



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Special Environmental Resource Concerns

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Criteria Pollutants

Clean Air Act
Regional Visibility
Degradation

Clean Water Act

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Coastal Zone Management Areas

Coastal Zone Management Areas

Coastal zone management areas (CZMAs) are areas located within or near the officially designated “coastal zone” of a State. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA’s) Office of Coastal Zone Management approves coastal programs, and not all coastal States have a CZMA.

What is it?

CZMAs are: 1) coastal waters and adjacent shorelines, including the lands or waters inside and under those zones, and 2) areas that strongly influence adjacent coastal zones of the 35 States that have coastal zone management programs. Examples include “transitional” and intertidal areas, such as salt marshes, freshwater wetlands, and beaches, and also connecting waters, harbors, and estuarine areas, such as bays, shallows, and marshes, as well as those waters adjacent to the shorelines, including but not limited to sounds, bays, lagoons, bayous, ponds, and the estuaries themselves. CZMAs can extend seaward to the outer limit of the United States territorial sea (generally 200 miles). Inland, the coastal area extends only to the extent necessary to control land uses that have a direct and significant impact (effect) on coastal waters.

Why is it important?

Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act specifies that actions or activities within the coastal zone done by a Federal agency or on behalf of or through a Federal agency must be consistent with the State’s coastal zone management plan. Therefore, NRCS planning must be consistent with the State’s coastal plan and be in concert with the goals, tenets, and objectives of that plan. On March 9, 1993, a letter was jointly signed by the Soil Conservation Service, the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, and the Extension Service setting forth the policies for enforcement and adoption of science- and technology-based land-management measures that eliminate or control nonpoint sources of pollution.

What can be done about it?

A current registry of CZMAs in each state should be kept in the Technical Guide. Guidance on nonpoint source pollution matters in the coastal zone is contained in EPA’s “Guidance Specifying Management Measures for Sources of Nonpoint Pollution in Coastal Waters” (EPA 840-B-92-002), issued in response to the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments (CZARA) of 1990.

Coastal Zone Management Areas at a Glance

Problems / Indicators - Proposed action is inconsistent with State’s coastal zone management plan	
Causes	Solutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil Erosion (short and/or long term) • CAFO contaminates (or other point sources) • Improper nutrient and/or pesticide application • Improper livestock grazing management • Improper irrigation water management • Other point and non-point source pollution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residue management • Cover crops • Comprehensive nutrient management plan • NPDES permit • Irrigation water management • Prescribed grazing

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