

Coastal Zone Management Program—Enhancement Grant Assessments and Strategies

SPECIAL AREA MANAGEMENT PLANNING**State Assessment and Strategy Overview**

The Coastal Zone Enhancement Program, authorized under the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), encourages states and territories to conduct self-assessments of their Coastal Management Programs and develop strategies to improve management of the following areas: wetlands, coastal hazards, public access, marine debris, cumulative and secondary impacts, special area management planning, ocean/Great Lakes resources, energy and government facility siting, and aquaculture. Every five years, states assess their management of all nine areas and develop enhancement strategies for their highest priority issues. The assessments highlight past successes and identify needs that will help improve coastal resource management.

We hope these summaries will be used to generate discussion and new ideas, target existing products and services, guide new project development in NOAA and the states, and promote partnerships and information sharing. Please use the contact information at the end to follow up with any ideas or questions.

Assessment Findings and Recent Trends

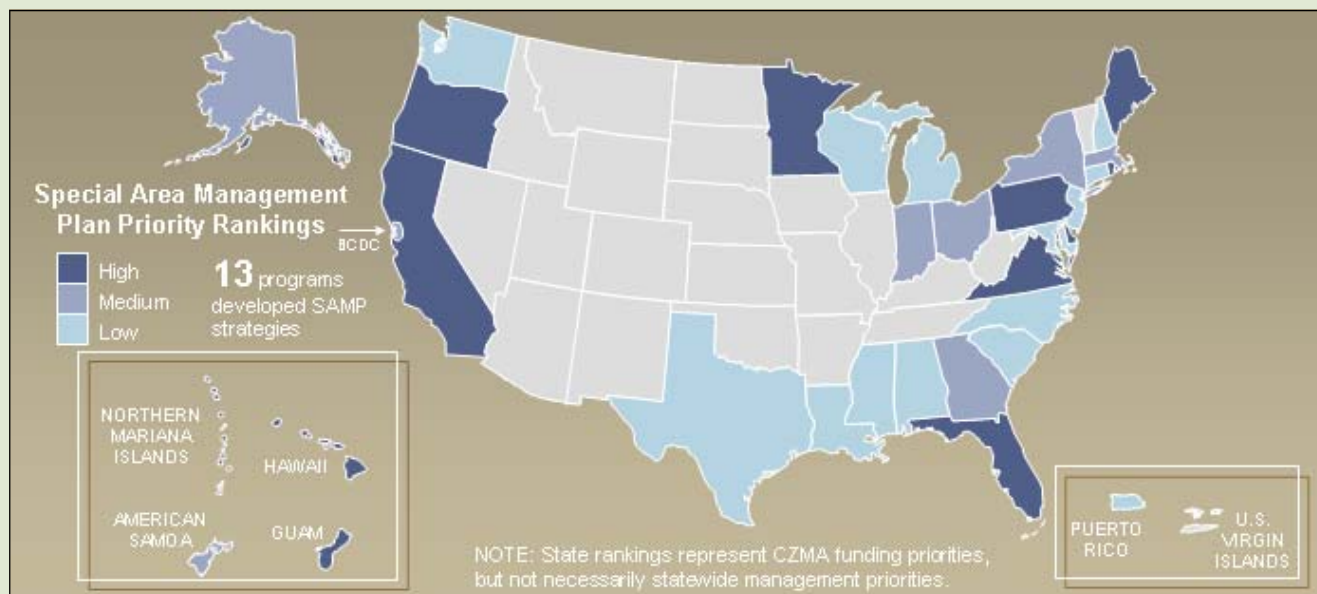
State coastal zone management programs approach the development and implementation of Special Area Management Plans (SAMPs) in a variety of ways. However, the ultimate goal of all SAMPs is to improve the management of specific geographic areas where existing

policies and programs need to be tailored to local needs and conditions. Often SAMPs are accompanied by revised state or local policies or laws to achieve this goal.

States and territories have developed SAMPs to address issues in a variety of geographic areas, including bays and harbors; barrier, marsh or other islands; river or estuary segments; waterfronts, ports, maritime centers; and watersheds. SAMPs are often developed to address a wide range of management issues, including managing watershed imperviousness and nonpoint source pollution; dock and pier proliferation; loss of public access, open space, or suitable sites waterfront redevelopment; habitat loss and fragmentation; and loss of aquifer recharge zones. For a number of states, SAMPs are also being employed to address common governance issues including improved consistency in resource management and policy implementation, coordination among multiple management authorities and jurisdictions, and a comprehensive approach to planning. Finally states have developed SAMPs that span the spectrum of management approaches including non-regulatory planning initiatives, action plans to address specific priorities, regional partnerships, and incorporating local priorities into state and local policies.

Primary Needs and Information Gaps

State Coastal Zone Management Programs were asked to identify their primary needs and information gaps for special area management planning. The following is a list



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of the most commonly identified needs:

- Need additional funding for coastal management programs to **assist local communities** in addressing complex, controversial, and time and resource intensive management needs for these special areas
- Need **improved capacity** to develop and implement local plans and ordinances that implement SAMPs
- Need better understanding and **awareness of the benefits** of SAMPs at local and State levels

Recent Successes

For most state coastal management programs, 2005-2006 was the fourth cycle of self assessments and strategy development. Below are two examples of strategies implemented by the states that demonstrate successes in improving special area management planning:

- The **Rhode Island Coastal Management Program** helped develop the Greenwich Bay SAMP which employs an ecosystem approach to protecting and restoring the bay's water quality and habitats. The Plan integrates policy to preserve boating and shell fishing, both important economic activities that depend on Greenwich Bay. Major accomplishments of the Greenwich Bay SAMP include: (1) addressing marina proliferation issues through water type "down zoning;" (2) providing the impetus for localities to sewer several neighborhoods; and (3) contributing to the determination that nutrient over-enrichment in Greenwich Bay was largely the result of publicly-owned treatment works rather than runoff. The City of Warwick intends to incorporate the SAMP into its comprehensive plan and to use it as a basis for expanding its zoning requirements.
- The **Delaware Coastal Management Program** in conjunction with the City of Wilmington and Southbridge community initiated development of a SAMP that will address imperviousness and regional drainage issues, increased non-point source pollution, loss of wetlands, degradation of river vegetation, lost opportunities to create community open space, and economic redevelopment in the area. The planning process brings together community members, business leaders, not-for-profit organizations and professionals from City, County, State and Federal governments to work together towards comprehensively planning the revitalization of the area.

Promising Strategies for 2006—2010

As part of the State Enhancement Grant Program, state coastal management programs are asked to develop strategies to address their high priority resource

management issues identified in the assessment. Below are a couple examples of strategies proposed for special area management planning:

- The **Massachusetts Coastal Management Program** will enhance several areas designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). ACEC are significant natural areas where the program works to improve stewardship with local communities. The program will help local communities improve area management plans, conduct priority projects to assess and characterize critical resources, and continue to implement regional planning. The program will use new assessment and characterizations tools on a pilot bases to describe ACEC habitats. Some of these tools include: tools to evaluate wetlands trends, assess wetlands health, map submerged aquatic vegetation, and map offshore habitats and substrate. These products and others will be evaluated to further characterize ACEC resources, promote the significance of these areas, and identify information and resource protection gaps.
- The **Guam Coastal Management Program** will pursue development of a comprehensive plan that determines appropriate development over Guam's northern aquifer. All effects of development activities including agricultural, must be assessed for impacts to the Northern Guam Groundwater Protection Zone. Before any land use development or agricultural activity is considered, the regulatory and enforcement agencies that have jurisdiction and mandated responsibilities for the preservation of our water quality must require that any and all developments are addressed accordingly in regards to the environment.



The South Wilmington SAMP in Delaware seeks to maintain and revitalize historical residential neighborhoods.

Questions, ideas or for more information:
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