

# John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Unit FL-70P, Gasparilla Island, Florida

**Type of Unit:** Otherwise protected area (OPA)

**Location of Unit:** South end of Gasparilla Island, northwest of Fort Myers, in Lee County, Florida

**Congressional District:** 14

**Draft Map Date:** January 10, 2012

**Imagery Source and Date:** Lee County, Florida; 2011

**Establishment of Unit:** Coastal Barrier Improvement Act (Pub. L. 101-591) enacted on 11/16/1990

**Historical Changes to Unit:** There have been no changes to the boundaries of Unit FL-70P since it was first established in 1990.

**Underlying Conservation/Recreation Area(s) in OPA:** Gasparilla Island State Park, owned by the Board of Trustees of the Internal Improvement Trust Fund of the State of Florida and leased to the Florida Division of Recreation and Parks. Boca Grande Ballfield Site, owned by Lee County. Two undeveloped parcels, owned by the Gasparilla Island Conservation and Improvement Association and held for conservation purposes.

**Existing Boundary Description:** The existing boundary of Unit FL-70P generally follows the boundary of Gasparilla Island State Park. Some private structures are inadvertently included along the edges of the OPA, primarily along Buttonwood Bay Drive and Luke Street. The existing OPA also includes part of the Boca Grande Ballfield Site and one residential structure owned by Lee County.

**Proposed Changes to Boundary:** The proposed boundaries are adjusted to more precisely follow the boundaries

of Gasparilla Island State Park and remove 27 structures from the OPA, including a restaurant on Gulf Boulevard, two private residential structures along Luke Street, 23 private residential structures along Buttonwood Bay Drive, and one residential structure owned by Lee County. An undeveloped private property located just north of South Harbor Drive is also proposed for removal from the OPA. The properties proposed for removal from the OPA are mostly privately owned, are not inholdings, and were not part of the state park at the time they were included within the OPA in 1990. At the northern end of Unit FL-70P, the boundaries are adjusted to add adjacent qualifying recreation lands to the OPA, including the Boca Grande Ballfield Site and portions of the Gasparilla Island State Park. The proposed boundaries along the western edge of the Boca Grande Ballfield Site are drawn to deliberately exclude structures owned by Lee County that are not used for conservation or recreation purposes. A new discrete segment is proposed for addition to Unit FL-70P to include lands held for conservation purposes by the Gasparilla Island Conservation and Improvement Association. This new discrete segment is located on a spit to the northeast of Gasparilla Island State Park, and is connected to the main portion of Unit FL-70P by proposed new System Unit FL-70.

**Additional Comments:** There are no known private inholdings within Unit FL-70P.

In accordance with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) standard mapping protocols for delineating underlying conservation and recreation areas within the Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS), the Service obtained a signed concurrence map

and Statement of Agreement from Gasparilla Island State Park, Lee County Parks and Recreation, and the Gasparilla Island Conservation and Improvement Association certifying that the boundaries of their respective lands were accurately depicted on a base map. The stakeholder concurrence maps were then used to compile portions of the proposed boundaries on the draft map for Unit FL-70P. This boundary review process does not necessarily indicate that the stakeholders concur with the Service's recommendations for boundary changes.

**Acreeage, Shoreline, and Structures:**

	<i>Total Acres</i>	<i>Upland Acres</i>	<i>Associated Aquatic Habitat Acres</i>	<i>Shoreline (miles)</i>	<i>Structures*</i>
Existing Unit	126	100	26	0.7	
Added to the CBRS	246	42	204		4**
Removed from the CBRS	6	6	0		27
Reclassified Area	(2)	(1)	(1)	0.0	
Proposed Unit	364	135	229	0.8	
Net Change	238	35	203	0.1	(23)

\* Approximate structure count derived from 2011 aerial imagery. Structures without walls and a roof (such as picnic shelters) and structures with fewer than 200 square feet were not counted.

\*\* The added structures are all park structures associated with Gasparilla Island State Park and the Boca Grande Ballfield Site.

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
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**March 2012**



# John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Unit FL-70, Gasparilla Island, Florida

**Type of Unit:** Proposed new System unit

**Location of Unit:** South end of Gasparilla Island, northwest of Fort Myers, in Lee County, Florida

**Congressional District:** 14

**Draft Map Date:** January 10, 2012

**Imagery Source and Date:** Lee County, Florida; 2011

**Current CBRS Status:** Parts of the proposed new System unit FL-70 are within existing otherwise protected area (OPA) Unit FL-70P. Those portions are a small piece of undeveloped land south of the structures along Buttonwood Bay Drive, and the offshore area along the Gulf of Mexico near the southern tip of Gasparilla Island. The remainder of the proposed new unit is currently not within the Coastal Barrier Resources System (CBRS).

**System Unit Criteria:** The proposed new Unit FL-70 meets the Coastal Barrier Resources Act (CBRA) definition and criteria of an undeveloped coastal barrier. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is not aware of the existence of a full complement of infrastructure in any areas proposed for inclusion within Unit FL-70P. Some of the land proposed for inclusion within Unit FL-70 is classified as “environmentally critical wetlands” or “conservation lands” by a Lee County Future Land Use Map dated April 2011, but because planning and zoning designations alone do not qualify an area for inclusion in an OPA, these undeveloped areas are proposed for inclusion within a new System unit.

**Proposed Boundaries:** The southernmost boundary of proposed new Unit FL-70 runs east-west through open water in the center of Boca Grande Pass, which is consistent with the channel delineation protocols developed in the Service’s 2008 Digital Mapping Pilot Project. The eastern open water boundary runs north-south approximately one mile

behind the protected side of the barrier. This delineation is consistent with the standards used since 1982 for delineating CBRS boundaries in open water bodies greater than one mile wide landward of the coastal barrier. Charlotte Harbor is part of the Gasparilla Sound – Charlotte Harbor Preserve. Volume 14 of the Department of the Interior’s 1988 Report to Congress: Coastal Barrier Resources System, Recommendations for Additions to or Deletions from the Coastal Barrier Resources System, stated that in Florida, the legal status of “Aquatic Preserves and Outstanding Florida Waters” was carefully considered, and the conclusion was reached that these areas do not meet the definition of “otherwise protected.” Therefore, the open water areas of Charlotte Harbor are proposed for inclusion within the new System unit.

The northernmost boundary of proposed new Unit FL-70 runs east-west through open water and crosses a barrier spit along the property boundary between a Lee County parcel and a parcel to the north owned by the Gasparilla Island Conservation and Improvement Association, which is proposed for addition to Unit FL-70P. The boundary then turns south to run through a channel that separates the barrier spit from the mainland portion of Gasparilla Island. The boundary then follows the parcel boundary that separates lands owned by Lee County and existing development; a break in vegetation through an undeveloped parcel owned by Lee County; a boundary of Gasparilla Island State Park; and the western edge of Pilot Point Lane (excluding existing development). An 11-acre parcel of land owned by the Boca Bay Master Association that has been set aside as open space on the north side of Pilot Point Lane is proposed for inclusion within Unit FL-70.

The Unit FL-70 boundary then generally follows the shoreline to the south along two developed areas and the parcel boundaries of several small undeveloped parcels of land owned

by the Boca Bay Master Association that have been set aside as open space. The boundary follows the break-in-development along the north side of an approximately 9-acre parcel owned by Florida Power & Light and then generally follows the Gasparilla Island State Park boundaries. The Florida Power & Light parcel, which is proposed for inclusion within Unit FL-70, previously contained infrastructure associated with an oil terminal, and prior to that it contained a phosphate port, which closed in 1979. The oil terminal has been removed, and the parcel is currently undeveloped open space, with the exception of a single remaining structure that is used for storage. The Unit FL-70 boundary then follows the shoreline along the tip and Gulf-side of Gasparilla Island and the parcel boundary of beachfront property owned by the U.S. Coast Guard. This four-acre parcel is proposed for addition to the CBRS and is located to the south of the adjacent northern segment of Gasparilla Island State Park. The boundary then follows the shoreline of the northern segment of Gasparilla Island State Park and turns to extend out into the Gulf of Mexico at the northernmost state park boundary.

**Additional Comments:** The proposed new System Unit FL-70 adds an operational lighthouse owned by the U.S. Coast Guard. Section 6(a)(5) of the CBRA provides an exemption for “the construction, operation, maintenance, and rehabilitation of Coast Guard facilities and access thereto.”

A small piece of undeveloped land owned by the Boca Bay Master Association that have been set aside as open space and the entire offshore portion of existing Unit FL-70P are proposed for reclassification to Unit FL-70.

**Acreeage, Shoreline, and Structures:**

	<i>Total Acres</i>	<i>Upland Acres</i>	<i>Associated Aquatic Habitat Acres</i>	<i>Shoreline (miles)</i>	<i>Structures*</i>
Existing Unit	0	0	0	0.0	
Added to the CBRS	1513	45	1468		1
Removed from the CBRS	0	0	0		0
Reclassified Area	2	1	1	0.0	
Proposed Unit	1515	46	1469	0.7	
Net Change	1515	46	1469	0.7	1

\* Approximate structure count derived from 2011 aerial imagery. Structures (such as the Boca Grande Rear Range Light) without walls and a roof and structures with fewer than 200 square feet were not counted.

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