

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: May 11, 2012

Imagery Source and Date: Lee County, Florida; 2011

Current CBRS Status: Parts of the proposed new System unit FL-70 are currently within existing otherwise protected area (OPA) Unit FL-70P. 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 this proposed new System unit. 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 within an OPA, these undeveloped areas are proposed for inclusion within a new System unit.

Public Comments: For a summary of the comments received on the Service’s draft map, dated January 10, 2012, during a 45-day public comment period (March 8 through April 23, 2012) and the Service’s responses to these comments, see the document entitled Summary of Public Comments Received on Draft Map for Coastal Barrier Resources System Units FL-70 and FL-70P and Fish and Wildlife Service Responses and Recommendation.

Final Recommended Boundary: The Service’s recommended changes to Unit FL-70 on the January 10, 2012, draft map are to include the water on the Gulf side of Gasparilla Island within OPA Unit FL-70P instead of within proposed new System Unit FL-70 and not include within the CBRS the 4-acre beachfront parcel owned by the U.S. Coast Guard. These changes are reflected on the final recommended map dated May 11, 2012.

Below is the description of the changes between the existing boundary and the final recommended boundary for Unit FL-70. The southernmost boundary of proposed new Unit FL-70 begins at the proposed boundary of OPA FL-70P in the center of Boca Grande Pass and runs northeast through open water into Charlotte Harbor. This boundary delineation 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 through Charlotte Harbor approximately one mile behind the protected side of the barrier. This delineation is consistent with the standards 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 (Department) 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 Department reached the conclusion 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 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 10-acre parcel owned by the Florida Power and Light (FPL) Company and then generally follows the Gasparilla Island State Park boundaries. The FPL 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 southern tip of Gasparilla Island and then turns southeast to follow the proposed OPA FL-70P boundary into the center of Boca Grande Pass.

Additional Comments: The Service notes that a lighthouse and a range

Unit FL-70, Gasparilla Island, Florida

light located on the southern end of Gasparilla Island are listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Port Boca Grande Lighthouse, which is located in Gasparilla Island State Park, is currently within Unit FL-70P and will remain in the OPA on the Service's final recommended map. The Boca Grande Rear Range Light is located on a parcel owned by the U.S. Coast Guard and is

not included within the CBRS on the Service's final recommended map.

A small piece of undeveloped land owned by the Boca Bay Master Association that has been set aside as open space and a small segment of the offshore area along Boca Grande Pass near the southern tip of Gasparilla Island 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 | |
| Added to the CBRS | 1458 | 41 | 1417 | | 1 |
| Removed from the CBRS | 0 | 0 | 0 | | 0 |
| Reclassified Area | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | |
| Proposed Unit | 1460 | 42 | 1418 | 0 | |
| Net Change | 1460 | 42 | 1418 | 0 | 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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September 2013



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: May 11, 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.

Public Comments: For a summary of the comments received on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service's) draft map, dated January 10, 2012, during a 45-day public comment period (March 8 through April 23, 2012) and the Service's responses to these comments, see the document entitled Summary of

Public Comments Received on Draft Map for Coastal Barrier Resources System Units FL-70 and FL-70P and Fish and Wildlife Service Responses and Recommendation.

Final Recommended Boundary: The Service's only recommended change to Unit FL-70P on the January 10, 2012, draft map is to include the water on the Gulf side of Gasparilla Island within OPA Unit FL-70P instead of within proposed new System Unit FL-70. This change is reflected on the final recommended map dated May 11, 2012.

Below is the description of the changes between the existing boundary and the final recommended boundary for Unit FL-70P. The boundaries of Unit FL-70P 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. The Unit FL-70P boundary is also adjusted to include the water on the Gulf side of Gasparilla Island from the center of Boca Grande Pass to the tip of Gasparilla Island and from approximately the southern

boundary of the Excluded area to the northernmost boundary of the state park. The delineation of the southernmost boundary of FL-70P is consistent with the channel delineation protocols described in the Service's 2008 Report to Congress: John H. Chafee Coastal Barrier Resources System Digital Mapping Pilot Project.

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 in Charlotte Harbor 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: The Service is not aware of any private inholdings located within Unit FL-70P.

The Service's assessment of 2011 aerial imagery estimates that there are four park-related structures, including two maintenance sheds, one bathhouse/restroom and one chapel are proposed for inclusion within Unit FL-70P. New Federal flood insurance coverage may be provided for structures located within OPAs that are used in a manner consistent with the purpose for which the area is protected (Sec. 9 of Pub. L. 101-591). Park-related structures (e.g., visitor's center, restrooms, bathhouse, etc.) are exempt from OPA prohibitions on Federal flood insurance, and would be allowed to carry Federal flood insurance regardless of when they were built or improved.

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

The Service notes that a lighthouse and a range light located on the southern end of Gasparilla Island are listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Port Boca Grande Lighthouse, which is located in Gasparilla Island State Park, is currently within Unit FL-70P and will remain in the OPA on the Service's final recommended map. The Boca Grande Rear Range Light is located on

a parcel owned by the U.S. Coast Guard and is not included within the CBRS on the Service's final recommended map.

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 | 293 | 42 | 251 | | 4** |
| Removed from the CBRS | 6 | 6 | 0 | | 27 |
| Reclassified Area | -2 | -1 | -1 | 0 | |
| Proposed Unit | 411 | 135 | 276 | 1.3 | |
| Net Change | 285 | 35 | 250 | 0.6 | -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.

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