

LaNERR

(Louisiana National Estuarine Research Reserve)

The search for a National Estuarine Research Reserve in Louisiana wants to involve you!



The LaNERR Site Development Committee will host a series of Town Hall meetings to provide information on three possible sites: Atchafalaya Basin, Barataria Basin and Pontchartrain Basin. Three Town Hall meetings (virtual and hybrid) have been organized for each site. Webinar information can be found at www.laseagrant.org/deltanerr. The public is encouraged to participate.



Stewardship



Research



Education



Training

The National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERR) is a network of estuarine areas representative of the various biogeographic regions in the United States. Reserves are established for long-term research, education, stewardship and interpretation to promote informed management of our nation's estuaries and coastal habitats. A reserve represents a partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and coastal states. NOAA provides funding and national guidance, and each site is managed by a lead state agency with input from local partners.

NOAA's Designation Process

Step 1 – Letter of Interest

Governor John Bel Edwards sent a letter of interest on July 23, 2019, to the undersecretary of NOAA who responded affirmatively in December 2019. In said letter, Louisiana Sea Grant was identified as the lead agency in the designation process, along with the Governor's Office of Coastal Activities, and initiated the process to nominate a Louisiana NEER to NOAA.

Step 2 – Site Selection and Nomination (Current Step)

Step 3 – Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Management Plan

Step 4 – Final Environmental Impact Statement and Management Plan

Step 5 – Designation Findings and Certificate; Record of Decision

Step 6 – Designation Ceremony



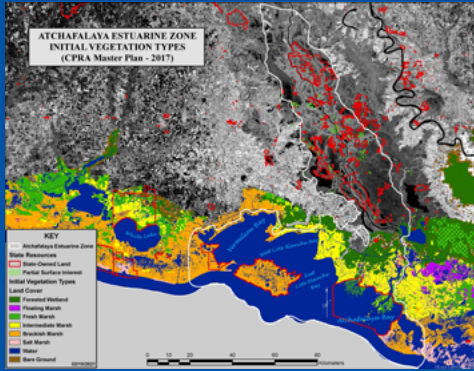


Why Should Louisiana have a NERR?

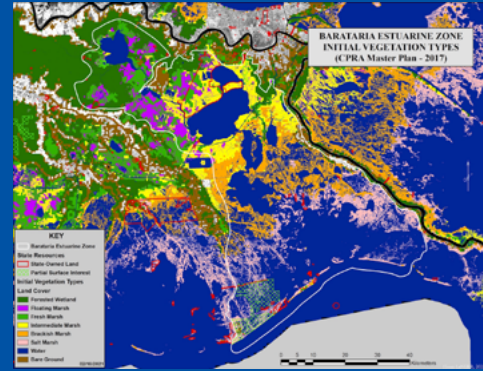
Louisiana is one of only two salt-water states in the nation without a designated Reserve. A Louisiana-based Reserve could complement and extend the scientific, educational and stewardship activities and needs of programs like the EPA National Estuary Program (Barataria National Estuary Program), the Louisiana Coastal Management Program, the Louisiana Sea Grant Program and various academic institutions through the addition of funding, resources and expertise. The health of the Mississippi River Delta ecosystem and its many services to Louisiana and the nation would benefit from establishing a NERR.

What Areas are Being Considered as a LaNERR Site?

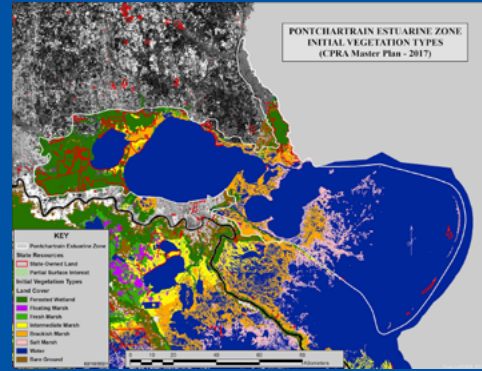
Three coastal basins are being considered for the location of a Reserve in coastal Louisiana. Each basin has habitats representative of a delta and contain resources to sustain programs in research, education and stewardship that are important to the mission of a NERR. Town Hall meetings have been organized (visit the LaNERR web site for details) to discuss preliminary plans for a Reserve at each of these proposed locations. One of these sites will be nominated based on criteria that have been approved by NOAA to meet the mission of a NERR (see LaNERR web site for criteria). We hope to have a nomination by June 2022 to complete Step #2 in the process (see above) and allow Louisiana to proceed with Steps 3–5 to designate a NERR along our coast.



Atchafalaya Basin



Barataria Basin



Pontchartrain Basin

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