



RESTORE AMERICA'S ESTUARIES



2020 ANNUAL REPORT



Todd Miller, Chair of the Board of Directors



Restore America's Estuaries protects and restores our nation's coasts. As we close the books on our 25th anniversary, we are proud of our accomplishments but still feel a real sense of urgency about emerging issues and challenges. Climate changes and intense population growth place more people and coastal habitats in harm's way as seas rise and storms become more frequent and intense. A healthy and productive coast depends more than ever on our ability to create strong partnerships to forge cost-effective coastal restoration solutions.

Recognizing these challenges as a founding board member, it is my unique pleasure as Chair of the Board to introduce Daniel Hayden as our next President and CEO. Hired in May of 2020, Daniel's decades of experience working with stakeholders, government agencies, and partners as an executive at multiple environmental non-profit organizations positions RAE perfectly to continue leading the coastal restoration community.

Daniel Hayden, President and CEO



The importance of estuaries has never been clearer than this past year. With our daily lives disrupted due to the Covid-19 pandemic, so many lives lost and the inequities of our society laid bare, we all looked for ways to find calm and a sense of normalcy. Across the country people flocked to nature and estuaries to find peace and solitude. The tranquility of outdoor spaces reconnected many with forgotten passions and opened the door for new hobbies.

In addition to this solace, estuaries played an important role in protecting our coastal communities from another record hurricane and storm season. Intact coastal wetlands saved communities billions of dollars in reconstruction and countless lives. Until we fully address climate change, the trend of record storms is not apt to decline. Now, more than ever, it is imperative that we prioritize nature-based solutions and sustainable management to protect the over 40% of our nation's population that all live within estuary regions.

If the 2020 National Coastal and Estuarine Virtual Summit was any testament to this need, then the future looks bright. Switching to an entirely digital format came with a lot of uncertainty, but you showed up and made this year's Summit the most successful to date. The resilience of our coastal community to overcome these hurdles to connect, learn from one another and celebrate our nation's estuaries is second to none.

I am very excited to join Restore America's Estuaries as the new President & CEO. I greatly appreciate the support of the Board, our staff, and partners for making 2020 another year of impact. Thank you to all our partners, friends, and advocates for making my first year at RAE so enjoyable. I look forward to meeting you all in 2021 and working with you to protect and restore our nation's estuaries and bays.

Todd Miller (Chair)

North Carolina Coastal Federation

Kimberly Davis Reyher (Vice-Chair)

Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana

Alison Prost (Secretary)

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Bob Stokes (Treasurer)

Galveston Bay Foundation

Peter Clark

Tampa Bay Watch

Tim Dillingham

American Littoral Society

Steve Dubiel

EarthCorps

Curt Johnson

Save the Sound

David Lewis

Save The Bay - San Francisco

Johnathan Stone

Save The Bay - Narragansett Bay

2020 RAE SUMMIT

1,500
attendees



500
presentations



50
sponsors



RAE's biennial Coastal and Estuarine Summit is the largest gathering of coastal restoration, protection, and management professionals. We were excited to bring together this dynamic community to Providence. However, given the global pandemic we needed to pivot and host the entire event in a virtual space for the first time. Unsure of what to expect, the results were stunning - our most well attended and well engaged Summit to date. A record 1,500 members of the coastal restoration, protection, and management community engaged in the tenth annual Summit.

Going virtual allowed us to reach new audiences, particularly those from underserved and marginalized communities, early career professionals, and students. We were also able to expand our offerings, more than tripling our total presentations and providing exclusive, on-demand content to attendees for months following the event.



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



Ørsted is committed to a future without fossil fuels. They specialize in offshore and onshore wind and supply renewable, green energy to over 15 million people. Ørsted has demonstrated their belief in the importance of coastal restoration by supporting RAE's efforts in sponsoring our 2020 National Coastal & Estuarine Virtual Summit and 2021 Living Shorelines Tech Transfer Workshop.

BLUE CARBON

Coastal blue carbon is the ability of wetlands, including salt marshes, mangroves, and seagrass, to sequester and store carbon in soil - and they're up to 10x more effective at doing so than their terrestrial forest counterparts. In 2020, RAE, VERRA, and Silvestrum Climate Associates released a critical update to the *Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD)* to include blue carbon - making this the first blue carbon conservation accounting methodology under any major green house gas program. Blue carbon ecosystems account for 50% of the total carbon stored in ocean sediments, but receive just 3% of global climate financing. RAE and Silvestrum led the update to the existing REDD+ Methodology Framework (VM0007) to expand its applicability to tidal wetland conservation and restoration activities in the above mentioned ecosystems. This update will enable these activities to access additional sources of finance through the sale of carbon credits in voluntary or compliance markets and help scale up coastal restoration efforts.

COASTAL WATERSHEDS GRANT

Although, we started working on the National Estuary Program (NEP) Coastal Watersheds Grants in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) in 2019, 2020 marked the inaugural round of project selection and it did not disappoint. In this first funding cycle, we received more than 200 letters of interest requesting over \$40 million in funding.

Seven projects were ultimately selected for funding with approximately \$1 million administered to bring about meaningful change to our nation's estuaries. Recipients of the 2020 grants span from coast to coast, including groups in California, Washington, Massachusetts, Louisiana, and New York. With funding in place, we look forward to sharing progress updates in 2021 and beyond.



Established in 1987 through the Clean Water Act, the NEP is a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) place-based program dedicated to protecting and restoring the water quality and ecological integrity of 28 estuaries across the country.

SUPPORTING RESTORATION



The Tampa Bay Environmental Restoration Fund (TBERF) is a competitive grants program with the goal of funding projects which restore and protect Tampa Bay and its watershed. It is managed through a strategic partnership between the Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP) and Restore America's Estuaries (RAE), who work together to encourage local and national contributions from the public and private sectors and achieve measurable conservation outcomes. In 2020, the program awarded \$921,819 to seven organizations. These projects will go a long way towards achieving a cleaner Tampa Bay by restoring wetlands, installing nature-based solutions, and stormwater mitigation.

With the addition of the NEP Coastal Watersheds Grant, RAE administered four grant programs in coordination with federal, corporate, and non-profit partners in 2020. In total, we awarded \$3,717,247 to more than 33 projects spanning coast to coast to improve estuary habitat, clean water, and coastal resilience.

In 2020, SNEP Watershed Grants supported 11 important initiatives, including dam and culvert removal, shellfish restoration, and urban community resilience planning. The awards—\$1.8 million in Rhode Island and Massachusetts—were selected through a rigorous competitive process, with the advice of an independent, interdisciplinary committee of coastal scientists and managers. RAE received more than 40 grant applications totaling more than \$10 million in requests from which the 2020 grants were selected. With non-federal match, these SNEP grants will result in more than \$2.3 million in new project funding for Southeast New England's coastal ecosystems and communities.





RAE was excited to renew and expand our National Water Stewardship Partnership with the Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation in 2020. This partnership supports the work of RAE, three of our member groups, and two other partner nonprofits to engage coastal communities around the country in the protection of their local waters and natural resources. We look forward to continuing to bring about meaningful environmental results through this partnership in the years ahead.

RESTORE YOUR COAST

RAE's Coastal Restoration Toolkit, launched in July 2020, is an accessible platform of educational tools designed to help community members across the United States start local coastal restoration projects of their own. The Toolkit is divided into five key project topics: Flooding, Coastal Erosion, Water Quality, Invasive Species, and Wildlife Habitats. Each project topic consists of information on development with step-by-step project guidance, past project examples, tools and resources, contacts, funding resources, and permitting. The Toolkit would not be possible without the support of NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation and Restoration Center. NOAA's partnership demonstrates their continuous support of coastal communities and community members taking action to create positive change.



COASTAL
RESTORATION
TOOLKIT

RESTOREYOURCOAST.ORG

THE RAE ALLIANCE

Fish ladder improves passage at Wreck Pond in NJ

Fish in New Jersey's Wreck Pond can now climb further into the watershed thanks to a ladder over the Old Mill Dam. The American Littoral Society installed the fish ladder in order to give anadromous herring renewed access to a former spawning area. Returning from the Atlantic Ocean to coastal rivers every spring, these small, silvery fish helped support important recreational and commercial species, such as cod, haddock, and striped bass. Construction of the fish passage was funded by U.S. Department of Interior through a \$2.2 million grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Additional funding for the Wreck Pond project came from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, as part of the Flood Hazard Risk Reduction and Resiliency grant program, and the Borough of Spring Lake.



Credit: American Littoral Society

Oyster Reef building in Southern Louisiana

In the summer of 2020, the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana built its third reef as part of its Oyster Shell Recycling Program. Through the program, New Orleans restaurants collect oyster shells, which are then returned to the waters of south Louisiana instead of being sent to landfills.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, oyster shell collection halted as restaurants closed, but there were plenty of recycled shells on hand to build a reef in Hackberry Bay which has been severely degraded by erosion, threatening the health of oysters and the commercial fishing industry. The reef is made using steel gabions and 800 tons of shell, and it covers 3,600 linear feet.



Credit: Coastal Environments, Inc.



FINANCIAL REPORT

Year Ended December 31

2020

2019

Revenue

Government Grants	\$4,146,978	\$2,370,211
Grants and Contributions	502,709	466,457
Conferences and Meetings	469,753	62,080
Affiliate Dues	45,000	46,500
Investment Income	4,907	10,118
Other Income	20,284	599
Total Revenue	\$5,189,631	\$2,955,965

Expenses

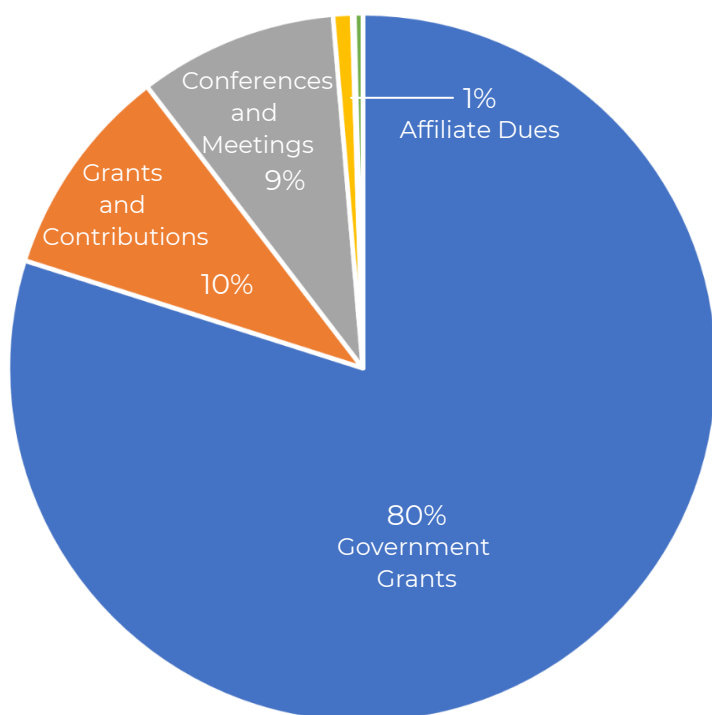
Program Services	\$4,577,926	\$2,711,096
General and Administrative	277,366	193,497
Fundraising	113,832	98,503
Total Expenses	\$4,969,124	\$3,003,096

Net Income

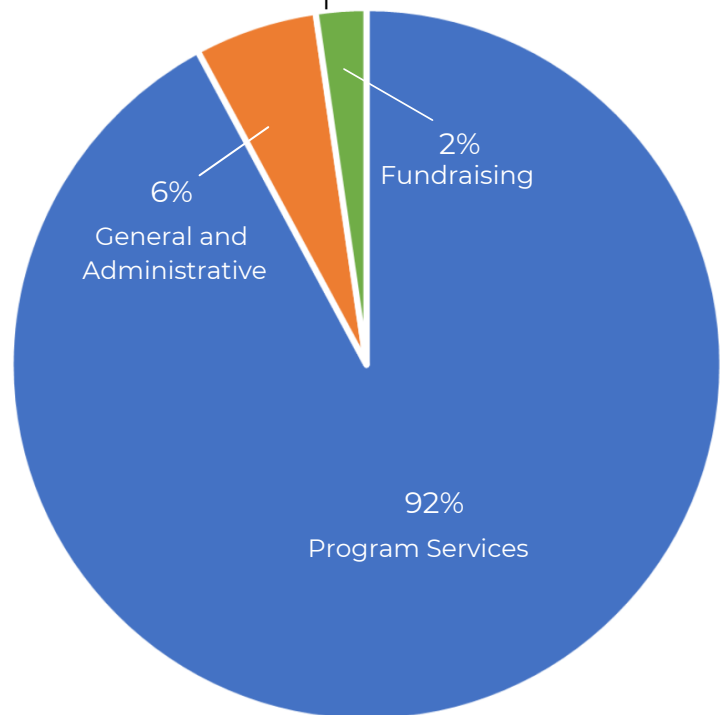
\$220,507

(\$47,131)

Revenue



Expenses



• Investment & Other Income (<1%)

THANK YOU

\$100,000+

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
National Oceanic and Atmospheric
Administration
The Scotts Miracle-Gro Foundation

\$50,000 - \$99,999

Cheniere Energy
Ørsted
The Ocean Foundation

\$10,000 - \$49,999

CITGO
Clean Foundation
Fuss & O'Neill
Honda Marine Science Foundation
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
The Clayton Fund
The Curtis & Edith Munson Foundation
The Dudley Foundation
The Nature Conservancy
The Pew Charitable Trusts
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture - Natural
Resources Conservation Service

\$5,000 - \$9,999

AECOM
Association of National Estuary Programs
Buzzards Bay Coalition
Cargill
Ducks Unlimited
HDR, Inc.
IOOS Association
Island Foundation
VHB

\$1,000 - \$4,999

American Littoral Society
Beta Group
Blue Robotics
Canadian Science Publishing
Chesapeake Bay Foundation
Chesapeake Bay Program
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
EA Engineering, Science and Technology
ESA
Earth Share
EarthCorps
Eureka Water Probes
Galveston Bay Foundation
Indian River Lagoon Council
J.F. Brennan Company
Moffatt & Nichol
NOAA Sea Grant
National Parks Conservation Association
National Wildlife Federation
North Carolina Coastal Federation
Reef Ball Foundation
Restore the Mississippi River Delta
Save The Bay - Narragansett Bay
Save The Bay - San Francisco
Save the Sound
Stantec Consulting Services
Tampa Bay Watch
Tetra Tech
The Ocean Foundation - SeaGrass Grow
Woods Hole Group

\$0 - \$999

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Restore America's Estuaries

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