

Site Profile Requirements

The development of a site profile is to be implemented by each Reserve as Phase II of the Three Phase Monitoring Program as required by the NERRS Regulations (§921.60). The site profile is a synthesis of information gathered during Phase I, the Environmental Characterization Phase, which is conducted as a combination of literature and field (optional) research that provides an overall picture of the Reserve in terms of its resources, issues, management constraints, and research needs. The site profile will help Reserve management find important information gaps in the resources and identify the aspects of monitoring to be initiated during Phase III, the Resource Monitoring Program.

General Expectations

Sites should complete their site profile within three years of designation. Chapter five of the site profile describing research and monitoring activities should be reviewed and updated every 5 years as part of the site's management plan.

Purpose

The purpose of the site profile is to review the existing state of knowledge for each Reserve's research and monitoring activities and to identify research and monitoring needs that should be addressed in the future. The site profile does not necessarily need to be a long document. If a Reserve can adequately cover its site profile in 75-100 pages, that is acceptable. This document will be given to prospective researchers, resource managers and the general public upon request, and it therefore should be a document that the Reserve can hold in high regard. The site profile does not need to be an overly exhaustive research review and the Reserve does not need to conduct any field research to obtain information for this document. If, for example, a Reserve cannot find any information on the plankton at the site, the Reserve should identify this as a gap in its research knowledge and an area where the Reserve needs to focus more research effort in the future. If there is a lot of information on a particular research topic pertinent to a Reserve's site profile, e.g. the benthos, only the most appropriate summary literature needs to be cited.

Regarding multi-component Reserve site profiles, the review of each component should be incorporated into a single site profile document. This will provide the best method of integrating the research information for multi-component site Reserves. If a Reserve only has good information on a few of the components of the site, the Reserve should incorporate the information it currently has in its site profile and identify the lack of research knowledge about the other components as research areas that need to be focused on in the future.

It is not necessary for the Reserve's Research Coordinator to write the site profile unless he or she wants to and the Reserve can provide the time for the Research Coordinator to do so. We encourage the Research Coordinator to act as the editor, writing the Introduction and Summary sections of the site profile while contracting out the other sections to academics that are familiar with the literature in each particular section. However, this is a decision for each Reserve to make. Part of the \$120K that ERD presently allocates to each Reserve for monitoring each year is the preferred way for each Reserve to fund this effort. ERD may make some funds available to help defray the cost of publishing site profiles, but this is contingent on ERD's annual budget. Finally, drafts of the site profile should be sent to ERD and other appropriate parties for review before a final draft is sent to the printer.

Content

Below is the outline of the minimum content that each Reserve site profile should contain. This outline has been provided to each Reserve as part of the Site Profile Guidance memo. Site profiles should contain a high quality map of the Reserve. However, it is not necessary for the Reserve to publish a glossy and expensive document; a black and white document with an economical binding is acceptable. Reserves are encouraged to refer to the following documents as they plan and conduct their own site profile that are excellent examples of completed site profiles:

- Zedler, J.B., C.S. Nordby, and B.E. Kus. 1992. The Ecology of Tijuana Estuary, California: A National Estuarine Research Reserve. NOAA office of Coastal Resource Management, Sanctuaries and Reserves Division, Washington, D.C.;
- Short, F.T. (ed.) 1992. The Ecology of the Great Bay Estuary, New Hampshire and Maine: an Estuarine Profile and Bibliography. NOAA - Coastal Ocean Program. 222 pp.