



Coastal Barrier Resources System Digital Mapping Pilot Project

On April 7, 2009, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) released to the public its Report to Congress: John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Digital Mapping Pilot Project and announced the start of a public comment period. The document highlights the benefits of updating Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS) maps with more accurate and precise digital maps to better protect people, coastal areas and natural resources. The Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) of 1982 removed the federal incentive to build on designated coastal barriers by prohibiting most Federal expenditures that promote development, including federal flood insurance.

The pilot project report and maps provide a framework for map modernization. The maps that currently depict the CBRS are outdated, difficult to use, and frequently challenged. Digitally remapping the entire CBRS would comprehensively address mapping errors and further the conservation goals of CBRA. The report and draft maps are available online at http://www.fws.gov/habitatconservation/coastal_barrier.html.

Coastal Barrier Resources Act

- CBRA created the CBRS in 1982
- CBRA removes federal subsidies for new development in designated coastal areas
- People can develop within the CBRS, but American taxpayers won't subsidize cost of flood insurance
- CBRS includes 857 units (approx. 3.1 million acres) located in 23 states and territories

- CBRS units are depicted on maps that, with few exceptions, can only be modified by Congress

Challenges Associated with Existing CBRS Maps

- Age and accuracy of base maps
- Antiquated cartographic methods
- Boundary location doesn't always match boundary intent

Pilot Project Authority

- Congress recognized the challenges associated with the existing paper maps
- Coastal Barrier Resources Reauthorization Act of 2000 (P.L. 106-514) directed the Service to map 50-75 CBRS areas using digital technology and submit a report to Congress

Scope of the Pilot Project

- Approximately 10% of the entire CBRS (70 pilot project units; 284,434 acres remapped)
- Pilot project units are located in Delaware, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana

Pilot Project Results

- Propose a net addition of 23,840 acres to the CBRS (mainly wetlands and water)
- Propose removal of 363 upland acres from the CBRS
- Propose reclassification of certain areas
- Propose consistent remapping of CBRS boundaries in waterways

Next Steps

- Public review and comment of pilot project report and draft

maps (comment period 4/7/09-8/5/09)

- Service submission of final recommended pilot project maps to Congress for its consideration
- Map modernization for the remainder of the CBRS



*Photo by U.S. Geological Survey
This photograph of Pine Beach, Alabama, was taken on September 17, 2004, following Hurricane Ivan. The hurricane breached the coastal barrier at a location with adjacent development. The undeveloped coastal habitat in the foreground is included within John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Unit Q01P.*

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