

COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

DEP's [Coastal Resources Management Program](#) (CRMP) is located within Compacts and Commissions Support in the Bureau of Safe Drinking Water. The CRMP receives annual funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to protect and enhance natural resources using a comprehensive approach in Pennsylvania's two coastal zones: 112 miles of coastline along the tidal Delaware River in Bucks, Philadelphia, and Delaware counties; and 77 miles of shoreline along Lake Erie in Erie County. The CRMP works to address 11 federally approved policy areas through direct program activities and annual competitive pass-through coastal zone grants. Of these 11 policies, categories that address water quality are described in more detail below:

- Coastal Hazards – In addition to administering the Bluff Recession Setback Act along Lake Erie, the CRMP seeks to assist communities to address increased flooding that can threaten coastal water quality and minimize stormwater that delivers nonpoint source pollutants to tidal waters of the Delaware Estuary and our Great Lakes.
- Dredging and Spoil Disposal – The CRMP works to ensure that dredging related activities are regulated to protect coastal water quality, minimizing harmful impacts to fish and wildlife habitats.
- Fisheries Management – The CRMP supports activities that ensure coastal waters do not contain pollutants, attributable to point or nonpoint discharges, in concentrations harmful to the water uses, including protection of human health and aquatic life. CRMP is currently conducting side scan sonar surveys of the tidal Delaware River to identify and protect native mussel beds, which improve water quality through filtering pollutants. Annual coastal zone funding also supports the work of a Great Lakes Biologist to conduct water quality monitoring on Lake Erie.
- Wetlands – The CRMP seeks to preserve, enhance, and restore the remaining wetlands in the coastal zones to ensure their water filtration functions and values are protected. Since the 1980s, federally funded coastal zone grants have been dedicated to new wetland creation, preservation, monitoring, and research. CRMP staff provide local technical expertise, specific to the unique wetlands of the coastal areas, to help ensure more successful project planning and wetland protection, rehabilitation, restoration, and creation.
- Energy Facility Siting – The CRMP seeks to ensure the siting of new facilities, including refineries, generating stations, and gas drilling, and the operation of existing energy production minimize disturbances to fragile coastal ecosystems. Pennsylvania's federal consistency program allows the CRMP to review the placement of energy facilities requiring Federal Energy Regulatory Commission licenses and US Army Corps of Engineers permits. For example, in 2016 CRMP conducted a federal consistency review and provided its concurrence for an international power transmission cable through Lake Erie between the United States and Canada.

The CRMP's remaining six policy areas address water quality to a lesser extent and include: public access for recreation, historic sites and structures, port activities, intergovernmental coordination, public involvement, and ocean and great lakes resources (related to aquatic nuisance species).

Since 2018, CRMP has dedicated over \$3 million to partner state agencies, local governments, nonprofits, and educational institutions working in Pennsylvania's coastal zones, leveraging a local match over \$4 million. CRMP provides funding for water quality research, regularly partnering with Regional Science Consortium in northwest Pennsylvania to study the impacts of harmful algal blooms and *E. coli* contamination of water quality in Lake Erie. In the Delaware Estuary, a 2020 coastal zone grant was provided to the Delaware River Basin Commission to study per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in surface water, sediment, and fish from the main tidal Delaware River and tributaries. In the last ten years, over \$300,000 has been dedicated to public education and outreach, supporting activities such the annual Delaware River Festival, development of the Schuylkill River Youth Crew at Bartram's Garden in Philadelphia, and Gannon University's Regional Summer School of Excellence for high school students. CRMP also supports design and implementation of projects that directly improve water quality, such as freshwater mussel restoration and living shoreline development by Partnership for the Delaware Estuary and restoration of an impaired section of Cascade Creek in Erie.

Every five years, CRMP reviews its program to identify priority needs and develops a multi-year enhancement plan under Section 309 of the Coastal Zone Management Act. The resulting [report](#) sets out two new strategies to be implemented from 2021-2026 to integrate and strengthen climate adaptation and resiliency planning in the Delaware Estuary and develop a comprehensive program to identify and mitigate the impacts of stormwater on Lake Erie bluff erosion and recession.