



Overview of NOAA's Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP)

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) was established in 2002 to protect coastal and estuarine lands important for their ecological, conservation, recreational, historical, and aesthetic values. The program provides state and local governments with matching funds to permanently protect significant coastal and estuarine areas, including lands that provide important fish and wildlife habitat, support the health of commercial and recreational fisheries, buffer the impacts of coastal storms, prevent flood damage and improve water quality, as well as lands that provide opportunities for outdoor recreation, research, and public education—all elements important to NOAA's broader mission. Since its creation, CELCP has distributed nearly \$200 million in 26 states. Completed projects have protected more than 35,000 acres of land, and the number of acres will grow as more projects come to completion. The program has further leveraged state, local, and private matching contributions, along with thousands of acres of land protected or donated as in-kind match for CELCP-funded land conservation projects.

Since its establishment, CELCP has been maturing into a strategic, competitive program that gives priority to ecologically-significant lands that can be effectively managed for long-term protection. The CELCP Guidelines published by NOAA in 2003 describe a competitive funding process guided by state land conservation priorities and national objectives. In FY2006, CELCP began the transition from a program in which all funds were allocated through Congressional direction to a program in which projects are competitively selected based on merit. In 2007, 18 projects were funded from a ranked list in the first ever national CELCP grant competition. These projects are located in California, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, South Carolina, Ohio, and Oregon.

NOAA is also working with states to complete strategic land conservation plans for coastal areas. More than 20 states are developing plans, and NOAA recently approved final CELCP plans for Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina, and Washington. Each state's plan is designed to maximize the benefits of each conservation dollar spent. For example, Washington's plan focuses on protecting high quality, ecologically significant wetlands, shorelines, and adjacent upland. New York's plan focuses on coastal hazard areas and significant coastal fish and wildlife habitat.

After five years, CELCP has resulted in numerous successes, and NOAA anticipates celebrating more accomplishments in coming years as dozens of additional projects come to a close and more competitively-selected projects are initiated.

For more information visit us online at:

<http://www.coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/programs/czm.html>
NOAA's National Ocean Service
Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management





CELCP Stories: Accomplishments and Ongoing Success

Great Lakes (includes IN, IL, MI, MN, NY, OH, PA, WI)

Seven Mile Point and Basaltic Bedrock Lakeshore, Keeweenaw County, Michigan

In an ongoing project, CELCP is contributing to the permanent protection of 120 acres of coastal wetland habitat and 2,000 feet of lakeshore on Keweenaw Peninsula, an area under threat of development on the northernmost point of the State of Michigan. This unique, pristine area contains polished basaltic bedrock shoreline, cobble beach coves, and bedrock islands that provide precious habitat for multiple rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species. Wetlands on the parcel also maintain clean water and provide a critical stopping point for several kinds of migratory birds, as well as bald eagles and other raptors. The project also will restore public access to the area, a site historically enjoyed for its numerous swimming, fishing, wildlife-viewing, and agate-picking opportunities. The project exemplifies local, state, and federal collaboration to protect our Nation's precious natural heritage.

East Sandusky Bay, Erie County, Ohio

Together with state, local, and private partners, CELCP helped to protect more than 1,300 acres of critical wetland and upland habitat along the Ohio shoreline of Lake Erie. Because Ohio has lost 90 percent of its historic wetlands, the multi-tract project, completed in 2007, has provided invaluable habitat for migratory waterfowl and rare plant species, as well as important water quality functions and recreation opportunities for public enjoyment such as canoeing, kayaking, and hiking.



East Sandusky Bay, OH; Photo credit: Elisabeth Morgan

Southeast (includes AL, FL, GA, LA, MD, MS, NC, SC, TX, VA)

Robinson Island, Baldwin County, Alabama

In 2004 and 2005, CELCP helped the City of Orange Beach and Baldwin County purchase Robinson Island, a 12.5-acre barrier island located in Perdido Bay on the Gulf of Mexico. In accordance with program goals, the city placed Robinson Island into permanent protection, thus preserving high-value habitat for several types of birds, including the great blue heron, little blue heron, and green heron, as well as several species of neotropical migratory songbirds. The island also contains several fringe beaches along its 3,300 feet of waterfront, providing recreational opportunities for boaters and swimmers alike.



Robinson Island, AL; Photo credit: City of Orange Beach

Downey ("Crab Claw") Property, Queen Anne's County, Maryland

In Maryland, CELCP provided funds to Queen Anne's County for the permanent protection of the Downey Property, a 44-acre parcel containing marshes and woodlands important for wildlife and water quality in the Chesapeake Bay. The purchase also expanded the Chesapeake Exploration Center, providing an interpretive park, trails, and picnic facilities for public enjoyment by visitors and residents to the Bay region.

Brays Bayou Parkland, Houston, Texas

The Brays Bayou project, currently underway, seeks to permanently protect and restore 6.42 acres and 3,700 feet of shoreline in a mixed-use (residential, commercial, industrial) neighborhood of Houston. Important for recreational use by surrounding residents, including hiking, biking, and access to public shorelines, the purchase will also provide important flood protection for the area by keeping the land open and permeable to help control and capture run-off during storms. Brays Bayou also contributes a valuable stream corridor for resident and migratory birds, aquatic habitat for estuarine species, and water quality control services important to the Galveston Bay region.

Northeast (includes CT, DE, ME, MA, NH, NJ, RI)

Hurd Farm, Town of Hampton & Hampton Falls, New Hampshire

The Town of Hampton, New Hampshire, acquired two conservation easements on a 151-acre farm. A 98-acre CELCP easement protects shoreline habitat and wetlands along the Taylor River by providing a buffer between the river and the agricultural activities on the property, thereby reducing the potential for polluted runoff to reach coastal waters. The second easement, over the remaining 50 acres of the property, was acquired with funds from U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, enabling the owners to continue a dairy operation, protecting both the rural landscape and the economy.

Barnegat Bay, Ocean County, New Jersey

Located in one of the fastest-growing areas in New Jersey, Barnegat Bay provides invaluable outdoor recreation opportunities, wetland and upland habitat for threatened and endangered species, fisheries, and water purification functions that are otherwise vanishing quickly in the region. Recognizing the important commercial and recreational values of the Bay, the State of New Jersey, municipal partners, and the Trust for Public Land used CELCP funds in 2004 to help protect 800 acres in the watershed, including the headwaters of a creek that flows into the Bay.

Pacific (includes AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)

Southwest Alaska Conservation Initiative

Together with numerous local, state, federal, and nongovernmental partners, CELCP is contributing to a multi-phased, multi-year project designed to protect more than 20,000 acres of Alaskan wilderness under threat of development. The region provides important salmon habitat, contains a 225,000-strong caribou herd, and is used heavily by waterfowl, raptors and other migratory birds. Naturally, the area also contains unparalleled opportunities for sport fishing, hunting, and wilderness recreation, and subsistence use has been a way of life in the region for thousands of years. The project is ultimately designed to protect vast acreages of wetlands and associated uplands, the four-mile long Aguluwak River, and approximately 42 miles of shoreline.

San Pablo Bay, California

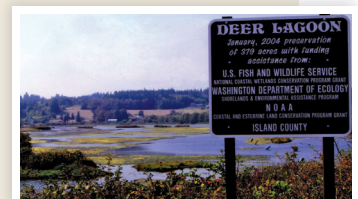
Lauded as one of the early accomplishments of CELCP, the State of California and Marin County acquired more than 2,300 acres within the state's Sonoma Baylands, located at the northern end of San Pablo Bay. This area, which once functioned as a tidal marsh, was diked and drained for agricultural use. The area is now targeted for restoration, and tidal flows will be returned to these historic wetlands. The public acquisition of this site will also add 8,000 feet to the San Francisco Bay trail for public recreational access.



San Pablo Bay, CA;
Photo credit: Stephen Joseph

Deer Lagoon, Island County, Washington

In the State of Washington, CELCP helped protect nearly 400 acres of mixed freshwater and estuarine habitat, including approximately 1,200 feet of shoreline. Restoration and enhancement is also planned for the property, which provides important habitat for salmon and other intertidal fish species, as well as several species of birds, mammals, amphibians, and plants. Passive recreation opportunities are also available to the public.



Deer Lagoon, WA;
Photo credit: Island County

Honu'apo Estuary, Hawai'i

In 2005, CELCP contributed to the protection of Honu'apo Estuary, a 225-acre tidal estuary and historic fishpond along the coast of the Island of Hawai'i under threat of real estate development. In addition to fish and wildlife habitat important for endangered species and coral reefs, the area also contains 32 archeological sites and 18 prehistoric traditional Hawaiian cultural sites, as well as ongoing submerged volcanic activity.



Honu'apo Estuary, HI;
Photo credit: Elisabeth Morgan



Tillamook, OR; Photo credit: Elaine Vaudreuil



For More Information on the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program:

<http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/welcome.html>

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