

## **MANAGING BEACH AND SHOREFRONT DEVELOPMENT**

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### **THE PANEL SESSION**

The primary purpose of this panel session is to present results of a survey on how state coastal zone management programs (CZMPs) manage beach and shorefront development. Panelists will discuss the results of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) study and present information on a variety of development management approaches (e.g., erosion-based setbacks, construction control lines, etc.), how their implementation may vary from state to state (and within states), and related issues and challenges. Collectively, the panel will aim to present a comprehensive evaluation of beach and shorefront development management techniques used in coastal states.

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Managing coastal development to protect lives and property is a primary goal of the Coastal Zone Management Act and national CZM program. One way coastal states accomplish this goal is by regulating where and what kind of development is permitted on land closest to the ocean and Great Lake front. States use several mechanisms to manage this development; among them are jurisdictional construction control lines, which require higher permit standards for development seaward of the line, and setbacks, usually based on erosion rates, which delineate zones where most development is prohibited.

Approximately two-thirds of coastal and Great Lakes states have some type of setback or construction control line. In states that do not have statewide regulations, local communities may implement their own programs. Similarly, local programs in states with statewide regulations may impose stricter requirements than the state.

NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM), which administers the national CZMP in partnership with coastal states, recently surveyed all 34 state CZMPs on their approaches to beach and shorefront development management. The survey, the first NOAA has done in almost a decade, was conducted in early 2009. It was prompted by an information request from the Texas Coastal Management Program (CMP).

In early 2008, the Texas CMP proposed new setback regulations that would encourage coastal communities to develop new ordinances or enhance their current shorefront development programs. Texas asked OCRM for a summary of other state setback programs. This request, made more urgent by the damage inflicted on the Texas coast by Hurricane Ike, highlighted the need for a comprehensive national update.

The survey asked how states set their jurisdictional lines, whether they defined zones where most development is prohibited, how this zone is delineated, how local governments are involved, and several other questions. In the face of continued development along our nation's coasts, devastating storms, and sea-level rise, this information can be particularly valuable to states as they consider how best to deal with shorefront development.

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