



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
Office for Coastal Management**

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** Reserve Managers and State Contacts

**TO:** Jeffrey Payne, Ph.D.  
Director, Office for Coastal Management

**THROUGH:** Joelle Gore  
Division Chief, Stewardship Division, Office for Coastal  
Management

**FROM:** Erica Seiden  
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**SUBJECT:** FY 2024 National Estuarine Research Reserve System  
Funding Allocations and Guidance

This memorandum explains how the fiscal year 2024 funding that is congressionally appropriated for the National Estuarine Research Reserve System will be distributed. This funding guidance is based on the funding levels contained in the FY2024 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 188-122), which provided \$33,300,000 for the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. This is \$800,000 more than the FY2023 appropriation. NOAA deductions for FY2024 equal \$33,300, and increases from FY2023 carry over equal \$129,645, resulting in \$33,396,345 in total available funding. However, due to the timing of the fellowship competition award negotiations with students, the total allocated for the Davidson Fellowship is less than the full amount anticipated and the FY23 carryover amount was not available to factor into planning, leaving \$392,114 to carryover into FY25. This memorandum provides guidance on the allocation and use of these funds, which are detailed in Tables 1 and 2.

## Funding Facts

<b>FY2024 Operations, Research, and Facilities Funding (ORF)</b>	
FY2024 ORF Appropriation	\$33,300,000
FY2024 Reductions	(\$33,300)
FY2023 Carryover	\$129,645
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$33,396,345</b>
FY2024 Carryover	\$392,114
<b>FY2024 Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction (PAC)</b>	
FY2024 PAC Appropriation	\$8,500,000
FY2023 PAC Carryover	\$446,937
FY2024 NOAA Reductions	(89,119)
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,857,818</b>
<p>The total allocated for the National Estuarine Research Reserve System for operations, research, and facilities is \$33,004,231. This includes the total amount from the FY2024 Consolidated Appropriations Act, less reductions of \$33,300 for the NOAA Hollings Scholarship program assessment and addition of \$129,645 carryover. FY24 funds in the amount of \$392,114 will be carried over into FY25 per the explanation above. The FY2024 PAC competition is recommending eight new construction, planning, and design projects for a total of \$6,028,458; and \$2,160,000 to support five existing projects impacted by inflationary costs during the Covid pandemic.</p>	

## Overview

The FY2024 appropriation of \$33,300,000, minus the reductions and carryover additions, as well as current year carryover noted above, provides \$33,004,231 for allocation. Each reserve and the Centralized Data Management Office (CDMO) will receive \$880,967 for operations. NOAA's Office for Coastal Management will retain \$20,000 to support SWMP equipment maintenance, shipping, training, and supplies. The Science Collaborative Program will receive \$4,000,000 to implement the first year of a five-year cooperative agreement. The competition for the recipient of this award is underway. Note that an additional Small Business Innovative Research tax of 3.5 percent is levied on the Science Collaborative allocation prior to fund distribution. The National Estuarine Research Reserve Association will receive \$120,000 to support strategic partnerships, communications efforts to improve program awareness, and the Friends and Foundation Network of partners. NOAA will support the first year of the third cohort of students in the Margaret A. Davidson Fellowship and will fund students at all reserves, allocating \$1,504,254 directly to student institutions for their associated research, travel, and indirect costs. Lastly, NOAA will apply \$50,000 to support diversity, equity, inclusion, justice and access efforts that support the system's goals.

## **Applicable Regulations**

Allocations for operations, management, education, monitoring, and research fall under Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA), Section 315(e), and the applicable regulations at 15 CFR Part 921 Subparts G, H, and I, including the 70:30 (federal:state) match requirement (except for projects that benefit the entire system, which do not require match). The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2024 (Public Law 118-122) includes a provision authorizing up to 50 percent of the cost sharing requirements under PAC. This waiver is based upon need and will not be automatically granted for FY2024 funds. Reserves wishing to designate another entity to receive a portion of their allocation must meet the statutory and regulatory requirements regarding the recipient (eligible recipients are state entities for education and operations, and state entities or public or private persons for research and monitoring). Agreements between the lead agency and the designated entity must be in place before submitting an award application. The allocation of funds to each reserve is shown in Table 2. Additionally, please see the federal government's Office of Management and Budget Uniform Grant Guidance which will apply to all operations awards for research reserves. For more information, visit [https://coast.noaa.gov/data/coasthome/funding/\\_pdf/forms/budget-narrative-guidance-for-NOAA-grants.pdf](https://coast.noaa.gov/data/coasthome/funding/_pdf/forms/budget-narrative-guidance-for-NOAA-grants.pdf)

## **Application Procedures**

Per this memo, the following application procedures are being distributed to eligible state recipients. Please work closely with your program liaison to complete all requirements associated with award development and submission. Recipients must find and apply for these funds via grants.gov using search term NERR and CFDA number 11.420. Recipients must download the application package and complete all forms including the SF424, SF424A, SF424B, and CD511. Recipients, including multi-year pilot programs, must complete their scope of work using the Coastal and Marine Management Program: <https://coast.noaa.gov/cammp/>. The final CAMMP document must be attached to the grants.gov application. Please submit your application according to the schedule below and apprise your program specialist of any administrative challenges.

Recipients, including multi-year pilots, with July award start dates should submit their applications to grants.gov by April 12 and recipients, including multi-year pilots, with award start dates past July should submit their applications to grants.gov by May 10. The FY2025 NERRS Final Funding Guidance and Allocations will include the final allocations for the second year of the multi-year award, and NOAA's Office for Coastal Management will work with pilot states to develop any necessary budget revisions based on FY2025 appropriations.

## **Reserve Operations, Research, Monitoring, Training, Education, and Stewardship**

Each operations award requires a 30 percent state match to the 70 percent federal allocation. Reserve operations awards are cooperative agreements and may be awarded for a period of 18 months. Personnel costs should be limited to 12 months to avoid any overlap with future awards. The core positions - manager, research coordinator, and education coordinator - should be fully funded (with state funds as much as possible) without the need to raise additional salary money

from external sources. Please refer to the FY 2024 NERR Operations Award Guidance for information to support development of the application.

The tasks outlined below should be distinct tasks within the award and supported adequately to achieve the stated outcomes. The target amounts have been determined by the sectors responsible for the following programs as a basis for implementation. Individual amounts per program may vary based on needs to achieve the stated outcomes.

### 1. System-wide Monitoring Program

All reserves must allocate funds to fully implement the current components of the NERR System-wide Monitoring Program (SWMP) including: operation of four water quality monitoring stations, a weather station, and monitoring for estuarine nutrients and chlorophyll *a*. Each reserve should continue to collect continuous data from a weather station and at least four long-term water quality datalogger stations, which should be calibrated, deployed, retrieved and operated in compliance with NERR SWMP protocols. The monitoring program for nutrients and chlorophyll *a* should consist of (at a minimum) monthly grab samples from the four SWMP datalogger stations and 24 hour automated sampling from a single SWMP datalogger station. Monitoring under this task includes data collection, quality control/quality assurance of all data, and timely data submission to the NERRS Centralized Data Management Office. A special award condition will stipulate these SWMP requirements. On average, it costs \$175,000 to implement this task; however, reserves may spend more or less, but the requirements for SWMP monitoring must be met. These SWMP funds typically should be used to support full-time and part-time SWMP technicians, pay for collection and processing of nutrient samples, and provide support for equipment upgrades, repairs, and routine maintenance. Reserves should replace and/or upgrade sondes and be aware of, and plan for, equipment lifespans to ensure continuity of operations. Funding decisions regarding on-site operation of SWMP should be made in close consultation with the reserve research coordinator and technician(s). Reserves should focus on supporting the core elements of SWMP and as they are able, continue biological monitoring and/or add components of additional elective monitoring modules. These efforts should follow research reserve system protocols, and details should be included in the task description and outcomes.

### 2. Coastal Training Program

All reserves must allocate funds to fully implement the Coastal Training Program (CTP). The national target for this program is \$120,000; however, reserves may allocate more or less funding, but the performance requirements must be met. The task description should reflect the program's strategy direction and include services, products, and projects to be implemented. A specific award condition will stipulate that reserves will have a Coastal Training Program Coordinator, comply with the training program's guidance, and submit performance reports on progress, programs, services, products, and performance monitoring data according to the agreed performance metrics.

### 3. Teachers on the Estuary Program

All reserves must allocate funds to conduct a 'Teachers on the Estuary' (TOTE) Program or market analysis/needs assessment to support the program during the pandemic. On average it costs \$15,000 to implement one TOTE workshop; however, reserves may allocate more or less funding, but the performance requirements for TOTE must be met. Reserves with an approved

market analysis/needs assessment will implement one TOTE professional development workshop that aligns to the state or national curriculum framework and includes an evaluation.

### **System-Wide Support Activities**

System-wide activities are those that benefit the entire reserve system, and are funded with 100 percent federal funds that do not require matching funds. The NERRS Centralized Data Management Office, housed at the University of South Carolina, Belle Baruch Lab, will receive \$4,000,000 for data management, synthesis, and dissemination,

### **Davidson Fellowship Activities**

NOAA will fund the first year of the third cohort of Margaret A. Davidson Fellows. Students will be funded directly through their academic institutions. We will fund 30 fellowship awards totaling \$1,504,254. Each reserve should allocate \$7,000 to support student supply, equipment and/or travel needs and/or general support for student research at the reserve. For those reserves that did not receive applications, this funding should support outreach and partnership efforts to prepare for the next competition.

### **Other Reserve Projects**

Table 1 reflects additional activities including support for the research reserve system's Collaborative Science Program in the amount of \$4,000,000, which assists the reserve system in meeting its mission through administering the program and supporting collaborative research. Note that an additional tax is levied on this program by NOAA, Small Business Innovation Research (approximately 3.5 percent of the allocation) which reduces the total amount the University of Michigan will receive. That deduction is not reflected in the allocation noted above.

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**Table 1. FY 2024 NERRS Budget Overview and Allocation Summary**

<b>Budget Category</b>	<b>Allocation</b>
Reserve Program Operations (\$880,967/reserve)	\$26,429,010
Centralized Data Management Office	\$880,967
Science Collaborative	\$4,000,000
SWMP Maintenance and Equipment Support	\$20,000
Margaret A. Davidson Fellowship	\$1,504,254
National Estuarine Research Reserve Association	\$120,000
Support for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice and Access	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$33,004,231</b>

<b>Budget Overview</b>	
FY24 ORF Appropriation	\$33,300,000
NOAA Deductions	(\$33,300)
FY23 Carryover	\$129,645
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$33,396,345</b>
FY24 Carryover	(\$392,114)
<b>Total for FY24 Allocation</b>	<b>\$33,004,231</b>

**Table 2. FY 2024 National Estuarine Research Reserve Allocations**

<b>Reserve</b>	<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Federal (70%)</b>	<b>State (30%)</b>	<b>Start Date</b>
ACE Basin, SC	SC Dept of Natural Resources	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Apalachicola, FL	FL Dept of Env Protection	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Chesapeake Bay, MD	Maryland Dept of Natural Resources	\$880,967	\$377,558	10/1/24
Chesapeake Bay, VA	College of William and Mary	\$880,967	\$377,558	9/1/24
Connecticut	University of Connecticut	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Delaware	DE Dept of Natural Resources & Env Control	\$880,967	\$377,558	10/1/24
Elkhorn Slough, CA	CA Coastal Conservancy	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Grand Bay, MS	MS Dept of Marine Resources	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Great Bay, NH	NH Dept of Fish and Game	\$717,667	\$307,572	7/1/24
Great Bay, NH	University of New Hampshire	\$163,300	\$69,986	7/1/24
GTM, FL	Florida Dept of Env Protection	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
He'eia, HI	University of Hawai'i	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Hudson River, NY	NY Dept of Env Conservation	\$827,218	\$354,522	7/1/24
Hudson River, NY	NY Greenway Conservancy	\$53,749	\$23,036	7/1/24
Jacques Cousteau, NJ	Rutgers University	\$880,967	\$377,558	10/1/24
Jobos Bay, PR	PR Dept of Natural and Env Resources	\$880,967	\$377,558	10/1/24
Kachemak Bay, AK	University of Alaska	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Lake Superior, WI	University of Wisconsin	\$880,967	\$377,558	11/1/24
Mission Aransas, TX	University of Texas	\$880,967	\$377,558	9/1/24
Narragansett Bay, RI	RI Dept of Environmental Management	\$880,967	\$377,558	9/1/24
North Carolina	NC Dept Environmental Quality	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
North Inlet-Winyah Bay, SC	University of South Carolina	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Old Woman Creek, OH	OH Dept of Natural Resources	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Padilla Bay, WA	WA Dept of Ecology	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Rookery Bay, FL	Florida Dept of Env Protection	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
San Francisco Bay, CA	San Francisco State University	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Sapelo Island, GA	GA Dept of Natural Resources	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
South Slough, OR	OR Division of State Lands	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Tijuana River, CA	CA Dept of Parks and Recreation	\$444,819	\$190,637	7/1/24
Tijuana River, CA	Southwest Interpretive Association	\$436,148	\$186,921	7/1/24
Waquoit Bay, MA	MA Dept of Environmental Management	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24
Weeks Bay, AL	AL Dept of Conservation and Nat Resources	\$880,967	\$377,558	10/1/24
Wells, ME	Wells Management Authority	\$880,967	\$377,558	7/1/24