

Organizational History and Timeline

NERRA: the Beginning

In the shadow of an adversarial administration in Washington, D.C. in the early 1980's, Reserve managers began consideration of options that would provide the growing number of Reserves and their managing state agencies and universities a strong and uniform voice. In 1984, following a disappointing meeting in Washington, D.C., a team of several managers and associates decided that formation of a national association, patterned after the recently-established Coastal States Organization (CSO), could serve the needs of the group. After meetings with key CSO members and staff, the team began preparation of organizational documents that would lead to the formation of NERRA and its registration as a 501-c (3) tax-exempt entity with an office in Washington, D.C., including necessary staff.

NERRA: the Evolution

- 1985: First NERRS meeting outside of the Washington, D.C., region held at the Old Woman Creek Reserve. Discussions continued around formation and structure of a non-profit organization.
- 1986: At the annual meeting at South Slough the managers selected Steve Bliven (MA CZM Office) as chairman of a work group to continue planning. This included Betsy Blair (HRNERR), Terence Stevens (PBNERR), Gene Wright (OWCNERR), and Mark Silberstein (ESNERR). The title of "National Estuarine Research Reserve Association" (NERRA) was chosen for the Organization.
- 1987: Discussions at the fall NERRS meetings at Apalachicola cemented the conceptual structure of the NERRA organization and managers voted to proceed. Betsy Blair (HRNERR) was elected first "official" president.
- 1989: NERRA By-laws, drafted by Terence Stevens (2nd NERRA President), were adopted by the NERRS managers at the fall meeting in Wells, ME. Betsy Blair (NERRA Treasurer/Secretary), with assistance from a local friend and attorney, develops Articles of Incorporation for registration in New York and applies to the IRS for tax exempt status as a 501-c (3) non-profit association.
- 1990: IRS grants tax exempt status to NERRA, and it officially begins operating as a non-profit organization to support the NERRS. NERRA is incorporated as a non-profit in New York.
- 2001: NERRA officially moves from doing business as a non-profit association in New York to Commonwealth of Virginia. NERRA incorporates in Virginia with its place of business associated with Chesapeake Bay (VA) NERR.
- 2002: NERRA hires its first contract employee: Business Manager Maurice ("Mo") Lynch, who had been serving as NERRA Treasurer until he retired as Director of Chesapeake Bay (VA) NERR.

- 2003: NERRA elects its first non-manager as President, Research Coordinator Chuck Nieder.
- 2003: NERRA Executive Committee established made up of the President, Vice President, Past President, Treasurer, Secretary, Chair of Government Affairs, and one at-large member. Regular conference calls begin.
- 2004: NERRA opens its first office in Washington, DC, at the Hall of States, renting space from Coastal States Organization.
- 2004: NERRA hires first Executive Director, Angela Corridor.
- 2006: At Annual Meeting hosted by Old Woman Creek NERR, NERRA board votes to increase dues from \$500 a year to \$2,500 a year to help cover growing NERRA operating costs.
- 2006: Accounting/Business Management switches from Mr. Lynch to Executive Director President.
- 2008 (January): Executive Director departs NERRA for position at Restore America's Estuaries. Position remains vacant for 8 months.
- 2008 (March): NERRA finances and accounting move to the Wells Reserve in Maine. Accountant Scott Rocray (CPA) becomes accountant. Accountant and financial activities overseen by the immediate past president (Paul Dest).
- 2008 (October): Matt Menashes hired as second Executive Director
- 2010 (August): Second Executive Director resigns after taking a position at the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in DC.
- 2010 (September) Third Executive Director hired, Rebecca Roth, who works out of her home office in Vermont (and then in Maine beginning in 2016).
- 2011 (January) – Washington, DC, office is closed. Business office and all NERRA files moved to the Wells NERR in Maine.
- 2017 (November): At Annual Meeting hosted by Mission-Aransas NERR, first CTP sector employee elected as NERRA President, Lisa Auermuller.

Presidents of NERRA

Betsy Blair, 1st NERRA President
 Terry Stevens
 Gene Wright
 Mike Graybill
 Jim List
 Christine Gault
 Gary Lytton
 Mike De Luca
 Peter Wellenberger

Chuck Nieder
 Paul Dest
 Jaime Kooser
 Rebecca Ellin
 David Ruple
 William Reay
 Cory Riley
 Lisa Auermuller