the flexibility to develop programs, policies and strategies that are targeted to their state priorities while advancing national goals. Under the CZMA program, the states receive grants from NOAA that are matched by the states and are used to leverage significantly more private and local investment in our nation's coastal areas. These grants have been used to reduce environmental impacts of coastal development, resolve conflicts between competing coastal uses, and provide critical assistance to local communities in coastal planning and resource protection.

The CZMA state grants have essentially remained level-funded for 9 years, resulting in a decreased capacity in the state coastal zone management programs and less funding being granted out to local communities. An increase in funding to \$88 million provides an additional \$300,000 - \$800,000 for each state and territory based on federal formula that takes into account coastal population and shoreline mileage. With the additional funding, states and territories could focus on near-term activities that would prepare their coastal communities to adapt to climate change, develop renewable energy sources, and conserve and restore habitat and working waterfronts. The following is a representative list of activities that the states and territories could pursue with the increased funding:

- Acquire high resolution topography and bathymetry mapping data (for example, LIDAR, shallow water-penetrating LIDAR) and/or integrate these and existing datasets for consistent statewide coverage and public dissemination;

- Invest in research, mapping and modeling to enable decision-making for renewable energy development;
- Host workshops to assist local officials to assess resources and identify strategies to integrate climate change adaptation measures into local policies, regulations and programs;
- Conserve and restore coastal habitat for storm protection, water-filtering benefits, fish nurseries, and recreation and preserve waterfront property for businesses dependant on access to the water to flourish;
- Foster coordinated permitting review and siting guidance among state and federal agencies for offshore renewable energy development;
- Work to implement new or modify existing state and local policies, regulations and programs to address climate change impacts, including those related to building design and construction, wetland conservation and restoration, stormwater systems and roadways, shore protection, and general public infrastructure; and
- Support outreach and extension activities related to science and public education with partners such as the National Estuarine Research Reserves and Sea Grant College Programs.

Under the current level of funding, most states and territories receive between \$850,000 and \$2,000,000 to carry out their coastal management programs based on a formula accounting for shoreline miles and coastal population. Appropriate at the time, a cap of \$2,000,000 was instituted years ago to allow for funding to spread more evenly across the states and territories, so as to prevent most of the funding from going entirely to the larger, more heavily populated states. But, now, over half of the states have met the cap and no longer receive an increase in funding, despite increased overall funding for CZMA state grants. Therefore, CSO requests that language be included in the appropriations bill declaring that each state will receive *no less than 1% and no more than 5% of the additional funds over and above previous appropriations*. As was provided for in fiscal year 2010, CSO requests that language be included in the appropriations bill that *directs NOAA to refrain from charging administrative costs to these grants*. This is to prevent any undue administrative fees from NOAA from being levied on grants intended for states.

Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program

CSO requests *\$60 million* for the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP). Authorized by Congress in 2002, CELCP protects “those coastal and estuarine areas with significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values, or that are threatened by conversion from their natural or recreation states to other uses.” To date, Congress has appropriated nearly \$260 million for CELCP. This funding has allowed for the completion of over 125 conservation projects, with more in progress. CELCP projects in 27 of the nation’s 35 coastal states have already helped preserve approximately 45,000 acres of the nation’s coastal treasures. All federal funding has been leveraged by at least an equal amount of state, local, and private investments, demonstrating the broad support of the program, the importance of coastal protection throughout the nation, and the critical role of federal funding to its success.

The preservation of coastal and estuarine areas is critical to both humans and the environment. These areas shield us from storms, protect us from the effects of sea-level rise, filter pollutants to maintain water quality, provide shelter, nesting and nursery grounds for fish and wildlife, protect rare and endangered species and provide access to beaches and waterfront areas. CELCP is the only program entirely dedicated to the conservation of these vital coastal areas.

The demand for CELCP funding far outstrips what has been available in recent years. In the last three years, NOAA, in partnership with the states, has identified over \$270 million of vetted and ranked projects. As demand for CELCP funding has grown, the funding has not kept pace. Adequate funding is needed to meet the demand of the increasingly high-quality projects developed by the states and submitted to NOAA.

This March, the CELCP program was formally authorized as part of H.R. 146, the *Omnibus Public Lands Management Act of 2009*, once again showing the broad, bipartisan support for coastal and estuarine land conservation. In recognition of the significant demand for CELCP projects, H.R. 146 authorized the program at \$60 million annually.

CZM and Stewardship

CSO requests ***\$12.5 million*** for CZM and Stewardship under NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resources Management (OCRM). OCRM provides support to the states and territories by providing program liaisons, and processing grants and program changes for the Coastal Zone Management Program, as well as leading the development of NOAA's Coastal Strategy. It also administers the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), leads coral reef conservation activities, and manages the development of a National System of Marine Protected Areas. With all of these vested responsibilities, and to administer all of its programs adequately, OCRM needs this funding to be the best possible partner to the states and territories.

CSO greatly appreciates the support the Subcommittee has provided in the past. Its support has assisted these programs in working together to protect our coasts and sustain our local communities. Thank you for taking our requests into consideration as you move forward in the FY 2011 appropriations process.