



Joint News Release From National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration Restore America's Estuaries

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NOAA05-R913

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 6, 2005

NOAA \$1.9 MILLION GRANT WILL RESTORE ESTUARIES FROM MAINE TO WASHINGTON

Projects by Restore America's Estuaries to Help Coastal Fisheries

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration awarded a grant for over \$1.9 million to the environmental organization, Restore America's Estuaries, as part of a multi-project partnership to restore habitat important to the conservation of coastal fisheries in 11 major estuaries.

Through this award, Restore America's Estuaries will implement community-based habitat restoration projects benefiting marine, estuarine and riparian habitats in the Gulf of Maine, Narragansett Bay, Long Island Sound, Hudson-Raritan Estuary, Chesapeake Bay, Albemarle and Pamlico Sounds, Tampa Bay, Louisiana's Mississippi Delta, Galveston Bay, San Francisco Bay, and Puget Sound. Habitats may include salt marshes, seagrass beds, oyster reefs, coral reefs, mangrove forests, shellfish beds, and freshwater spawning and rearing habitats in streams and rivers.

"The continued partnership between NOAA and Restore America's Estuaries demonstrates our joint commitment to restore fisheries habitat," said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. "These habitat restoration efforts fit into our model of ecosystem-based management, and promote local stewardship of the habitats that sustain our nation's fishery resources."

Mark Wolf-Armstrong, president of Restore America's Estuaries, said, "We are delighted to be partnering with NOAA's Restoration Center for another year, and we look forward to closing in on the nation's goal of restoring one million acres of estuarine habitat by 2010. Our partnership will build on our earlier successes and result in hundreds of new restoration projects, leading to more engaged communities and healthier coasts for us and our children."

The restoration projects will improve fisheries by providing nursery areas and food sources for commercial and recreational species.

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The funding will support the 6th year of a partnership between RAE and the NOAA Restoration Center for coastal habitat restoration projects. RAE's mission is to preserve the nation's network of estuaries by protecting and restoring the lands and waters essential to the richness and diversity of coastal life. Past projects funded through the NOAA Fisheries Service partnership with RAE include small projects that foster environmental stewardship, large-scale hydrologic marsh restorations and citizen-driven dam removals.

Since 1995, Restore America's Estuaries has worked closely with community, business, academic and governmental organizations to preserve the extraordinary heritage of our nation's estuaries. Restore America's Estuaries' members are: American Littoral Society, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, Connecticut Fund for the Environment, Conservation Law Foundation, Galveston Bay Foundation, North Carolina Coastal Federation, People For Puget Sound, Save San Francisco Bay Association, Save The Bay - Narragansett Bay, and Tampa BayWatch.

The NOAA Restoration Center Community-based Restoration Program (CRP) is a financial and technical assistance program that promotes strong partnerships at the national, regional, and local level to restore fisheries habitat. NOAA CRP works with organizations and government to support locally-driven habitat restoration projects in marine, estuarine, and riparian areas. NOAA CRP funds on-the-ground habitat restoration projects that (1) offer educational and social benefits for citizens and their communities, and (2) provide long-term ecological benefits for fishery resources. Since 1996, more than 900 projects in 26 states have been implemented using NOAA funding and leveraged funding from national and regional habitat restoration partners.

Each year, NOAA awards approximately \$900 million in grants to members of the academic, scientific and business communities to assist the agency in fulfilling its mission to study the Earth's natural systems in order to predict environmental change, manage ocean resources, protect life and property, and provide decision makers with reliable scientific information. NOAA goals and programs reflect a commitment to these basic responsibilities of science and service to the nation for the past 35 years.

NOAA, an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

On the web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>.

Community-based Restoration Program: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration>

Restore America's Estuaries: <http://www.estuaries.org/>