NOAA’s National Coastal Zone Management Program

Recognizing the importance of our coasts, 50 years ago, in 1972, Congress created the National Coastal Zone Management Program, a voluntary partnership between NOAA and coastal states and territories. The program was designed to enhance and protect coastal resources and communities, which it continues to do.

In fiscal year 2021, NOAA invested over $78 million, allocated through the Coastal Zone Management Act, to implement coastal management programs in the 34 participating states and territories. Federal funding was matched by over $63 million from state, territorial, and local governments and other partners. These funds are being used to improve public access, enhance hazard resilience, and fuel the nation’s vibrant coastal economy.

**Funding Summary 2021**

Office for Coastal Management
cost.noaa.gov/czm

Planning for Our Ocean and Coastal Waters ($3.4 million federal; $2.6 million matching)

Comprehensive planning supports jobs, reduces user conflicts, and sustains natural resources.

Implementing State Program Management ($4.6 million federal; $8.1 million matching)

State coastal management programs serve as the “boots on the ground” for addressing coastal management issues.

Protecting and Restoring Coastal Habitat ($17.0 million federal; $17.7 million matching)

Coastal habitats buffer communities from storms and are needed to support fisheries, robust recreation and tourism industries, and thriving wildlife populations.

Mitigating Coastal Hazards ($14.6 million federal; $9.9 million matching)

Minimizing risks from coastal hazards such as storms, flooding, erosion, and sea-level rise makes communities more resilient.

Protecting Coastal Water Quality ($6.6 million federal; $5.8 million matching)

Preventing and reducing polluted runoff and marine debris results in coastal waters that are safe and healthy for drinking, swimming, and fishing.

Promoting Coastal Community Development ($12.1 million federal; $9.6 million matching)

Wise development protects coastal community character and health and promotes appropriate coastal-dependent uses and industries.

Enhancing Public Access ($7.1 million federal; $5.7 million matching)

Providing public access allows all Americans to enjoy the coast and delivers substantial economic benefits to coastal communities.

Expanding Public Engagement ($12.9 million federal; $6.8 million matching)

Strong coordination and communication among agencies and the public results in better decision-making for America’s coastlines.
The National Coastal Zone Management Program

Strong partnerships and a multi-pronged approach represent core components of the Coastal Zone Management Act. As we celebrate the national program’s 50th birthday, we recognize its many contributions to a more vibrant, resilient, and healthy coast, and look forward to building on this state and federal partnership in the next 50 years and beyond. Here are some examples.

Increasing Community Resilience Saves Money
The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s Community Rating System lowers flood insurance premiums for citizens in communities that take proactive approaches to reduce flood risk. Many coastal programs work with communities to institute and document the flood reduction actions that FEMA recognizes. South Carolina, for instance, developed guidance, visualization tools, and a forum that communities use to share lessons learned. This assistance helped one community preserve coastal wetlands and beaches to provide important flood protection and reduce its insurance premiums by 30 percent—a savings of over $1 million.

Smart Ocean Planning for a Better Future
Smart, forward-looking planning ensures the nation is prepared for the expansion of ocean industries, including offshore wind facilities and aquaculture. In 2021, Connecticut joined the growing list of coastal programs that have developed comprehensive marine spatial plans to guide these activities. Informed by science and robust public engagement, these plans lead to improved decision-making and more efficient permitting processes.

Boosting Community, Ecology, and Access
The Illinois Coastal Program, working with partners, spearheaded an initiative to reconnect people to a rich wetland ecosystem along Lake Michigan. The program provided over $1.6 million in grants and other assistance to restore habitat, expand multi-use trails, install an accessible kayak launch, and develop a port master plan. The initiative restored 1,166 acres of habitat, created additional public access opportunities in the southern part of Chicago, and leveraged over $4.8 million in additional funding to support this work.

See more stories at coast.noaa.gov/states/stories/index.html.

BY THE NUMBERS
Our coastal communities are home to over 126 million people, support 56.8 million jobs, and contribute $8.6 trillion to the U.S. economy, accounting for 46 percent of the nation’s economic output. Over the last 10 years, the National Coastal Zone Management Program has

- **2,500** Completed over 2,500 projects that improve resilience to coastal hazards, including developing and updating state and local policies and plans.
- **3,000** Worked with over 3,000 communities to help them grow in a balanced way that protects coastal character and health.
- **59,000** Protected nearly 59,000 acres of habitat and restored an additional 62,000 acres.
- **800** Created nearly 800 new public access sites and enhanced over 2,400 additional access sites to improve the visitor experience.

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