



NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM

WHAT ARE ESTUARIES?

Estuaries are places where freshwater from rivers mixes with saltwater from the ocean.

Estuaries contain important habitats such as wetlands, mudflats, rocky shores, and seagrass beds.

Estuaries serve as nursery and spawning areas. Almost 80% of the commercial and recreational fish we catch depend on estuaries for part or all of their lives.



Please visit:
www.epa.gov/nep
 for more information

Overview

- Established under the 1987 Clean Water Act Amendments, the **National Estuary Program (NEP)** protects and restores the ecological integrity of estuaries of national significance.
- The NEP operates through partnerships** among EPA and other Federal, State, and local organizations, industry, academia, environmental and business groups, and community residents.
- There are **28 local National Estuary Programs**, each with a Director and staff, working with local stakeholders to improve the health of the waters, habitats, and living resources of their estuaries.
- The NEP uses an **inclusive decision-making process** to deliver on-the-ground action and results. The program is an important national model for the protection and management of watersheds.



How Do Local NEPs Protect Estuaries?

- Together with their partners, local NEPs develop and implement **locally-driven plans** to improve water quality, habitat, and living resources in and surrounding their estuaries.
- Local NEPs develop **tailored approaches** to address **critical water quality priorities** in their specific places.
- Local NEPs look across their watershed and recognize the **connection between upstream sources of pollution and downstream impacts**.
- Local NEPs engage in **adaptive management approaches** to tie monitoring to management actions, and make corrections where necessary.

COMMON CHALLENGES FACING LOCAL NEPs:

- Habitat loss & Degradation
- Declines in Fish and Wildlife Resources
- Invasive Species
- Alteration of Natural Flow Regimes
- Nutrient Over-enrichment
- Toxics and Emerging Contaminants
- Harmful Algal Blooms
- Sea Level Rise, Coastal Flooding, and Coastal Erosion

Local NEP Websites

Albemarle-Pamlico Sounds
www.apnep.org

Barataria-Terrebonne
www.btnep.org

Barnegat Bay
www.barnegatbaypartnership.org/

Buzzards Bay
www.buzzardsbay.org

Casco Bay
www.cascobayestuary.org/

Charlotte Harbor
www.chnep.org

Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries
www.cbbep.org

Delaware Inland Bays
www.inlandbays.org

Galveston Bay
www.gbep.state.tx.us

Indian River Lagoon
www.irlcouncil.com/

Long Island Sound
www.longislandsoundstudy.net

Lower Columbia Estuary
www.estuarypartnership.org/

Maryland Coastal Bays
www.mdcoastalbays.org

Massachusetts Bays
www.mass.gov/orgs/massbays-national-estuary-program

Mobile Bay
www.mobilebaynep.com

Morro Bay
www.mbnep.org

Narragansett Bay
www.nbep.org

New York-New Jersey Harbor
http://www.harborestuary.org/

Partnership for the Delaware Estuary
www.delawareestuary.org

Peconic Estuary Program
www.peconicestuary.org

Piscataqua Region Estuaries
www.preestuaries.org/

Puget Sound
www.psp.wa.gov

San Francisco Estuary
www.sfestuary.org/

San Juan Bay
www.estuario.org

Santa Monica Bay
www.santamonicaabay.org

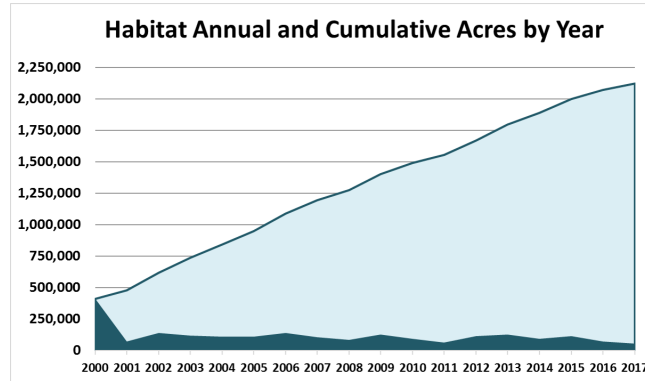
Sarasota Bay
www.sarasotabay.org

Tampa Bay
www.tbep.org

Tillamook Bay
www.tbnep.org

An Effective and Efficient Public-Private Partnership

What has the NEP accomplished?



ON-THE-GROUND RESULTS

Local NEPs have protected and restored over **2 million acres** of habitat since 2000

Local NEPs cultivate collaboration and build partnerships that make **on-the-ground results possible.**



Fostering investment over the **long term** builds capacity to provide sustained benefits.

LEVERAGING FUNDS

Local NEPs provide a high return on investment, with **\$19 leveraged for every dollar** provided by EPA.

NEP Primary Leveraged Dollars (\$5.71 billion) 2003 to 2017

