

Coastal Zone Management Program—Enhancement Grant Assessments and Strategies

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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

Marine debris is a persistent issue for all coastal states and territories, causing impacts to resources and wildlife, health and safety concerns, and aesthetic impacts. Marine debris is frequently identified by the source of the debris, typically land or ocean based. Land-based sources

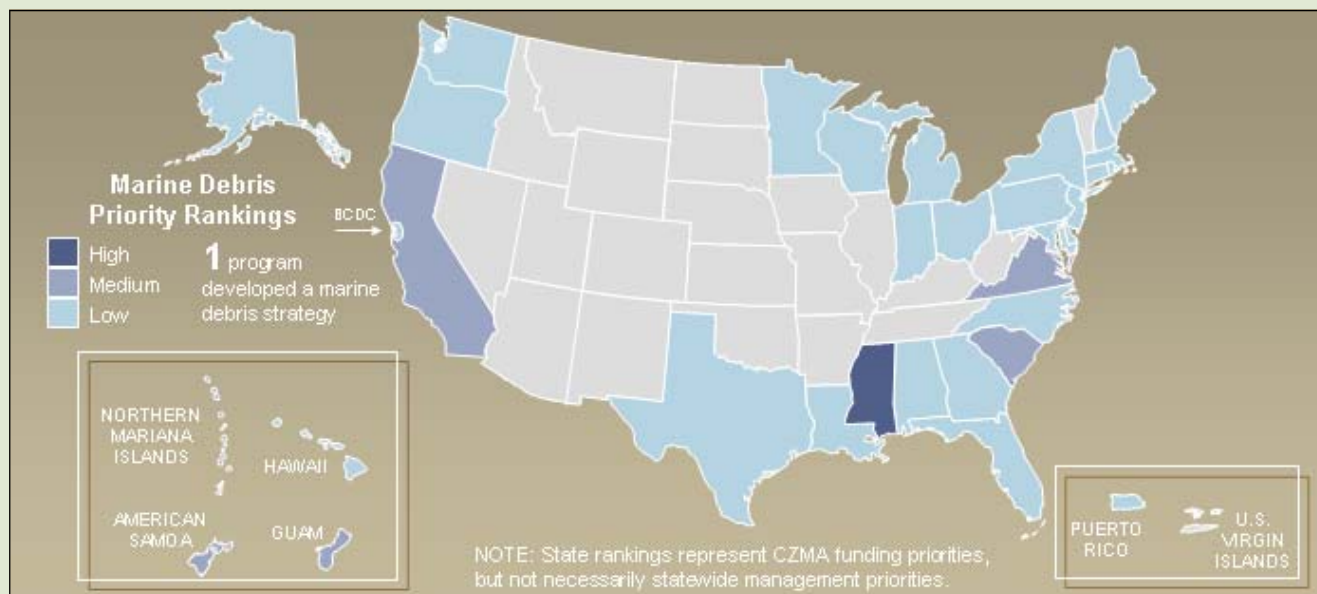
include: beach and shore activities; dumping; storm drains and runoff; and land based fishing. Ocean-based sources include: derelict fishing gear; derelict vessels; vessel based debris (from cruise ships, fishing boats, and recreational vessels); and from offshore energy facilities.

Since 2001, coastal programs identified land-based sources as the most common marine debris issue, identifying cigarettes and food wrappers as the most common items found during coastal cleanups. Not surprisingly, states in the Gulf of Mexico and on the southeast coast are also reporting that hurricane and storm related debris has become a significant problem. Over the past five years, we have seen a trend of states incorporating marine debris into marina and harbor management plans, and linking debris and fishing gear management with their clean marina programs.

Primary Needs and Information Gaps

State Coastal Zone Management Programs were asked to identify their primary needs and information gaps for marine debris. The following is a list of the most commonly identified needs:

- Need for additional **education and outreach**, including improved public awareness, local education, media campaigns, partnerships, and changing perception and human behavior on littering
- Need to move from voluntary programs to required and **enforceable programs and regulations**, along



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with increased monitoring and enforcement (including on the water)

- Need better methods to **identify and map** derelict vessels, gear and structures
- Need to understand how to best **prevent** hurricane and storm debris
- Need **disposal or recycling** systems for nets, line and other fishing gear

Recent Successes

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

- The **California Coastal Management Program** has worked with local governments and other partners to implement a number of changes to reduce wasteful packaging. Some examples include: the City of Malibu banned polystyrene from grocery stores, fast food outlets and coffee shops; the cities of Laguna Hills, Huntington Beach, San Clements and San Juan Capistrano banned polystyrene packaging from city offices and city-run events; Ventura County banned polystyrene products at all restaurants and concessions doing business on Ventura County properties; and the Progressive Bag Alliance (5 plastic bag manufacturers) are working to reduce wasteful use of plastic by increasing the recycled content, providing clerk training, public education in stores, and increased in-store recycling of bags. In addition, there have been several efforts to improve recycling, including several cities that instituted curbside plastic bag recycling programs, and the California redemption value for recyclable containers increased by approximately 40%.
- In 2004, the **South Carolina Coastal Management Program** partnered with the Department of Natural Resources, the US Coast Guards and the US Army Corps of Engineers to form the Marine Debris and Abandoned Vessel Removal Task Force. The Task Force was organized to coordinate efforts to manage debris removal, and to raise public awareness about the problems associated with debris. The task force identified sites with significant debris by documenting sites during routine fieldwork, as well as recruiting public identification by advertising in local newspapers. The sites were prioritized for cleanup and removal based on environmental, economic, and navigational impacts, relationship to shellfish beds, and public interest. Seventeen sites have been cleared, and the program has moved forward in forging innovative cost-sharing partnerships with local municipalities for further removal of inventoried items.

- The **North Carolina Clean Marina Program** partnered with a local non-profit organization to initiate a monofilament (fishing line) recycling program at coastal marinas. Participating marinas receive a collection station and prepaid mailers to send the line in for recycling.

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 is an example of a strategy proposed for marine debris:

- The **Mississippi Coastal Management Program** is developing a strategy to address post-storm submerged debris. In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, locating, characterizing, collecting and disposing of submerged marine debris presented a significant problem to coastal communities. The debris causes threats to human health and safety, as well as obstacles to navigation. The Program proposes to develop methods to locate and identify submerged debris, prioritize debris piles for removal, research and establish alternative methods of disposal including recycling and reuse, and provide a strategy for the management of submerged debris to be prepared for future storms. The strategy will become part of the State's long term strategic management plan.



Litter from beach and shore activities is a significant source of marine debris.

Questions, ideas or for more information:
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