



CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE
COST ESTIMATE

July 7, 2004

S. 2495

A bill to strike limitations on funding and extend the period of authorization for certain coastal wetlands conservation projects

*As ordered reported by the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
on June 23, 2004*

S. 2495 would extend through fiscal year 2019 the authorization for programs carried out by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Army Corps of Engineers under the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act (CWPPRA). (Under current law, authorization for the three programs will expire after fiscal year 2009.) The bill also would eliminate the \$100 million cap on funding for these programs.

Coastal wetland projects and other programs such as sport fish restoration and boating safety grants are financed by excise taxes and other collections deposited into the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund (ARTF). Each program receives direct spending authority equal to a specified allocation of the fund's income. For CWPPRA programs, the allocation is the greater of the previous year's excise taxes on fuels used in small engines or 18 percent of that year's total ARTF deposits (up to \$100 million a year). For 2004, CBO expects that CWPPRA programs will receive about \$85 million, about 18 percent of ARTF resources.

CBO estimates that the changes made by S. 2495 would have no net effect on the federal budget because the extension of CWPPRA programs and the elimination of the \$100 million annual cap on funding would not change total spending from the ARTF. Without reauthorization of CWPPRA programs, funding would be reallocated to other ARTF programs after 2009. Eliminating the annual cap on funding for coastal wetlands projects would increase the relative share of ARTF funding received by CWPPRA programs after 2008, but would not change total spending from the fund.

S. 2495 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Deborah Reis. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Deputy Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.