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Bainbridge Island, WA 98110
(206) 780-6947

September 22, 2009

Matt Menashes, Executive Director
National Estuarine Research Reserve Association
444 N. Capitol St., Suite 322
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Matt,

I am writing in support of the National Estuarine Research Reserve Association's (NERRA) omnibus proposal to receive block funds that could then be distributed to site-based NERRS for specific projects. It is my understanding that funds received by NERRA would be used to pay for restoration work and effectiveness monitoring at multiple NERR sites.

One of the priorities identified in the proposal is to restore habitats that support threatened/endangered fish species and diadromous fish, coastal wetlands, stream habitat, shoreline restoration, coral and/or shellfish beds.

To that end, the South Slough NERR (under the direction of Steve Rumrill) is conducting groundbreaking research on interactions between native oysters and eelgrass. It is important for this work to continue, not only for its own sake but because it has ramifications for other native oyster restoration efforts on the West Coast. This is particularly true in areas where eelgrass has expanded into areas that historically hosted dense populations of native oysters. My hope is that block funds would help provide continued funding for this important work.

Best of luck with your proposal. NERRA funding would provide a great opportunity to generate financial support for estuary, salt marsh, seagrass, and oyster restoration within the NERRS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'BPeabody'.

Betsy Peabody
Executive Director