

NERRS Geographic and Program Expansion

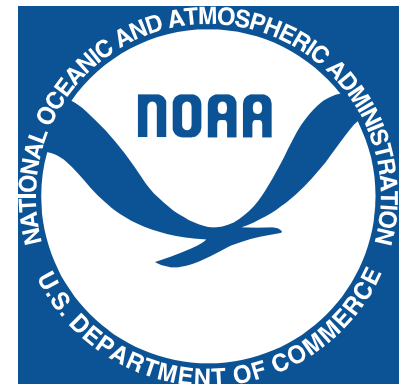
Michael DeLuca, Rutgers University

NERRA

National Estuarine
Research Reserve
ASSOCIATION



NATIONAL
ESTUARINE
RESEARCH
RESERVE
SYSTEM



Geographic Expansion

Goal -

To increase service to nation w/ representative protected estuaries for research, education, stewardship, and management

NERRS Workgroup Effort -

- *Define long and short-term targets
- *Evaluate and develop explicit criteria
- *Consider a changing climate/environment
- * Take a more proactive approach to site selection

Geographic Expansion

Work Group Recommendations

- *Rely on existing biogeographic classification scheme and site selection criteria
- *Apply additional areas of site selection criteria
 - Strength of partnerships
 - Resilience capacity of ecosystems and infrastructure
 - Administrative and institutional commitment and capacity
- *Pursue strategic outreach for new reserves to address geographic gaps

Geographic Expansion

Assumptions

- Short-term for this planning effort is 15 years
- No new reserves without new funding
- Long-term strategy requires additional evaluation

Currently two new sites in designation process (HI, CT)

Program Expansion

Challenges

- *Increasing demand for NERRS programs and services
- *Dynamic coastal environment with increasing population pressures
- *Relatively small labor force and budget
- *Tightening/increasingly competitive budget environment

Program Expansion

Opportunities

- *Partnerships with other place-based networks (NEP, NPS, USFWS)
- *Integration with large-scale environmental observing systems (IOOS)
- *Collaborative grant pursuit
- *Citizen science engagement
- *Co-location of personnel and facilities

Program Expansion Discussion Questions

What NERRS programs and services do you value as priorities for expansion?

What “network” benefits of the NERR System do you value and/or use?

What opportunities exist for the NERRS to tap into other place-based networks?

How can we address coastal issues at broader scales, regional and national?

What are good strategies to increase the reach of NERRS programs?