

CAFRA

The Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA) was created to protect the coastal areas of the state by regulating its uses.

The New Jersey shore, an area of vital economic and environmental concern to the state, has become the focal point of a multi-million dollar resort and marine industry. Yet, the very development that has spawned this industry has systematically sown its own seeds of destruction by its one-sided utilization of the environment.

To ensure a viable environmental continuum, the Department of Environmental Protection set up CAFRA. Its purpose is to regulate the development of the shore area, assuring a palatable balance of environmental factors necessary for the existence of fish, shellfish, beaches, rivers, swamps, and the general aesthetic nature of the area.

Commercial, industrial, and residential development are all regulated in accordance with the above objectives. As applied in Brielle, CAFRA would not discourage housing or garden apartment construction as long as it did not affect areas sensitive to environmental, historical, or aesthetic considerations.

Most of the Borough falls within the limits of CAFRA jurisdiction. This authority of CAFRA was recently tested in the courts, where a CAFRA decision to prohibit construction of a high-rise apartment in Toms River was upheld.

In cases where both the Wetlands Act and CAFRA apply, the former is employed, due to its more excludable nature.



Great Horned Owl, in "Owl Woods", one of Brielle's environmentally sensitive areas.