



Frequently Asked Questions:

Ballot Measure 2 & the Alaska Coastal Management Program

Why does Alaska need a coastal management program? Alaska has more coastline than all other states combined and more federal land and water than any other state, *yet it is the only state without a coastal management program*. The coastal area is subject to higher population and development pressures than other regions; over 75% of Alaskans live near the coast. Coastal management balances potentially competing uses and resolves conflicts early in the process so development can proceed with fewer hurdles. A state coastal management program gives Alaskans a powerful voice in federal decisions that impact the coastal uses and resources we value.

What happened to the former Alaska coastal management program? The U.S. Congress recognized the importance of meeting the challenge of continued growth in the coastal zone by passing the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) in 1972. In 1976, Governor Hammond introduced the Alaska Coastal Management Act (ACMP) in response to increasing demands on state coastal resources. The program provided for the establishment of local coastal districts and a strong role for local governments in coastal development decisions. In 1984, Governor Sheffield adopted a coordinated review process for coastal projects. In 2003, Governor Murkowski essentially gutted the coastal program, reducing local communities' voice in coastal development decisions; removing consideration of air and water quality matters from the coordinated review process; and eliminating the regionally represented Coastal Policy Council, transferring its powers to a single agency, the Department of Natural Resources. In 2011, the Alaska legislature and the governor failed to agree on conditions for extending the coastal program and the program expired on July 1, 2011.

Are there other laws that give Alaska the same ability to influence federal decisions? No. While other federal environmental and resource laws give states the ability to comment on federal decisions, only the federal Coastal Zone Management Act and a federally approved state coastal management program requires federal agencies to reach an agreement with coastal states before permitting coastal projects.

How will the coastal management program promote economic development? A state coastal program promotes economic development in several ways. Local coastal management plans identify areas suitable for development and provide guidance for development through established policies. The potential for lawsuits is reduced by providing a forum for meaningful public participation by citizens and interest groups and the early identification and resolution of issues. Responsible development is facilitated by a unified project review that coordinates federal, state, and local government permitting actions.

What does the initiative do? The citizens' coastal management program initiative lays the groundwork for the creation of a new, improved program that will give the state and local communities an effective voice to protect Alaska's interests and values in the development of our coastal lands and waters. Rather than dictate the form of the new program, the initiative establishes a comprehensive list of objectives that will guide development of the new program. The objectives address: the use, management, restoration, enhancement, development, and protection of the coastal environment; coordination among government

agencies and citizens; and public and government participation in development and implementation of the coastal management program.

How is the initiative different from the coastal program that was in effect prior to July 2011? The initiative differs from the prior program in the following substantive ways:

- Rather than consolidating all decision-making in a single resource agency as was done under the prior program, the initiative creates the Alaska Coastal Policy Board to oversee development and implementation of the new program, including approval of regulations and local coastal management plans. The Coastal Policy Board will bring local coastal district and state representatives together and ensure statewide input into the development and implementation of the coastal program.
- The new program will be located in the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development (DCCED) rather than in the Department of Natural Resources. DCCED has a long history of working with local governments, including management of coastal district funding. In addition, since DCCED is not a resource agency, it provides a neutral role when coordinating project reviews.
- Generally, the new program does not incorporate prior program statutes and regulations, but instead establishes a comprehensive list of objectives that will be addressed through regulations developed and approved by the Alaska Coastal Policy Board.

Why is there no industry or interest group on the Alaska Coastal Policy Board? The Alaska Coastal Policy Board is designed to represent the interests of all Alaskans, not a particular industry or interest group. Through the regulatory process, all Alaskans, including industry and interest groups, will have the ability to help shape the new program.

What administrative unit will be responsible for the program? A new division, the Division of Ocean and Coastal Management, will be created in DCCED. The division will provide support to the Coastal Policy Board and, with guidance from the Board, will implement the program, including coordinating coastal program project reviews.

What are coastal districts? Coastal districts are local government organizations that participate in the coastal program by developing local coastal management plans. Coastal districts include municipalities (cities and boroughs) and four coastal resource service areas located in the unorganized boroughs. Coastal district management plans include criteria for activities ("enforceable policies") that address local coastal values.

Will the new program give coastal districts the ability to veto a development project? No. While the initiative brings local policies to bear on development decisions, it does not allow for a coastal district to veto development projects.

How will the coastal program be funded? Federal funding for the coastal program will be available once the program receives federal approval. In fiscal year 2010, the federal government provided Alaska with approximately \$2.6 million to implement the coastal program, including grants for special projects. State agencies and coastal districts provided matching in-kind and cash contributions totaling \$2.1 million.

Information derived from the Alaska Sea Party: www.alaskacoastalmanagement.org
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