South Carolina · Coastal Zone Management Program

COASTAL ZONE PLANNING:
A NEW CONCEPT FOR PROGRESS IN
SOUTH CAROLINA

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COASTAL ZONE PLANNING:

A NEW CONCEPT FOR PROGRESS IN SOUTH CAROLINA

Introduction:

A steady growth in population and the accompanying growth of industries are putting tremendous pressures on South Carolina's coastal environment. The results of this rapid development have already been seen in the bitter conflicts which have arisen in the past over such things as industrial plants and island developments. Although our state is faced with some real problems in this area, these problems can be resolved to the benefit of all through wise management of our coastal resources. Today all coastal zone states have the opportunity to establish programs for the wise management of their coastal zone resources.

"COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1972"

In 1972 the United States Congress passed the "Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972". Under this Act, the Secretary of Commerce is authorized to make grants to coastal states for the purposes of: (1) management program development, (2) administration of management programs, and (3) the establishment of estuarine sanctuaries.

Management Program Development Grants:

By means of this legislation, any coastal state may receive three annual grants to assist in the development of a management program for the land and water resources of its coastal zone. This program must include:

(1) the delineation or boundary of the state's coastal zone;

(2) a definition of permissible land and water uses within the coastal zone;

(3) an inventory and designation of areas of particular concern;

(4) an identification of the means by which the state proposes to exert control over the land and water uses referred to in (2);

(5) broad guidelines on priority of uses in particular areas; and

(6) a description of the organizational structure proposed to implement the program.

Upon completion of the development of a management program, the state must submit the program to the Secretary of Commerce for approval. Prior to giving his approval, the Secretary must find that:

(1) the state has developed and adopted a management program;

(2) the state has coordinated its program with local, area-wide and interstate plans applicable to areas within the coastal zone;

(3) the state has held public hearings in the development of its management program;

(4) the management program has been approved by the Governor;

(5) the Governor has designated a single agency to receive and administer grants for implementation of the management program;

(6) the state is organized to implement the program;

(7) the state has the authorities necessary to implement the program;

(8) the program provides for sufficient consideration of the national interest in the siting of facilities necessary to meet requirements which are other than local in nature; and

(9) the program provides for procedures by means of which specific areas may be designated for preservation or restoration.

The management program must also include one of three general techniques for control of land and water uses within the coastal zone or a combination of those techniques. Finally, the program must provide for a method of assuring that local land and water use regulations within the coastal zone do not unreasonably restrict or exclude land and water uses of regional benefit.

Administrative Grants:

Once its management plan has been approved, a state may then apply for administrative grants to help in the implementation or enforcement of its management program. The Secretary of Commerce is authorized to make annual grants to any coastal state for as much as 66 2/3 percent of the costs of administering the management program.

Estuarine Sanctuaries:

The third type of funding provided for in the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 is that of establishing estuarine sanctuaries. The Secretary of Commerce is authorized to make available to any coastal state, grants of up to 50 percent of the costs of acquisition, development and operation of estuarine sanctuaries. The value of an estuarine sanctuary is that it serves as a natural field laboratory for gathering data and making studies of the processes occurring within the estuaries of the coastal zone.

SOUTH CAROLINA'S RESPONSE TO THE COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1972

The South Carolina Coastal Zone Planning & Management Council:

Realizing the need for a management plan suited to the needs of the coastal zone, Governor John C. West created in August 1973, the South Carolina Coastal Zone Planning and Management Council. The Council was designated as the state agency for the purposes of utilizing the grants provided for in the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972.

This Council is chaired by State Senator James M. Waddell, Jr., of Beaufort and is composed of the following members:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Wildlife and Marine Resources Department

DIRECTOR, Marine Resources Division of the Wildlife and Marine Resources Department

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Water Resources Commission

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, State Ports Authority

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Department of Health and Environmental Control

DIRECTOR, State Development Board

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Land Resources Conservation Commission

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Commission

STATE FORESTER

One at-large member to represent environmental interests, appointed by the Governor

The Council was instructed to undertake the planning research necessary to develop a planning and management program designed to promote the maximum beneficial use of the coastal zone and to submit the program together with the legislation necessary to implement the program to the General Assembly. In addition, the Council was authorized to hold public hearings; to afford participation in the Planning and Management Council to local government, relevant state and federal agencies, and other interested parties.

Council Staff:

Staff through which the Council is carrying out its program is provided by the Wildlife and Marine Resources Department. This staff, headed by Dr. Eugene A. Laurent, works out of the Office of Coastal Zone Planning at the Marine Resources Center in Charleston.

Coastal Zone Advisory Committee:

To aid and advise the Council in carrying out its duties and responsibilities, the Governor also created the Coastal Zone Advisory Committee composed of three marine scientists, one member from each of the three coastal regional councils of government, and four members to represent private interests.

Program Development Grant Application:

In March 1974, the Coastal Zone Planning and Management Council submitted its application for a Program Development Grant to the Office of Coastal Environment in Washington, D.C. The application was given approval and staff members were subsequently hired to carry out the instructions of the Council.

Development of a Positive Coastal Management Program:

The major task of the Council is to develop a positive coastal management program by viewing coastal resources as a set of opportunities for recreation, conservation and economic development. Such an undertaking involves the gathering of a large amount of data on various aspects of the coastal zone. The following projects are presently underway for the purpose of gathering this data:

(1) Comprehensive Natural Resources Inventory: This project will cover such things as identification and evaluation of natural areas, shrimp nursery areas, present and potential historic and recreation areas, existing land use, prime industrial sites, and so on.

(2) Delineation of the Coastal Zone: The Council is faced with deciding just how much of the coastal zone needs to be included in a management program. There is no question that a management program should include coastal waters and tidal salt marsh. However, questions such as how far the boundary should go up coastal rivers, or how much highland should be included, are very difficult to answer. A tentative boundary line has been established to date.

(3) Bottom Tidal Currents Study: A bottom tidal currents study is being conducted to measure currents caused by tidal action adjacent to and inside tidal inlets. Because of an extreme tidal range in our coastal area,

tidal currents reach a good velocity and are responsible for considerable sand movement in the tidal inlets. The purpose of the bottom tidal currents study is to locate and identify areas of erosion and deposition which may have considerable effects on future development considerations.

(4) Coastal Soil Survey: A coastal soil survey is being conducted to obtain information on natural mineral resources, topography and drainage patterns in the coastal zone.

(5) Remote Sensing Study: The purpose of this project is to conduct a comprehensive survey of land cover and use in the coastal zone. One of the techniques used in this endeavor is that of electronic imagery which is received by means of a NASA satellite. As the satellite scans the coast, it sends back information which is recorded on tapes. These tapes are fed into a computer which in turn flashes images of this information onto a television screen. This satellite data provides the fastest method of surveying existing land cover and use including urban centers, forested areas, marshlands, spoil areas, etc.

(6) Public Involvement Program: Finally, the Council staff has outlined an extensive public involvement program to guarantee the opportunity for public input which the Council feels is essential to the development of an effective coastal management program. A Coastal Management Information Center has recently been established in the Office of Coastal Zone Planning. Persons who wish to express their views or who desire information on the S.C. Coastal Zone Planning and Management Program, or on any aspect or problem in the area of coastal zone management, may call the Information Center collect at 795-7341. Through such things as this Information Center as well as through public hearings, study groups, television and radio programs, in-depth newspaper articles and the publication of pamphlets, such as this, the Council hopes to develop a two-way communication with South Carolina's public.

Time-Table for Development of a Management Program:

The development of South Carolina's Coastal Zone Management Program will be a three year endeavor. In this first year, the Council must: (1) gather the vital information necessary to formulate a sound management program, (2) establish a two-way communication with the public, (3) establish a tentative coastal zone boundary, and (4) perform an inventory and allocation of coastal zone resources.

The second year will involve: (1) a careful inventory and analysis of federal and state laws and regulations related to the coastal zone, and (2) an evaluation of alternatives or options for the various elements of the management program.

During the third year any final legislative changes and/or program revisions will be made. If then the management program is approved by the Secretary of Commerce, a grant application will be developed for the implementation of the program. If not, planning tasks will be undertaken as necessary to assure program approval.

Establishment of an Estuarine Sanctuary:

An exciting addition to South Carolina's Coastal Zone Management Program will be the establishment of the North Inlet Estuary in Georgetown County as an estuarine sanctuary. An application for a Development and Operation Grant for North Inlet is presently being drafted. No funds are being requested to acquire land since the property will be provided by the Belle W. Baruch Foundation on a long term basis.

When established, this sanctuary will be an asset to our state as well as the nation, as it will serve the research and instructional needs of investigators and students from throughout the United States and abroad. The Belle W. Baruch Institute for Marine Biology and Coastal Research, University of

South Carolina, will serve as the managing agency, and the Estuarine Sanctuary Program will be considered as part of South Carolina's Coastal Zone Management Program. One of the most important long-term research goals of the Sanctuary will be to develop a predictive ecosystem model which will have significant value to coastal zone management decision making.

Conclusion:

The Coastal Zone Planning and Management Council and its staff believe that the future is bright for South Carolina's coastal zone. We urge you to help us in the development of a sound and workable management plan by keeping us informed of your thoughts and viewpoints on the subject. If you have an interest in the future of South Carolina's coastal zone, and would like to be placed on a mailing list to receive further information, please call us at 795-7341 (call collect, if long distance) or write to:

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