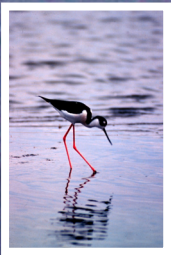




FY11 BUDGET PRIORITIES



PROTECTING THE NATION'S ESTUARIES

The National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) is a network of protected areas established for long-term research, education, and stewardship. Through an effective partnership between NOAA and the coastal states, the NERRS plays a critical role in sustaining the nation's estuaries and coasts. The reserve system is the most efficient place-based environmental federal/state partnership in the nation. There are currently 27 reserves throughout the country that strategically combine research, monitoring, restoration, education, and training to improve our understanding and management of estuaries. The National Estuarine Research Reserve Association (NERRA) is dedicated to the protection, understanding, and science-based management of our nation's estuaries and coasts, and is committed to supporting and advancing the NERRS.

NERRA'S FY11 REQUEST FOR THE NERRS

NERRA seeks \$33 million to operate the NERRS, including local and regional research and education programs, NERRS national programs, and the NERRS Science Collaborative. This funding enables expansion of the NERRS to new states including Wisconsin and Connecticut. Of the \$33 million, NERRA requests \$5.3 million for the NERRS Science Collaborative to fund competitively awarded, collaborative projects that put science to work in preventing and reversing the impacts of pollution and habitat degradation in coastal communities served by the reserves. NERRA seeks \$15.6 million for NERRS construction and acquisition to upgrade and construct facilities and acquire priority lands. Federal funds are matched with state funds.

NERRA's FY11 Request	
NERRS Operations	\$33.0 Million
<i>Local, Regional, National Implementation</i>	<i>\$27.7 Million</i>
<i>NERRS Science Collaborative</i>	<i>\$5.3 Million</i>
NERRS Construction and Acquisition	\$15.6 Million

THE RESERVES AS SENTINEL SITES

Each of the 27 research reserves is uniquely prepared to help communities respond to the challenge of changes in sea- and lake-levels along the nation's coastlines. Reserves are poised to serve as place-based sentinel sites where changing coastlines can be studied and science-based information on these changes can be communicated in a timely manner to local officials and the public. Our research programs have a long history of collecting the critical data needed to understand the effects of change along the coast. We are already providing education and training programs on sea-level change in many local communities. Our core education and research programs, combined with effective regional networks, enable other scientific and educational agencies to inform their work from our science-based information.

Unfortunately, due to long-term funding issues, research reserves are unable to fulfill their potential as sentinel sites. The NERRS has essentially been level-funded for the past 8 years. The mission, framework, experience, and locations are in place to allow the NERRS to flourish as the nation's leaders in understanding and addressing local impacts from changing sea- and lake-levels: the money is not. A proposed \$9.5 million increase in operations funding will allow the NERRS to expand capabilities to help communities address these changes.

For Additional Information

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RESEARCH AND MONITORING

Reserves provide stable environments for research on estuaries and coastal resources, serving as reference sites and living laboratories for scientists and students. The [System-wide Monitoring Program](#) identifies short-term variability and long-term trends in coastal environmental quality. The program focuses on water quality, biodiversity, land use, and habitat change. Funding will support the collection and interpretation of data and expand efforts to monitor biological diversity and habitat change.

To provide opportunities for students to gain hands-on research experience, the NERRS sponsors competitive [Graduate Research Fellowships](#) each year, which bring academic research expertise to bear upon coastal and estuarine management. In FY11, up to 54 fellowships will be awarded across the system.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Consistent with the goals of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, NERRS education programs enhance the nation's coastal and ocean literacy. Additional funding to establish a national [K-12 Estuarine Education Program](#) will allow the NERRS to expand its ability to bring ocean and coastal science and policy content into classrooms and living rooms throughout the nation.

The [Coastal Training Program](#) provides broad resources to professionals who make decisions that can affect coastal resources. This program ensures that developers, local government officials, and resource managers have the science-based information they need to make informed decisions. Community demand for this program continues to grow, requiring funds to increase capacity to provide technical training and information to decision-makers.

STEWARDSHIP

[Stewardship](#) at each reserve involves a wide range of activities to protect the reserves for long-term research and education, including: habitat mapping, ecological and wetland restoration, biological monitoring, resource inventories and management, watershed management, land acquisition, and recreation management.

NERRS SCIENCE COLLABORATIVE

The [NERRS Science Collaborative](#) is a competitive program designed to develop and transfer science on coastal environmental issues related to land use, habitat change and restoration, and pollution. Lessons learned will be transferred beyond the reserve system to the greater coastal management community.

FY11 REQUESTS FOR OTHER COASTAL PROGRAMS

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT GRANTS: \$88 MILLION

The reserves work closely with the Coastal Zone Management agencies in their state. Reserves provide research and partner on outreach to support the agencies' management of issues such as habitat conservation, public access, erosion control and hazard mitigation.

CZM & STEWARDSHIP: \$12.5 MILLION

NOAA's Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM) assists in coordinating the NERRS network, in addition to many other partnerships and programs. Staff help promote transfer between and coordination among the reserves. OCRM helps the reserves build capacity by sharing information, research methods and results, collaborative processes, and evaluation tools.

COASTAL AND ESTUARINE LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM (CELCP): \$60 MILLION

CELCP provides vital support for securing the long-term protection of lands from willing sellers in coastal communities. Protected lands near the reserves can serve as demonstration areas for stewardship efforts, and provide additional reference areas when studying development impacts.

COASTAL SERVICES CENTER: \$56 MILLION

The NOAA Coastal Services Center supports the reserves through projects and training to address management issues including coastal resilience, regional governance, community impacts from coastal storms, and more. Partnerships with the Coastal Services Center result in local initiatives based on national priorities.

THE NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVE SYSTEM

