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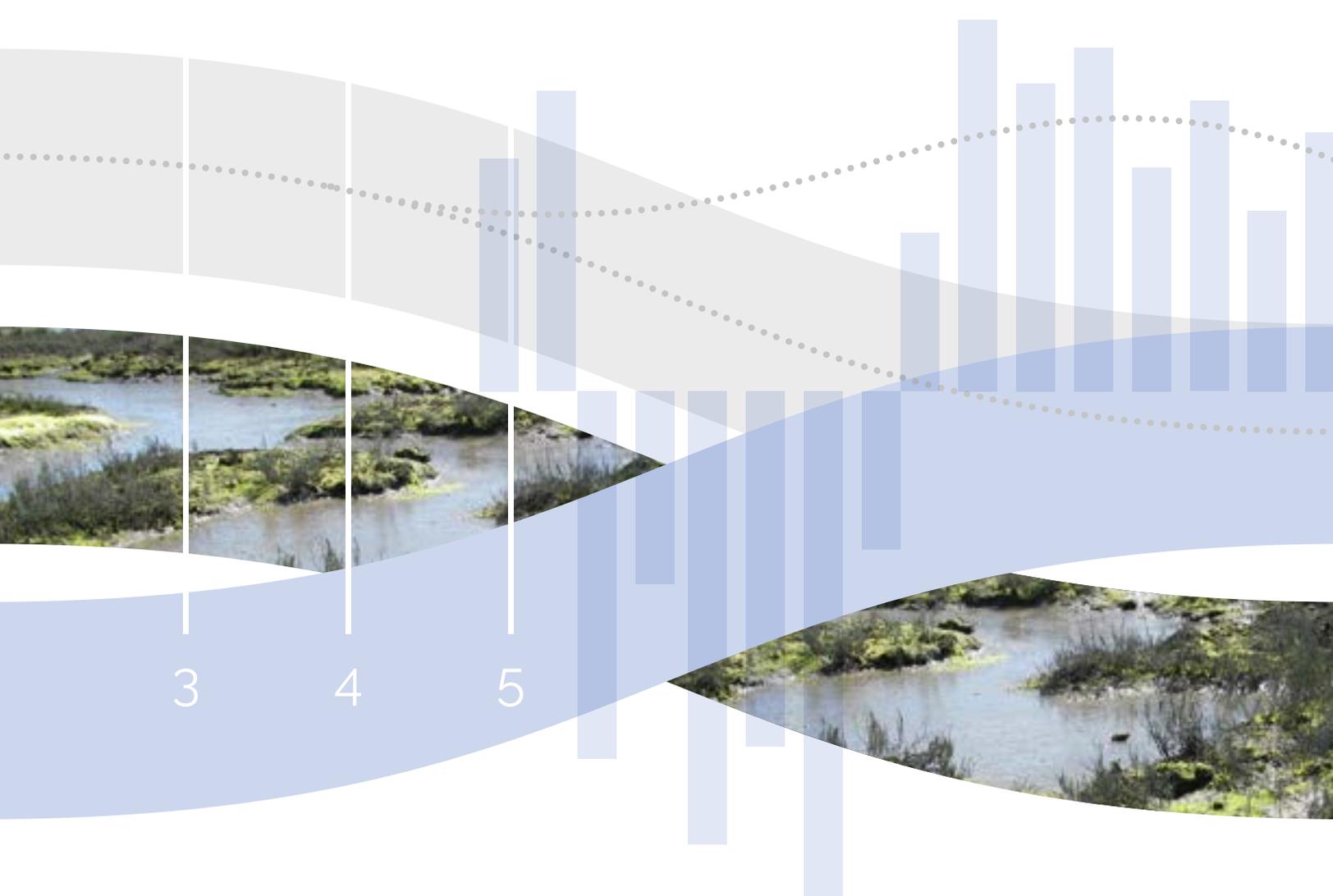
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# An Approach to Putting **NERRS DATA TO WORK** for the Coasts



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# ABOUT THE ROAD

Data generated by the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) is a powerful resource for addressing multiple coastal management challenges related to the impacts of changing water levels and inundation patterns on tidal wetlands. These data are collected under the NERRS System-Wide Monitoring Program (SWMP) as part of the Sentinel Site Adaptation Module-1 (SSAM-1). Putting this data to work for the coasts, however, is not a simple task.

The challenges facing coastal decision makers are inherently complex. They impact many diverse stakeholders and trigger dozens of questions that can only be answered by interdisciplinary teams. The solutions shift with geography—what works for one site may not be appropriate only a dozen miles away, let alone in another state. Given this complexity, how do we put NERRS data to work in an effective way? Which problems would most benefit by its application? At what scale is the data relevant? How do we choose?

A tested approach can help address such questions. **ROAD** is a process designed to support Reserves and partners seeking to connect NERRS monitoring data to coastal management needs at a regional scale. It was developed as a result of a pilot that explored the relevance of NERRS SSAM-1 data to the practice of applying dredged sediment to support wetland restoration in the Mid-Atlantic region. This pilot used a combination of needs assessment and networking to inform a regional workshop that has led to active collaborations involving the NERRS and its data.

Each step of **ROAD** is accompanied by lessons learned and tools generated through this pilot. The pilot team looks forward to learning from other Reserves and as they test this approach and enrich it with their own experience.

## GETTING TO YOUR OFFICIAL TOPIC

Generate a list of potential management priorities.

Pick a management priority that aligns well with NERRS data & other assets.

Narrow your focus until you find a topic relevant to your region's NERR sites & stakeholders.

Use this as the official topic for your needs

### REQUEST INPUT

Build on what (and who) you know to create a list of management priorities that could be addressed by NERRS data; broadly survey relevant stakeholder needs; and identify interests, opportunities, and gaps that align with NERRS data and other assets.

R

REQUEST INPUT

### OFFICIAL TOPIC

Select a management priority; lean on Reserve knowledge to understand its relevance to their work and stakeholders; and narrow your focus to pick an official topic for your needs assessment.

O

OFFICIAL TOPIC

### ASSESS NEEDS & REFINE TOPIC

Conduct an in-depth assessment of stakeholder needs, knowledge, and experience related to the official topic you have chosen.

A

ASSESS NEEDS

### DESIGN A WORKSHOP

Design and host a regional workshop that places NERRS data in the context of your official topic, brings the right people to the table, and generates ideas for collaboration and partnerships that put NERRS data to work in your region.

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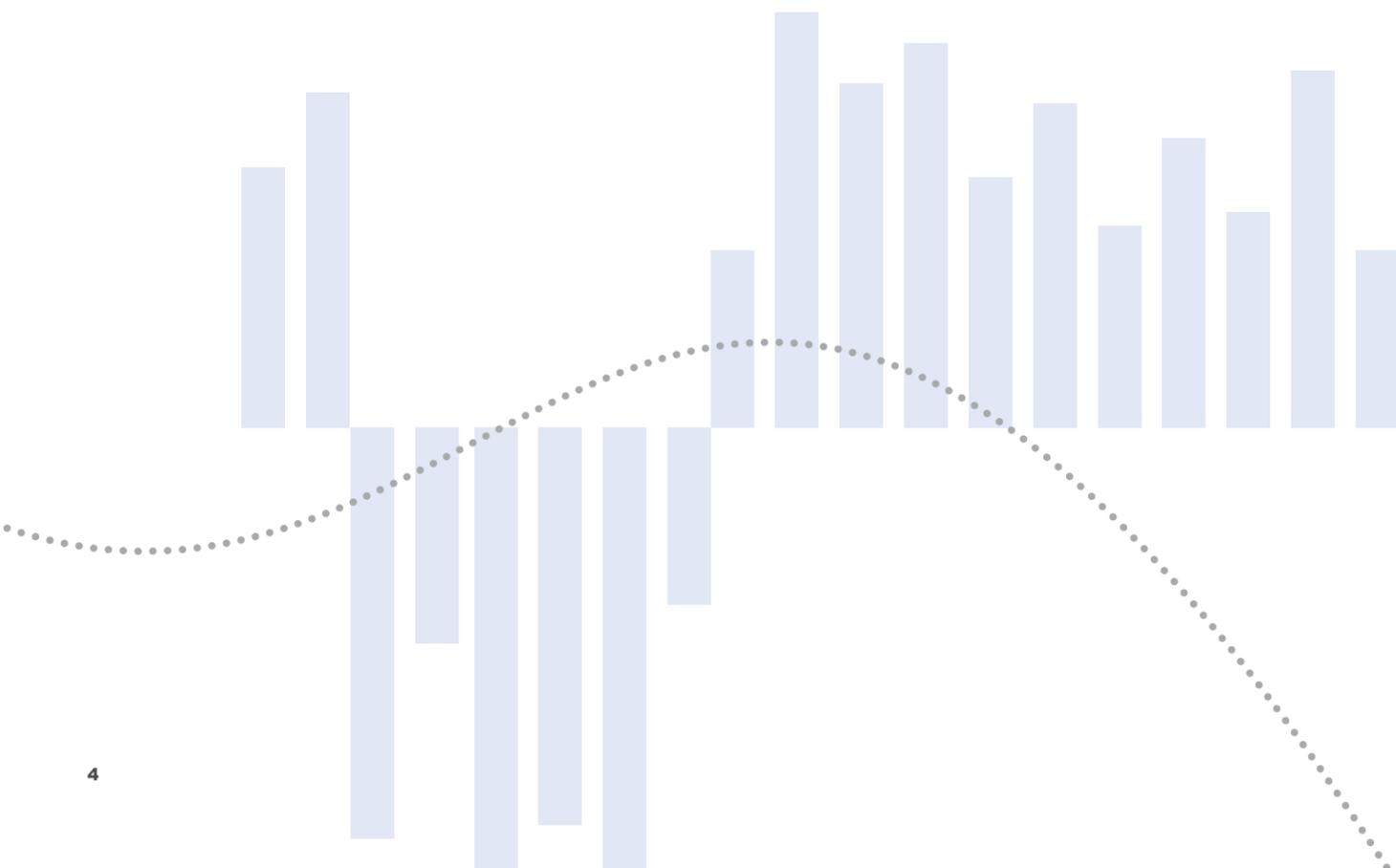
DESIGN A WORKSHOP

# ROAD DRIVERS

Every year, the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) System-Wide Monitoring Program (SWMP) captures millions of data points that reflect the changing conditions of weather, water quality, and wetlands along America’s coasts. In response to its 2011 Climate Change Initiative, the NERRS launched the Sentinel Site Application Module (SSAM-1) to link this wealth of data to changes in water levels and wetland elevation. The goal? Create a unique resource to study short-term variability and long-term trends related to the impacts of changing water levels and inundation patterns on tidal wetlands.

Over six years, 17 Reserves have installed SSAM-1 infrastructure and begun to collect data. By 2020, 29 Reserves will have installed SSAM-1 infrastructure. While the core purpose of this effort is to understand how sea level change impacts wetlands, the NERRS and NOAA’s Office for Coastal Management (OCM) wanted to know if SSAM-1 data could do more. Could it, for example, help address other management priorities? Could the process of applying it in one place be useful somewhere else? How might it add value to the constellation of data sets that support wetland science and management around the country?

Considering these questions at the regional scale presents unique opportunities to consider the impacts of changing sea levels across diverse sites, strengthen partnerships, and elevate awareness of NERRS capacity to address management concerns. In 2016, the NERRS and NOAA SSAM-1 steering committee selected the Mid-Atlantic as a pilot region to explore these opportunities. This choice was motivated by the presence of SSAM-1 data at each Reserve site, the region’s high density of Reserves, and the spectrum of fresh, brackish, and salt marshes that they manage.



# MID-ATLANTIC PILOT LESSONS LEARNED



Teams composed of staff from different Reserve sectors managed different aspects of the project. These diverse perspectives helped frame the project, gain regional buy-in, and relieve the Facilitation Oversight Committee of much detailed work. Each team had its own leadership and tasks. After these were complete, the teams disbanded. While the benefits of shared engagement are noteworthy, the time it takes to manage all of the moving parts cannot be underestimated and should be resourced appropriately.

In the NERRS spirit of sector integration, the team recognized the benefit of engaging education coordinators throughout the project and relying on them to identify strategies to integrate outcomes into Reserve education programs as appropriate.

## Guiding Principles

The Mid-Atlantic NERRS Sentinel Site Pilot (referred to as Mid-Atlantic Pilot hereafter) embraced the following guiding principles:

- Build on existing knowledge and relationships
- Use collaborative, shared leadership that engages all Reserve sectors
- Adapt to challenges and leverage experience to reconcile project ambitions with existing resources and opportunities
- Adopt transferable, scalable processes and tools and pay these forward as part of pilot results

## Pilot Team

The Mid-Atlantic Pilot’s shared management structure engaged NERRS and NOAA staff in the region and around the country. The project launched with four, mutually supporting teams and a Facilitation Oversight Committee. (See table below.)

Each team was managed by two co-chairs, one of whom also sat on the Oversight Committee. In addition, an Advisory Committee with representatives of partner organizations and Reserves from other regions provided input throughout the process. Finally, the project hired two contractors to support the needs assessment, the workshop, and ROAD development. ([For a complete list of the pilot team members, see Appendix A.](#))

MID-ATLANTIC PILOT TEAM	PURPOSE
<b>Facilitation Oversight Committee</b>	Provide leadership, coordinate sub-teams, maintain momentum, oversee contractors, and make key decisions as needed.
<b>ROAD Team</b>	Draft ROAD outline and oversee its development as needed.
<b>Project Application Identification</b>	Define criteria to select a management priority for pilot.
<b>Needs Assessment/Market Analysis Sub-Team</b>	Advise contractors as they conduct a needs assessment and tools and data inventory related to the selected management priority.

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# REQUEST INPUT

Consider your objective—a workshop that leads to productive partnerships that put SSAM-1 data to work in your region to address research question and other needs. Getting there might feel overwhelming, but like most epic “road trips,” some research will help point you in the right direction. In this phase, you will review existing resources and administer a regional survey to develop a list of management priorities, each of which could serve as a focus for your work.



**1st GEAR**  
**Build on what (and who) you know**

Reserves and their partners typically have access to a wealth of knowledge about management priorities in their states. Start by reviewing needs assessments and other analyses that looked at management priorities related to the vulnerability of wetlands to sea level rise and/or the use of NERRS monitoring data in your region. Did they identify relevant tools and data? What resources are reportedly lacking? It may also be useful to review the list of priorities identified in the Mid-Atlantic pilot. (See Appendix B.) Use this preliminary review to create a draft list of management priorities and any relevant tools and data from your region. If appropriate, refine it with input from your team’s advisory committee.

**2nd GEAR**  
**Survey partners and stakeholders**

No doubt your draft list of management priorities has raised questions. For example, are there management questions that involve a diversity of stakeholders and input? Are these questions localized or do they pop up around the region? Are there gaps in needed tools and data? An online survey of regional stakeholders can help address questions like these. Given survey fatigue among many NERRS stakeholders, keep the survey short—under seven minutes—and clearly define the management priorities you are asking questions about. Coastal Training Program (CTP) coordinators can be extremely useful advisors for survey design, development of potential respondent lists, and managing survey implementation. Also, NOAA’s Digital Coast offers a comprehensive guide to [survey design and delivery](#) with tools and case studies.

**3rd GEAR**  
**Look for interest, opportunities, and gaps**

Use the survey results to update your list of management priorities. Did the survey confirm interest in these topics or suggest others? What related work is happening? Are there thought leaders (individuals or organizations) who should be consulted? Can you add to your list of existing data or tools? Were NERR sites or data called out? Then look at results from individual states to see how those trends vary. If they do, check in with Reserve staff who may be able to speak to those perspectives in their states. Update your list of management priorities with what you learn.



The team kept an open mind about focus areas at the start of the process. They confirmed they were not duplicating a recent survey by the Chesapeake Bay Sentinel Site Cooperative and deployed a survey that covered a range of management priorities related to wetland vulnerability. They tested their survey in New York and then distributed it to stakeholders in other states through each NERR’s Coastal Training Program. Some lessons they learned along the way:

- While casting a broad net that asked about many management priorities was useful, focusing earlier on would have streamlined the process. As a result, the pilot team recommends using existing survey results and needs assessments to help focus sooner.
- Definitions of management priorities were left open to interpretation in the survey. As a result, the team had to make assumptions as they interpreted results and conduct additional work to define the management priority they selected. They recommend defining management priorities in surveys to avoid confusion as the project progresses.
- The pilot team contracted with a master’s level intern at the Hudson River Reserve to work with their CTP coordinator to design and administer the survey. It was beneficial to work with someone who had initiative and the skills needed for the project.

## TOOLS & REFERENCES

MID-ATLANTIC PILOT MANAGEMENT PRIORITIES (APPX. B)	MID-ATLANTIC PILOT SAMPLE SURVEY (APPX. C)
MID-ATLANTIC PILOT SURVEY RESPONSES (APPX. D)	MID-ATLANTIC PILOT SURVEY FINAL REPORT (APPX. E)

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## OFFICIAL TOPIC

In this phase, you will select one management priority from your list and use NERRS knowledge to narrow your focus until you find your “official topic,” which will be the focus of your needs assessment. Your official topic should be one with a high degree of relevance to the work of your region’s NERR sites and their stakeholders. The more focused your topic, the richer and more actionable the information you collect in your needs assessment will be.



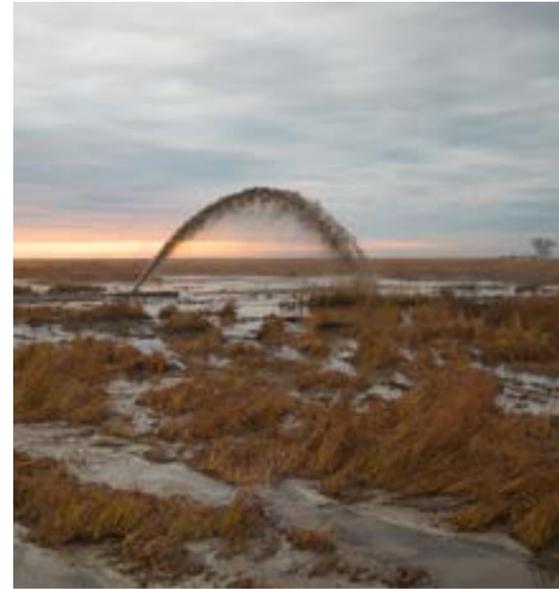
### Pick a management priority

Develop a set of criteria to rank the management priorities on your list. For example, can you confirm the issue is representative of NERRS partner interests in each state? Was each state equally represented in the survey? Did a majority of respondents consider the issue a top priority? Can it be informed by SSAM-1 data? Once you have identified the highest priority issues, brainstorm how NERRS SWMP/SSAM-1 data might be useful in addressing them, consult with your advisory group, and pick one management priority to focus on.

**2nd**  
GEAR

### Lean on NERRS knowledge

NERRS knowledge of local decision maker interests will be invaluable as you unpack the management priority you have selected. While Reserve staff can’t speak directly for stakeholders, they can reflect on their experiences in working with them. It is likely they have conducted surveys, participated in projects, filled data needs, held trainings, or attended meetings with relevant stakeholders. Lean on this knowledge to further define your management priority and understand how each Reserve engages with it. Make sure you get feedback from all Reserve sectors, either through an e-mails or group calls. If staff want to share ideas for research proposals—great! They can be ground-truthed in the needs assessment ahead.



• Photo credit: Dave Harp

**3rd**  
GEAR

### Pick an Official Topic

Whatever management priority you chose, chances are it encompasses so many topics it’s prudent to narrow your focus and pick just one. Review the NERRS feedback you collected. Which aspects of the management priority are most relevant to Reserves in the region? Can SSAM-1 data play a role? What needs were identified? Is there a role for all Reserves to participate in future projects to address those needs? Do they have ideas for research questions? Your goal is to pick a topic within your management priority that aligns with NERRS and stakeholder interests, is natural to every Reserve’s mission, and is broad enough for each Reserve and all sectors to participate.

Moving from ten broad management priorities to one focused topic was an iterative process. The team developed criteria, which they used to select wetland restoration as their management priority. They refined their understanding of this priority through group calls and e-mail exchanges with NERR managers and staff. As a result, the Facilitation Oversight Committee identified four potential topics within wetland restoration. Ultimately, they selected thin layer sediment placement to support wetland restoration as their official topic. They chose this topic for its relevance throughout the region; the applicability of SSAM-1 data; and the high chance of success to leverage data from, and collaborations with, multiple partners. Some lessons they learned along the way:

- The team engaged two contractors—one to support a needs assessment and market analysis and the other to conduct a data and tools inventory. By working together, the contractors were able to support the Facilitation Oversight Committee in selecting an official topic and executing one needs assessment designed to get at management needs and relevant data and tools.
- NERR managers and staff in the region helped further define their management priority, explain how it is relevant to the work of all sectors, identify relevant decision maker networks, and suggest research opportunities.
- Despite the inconsistencies that may occur with how different NERR sites engage with a specific topic, the diversity of skills, capacity, and knowledge within and among Reserves can enhance collaborative opportunities.



## TOOLS & REFERENCES

MID-ATLANTIC PILOT  
PROCESS FOR SELECTING A  
MANAGEMENT PRIORITY  
(APPX. F)

RESEARCH IDEAS FROM  
MID-ATLANTIC RESEARCH  
AND STEWARDSHIP  
COORDINATORS  
(APPX. G)

# ASSESS NEEDS

In this phase, you will conduct an in-depth needs assessment of stakeholder needs, knowledge, and experience related to your official topic. There are many ways to approach a needs assessment. (See the [comprehensive guide to needs assessment](#) on NOAA's Digital Coast.) However, when the goal is to design a workshop to foster collaboration around NERRS data and other assets, interviews are particularly useful. They provide detailed information that can be used to build interest in the workshop and future partnerships. This section provides guidance and tools to conduct stakeholder interviews and synthesize what you learn in a productive way.

## 1st GEAR

### Plan your approach

Outlining your approach at the outset is an opportunity to clarify your ultimate goal and think through the process holistically—from whom to interview to how you will act on their input.

- **Identify interviewees:** Regardless of your topic, the nature of SSAM-1 data makes it likely you will need to interview scientists from different disciplines, conservation and restoration practitioners, regulatory officials, landowners and/or land managers, and private sector consultants. Work with Reserve staff from each state to identify and prioritize potential interviewees. Prioritization is key to getting good representation from each group in all states.
- **Design questions:** Consider what you already know about the topic. Have you identified gaps in science or data? Technical or regulatory challenges associated with related land management practices? Resources or partnership opportunities? Then draft questions that allow you to dig into these topics, but are broad enough to capture new issues. Include a question that vets the interviewee's familiarity with the NERRS, its programs, and its data collection capacity. Run these questions by your advisory committee, if you created one for your project.
- **Create process support tools:** While each interview will be unique, you can save time by creating a few simple tools like a boilerplate e-mail for introducing yourself and a one-page primer that explains the purpose and scope of your work. Once interviews are underway, track your progress with a spreadsheet. This will be helpful for your analysis and provide the basis for your workshop invitation list.

## 2nd GEAR

### Collect input

Start by being honest about the time you can commit. A 45-minute interview can take between two and four hours to schedule, prepare for, conduct, and analyze. Multiply that by the number of groups whose perspectives you want to capture, and then multiply that by the number of states you need to represent. It quickly adds up to weeks of work! Setting a time budget and deadline at the outset will help you be more selective and efficient. Here are some tips to keep the process running smoothly:

- Prepare for each interview with online research about the participant's organization. Keep a record of relevant data sets, models, and other research tools you uncover.
- Consider recording the interviews if you find it challenging to take notes as you listen. If you do record, confirm your interviewees are comfortable with that.
- After the interview, spend a few minutes following up on leads. Did they recommend new interviewees? Did they cite relevant projects, tools, papers, or case studies?
- After the first few interviews, consider whether to adapt your questions or protocol based on how they went. You are not conducting research—it's okay to modify your approach to support more fluent, productive conversations.





## Analyze & Report

Translating dozens of sets of interview notes into recommendations for a workshop can induce cognitive vertigo. There are many ways to approach the analysis, depending on how you will use the results and available time. The following is one approach:

- **Create an overview of your approach** that includes clear goals for how your analysis will be used, who will use it, the themes it will explore, and how it will be reported.
- **Identify themes that will be helpful in designing your workshop.** Use these as filters for your review. If the input you collected is highly variable, you may want to create a memo that boils each interview down to your themes. ([See Appendix I.](#)) If there's less variability and/or fewer interviews, flag relevant input for each theme directly in transcripts or notes.
- **Lump relevant input together under each theme and look for trends and gaps in information.** Did they describe their work consistently? Are they working toward similar goals? Did they reference a particular data need? Are research groups already working on the issue? Does the regulatory environment vary significantly from state to state? Were thought leaders cited by multiple interviewees? Relevant funding opportunities to support collaboration?
- **Organize your analysis into a final report or presentation.** This should include a summary of relevant coastal management needs and challenges; opportunities to address them; inventory of existing (and needed) data and tools; list of management-relevant research topics, assessment of how all NERRS sectors could contribute to the issue; and recommendations for the workshop. The latter could include suggestions for participants, location, agenda topics, or even additional pre-workshop interviews to fill gaps in critical information.

# MID-ATLANTIC PILOT

## LESSONS LEARNED

The contractors worked with all NERR sites in the region to generate a list of potential interviewees. They conducted 22 interviews, which were recorded and transcribed. Analysis involved developing an anonymous memo for each transcript that summarized key themes, captured demonstrative quotes, and recorded insights. Memos were informally coded into sub themes that informed the final needs assessment report and an inventory of regional tools and data. Some things they learned along the way:

- The relevance of NERR recommendations for interviewees depended on a Reserve's engagement with the topic. Interviewees had a range of familiarity with the NERRS. This diversity allowed the assessment to both "market" NERRS data and other capacities and to collect

diverse ideas for broader NERRS engagement in the topic.

- Interviewing professionals who represent multiple expertise saved time and increased insight. For example, a scientist who did restoration for a program that manages large tracts of land could speak to management research needs, the state of the science, and the challenge of bringing those things together in practice.
- The practice of thin layer placement of dredged sediment is in the early stages of adoption in the Mid-Atlantic. As a result, it was more difficult to find interviewees in states like Virginia and New York and these states were underrepresented in the assessment. The team tried to address this by ensuring that

the workshop included sufficient representation from these states.

- Working with a university as a fiscal agent meant having to recast the needs assessment as "human subjects" research. Meeting Institutional Review Board requirements used resources that could have been applied to the project. That may be appropriate if you intend to publish your results, but if not, you may want to explore other ways of getting the work done.
- Recording and transcribing each interview was useful for this project. It allowed contractors to tag team the calls and created a record that each could use to complete their part of the assessment. However, it is a time consuming approach and should be done only when needed.



## TOOLS & REFERENCES

MID-ATLANTIC PILOT INTERVIEW PROCESS OVERVIEW (APPX. H)

MID-ATLANTIC PILOT MEMO STRUCTURE AND SAMPLE MEMO (APPX. I)

MID-ATLANTIC FINAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT (APPX. J)

# DESIGN A WORKSHOP

Designing and hosting a workshop is the last phase of the ROAD and the beginning of connecting SSAM-1 data to a wide world of management needs. This section provides guidance and tools to design a regional workshop that places NERRS data and other capacities in the context of your official topic, brings the right people to the table to explore ideas for collaboration, and catalyzes partnerships to put NERRS data to work in your region.

## 1st GEAR

### Set the Table

Proper planning that makes the most of the work you have done—and the people you have engaged— will set you up for a productive workshop. Coastal Training Program Coordinators are veteran workshop planners who can help you follow, or improve, the following steps to desinging your workshop:

- **Select your workshop site.** A central location that minimizes travel for participants is ideal. Hosting at a Reserve is an excellent opportunity to showcase NERRS monitoring infrastructure and how its programs come together in a workshop forum.
- **Set goals and objectives for your workshop using your needs assessment.** Which aspects of your official topic were of highest interest for all stakeholders you interviewed? How well do these interests align with what Reserves can offer in terms of science, monitoring, education, and training? Are they feasible to address in a workshop setting?
- **Build your participant list.** Start with interviewees (and names they suggested). Solicit additional ideas from your advisory committee. Ultimately, you want

to assemble a group that can represent the range of stakeholder perspectives from within each state, organizations with relevant monitoring or research capacity, and all Reserve sectors. Keeping the workshop to a maximum of 35 participants is more affordable and likely lead to productive discussions.

- **Use the needs assessment to design your agenda.** Showcase regional expertise, data and tools related to the issue you have selected. Consider whether it will be helpful to present existing data and tools to support your agenda and how to do it. Include at least one session that illustrates NERRS SSAM-1 and other capacities to address the issue. Build in opportunities for participant engagement and encourage iterative development of collaborative ideas.

## 2nd GEAR

### Hold the Workshop

The key to a successful workshop is staying true to your goals and objectives, ensuring there is enough time for participant interaction and discussion, and not creating expectations that are unattainable in a day or two of group meeting. Here are some other tips for success:

- **Invest in process support tools.** Use process agendas and/or facilitation plans map out the what, how, and who of your workshop. This will help you communicate and refine ideas among your planning team, prepare presenters, draft talking points, develop discussion support tools, and coordinate with your site host.
- **Lean on NERRS colleagues for support.** Reserve staff are often skilled facilitators and note takers. Putting them to work for breakout groups can help those discussions be more productive; just give them enough guidance. It also helps to make sure that each group has at least one Reserve person whose only focus is representing SSAM-1 and its potential for application.
- **Prepare your presenters:** Create a presenters' version of the agenda and guidance for their talk. If you have time, convene a group call so they can hear directly from each other and look for ways to build on, rather than duplicate, information.



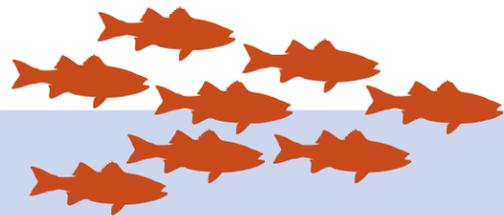
- **Use online polling:** Online polling services like Mentimeter can help the group respond to summarized discussion outcomes and decide where they want to take the conversation next. Build time for facilitators to tee up polls in between sessions.
- **Capture impressions throughout:** You'll need notes (flip chart and otherwise) and presentations to prepare post workshop proceedings, but even more valuable will be the impressions your planning team records. What is working and what would you do differently next time? Which participants seem particularly interested in carrying on the conversation after the workshop?
- **Don't forget the power of down time:** Encourage a little socializing during down time and/or consider a field visit or walk and talk to allow informal discussion and encourage participant bonds to form.

**3rd**  
GEAR

### Build on Momentum

A workshop is just an event unless there is a plan to follow up on ideas and relationships. Here are some ideas:

- If funding allows, use your evaluation results to support momentum around the collaborative ideas that the workshop generates.
- Develop proceedings to summarize presentations, discussions, and collaborative ideas generated. Include a directory of participants and your needs assessment report. Distribute these among participants and within your professional networks.
- Consider hosting a post webinar workshop for people who were able to attend the workshop and/or present the collaborative ideas that have traction.



### TOOLS & REFERENCES

MID-ATLANTIC WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT AGENDA (APPX. K)	MID-ATLANTIC WORKSHOP FACILITATION PLAN (APPX. L)	MID-ATLANTIC WORKSHOP MENTIMETER FOR INTRODUCTIONS (APPX. M)	MID-ATLANTIC WORKSHOP GUIDANCE FOR SPEED DATING BRAINSTORM (APPX. N)
MID-ATLANTIC WORKSHOP GUIDANCE FOR COLLABORATIVE IDEA DEVELOPMENT (APPX. O)	MID-ATLANTIC WORKSHOP COLLABORATIVE IDEA MATRIX (APPX. P)	MID-ATLANTIC WORKSHOP PROCEEDINGS (APPX. Q)	MID-ATLANTIC WORKSHOP EVALUATIONS (APPX. R)

## MID-ATLANTIC PILOT

### LESSONS LEARNED

The team worked with the Delaware Reserve to plan the workshop and hold it at the Reserve's St. Jones site. Presentations and big group discussion provided a framework for a subsequent "speed dating" activity to identify ideas for collaboration. Participants then broke into three, self-selected groups to develop collaborative project ideas; identify potential partners, available data, and funding opportunities; and outline next steps toward pursuing the idea. Some lessons the team learned along the way:

- The team worked with a contractor, NERRS staff, and NOAA OCM to create an online portal with access to data sets and tools identified as important to support wetland restoration planning that engages the practice of thin layer placement (TLP) of dredged sediment. The tool helped to show partners what could be done collectively and brought NERRS and other relevant data sets together in one place.

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) emerged as key partner for advancing understanding of thin layer placement of dredged sediment for wetland restoration. Engaging USACE representatives in workshop design and participation has been key to strengthening this partnership.
- The panel could have had fewer speakers to facilitate getting to group discussion sooner. However, the panel did provide an excellent opportunity to showcase NERRS capacity to address TLP.
- Being flexible enough to allow a participant to spontaneously present a relevant new tool led to an idea for a regional research proposal.
- It was challenging to keep participants to a number that travel funding could support. This was related to the diverse range of stakeholders needed from each state and the desire of many Reserve staff to attend. However, at 42 participants, the team felt they had the right people in the room to support productive conversations.

- Online polling was a great way to advance conversation and enhance the flow of ideas. The team used Mentimeter in two ways: 1) introductions that encouraged participants to compare needs assessment findings to their experience and, 2) to move from the many ideas generated from brainstorming to three ideas for collaboration. Allowing time at the end of day one for the facilitation team to translate flip chart notes into Mentimeter options was critical to maintaining progress.
- The Coastal Training Program's standard evaluation was easy to adapt to collect information to support post workshop actions. For example, the team used it to collect input on the NERRS data portal and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Beneficial Reuse Project Portal, both of which were presented during the workshop.
- It was tricky to balance the planning team's goal to apply SSAM-1 data to advancing knowledge of thin layer application with the need to allow participants to follow their own interests in the issue. Given that this was the first time NERRS had brought these stakeholders together, they felt time for relationship building and "dating" was important before getting into the nitty gritty.
- The team saw a critical role for Reserve education and stewardship coordinators to engage the public about TLP and proactively address public concerns and perception barriers in cases where it has been determined to be an appropriate wetland restoration strategy.



# APPENDICES

[Appendix A: Mid Atlantic Pilot Team Members](#)

[Appendix B: Mid Atlantic Pilot Management Priorities](#)

[Appendix C: Mid Atlantic Pilot Regional Survey](#)

[Appendix D: Mid Atlantic Pilot Survey Responses](#)

[Appendix E: Mid Atlantic Pilot Sample Survey](#)

[Appendix F: Mid Atlantic Pilot Process for Selecting A Management Priority](#)

[Appendix G: Mid Atlantic Research and Stewardship Coordinator Research Ideas](#)

[Appendix H: Mid Atlantic Pilot Interview Process Overview](#)

[Appendix I: Mid Atlantic Pilot Memo Structure and Sample Memo](#)

[Appendix J: Mid Atlantic Pilot Final Needs Assessment Report](#)

[Appendix K: Mid Atlantic Pilot Workshop Participant Agenda](#)

[Appendix L: Mid Atlantic Pilot Workshop Facilitation Plan](#)

[Appendix M: Mid Atlantic Pilot Workshop Mentimeter for Introductions](#)

[Appendix N: Mid Atlantic Pilot Guidance for Speed Dating Brainstorm](#)

[Appendix O: Mid Atlantic Pilot Guidance for Collaborative Idea Development](#)

[Appendix P: Mid Atlantic Pilot Collaborative Idea Matrix](#)

[Appendix Q: Mid Atlantic Pilot Workshop Proceedings](#)

[Appendix R: Mid Atlantic Pilot Workshop Evaluation](#)

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*ROAD is a product of the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office for Coastal Management (NOAA OCM). It was developed as a result of a pilot project that explored the relevance of NERRS data to management needs in the Mid-Atlantic region.*

*The project's Facilitation Oversight Committee included Nina Garfield and Randall Schneider from NOAA OCM; Lisa Auermuller from New Jersey's Jacques Cousteau NERR; and Sarah Fernald from New York's Hudson River NERR. Process and assessment support was provided by Dolores Leonard at Roca Communications+ and Heather Kerkering at Sea Connections Consulting.*

