

§ 1461. National Estuarine Research Reserve System

(a) Establishment of System

There is established the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (hereinafter referred to in this section as the "System") that consists of—

- (1) each estuarine sanctuary designated under this section as in effect before April 7, 1986; and
- (2) each estuarine area designated as a national estuarine reserve under subsection (b) of this section.

Each estuarine sanctuary referred to in paragraph (1) is hereby designated as a national estuarine reserve.

(b) Designation of national estuarine reserves

After April 7, 1986, the Secretary may designate an estuarine area as a national estuarine reserve if—

- (1) the Governor of the coastal state in which the area is located nominates the area for that designation; and
- (2) the Secretary finds that—
 - (A) the area is a representative estuarine ecosystem that is suitable for long-term research and contributes to the biogeographical and typological balance of the System;
 - (B) the law of the coastal state provides long-term protection for reserve resources to ensure a stable environment for research;
 - (C) designation of the area as a reserve will serve to enhance public awareness and understanding of estuarine areas, and provide suitable opportunities for public education and interpretation; and
 - (D) the coastal state in which the area is located has complied with the requirements of any regulations issued by the Secretary to implement this section.

(c) Estuarine research guidelines

The Secretary shall develop guidelines for the conduct of research within the System that shall include—

- (1) a mechanism for identifying, and establishing priorities among, the coastal management issues that should be addressed through coordinated research within the System;
- (2) the establishment of common research principles and objectives to guide the development of research programs within the System;
- (3) the identification of uniform research methodologies which will ensure comparability of data, the broadest application of research results, and the maximum use of the System for research purposes;
- (4) the establishment of performance standards upon which the effectiveness of the research efforts and the value of reserves within the System in addressing the coastal management issues identified in paragraph (1) may be measured; and
- (5) the consideration of additional sources of funds for estuarine research than the funds authorized under this chapter, and strategies for encouraging the use of such funds within the System, with particular emphasis on mechanisms established under subsection (d) of this section.

In developing the guidelines under this section, the Secretary shall consult with prominent members of the estuarine research community.

(d) Promotion and coordination of estuarine research

The Secretary shall take such action as is necessary to promote and coordinate the use of the System for research purposes including—

- (1) requiring that the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in conducting or supporting estuarine research, give priority consideration to research that uses the System; and
- (2) consulting with other Federal and State agencies to promote use of one or more reserves within the System by such agencies when conducting estuarine research.

(e) Financial assistance

(1) The Secretary may, in accordance with such rules and regulations as the Secretary shall promulgate, make grants—

(A) to a coastal state—

- (i) for purposes of acquiring such lands and waters, and any property interests therein, as are necessary to ensure the appropriate long-term management of an area as a national estuarine reserve,
- (ii) for purposes of operating or managing a national estuarine reserve and constructing appropriate reserve facilities, or
- (iii) for purposes of conducting educational or interpretive activities; and

(B) to any coastal state or public or private person for purposes of supporting research and monitoring within a national estuarine reserve that are consistent with the research guidelines developed under subsection (c) of this section.

(2) Financial assistance provided under paragraph (1) shall be subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary considers necessary or appropriate to protect the interests of the United States, including requiring coastal states to execute suitable title documents setting forth the property interest or interests of the United States in any lands and waters acquired in whole or part with such financial assistance.

(3)(A) The amount of the financial assistance provided under paragraph (1)(A)(i) with respect to the acquisition of lands and waters, or interests therein, for any one national estuarine reserve may not exceed an amount equal to 50 percent of the costs of the lands, waters, and interests therein or \$5,000,000, whichever amount is less.

(B) The amount of the financial assistance provided under paragraph (1)(A)(ii) and (iii) and paragraph (1)(B) may not exceed 70 percent of the costs incurred to achieve the purposes described in those paragraphs with respect to a reserve; except that the amount of the financial assistance provided under paragraph (1)(A)(iii) may be up to 100 percent of any costs for activities that benefit the entire System.

(C) Notwithstanding subparagraphs (A) and (B), financial assistance under this subsection provided from amounts recovered as a result of damage to natural resources located in the coastal zone may be used to pay 100 percent of

the costs of activities carried out with the assistance.

(f) Evaluation of System performance

(1) The Secretary shall periodically evaluate the operation and management of each national estuarine reserve, including education and interpretive activities, and the research being conducted within the reserve.

(2) If evaluation under paragraph (1) reveals that the operation and management of the reserve is deficient, or that the research being conducted within the reserve is not consistent with the research guidelines developed under subsection (c) of this section, the Secretary may suspend the eligibility of that reserve for financial assistance under subsection (e) of this section until the deficiency or inconsistency is remedied.

(3) The Secretary may withdraw the designation of an estuarine area as a national estuarine reserve if evaluation under paragraph (1) reveals that—

(A) the basis for any one or more of the findings made under subsection (b)(2) of this section regarding that area no longer exists; or

(B) a substantial portion of the research conducted within the area, over a period of years, has not been consistent with the research guidelines developed under subsection (c) of this section.

(g) Report

The Secretary shall include in the report required under section 1462 of this title information regarding—

(1) new designations of national estuarine reserves;

(2) any expansion of existing national estuarine reserves;

(3) the status of the research program being conducted within the System; and

(4) a summary of the evaluations made under subsection (f) of this section.

(Pub. L. 89-454, title III, §315, formerly §312, as added Pub. L. 92-583, Oct. 27, 1972, 86 Stat. 1288; renumbered §315 and amended Pub. L. 94-370, §§7, 12, July 26, 1976, 90 Stat. 1019, 1030; Pub. L. 96-464, §11, Oct. 17, 1980, 94 Stat. 2067; Pub. L. 99-272, title VI, §6044, Apr. 7, 1986, 100 Stat. 125; Pub. L. 101-508, title VI, §6214, Nov. 5, 1990, 104 Stat. 1388-313; Pub. L. 102-587, title II, §2205(b)(1)(A), (B), (21), (22), Nov. 4, 1992, 106 Stat. 5050, 5052; Pub. L. 104-150, §6, June 3, 1996, 110 Stat. 1381.)

AMENDMENTS

1996—Subsec. (e)(3)(C). Pub. L. 104-150 added subpar. (C).

1992—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 102-587, §2205(b)(21), substituted “Research Reserve” for “Reserve Research”.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 102-587, §2205(b)(1)(A), substituted “coastal state” for “coastal State” in pars. (1) and (2)(B) and (D).

Subsec. (c)(4). Pub. L. 102-587, §2205(b)(22), substituted “paragraph (1)” for “subsection (1)”.

Subsec. (e). Pub. L. 102-587, §2205(b)(1)(A), (B), substituted “coastal state” for “coastal State” in par. (1)(A) and (B) and “coastal states” for “coastal States” in par. (2).

1990—Pub. L. 101-508, §6214(a), substituted “Research Reserve” for “Reserve Research” in section catchline.

Subsec. (e)(3)(A). Pub. L. 101-508, §6214(b), (d), substituted “percent” for “per centum” and “\$5,000,000”

for “\$4,000,000”, and struck out “of subsection (e) of this section” after “paragraph (1)(A)(i)”.

Subsec. (e)(3)(B). Pub. L. 101-508, §6214(c), (d), substituted “70 percent” for “50 per centum”, struck out “of subsection (e) of this section” after “paragraph (1)(B)” and inserted before period at end “; except that the amount of the financial assistance provided under paragraph (1)(A)(iii) may be up to 100 percent of any costs for activities that benefit the entire System”.

1986—Pub. L. 99-272 amended section generally. Prior to amendment, section read as follows: “The Secretary may, in accordance with this section and in accordance with such rules and regulations as the Secretary shall promulgate, make grants to any coastal state for the purpose of—

“(1) acquiring, developing, or operating estuarine sanctuaries, to serve as natural field laboratories in which to study and gather data on the natural and human processes occurring within the estuaries of the coastal zone; and

“(2) acquiring lands to provide for the preservation of islands, or portions thereof.

The amount of any such grant shall not exceed 50 per centum of the cost of the project involved; except that, in the case of acquisition of any estuarine sanctuary, the Federal share of the cost thereof shall not exceed \$3,000,000. No grant for acquisition of land may be made under this section without the approval of the Governor of the State in which is located the land proposed to be acquired.”

1980—Pub. L. 96-464, in par. (2), substituted “the preservation of islands, or portions thereof” for “access to public beaches and other public coastal areas of environmental, recreational, historical, esthetic, ecological, or cultural value, and for the preservation of islands”; and in provision following par. (2), raised the spending limitation of \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000 and inserted provision that no grant for acquisition of land may be made under this section without the approval of the Governor of the state in which the land proposed to be acquired is located.

1976—Pub. L. 94-370, §12, restructured existing provisions into pars. (1) and (2), inserted purpose of acquiring lands to provide for access to beaches and other coastal areas and for the preservation of islands, and struck out proviso that no Federal funds received pursuant to sections 1454 or 1455 of this title be used for purposes of this section.

§ 1462. Coastal zone management reports

(a) Biennial reports

The Secretary shall consult with the Congress on a regular basis concerning the administration of this chapter and shall prepare and submit to the President for transmittal to the Congress a report summarizing the administration of this chapter during each period of two consecutive fiscal years. Each report, which shall be transmitted to the Congress not later than April 1 of the year following the close of the biennial period to which it pertains, shall include, but not be restricted to (1) an identification of the state programs approved pursuant to this chapter during the preceding Federal fiscal year and a description of those programs; (2) a listing of the states participating in the provisions of this chapter and a description of the status of each state's programs and its accomplishments during the preceding Federal fiscal year; (3) an itemization of the allocation of funds to the various coastal states and a breakdown of the major projects and areas on which these funds were expended; (4) an identification of any state programs which have been reviewed and disapproved, and a statement of the reasons for such actions; (5) a summary of evaluation find-