



Coastal States Organization

Policy to Advance U.S. Coastal Zone Management October 17, 2011

THE STATES' INTEREST

The Nation's economy and security depend on the health of oceans and coasts and the resilience of coastal communities and environments. Well managed coasts benefit all Americans; an investment in governance, funding and policy for the nation's coasts is a good investment for the country.

Coastal states and territories are on the front lines of increasingly complex social, environmental, and governance challenges, including pressures to develop in high risk areas and valuable habitats, management of natural resources, energy development, climate change impacts, and maintaining ports and waterways. For almost 40 years, the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) has provided coastal states with financial resources and authority to manage the Nation's coastal resources. In return for this investment, states have actively protected and restored habitat, provided access to coastal waters, guided development, provided monitoring and scientific research, and promoted stewardship of coastal resources. The unique state-federal partnership under the CZMA that supports coastal communities is being neglected at a time when the U.S. is increasing its reliance on coasts and oceans for economic and energy development and has adopted a National Ocean Policy. It is in the national interest for Congress and the Administration to support the purposes, priorities, and objectives of the CZMA. CSO recommends the following.

★ SUPPORT COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS AS ESSENTIAL MECHANISMS TO ADVANCE THE NATION'S COASTAL AND OCEAN PRIORITIES

Coastal States urge Congress and the Administration to support the nation's coastal communities by

- advancing state and national coastal zone management programs as mechanisms for delivering effective coastal resource management on the ground and
- increasing support for states and regions to build coastal resource management capacity through sufficient funding, aligning federal resources, and developing relevant tools and technologies.

★ REAUTHORIZE AND REINVIGORATE THE COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT

Coastal States recommend that Congress and the Administration support a reauthorized and reinvigorated CZMA to improve efficiency and governance of the nation's vital ocean and coastal resources.

★ MAINTAIN FEDERAL CONSISTENCY REVIEW UNDER THE CZMA

Coastal States urge Congress and the Administration to reaffirm the federal consistency review provisions in a reauthorized CZMA.

SUPPORT COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS AS ESSENTIAL MECHANISMS TO ADVANCE THE NATION'S COASTAL AND OCEAN PRIORITIES

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The CZMA creates a diverse and experienced state-federal partnership that provides the governance infrastructure for protecting and managing the Nation's coasts as economic and ecological resources. For nearly 40 years, state coastal zone management programs approved under the CZMA have played an essential role in carrying out Congressional objectives. State programs possess the tools, experience and relationships with local stakeholders – the vital CZMA infrastructure – and they need federal support to implement sustainable policies. The nation's increasing reliance on coasts and oceans for economic development and energy supplies requires investments in this CZMA infrastructure to ensure state programs have the capacity to support implementation of the National Ocean Policy.

Unfortunately, the federal support that is so critical to states is currently insufficient: if states are to meet national objectives, expand capacity to address emerging issues, and participate in regional planning, it is imperative that CZMA funding be at a level proportionate to the value of the nation's coastal communities and ecosystems. Even with decreased public funding, support can be achieved through aligning capacities and priorities at the national, regional and state levels, improving federal government efficiencies and using public-private partnerships. Such alignment enables state programs to continue their role as implementation mechanisms of national and regional policies. Similarly, alignment will advance the efforts of NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, the vital federal partner to the states in meeting CZMA objectives.

REAUTHORIZE AND REINVIGORATE THE COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT

POLICY STATEMENT: Coastal States recommend that Congress and the Administration support a reauthorized and reinvigorated CZMA to ensure efficient governance of the nation's vital ocean and coastal resources.

It is in the national interest for Congress to maintain the authorities and programs of coastal states approved under the CZMA and to strengthen the planning, management, and coordination capabilities of states and federal agencies with coastal management responsibilities. Another critical component of the CZMA is the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS), which generates and provides science-based practical help to state coastal programs, coastal communities and the public combined with estuarine stewardship.

A reauthorized CZMA should assist the states in exercising stewardship and management responsibilities by maintaining their authorities and essential program services. A reauthorized CZMA should also encourage greater state-federal efficiencies through better partnerships. Congress should provide incentives to states to develop and implement programs to address national coastal management priorities to:

- (A) support healthy, resilient coastal communities and economies;
- (B) protect and restore coastal ecosystems, habitats, waters, and unique resources;
- (C) prepare for effects of natural hazards and climate change on the nation's coasts and coastal communities; and

(D) ensure that local, state, regional, and federal coastal programs are coordinated and integrated at appropriate scales.

MAINTAIN FEDERAL CONSISTENCY REVIEW UNDER THE CZMA

POLICY STATEMENT: Coastal States urge Congress and the Administration to reaffirm the federal consistency review provisions in a reauthorized CZMA.

Central to the federal-state partnership under the CZMA is the coordination and consistency review process that allows states to ensure that federal activities comply with state programs. All federal actions in the coastal zone—or affecting any natural resources, land uses, or water uses in the coastal zone—should be fully consistent with approved state coastal zone management plans. Consultation with states should begin early in the permitting and environmental impact assessment process. State sovereignty over coastal zone management and consistency review authority should be preserved in any legislation or rulemaking.

CONCLUSION

The Nation's oceans, Great Lakes, and coasts provide vital ecological, economic, and cultural values to the country for current and future generations. It is in the national interest for Congress and the Administration to support the important work conducted under the CZMA.

Since 1970, CSO has represented the interests of the Governors of the nation's thirty-five coastal states and territories, including the Great Lakes states, on issues relating to the sound management and development of coastal and ocean resources.