

Coastal Barrier Resources Act

Agency: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Citation: [16 U.S.C. §§ 3501 et seq.](#)

Enacted as: the "Coastal Barrier Resources Act", on October 18, 1982

Summary:

In the 1970s and 1980s, Congress recognized that certain actions and programs of the Federal Government have historically subsidized and encouraged development on coastal barriers, resulting in the loss of natural resources; threats to human life, health, and property; and the expenditure of millions of tax dollars each year. To remove the federal incentive to develop these areas, the [Coastal Barrier Resources Act \(CBRA\)](#) designated relatively undeveloped coastal barriers along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts as part of the [John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System \(CBRS\)](#), and made these areas ineligible for most new federal expenditures and financial assistance.

The Coastal Barrier Improvement Act (CBIA) of 1990 ([Public Law 101-591](#)) reauthorized the CBRA; expanded the CBRS to include undeveloped coastal barriers along the Florida Keys, Great Lakes, Puerto Rico, and U.S. Virgin Islands; and added a new category of coastal barriers to the CBRS called "otherwise protected areas" (OPAs). OPAs are undeveloped coastal barriers that are within the boundaries of an area established under federal, state, or local law, or held by a qualified organization, primarily for wildlife refuge, sanctuary, recreational, or natural resource conservation purposes.

The law encourages the conservation of hurricane prone, biologically rich coastal barriers by restricting federal expenditures that encourage development, such as federal flood insurance. Areas within the CBRS can be developed provided that private developers or other non-federal parties bear the full cost. Between 1982 and 2010, CBRA has saved over \$1 billion in federal dollars and will save millions more in the future.

Source: <http://www.fws.gov/CBRA/Act/index.html>

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