

**§ 459f. Assateague Island National Seashore; purposes; description of area**

For the purpose of protecting and developing Assateague Island in the States of Maryland and Virginia and certain adjacent waters and small marsh islands for public outdoor recreation use and enjoyment, the Assateague Island National Seashore (hereinafter referred to as the “seashore”) shall be established and administered in accordance with the provisions of sections 459f to 459f-11 of this title. The seashore shall comprise the area within Assateague Island and the small marsh islands adjacent thereto, together with the adjacent water areas not more than one-half mile beyond the mean high waterline of the land portions as generally depicted on a map identified as “Proposed Assateague Island National Seashore, Boundary Map, NS-AI-7100A, November, 1964”, which map shall be on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the Department of the Interior.

(Pub. L. 89-195, §1, Sept. 21, 1965, 79 Stat. 824.)

**§ 459f-1. Acquisition of property**

**(a) Authority of Secretary; manner and place; fair market value; concurrence of State owner; transfer from Federal agency to administrative jurisdiction of Secretary**

Within the boundaries of the seashore, the Secretary of the Interior (hereinafter referred to as the “Secretary”) is authorized to acquire lands, waters, and other property, or any interest therein, by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, exchange, or in such other method as he may find to be in the public interest. The Secretary is authorized to include within the boundaries of the seashore, not to exceed 112 acres of land or interests therein on the mainland in Worcester County, Maryland. In the case of acquisition by negotiated purchase, the property owners shall be paid the fair market value by the Secretary. Any property or interests therein owned by the States of Maryland or Virginia shall be acquired only with the concurrence of such owner. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any Federal property located within the boundaries of the seashore may, with the concurrence of the agency having custody thereof, be transferred without consideration to the administrative jurisdiction of the Secretary for purposes of the seashore.

**(b) Exchange of property; cash equalization payments; scenic easement donation**

When acquiring lands by exchange, the Secretary may accept title to any non-Federal property within the boundaries of the seashore and convey to the grantor of such property any federally owned property under the jurisdiction of the Secretary which the Secretary classifies suitable for exchange or other disposal, and which is located in Maryland or Virginia. The properties so exchanged shall be approximately equal in fair market value, but the Secretary may accept cash from or pay cash to the grantor in order to equalize the values of the properties exchanged. Notwithstanding the acreage limitation set forth in sections 459f to 459f-11 of this title, the Secretary is authorized to accept the donation of a scenic easement covering the par-

cel of land adjacent to the seashore and known as the “Woodcock Property”.

**(c) Bridge acquisition; amount of compensation; payment terms and conditions**

The Secretary is authorized to acquire all of the right, title, or interest of the Chincoteague-Assateague Bridge and Beach Authority, a political subdivision of the State of Virginia, in the bridge constructed by such authority across the Assateague Channel, together with all lands or interests therein, roads, parking lots, buildings, or other real or personal property of such authority, and to compensate the authority in such amount as will permit it to meet its valid outstanding obligations at the time of such acquisition. Payments by the Secretary shall be on such terms and conditions as he shall consider to be in the public interest. Any of the aforesaid property outside the boundaries of the national seashore, upon acquisition by the Secretary, shall be subject to his administration for purposes of the seashore.

**(d) Owner's reservation of right of use and occupancy for residential or hunting purposes for term of years; adjustment of compensation; rules and regulations for appearance of buildings; “improved property” defined**

Owners of improved property acquired by the Secretary may reserve for themselves and their successors or assigns a right of use and occupancy of the improved property for noncommercial residential purposes or for hunting purposes, as hereinafter provided, for a term that is not more than twenty-five years. In such cases, the Secretary shall pay to the owner of the property the fair market value thereof less the fair market value of the right retained by such owner: *Provided*, That such use and occupancy shall be subject to general rules and regulations established by the Secretary with respect to the outward appearance of any buildings on the lands involved. The term “improved property” as used in sections 459f to 459f-11 of this title shall mean (1) any single-family residence the construction of which was begun before January 1, 1964, and such amount of land, not in excess of three acres, on which the building is situated as the Secretary considers reasonably necessary to the noncommercial residential use of the building, and (2) any property fronting on the Chincoteague Bay or Sinepuxent Bay, including the offshore bay islands adjacent thereto, that is used chiefly for hunting and continues in such use: *Provided*, That the Secretary may exclude from improved properties any marsh, beach, or waters, together with so much of the land adjoining such marsh, beach, or waters as he deems necessary for public use or public access thereto.

(Pub. L. 89-195, §2, Sept. 21, 1965, 79 Stat. 824; Pub. L. 101-512, title I, Nov. 5, 1990, 104 Stat. 1924; Pub. L. 102-320, §1(1)-(4), July 10, 1992, 106 Stat. 321.)

AMENDMENTS

1992—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 102-320, §1(1), (2), amended second and last sentences generally, substituting reference to 112 acres for reference to sixteen acres for an administrative site in second sentence and striking out reference in last sentence to sixteen acres of Federal