



Connecticut Fund
for the Environment

Save the Sound®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CFE/Save the Sound applauds proposed expansion of protected coastal wetlands and natural areas

New Haven, Conn. – Connecticut Fund for the Environment/Save the Sound today [submitted comments](#) to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in support of proposed amendments to the Coastal Barriers Resources Act (CBRA).

The proposed updates and expansion will add another valuable layer of protection to nearly 25,000 acres of natural coastal areas all around Long Island Sound and the southern and eastern coasts of Long Island. In all, these acres provide **coastal flood protection value of approximately \$76.6 million dollars every year**, and **between \$288 million and \$1.9 billion annually in ecological services** including water pollution filtration and absorption of greenhouse gases.

“We strongly support the expanded protection to tens of thousands of acres of natural dunes, marshes, and tidal flats all around Long Island Sound,” **said Curt Johnson, president of CFE/Save the Sound.** “These natural areas on Connecticut’s and Long Island’s shoreline provide a refuge for fish, wildlife, and people to enjoy 365 days a year. They save taxpayers and property owners over \$76 million a year on average by reducing flood impacts to our neighborhoods during our region’s increasingly frequent coastal storms. And, as nature’s filters, they naturally provide us with hundreds of millions of dollars in value each and every year by acting as water pollution sponges and locking up greenhouse gas pollution. Let’s give these areas the protection they deserve, for our families and future generations.”

The CBRA established the John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System to protect critical habitats with the goal of minimizing loss of human life, wasteful federal revenue expenditures, and damage to fish, wildlife, and other natural resources. Within a coastal barrier resources area, building developments are not eligible for federal funding nor participation in the National Flood Insurance Program, effectively precluding them from building in the system unless the builder self-funds and self-insures the entire project. The last major update for most areas in the system was in 1990 and the current update is a direct response to the damage caused by Hurricane Sandy.

A recent economic analysis by Earth Economics for our National Estuary Program estimated the ecological services and flood mitigation value provided by these natural coastal areas. CFE/Save the Sound broke out the values of the proposed *additional* acres by coastal area, as follows:

Stonington to Madison, CT

3,189 additional acres

\$35.9 and \$237.1 million per year in ecological services

\$11.6 million per year on average in flood mitigation

Madison to Stratford, CT

938 additional acres

\$9.4 to \$62 million per year in ecological services

\$3 million per year on average in flood mitigation

Stratford to Greenwich, CT

686 additional acres

\$7.8 to \$51.4 million per year in ecological services

\$2.5 million per year on average in flood mitigation

Long Island, NY (including north and south shores and Peconic Bay)

23,009 additional acres

\$235.8 to \$1,557.2 million per year in ecological services

\$76.6 million per year on average in flood mitigation

A map of current CBRS areas in Connecticut is available at <https://www.fws.gov/ecological-services/habitat-conservation/cbra/maps/a/CT.pdf>, and for New York at https://www.fws.gov/ecological-services/habitat-conservation/cbra/maps/a/NY_Long_Island.pdf.

USFWS's proposal to add new acres may be viewed at <https://www.fws.gov/cbra/maps/Hurricane-Sandy-Project-Batch-2.html>.

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Save the Sound is a bi-state program of Connecticut Fund for the Environment with an over 40-year track record of restoring and protecting the waters and shorelines of the Sound. From its offices in New Haven and Mamaroneck, Save the Sound works for a cleaner, healthier, and more vibrant Long Island Sound where humans and marine life can prosper year-round. Our success is based on scientific knowledge, legal expertise, and thousands of ordinary people teaming up achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.