

## **Priority List of Projects Eligible for Funding in FY 2011 under the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program**

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) provides state and local governments with matching funds to purchase significant coastal and estuarine lands, or conservation easements on such lands, from willing sellers. Each fiscal year, projects are ranked for selection based on an independent, competitive, merit-based evaluation. This report provides the priority list of projects that are ready and eligible for funding in FY 2011, subject to the amounts appropriated for the program. This report also describes the process and criteria used to develop the list.

*The projects included on this list have not yet been selected for funding.* Rather, NOAA will use this list as a guide in selecting projects for funding within the amounts appropriated for FY 2011, after confirming that projects are still viable.

The President's Budget for FY 2011 requested \$25 million for land conservation projects under the Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP), as well as additional funds for projects under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

### ***Background on CELCP***

Established in 2002 under the Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, and re-authorized in 2009 under the Omnibus Public Land Management Act, CELCP provides matching funds to state and local governments to protect lands with significant conservation, recreation, ecological, historical, or aesthetic values, or that are threatened by conversion from their natural, undeveloped, or recreational state to other uses. CELCP's authority specifies that priority be given to lands which can be effectively managed and protected, that have significant ecological value, that have a demonstrated need for protection, and that have ability to successfully leverage funds.

Since 2002, NOAA has awarded more than \$230 million to state and local governments in 27 of the 34 eligible coastal states and territories. CELCP funds have supported the protection of more than 50,000 acres, and the number of acres will continue to grow as the dozens of ongoing projects come to completion. Additional information about the CELCP can be found on NOAA's website at: <http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/welcome.html>.

### ***FY 2011 Competitive Process***

The FY 2011 CELCP competition was conducted in much the same manner as in previous years. NOAA published a Federal Register Notice (FRN) announcing the FY 2011 CELCP funding opportunity in the agency's December omnibus FRN on January 19, 2010 (Vol. 75, p. 3103), with the application period ending April 9, 2010. The funding opportunity notice and associated application materials were posted through Grants.gov and on the CELCP website at: [http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/celcp\\_fundingop.html](http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/celcp_fundingop.html).

In total, coastal states and territories submitted forty-three (43) proposals requesting over \$71 million in land conservation project funds for the FY 2011 competition. NOAA has generated a ranked list of projects considered ready and eligible for funding (below). *Funding for projects on the list is subject to the availability of FY 2011 appropriations.*

### ***Development of the FY 2011 Priority List***

Under the funding opportunity, each eligible coastal state and territory could nominate up to three projects addressing priorities identified within the state or territorial CELCP plans for the national funding competition. Each qualifying project proposal was evaluated by four merit reviewers according to criteria described in the funding notice. Criteria included:

- *Program purpose (up to 55 points)*, i.e., relevance to program goals, including ecological, conservation, recreational, aesthetic, historical/cultural values, and public benefits gained from the long-term protection and management of the property. Priority was given to projects that protect lands with significant ecological value.
- *Technical merit (up to 25 points)*, i.e., whether a project could be effectively managed and protected over the long-term; the degree of threat of conversion from a natural or recreational state to other uses; and whether the project could be executed within the performance period.
- *Qualifications of applicants (up to 10 points)*, i.e., capacity and experience of the applicant to execute the land transaction consistently with CELCP Guidelines and to manage (either directly or through partnerships) property for long-term conservation of the values for which it is being protected.
- *Project costs (up to 20 points)*, i.e., whether land acquisition costs are reasonable and based on an independent appraisal or other assessment of fair market value; whether the source of the required non-Federal matching share of funds is consistent with CELCP program authority and guidelines and is likely to be available within the performance period; and whether direct and indirect costs for implementation of the project, if requested, are reasonable and consistent with CELCP guidelines.

Program staff ranked eligible projects in priority order based on the averaged scores of the four merit reviewers. Projects were further evaluated according to the following selection factors, which were listed in the funding notice: program objectives and priorities (as set forth in section I.A. and I.B. of the FFO notice), including priority consideration for lands with significant ecological value and that can be effectively managed and protected; geographic distribution of projects and/or funds; benefits to National Estuarine Research Reserves; and the applicant's prior CELCP award performance (if applicable).

Program staff also reviewed each project for eligibility and completeness. Projects that were determined to be not ready or eligible did not meet evaluation criteria published in the Federal Funding Opportunity Notice.

***Final Selection of FY 2011 Projects for Funding under CELCP***

The list below comprises the FY 2011 priority list of projects that are ready and eligible for funding in FY 2011, subject to the amounts appropriated for the program. *The projects included on this list have not yet been selected for funding.* NOAA will use this list as a guide in selecting projects for funding within the amounts appropriated for FY 2011, after confirming that projects are still viable. NOAA must also first review and approve a final grant application before funds will be awarded, as well as review supporting due diligence documents (such as appraisal and title documentation) for each project before funds will be released to grant recipients.

For any projects selected for funding, applicants will need to submit additional documentation either at the time of final grant application, or as a condition of a grant award. This documentation includes: an appraisal that meets Federal appraisal standards to support the requested funding amount; evidence of title; evidence of seller’s willingness; evidence of agreement; survey plat map; and state certification that the project complements working waterfronts needs. Documentation is required for each property that will be acquired with CELCP funds and also for each property that will contribute toward the non-Federal cost share. Documents will be used to substantiate cost estimates contained in project proposals and ensure the clear transfer of title or proper recordation of conservation easements to the grant recipient. These requirements are further described in section 4.4 of the CELCP Guidelines and in section IV.B.2. of the FFO.

If funding is appropriated for CELCP in FY 2011, NOAA would expect to award grants between June and October 2011. NOAA recognizes that some projects may cease to be viable before a grant is awarded. NOAA will confirm the status of projects prior to making a final selection for funding. NOAA also recognizes that projects selected for funding may fall through prior to completion, even after a grant award has been made. To address this possibility, NOAA will maintain a contingency list of projects that were not able to be funded with available appropriations. NOAA will select replacement projects from this list in the event that a selected project cannot be completed and/or if funds are returned to the program.

**FY 2011 Prioritized List for the  
Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Eligible Funding</b>
1	WA	Dabob Bay Natural Area Acquisition	\$3,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
2	OR	Big Creek	\$2,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
3	NY	Hudson River NERR Enhancement Project: Plotkin Property Acquisition	\$1,009,500* <sup>#β†</sup>
4	ME	Merriland River Corridor: Tilton Tract	\$287,000* <sup>#β</sup>
5	OR	South Slough NERR	\$1,683,000* <sup>#β</sup>
6	FL	Boot Key	\$3,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
7	WI	Frog Bay Tribal National Park	\$488,400* <sup>#</sup>
8	FL	Indian River Lagoon	\$940,450* <sup>#</sup>

9	TX	Settegast Coastal Heritage Preserve at Galveston Island	\$3,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
10	AK	Campbell Creek Estuary Conservation Project	\$1,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
11	AL	Live Oak Landing	\$3,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
12	NH	Sprucewood Forest - Oyster River	\$3,000,000* <sup>#β</sup>
13	WA	John's Creek Estuary Acquisition	\$1,525,000* <sup>#†</sup>
14	VA	Lynnhaven Oyster Restoration and Estuary Protection	\$3,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
15	ME	Pleasant Bay Wildlife Management Area	\$3,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
16	NC	Green Swamp	\$3,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
17	CA	Mira Monte Acquisition	\$930,750* <sup>#</sup>
18	HI	Paukukalo Coastal Wetlands	\$1,500,000* <sup>#</sup>
19	NC	Lea Island	\$1,750,000* <sup>#</sup>
20	FL	Sugarloaf Beach, Florida Keys	\$1,250,000* <sup>#</sup>
21	GA	Ft. Frederica North Marsh Property	\$1,511,250* <sup>#</sup>
22	TX	Big Tree Ranch Acquisition	\$2,500,000* <sup>#β</sup>
23	MA	Magnolia Hill Conservation Project	\$3,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
24	WI	Lost Creek Watershed Protection	\$283,750* <sup>#</sup>
25	OH	Wyandot Wetlands - Barnes Addition	\$700,000* <sup>#</sup>
26	CA	Ocean Meadows Acquisition at Devereux Slough	\$3,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
27	PA	Roderick Wildlife Reserve Expansion	\$513,881* <sup>#</sup>
28	OH	Lake Erie Bluff Preservation Project II	\$2,570,628* <sup>#</sup>
29	MI	Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area - North Property	\$3,000,000* <sup>#†</sup>
30	NJ	MPS LLC-Durham-Tuckahoe WMA	\$2,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
31	SC	Waccamaw River Nature Park	\$630,000* <sup>#†β</sup>
32	MD	Mattawoman Pomfret Acquisition	\$2,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
33	OH	Marblehead Lighthouse State Park Expansion	\$400,000* <sup>#</sup>
34	WI	Point au Sable Coastal Wetlands Acquisition	\$167,500* <sup>#</sup>
35	ME	Piscataqua River Tidal Waters Project	\$642,700* <sup>#β</sup>
36	RI	Whale Rock, Narragansett Bay NERR	\$3,000,000* <sup>#</sup>
37	NJ	Cohanzie-Cohansey River	\$1,500,000* <sup>#</sup>
38	LA	Salvador Wildlife Management Area	\$327,750* <sup>#</sup>
39	NY	Sill-Pipes Cove-Peconic Estuary	\$1,175,000* <sup>#</sup>
40	GA	JF Gregory Park: Wetlands Expansion	\$266,100* <sup>#†</sup>
41	GA	St. Marys River Conservation Area	\$131,250* <sup>#†</sup>
42	NY	William H. Pouch Scout Camp	\$3,000,000* <sup>#</sup>

*Guide to Notations:*

\* Signifies projects that may require negotiation or clarification of some elements with applicant, particularly regarding proposed project costs or uses of property. NOAA reserves the right to review any lease or management

strategy for consistency with CELCP guidelines. NOAA also reserves the right to review all costs at the time of final grant application to determine eligibility and reasonableness and request budget changes accordingly, if needed.

<sup>#</sup> Signifies that the costs for purchase of lands or easements, or the value of in-kind properties or donated land value proposed as match, must be documented through appraisals that meet Federal “Yellow Book” appraisal standards and/or the Uniform Standards for Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). These and other costs will be reviewed at the time of final grant application or as a part of the due diligence documentation and, if necessary, NOAA may request or negotiate budget changes accordingly.

<sup>†</sup> Signifies projects that have been recommended for the list, but may contain certain ineligible proposed costs, match, or uses that necessitate an as-yet-undetermined reduction in funding level from the requested amount. If selected for funding, program officials will work with applicants to determine the eligible federal funding amount.

<sup>β</sup> Signifies documented benefits to a National Estuarine Research Reserve.