

# Union Calendar No. 567

118<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 2950

[Report No. 118-671]

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior, through the Coastal Program of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, to work with willing partners and provide support to efforts to assess, protect, restore, and enhance important coastal landscapes that provide fish and wildlife habitat on which certain Federal trust species depend, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 27, 2023

Mr. HUFFMAN (for himself and Mrs. GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Natural Resources

SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

Additional sponsors: Mr. MOYLAN, Mr. KILMER, Mr. LALOTA, and Ms. BONAMICI

SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

Reported with an amendment, committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, and ordered to be printed

[Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert the part printed in italic]

[For text of introduced bill, see copy of bill as introduced on April 27, 2023]

# **A BILL**

To authorize the Secretary of the Interior, through the Coastal Program of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, to work with willing partners and provide support to efforts to assess, protect, restore, and enhance important coastal landscapes that provide fish and wildlife habitat on which certain Federal trust species depend, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 *This Act may be cited as the “Coastal Habitat Con-*  
5 *servation Act of 2023”.*

6 **SEC. 2. PURPOSE.**

7 *The purpose of this Act is to legislatively authorize the*  
8 *Coastal Program of the Service in effect as of the date of*  
9 *the enactment of this Act to conduct collaborative land-*  
10 *scape-level planning and on-the-ground coastal habitat as-*  
11 *essment, coastal habitat protection, coastal habitat restora-*  
12 *tion, and coastal habitat enhancement projects in priority*  
13 *coastal landscapes to conserve and recover Federal trust spe-*  
14 *cies.*

15 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

16 *In this Act:*

17 (1) *COASTAL ECOSYSTEM.—The term “coastal*  
18 *ecosystem” means a biological community of orga-*  
19 *nisms interacting with each other and their habitats*  
20 *in a coastal landscape.*

21 (2) *COASTAL HABITAT ASSESSMENT.—The term*  
22 *“coastal habitat assessment” means the process of*  
23 *evaluating the physical, chemical, and biological func-*  
24 *tion of a coastal site to determine the value of the site*  
25 *to fish and wildlife.*

1           (3) *COASTAL HABITAT ENHANCEMENT.*—*The*  
2 *term “coastal habitat enhancement” means the ma-*  
3 *nipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological*  
4 *characteristics of a coastal ecosystem to increase or*  
5 *decrease specific biological functions that make the*  
6 *ecosystem valuable to fish and wildlife.*

7           (4) *COASTAL HABITAT PLANNING.*—*The term*  
8 *“coastal habitat planning” means the process of devel-*  
9 *oping a comprehensive plan that—*

10                   (A) *characterizes a coastal ecosystem;*

11                   (B) *sets protection, restoration, or enhance-*  
12 *ment goals and identifies the priorities of those*  
13 *goals;*

14                   (C) *describes conservation strategies and*  
15 *methodologies;*

16                   (D) *establishes a timetable for implementa-*  
17 *tion of the plan; and*

18                   (E) *identifies roles of participants and*  
19 *stakeholders.*

20           (5) *COASTAL HABITAT PROTECTION.*—

21                   (A) *IN GENERAL.*—*The term “coastal habi-*  
22 *tat protection” means a long-term action to safe-*  
23 *guard habitat of value to fish and wildlife in a*  
24 *coastal ecosystem.*

1           (B) *INCLUSION.*—*The term “coastal habitat*  
2           *protection” includes activities to support estab-*  
3           *lishment of a conservation easement or fee title*  
4           *acquisition by Federal and non-Federal part-*  
5           *ners.*

6           (6) *COASTAL HABITAT RESTORATION.*—*The term*  
7           *“coastal habitat restoration” means the manipulation*  
8           *of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics*  
9           *of a coastal ecosystem with the goal of returning, to*  
10          *the maximum extent practicable, the full natural bio-*  
11          *logical functions to lost or degraded native habitat.*

12          (7) *COASTAL LANDSCAPE.*—*The term “coastal*  
13          *landscape” means a portion of a coastal ecosystem*  
14          *within or adjacent to a coastal State that contains*  
15          *various habitat types, including—*

16                (A) *a fresh or saltwater wetland in a coast-*  
17                *al watershed;*

18                (B) *a coastal river, stream, or waterway;*

19                (C) *a coastal bay or estuary;*

20                (D) *a seagrass bed, reef, or other nearshore*  
21                *marine habitat;*

22                (E) *a beach or dune system;*

23                (F) *a mangrove forest; and*

24                (G) *an associated coastal upland.*

1           (8) *COASTAL STATE*.—The term “coastal State”  
2       *means—*

3                   (A) a State in, or bordering on, the Atlan-  
4       *tic, Pacific, or Arctic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico,*  
5       *the Long Island Sound, or 1 or more of the*  
6       *Great Lakes;*

7                   (B) the District of Columbia;

8                   (C) the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico;

9                   (D) Guam;

10                  (E) American Samoa;

11                  (F) the Commonwealth of the Northern  
12       *Mariana Islands;*

13                  (G) the Federated States of Micronesia;

14                  (H) the Republic of the Marshall Islands;

15                  (I) the Republic of Palau; and

16                  (J) the United States Virgin Islands.

17           (9) *FEDERAL TRUST SPECIES*.—The term “Fed-  
18       *eral trust species” means migratory birds, threatened*  
19       *species or endangered species listed under the Endan-*  
20       *gered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.),*  
21       *interjurisdictional fish, and marine mammals for*  
22       *which the Secretary has management authority.*

23           (10) *FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE*.—The term “finan-  
24       *cial assistance” means Federal funding provided to*  
25       *Federal, State, local, or Tribal governments, non-*

1 *governmental institutions, nonprofit organizations,*  
2 *and private individuals and entities through a grant*  
3 *or cooperative agreement.*

4 (11) *SECRETARY.*—*The term “Secretary” means*  
5 *the Secretary of the Interior.*

6 (12) *SERVICE.*—*The term “Service” means the*  
7 *United States Fish and Wildlife Service.*

8 (13) *TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.*—*The term “tech-*  
9 *nical assistance” means a collaboration, facilitation,*  
10 *or consulting action relating to a coastal habitat*  
11 *planning, coastal habitat assessment, coastal habitat*  
12 *protection, coastal habitat restoration, or coastal*  
13 *habitat enhancement project or initiative in which the*  
14 *Service contributes scientific knowledge, skills, and ex-*  
15 *pertise to the project or initiative.*

16 **SEC. 4. COASTAL PROGRAM.**

17 *The Secretary shall carry out the Coastal Program*  
18 *within the Service to—*

19 (1) *identify the leading threats to priority coast-*  
20 *al landscapes and conservation actions to address*  
21 *those threats in partnership with Federal, State,*  
22 *local, and Tribal governments, nongovernmental in-*  
23 *stitutions, nonprofit organizations, and private indi-*  
24 *viduals and entities;*

1           (2) *provide technical assistance and financial as-*  
2           *istance through partnerships with Federal, State,*  
3           *local, and Tribal governments, nongovernmental in-*  
4           *stitutions, nonprofit organizations, and private indi-*  
5           *viduals and entities to conduct voluntary coastal*  
6           *habitat planning, coastal habitat assessment, coastal*  
7           *habitat protection, coastal habitat restoration, and*  
8           *coastal habitat enhancement projects on public land*  
9           *or private land;*

10           (3) *ensure the health and resilience of coastal*  
11           *ecosystems through adaptive management procedures*  
12           *based on the best available science;*

13           (4) *build the capacity of Federal, State, local,*  
14           *and Tribal governments, nongovernmental institu-*  
15           *tions, nonprofit organizations, and private individ-*  
16           *uals and entities to carry out environmental con-*  
17           *servation and stewardship measures;*

18           (5) *assist in the development and implementa-*  
19           *tion of monitoring protocols to ensure the success of*  
20           *coastal ecosystem restoration and coastal ecosystem*  
21           *enhancement measures; and*

22           (6) *collaborate and share information with part-*  
23           *ners and the public relating to best management*  
24           *practices for the conservation, restoration, and en-*  
25           *hancement of coastal ecosystems.*



1 **SEC. 5. REPORTS.**

2       (a) *IN GENERAL.*—Not later than 1 year after the date  
3 of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, the  
4 Secretary, acting through the Director of the Service, shall  
5 submit to the Committees on Appropriations and Natural  
6 Resources of the House of Representatives and the Commit-  
7 tees on Appropriations and Environment and Public Works  
8 of the Senate, and make available to the public on the  
9 website of the Service, a report on the Coastal Program car-  
10 ried out under this Act.

11       (b) *REQUIREMENTS.*—Each report submitted under  
12 subsection (a) shall assess on regional and nationwide  
13 bases—

14               (1) *Coastal Program work on coastal ecosystems;*

15               (2) *progress made by the Coastal Program to-*  
16 *ward identifying the leading threats to priority coast-*  
17 *al landscapes and conservation actions to address*  
18 *those threats; and*

19               (3) *prospects for, and success of, protecting, re-*  
20 *storing, and enhancing coastal ecosystems.*

21       (c) *INCLUSIONS.*—Each report submitted under sub-  
22 section (a) shall include—

23               (1) *quantitative information on coastal land-*  
24 *scapes protected, restored, or enhanced;*

25               (2) *funds appropriated to the Coastal Program*  
26 *that have been expended or leveraged;*

1           (3) *a description of adaptive management prac-*  
2           *tices implemented; and*

3           (4) *a description of emerging challenges or data*  
4           *gaps that hinder the ability of the Coastal Program*  
5           *to achieve the purpose of this Act.*

6 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

7           *There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out*  
8           *this Act \$16,957,000 for each of fiscal years 2024 through*  
9           *2028.*



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