

New Jersey Coastal Management Program

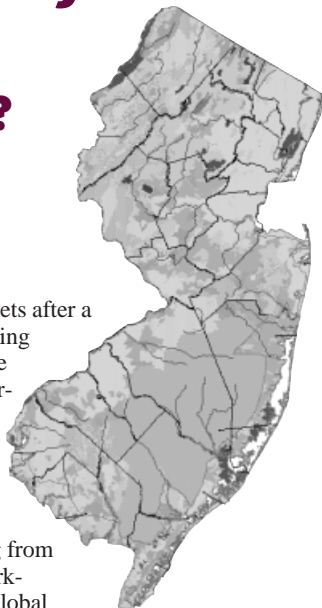
What is the New Jersey Coast?

- *Ecological Riches*
- *Economic Opportunity*
- *Quality of Life*

Crowded summer beaches...hauling the nets after a day's catch...waterfront walkways opening dense urban landscapes to the expanse of the Hudson River...huge container ships transferring goods to rail and roadway...shore birds feeding on mud flats edging acres of salt marsh...boardwalks and amusements bustling with residents and visitors...

What's your view of the coast?

The New Jersey coast boasts everything from the world-class commercial port of New York-New Jersey in the north to natural areas of global significance in the south on the Cape May Peninsula and Delaware Bay, and every kind of waterfront in between. In addition to the ocean and bay shore areas, the New Jersey coast includes all tidal waterways, bays and



estuaries and adjacent land areas throughout the state. Nowhere are environmental features and economic vitality more inextricably linked than in our state's coastal region.

Natural Resources

- Over 300,000 acres of tidal wetlands provide breeding and nursery habitat for finfish and shellfish, and act as natural flood and pollution control features.
- There is no place in America with more osprey, peregrine falcon, merlin, coopers hawks and sharp shin hawks than Cape May Point. 1.5 million shorebirds utilize this area as a migratory stop-over before crossing the great open-water expanse of Delaware Bay.
- More than 50 species of fish and shellfish are commercially and recreationally harvested in New Jersey.
- Bays, rivers and 127 miles of ocean coastline provide recreational opportunities for the enjoyment of New Jersey residents and visitors alike.

Economic Contribution

- Tourism in New Jersey coastal communities is a \$16 billion industry, employing hundreds of thousands of people. Eco-tourism based on wildlife observation and exploring natural areas has grown substantially in the last decade.
- Annual commercial landings of finfish and shellfish are over 182 million

pounds with an approximate dockside value of \$100 million. Recreational fishing, clamming and crabbing also contribute to this important industry.

- The Port of New York-New Jersey is the largest container port on the East Coast, providing 193,000 direct and indirect jobs and handling almost 18 million tons of cargo per year.

Balancing Interests/Managing Impacts

- New Jersey is the fifth smallest state in the nation, and yet is the most densely populated. We continue to grow at a rapid rate, with significant residential development occurring in the southern coastal counties and redevelopment of urban coastal areas taking place throughout the state.
- New development impacts the character of the coastal environment and has the potential to increase non-point sources of pollution to marine waters, reduce natural forest areas and open space, increase traffic on coastal roadways, and restrict public access to the waterfront.
- Some of the most sensitive coastal systems are also the most heavily used recreational resources in the state.
- Contaminants from stormwater runoff can cause closure of beaches and shellfish beds.
- The heavily developed ocean shoreline is vulnerable to hazards including flooding, erosion, and coastal storms, with increasing numbers of people and property at risk.
- Erosion and runoff send sediment into coastal waterways and harbors, which then require dredging to provide safe navigation.



Federal-State Coastal Zone Management Partnership

The Federal Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972 provided an opportunity for New Jersey to develop a comprehensive plan to address growth management and resource protection issues in the coastal area. In response to the CZMA, New Jersey developed and gained federal approval of the New Jersey Coastal Management Program (NJCMP), which addresses this complex coastal ecosystem as a whole, integrating goals and standards for protection/enhancement of natural resources, for appropriate land use and development and for public access to and use of coastal resources.

New Jersey had long recognized and taken action to protect the values of our coastal resources by the time the state joined the federal Coastal Zone Management Program in 1978. The NJCMP brought together several existing laws and agencies, and integrated them through a set of over-arching policies to guide implementation. The framework for the NJCMP is established by Coastal Areas Facilities Review Act, the Wetlands Act of 1970, the Waterfront Development Law, the Public Trust Doctrine for access to and use of state-owned tidelands, and the regulatory activities of the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (formerly the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission).

The regulatory authority of the NJCMP has evolved over the years through amendments to the Coastal Zone Management rules (N.J.A.C. 7:7E) and the Coastal Permit Program rules (N.J.A.C. 7:7). In addition, the non-regulatory Coastal Non-Point Pollution Control Program recently developed as required by CZMA is being integrated into the NJCMP.

Original New Jersey Coastal Management Program Goals

These eight basic coastal goals were established in 1980 to reflect the objectives of the New Jersey Coastal Management Program in land and

(continued on page 26)

New Jersey Coastal Management Program

(continued from page 24)

water decision-making throughout the coastal zone at that time. As part of an ongoing assessment of the coastal program, the Office of Coastal Planning is evaluating these goals to determine if they remain relevant, if/how they should be modified, and if these goals should still be a priority of the NJCMP.

1. Protect and enhance the coastal ecosystem
2. Concentrate the pattern of coastal development and encourage the preservation of open space
3. Evaluate each site individually to determine the acceptability of proposed development
4. Protect the health, safety and welfare of people who reside, work and visit the coastal zone
5. Promote public access to the waterfront through protection and creation of meaningful access points and linear walkways
6. Maintain and enhance active port and industrial facilities
7. Maintain and upgrade existing energy facilities and site facilities in a manner consistent with the Coastal Zone Management rules
8. Encourage residential, commercial, and recreational mixed-use redevelopment of the developed waterfront

Once these goals are refined to reflect the future direction of the NJCMP, the Office of Coastal Planning anticipates the development of a results based management approach to coastal zone management. This will involve identifying appropriate indicators to measure environmental quality and assess progress toward achieving established goals. The Office of Coastal Planning invites all stakeholders to actively participate in developing this new framework for the NJCMP.