



## The National Estuarine Research Reserve System

# Strategic Plan 2017-2022:

## Goals and Objectives At a Glance

**VISION:** Resilient estuaries and coastal watersheds where human and natural communities thrive.

**MISSION:** To practice and promote stewardship of coasts and estuaries through innovative research, education, and training using a place-based system of protected areas.



### PROTECTING PLACES

**Goal:** Enhance and inspire stewardship, protection, and management of estuaries and their watersheds in coastal communities through place-based approaches.

**Objective 1:** Coastal practitioners will enhance resiliency of reserves and their watersheds by improving the protection and function of coastal habitats.

**Objective 2:** Communities and individuals will have an enhanced connection to estuaries and coastal ecosystems in order to promote stewardship and care of the resource.

**Objective 3:** The reserve system will strategically expand the number of representative estuaries across the country, serving to improve the nation's coastal management.

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Office for Coastal Management  
National Estuarine Research Reserves



## APPLYING SCIENCE

**Goal:** Improve the scientific understanding of estuaries and their watersheds through the development and application of reserve research, data, and tools.

**Objective 1:** The reserve system will maintain and expand monitoring of relevant and emerging biophysical and socioeconomic parameters, increasing their capacity to track the effects of changes in land use, coastal development, and climate.

**Objective 2:** Reserves and coastal researchers will increase their collaborative research to address the needs of decision-makers and stakeholders.

**Objective 3:** Scientific, management, and educational audiences will know about and effectively use reserve research, data, and products to understand the effects of climate and land-use change on estuaries, ecosystem services, and human well-being.

## EDUCATING COMMUNITIES

**Goal:** Advance environmental appreciation and scientific literacy, allowing for science-based decisions that positively affect estuaries, watersheds, and coastal communities.

**Objective 1:** Coastal residents and visitors will increase their awareness and ability to improve stewardship of estuaries, coastal watersheds, and their communities.

**Objective 2:** Educators and students will better understand and use reserve system and NOAA resources for place-based and inquiry-based learning.

**Objective 3:** Coastal decision-makers and environmental professionals will understand and effectively apply science-based tools, information, and planning approaches that support resilient estuaries and coastal communities.

**Objective 4:** The next generation of coastal professionals and environmental stewards will expand and be motivated through access to programs and facilities that facilitate research, resource management, and educational opportunities.

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