



RESTORE
AMERICA'S
ESTUARIES

2021 ACCOMPLISHMENTS REPORT



ABOUT US

Restore America's Estuaries is dedicated to the protection and restoration of bays and estuaries as essential resources for our nation.

Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) is a national alliance of 10 coastal conservation groups dedicated to restoring and preserving America's estuaries and coasts. RAE member organizations, and our Affiliate Member partners, restore coastal habitats in estuaries nationwide, stretching from Maine to California.

Member Groups



Affiliate Members



Note from the President



2021 was a year that saw many successes, and I can't help but reflect on how inspiring the RAE community truly is. Covid-19 continued to scourge our country, and gave us pause for our large in-person gathering at the 2021 Living Shorelines Tech Transfer Workshop. Like 2020 it was a year of resilience and adaption, as we shifted to a hybrid event (in person + virtual), increasing options and breaking down barriers to participation. You showed up in full force, helping us set a record for attendance, with over 300 professionals and decision-makers in attendance and more than 22 sponsors providing financial and technical support.

We didn't stop there, though. This past year also reiterated the importance of coastal restoration and protection to combat climate change and spur economic growth. The release of our new report, *The Economic Value of America's Estuaries: 2021 Report*, with funding from the NOAA Office of Habitat Conservation, amplified the value these critical, yet fragile, ecosystems provide coastal communities. Additionally, Congress and the Biden Administration put coastal issues at the forefront of their policy agendas. RAE was engaged in supporting the 2021 Bi-partisan Infrastructure Bill to provides billions of dollars for new projects to protect our coasts. RAE was pleased to provide technical support to pending bipartisan legislation, such as the Blue Carbon for our Planet Act, the Blue Carbon Protection Act, and the Living Shorelines Act of 2021. Thank you to the many elected officials for advancing these important measures for our coasts and coastal communities.

We are also pleased that we can continue to manage funding programs that benefit our coasts. We are excited to announce that EPA selected RAE to manage the next cycle of the EPA's Southeastern New England Program Watershed Implementation Grants. We are also delighted to continue to work with funding entities such as the EPA's National Estuary Program, Tampa Bay Environmental Restoration Fund, and the Caring For our Coasts grant program with support from Citgo. In total, RAE distributed more than \$3 million to support projects that will result in critical improvements to resiliency along our coasts.

This year, we also launched our Inclusive Coasts Initiative, aimed at improving Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) in the coastal restoration grantmaking space. The Initiative will include two workshop series, one aimed at project implementers and the other at grantmakers with the intent of recognizing and breaking down barriers related to funding projects that benefit all community members. There is a lot of work to be done, and we are excited to get started.

Lastly, I'd like to thank all our supporters for your generous contributions and forward-thinking solutions to the most pressing threats facing our estuaries. Your participation in conversations, webinars, workgroups, and events gives us at RAE assurance that we are moving in the right direction and excites us for the accomplishments to come in 2022.

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

Catherine Nueva España

EarthCorps

Curt Johnson

Save the Sound

David Lewis

Save The Bay - San Francisco

Johnathan Stone

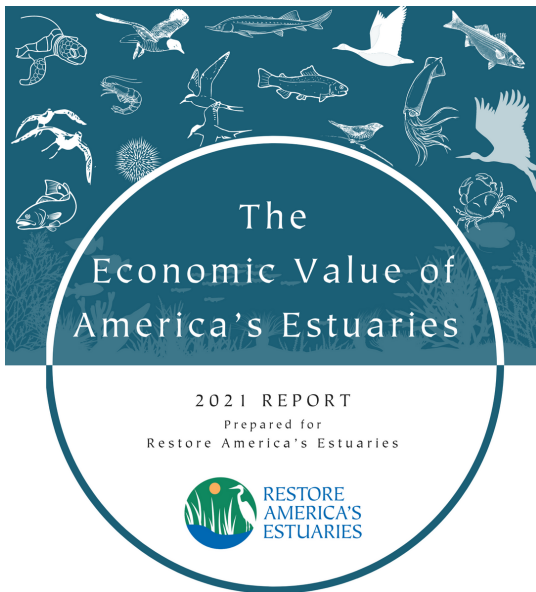
Save The Bay - Narragansett Bay

THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF AMERICA'S ESTUARIES

Matt Gregg is the founder of Forty North Oysters and the Barnegat Oyster Collective in Barnegat Light, NJ. His 12 acre farm puts food on tables in restaurants from Philadelphia to New York and everywhere in between. Given his dependence on clean water and a healthy estuary to his business, Matt recognizes the importance of protecting Barnegat Bay as a natural resource to protect his business in the face of a climate change, rising seas, and more regular and volatile storms.



He's not alone, either. More than 40% of Americans live in estuaries across the country. Additionally, while only accounting for 4% of continental U.S., these regions are also responsible for 47% of the country's GDP. They are also home to culturally significant traditions and serve as sanctuaries for families, outdoor enthusiasts, and fish and wildlife alike.



Continuing our efforts to promote the multiple benefits of our estuaries, RAE released an update to our 2008 economics report putting numbers to what we know is true: estuaries are small places with big impact. Using innovative modeling techniques, The Economic Value of America's Estuaries: 2021 Report quantifies the value of blue carbon and natural infrastructure to protect people and property, and builds on the analysis of the marine economy from 2008.

You can download the full report at www.estuaries.org/economics.

PREPARED BY
T&D ECONOMICS, LLC
CENTER FOR THE BLUE ECONOMY
JUNE 9, 2021

THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF

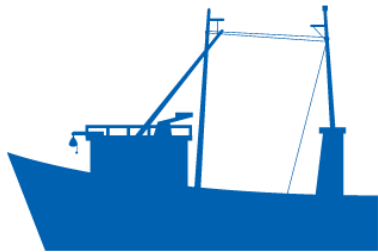
130 million Americans

live in estuary regions



47% U.S. GDP

comes from
estuary regions



estuaries support

59 million

jobs in the U.S.

coastal blue carbon ecosystems value

\$480 - \$7,800 / acre



\$1 spent on mitigation

saves **\$6**

in recovery



AMERICA'S ESTUARIES

INCLUSIVE COASTS INITIATIVE

Thanks to support from the National Science Foundation and our donors, RAE took significant steps in advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) in the coastal restoration grantmaking space with the launch of the Inclusive Coasts Initiative. We hope this initiative will lead to improved access to grant funding, a broader reach of grant programs, and promote inclusivity in project implementation with the ultimate goal to advance a just distribution of resources and access that benefits all members of coastal communities.

In RAE's work as a grant facilitator, stakeholder convener, and project implementer, we have become acutely aware of the benefit of DEIJ-focused approaches to these processes. Likewise, other organizations in the coastal conservation community have expressed the urgent need for a greater DEIJ emphasis in grantmaking and project implementation. We are planning a series of workshops to bridge the gaps between funders, project implementers, and the diverse needs of our coastal community members. To inform these workshops, we formed a working group of grant makers and project implementers from diverse cultural, geographic, and professional backgrounds.

Internally, we have updated our [DEIJ statement](#) to foster transparency and accountability for our commitment. Secondly, we have updated our internal equity policies to highlight non-discrimination on the basis of gender identity. We are placing greater emphasis on creating and promoting content online and at our events that reflects the needs of all coastal community.

To learn more, visit www.estuaries.org/initiatives/inclusive-coasts.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is an independent federal agency tasked with promoting to progress of science. NSF has been a critical partner in RAE's work, providing generous funding to jumpstart the Inclusive Coasts Initiative. Learn more by visiting www.nsf.gov.



GRANT PROGRAMS

In September, we were joined by Senator Jack Reed (RI) and Congressman Bill Keating (MA-9), and federal and state agencies representing both Massachusetts and Rhode Island to announce this year's Southeast New England Program (SNEP) Watershed Implementation Grants Program awardees. This program, established by EPA Region 1 has distributed more than \$40 million in funding and technical assistance since 2012. We are also excited to announce that RAE was selected to administer this program through 2028.



2021 Details

- 14 awards in MA and RI
- \$1.75 million in funding
- \$1.85 million in matching funds

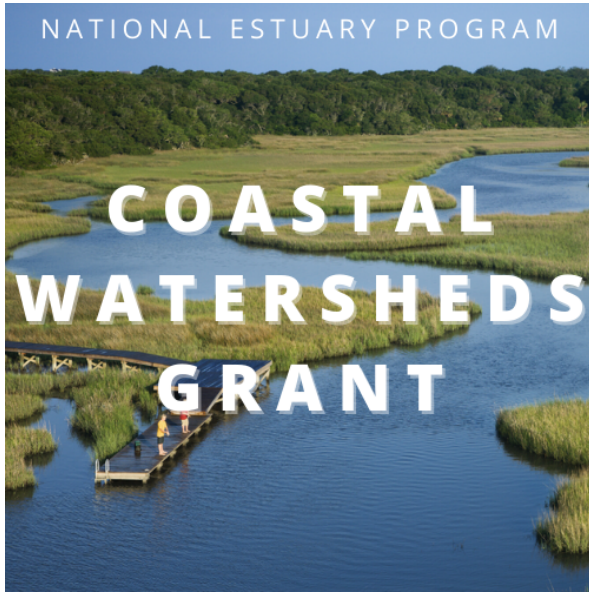


The Tampa Bay Environmental Restoration Fund (TBERF) is a competitive grants program with the goal of funding projects which restore and protect Tampa Bay and its watershed. It is managed through a strategic partnership between the Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP) and Restore America's Estuaries (RAE), who work together to encourage local and national contributions from the public and private sectors and achieve measurable conservation outcomes. TBERF has awarded more than \$8 million to 80 projects since 2016.

2021 Details

- 7 awards
- \$742,691 in funding
- 9 funding partners

GRANT PROGRAMS



On behalf of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), RAE announced the awardees for the 2021 National Estuary Program (NEP) Coastal Watersheds Grant. We were joined by Representatives Chellie Pingree (ME-1) and Kurt Schrader (OR-5) to announce this year's grantees, as well as representatives from EPA. This was our second year managing this program, bringing the total allocation of funds projects within the NEP geographic areas and supports Congressionally-set priorities.

2021 Details

- 4 awards in MD, FL, OR, & ME
- \$703,213 in funding
- \$1.5 million in matching funds

In partnership with Citgo, RAE supported organizations working in the Gulf of Mexico working to restore shorelines by cleaning trash, planting trees, and engaging volunteers. This program is in association with National Estuaries Week, a congressionally designated event that takes place each September.

2021 Details

- 8 awards the Gulf Region
- \$17,777 in funding
- 57 events hosted
- 1,121 volunteers engaged
- 27,000 lbs of trash collected



2021 LIVING SHORELINES WORKSHOP

After two years of planning, promoting, and a good bit of maneuvering due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the [2021 Living Shorelines Tech Transfer Workshop](#) was a huge success.

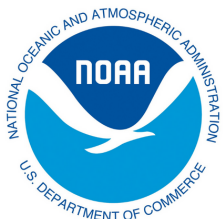
We were able to extend the reach of the Workshop by making it accessible to students, young professionals, and other members of our community who did not have the means, time, or other limiting factors to travel to Cape May.

We also owe a debt of gratitude to our cohosts, American Littoral Society, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) as well as our lead sponsors, Orsted and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), for their support of this year's event. Additionally, our expert panelists provided thought provoking content, both in person and virtually, and encouraged meaningful and effective conversations and networking opportunities.



This year's event set record numbers:

- 300 attendees joined us both virtually and in Cape May
- 22 sponsors provided financial and technical support
- 32 dedicated speakers generously gave their time and expertise to ensure our robust agenda was the strongest it's ever been
- 7 individual and 3 classroom scholarships for students and young professionals provided by the Island Foundation





Restore America's Estuaries

2300 Clarendon Blvd #603 Arlington, VA 22201

www.estuaries.org/donate