



National Estuarine
Research Reserve
ASSOCIATION

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate
The Honorable Mitch McConnell,
Minority Leader, U.S. Senate
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, Speaker,
U.S. House of Representatives
The Honorable Kevin McCarthy,
Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 2051

December 7, 2022

Dear Congressional Leaders:

On behalf of the National Estuarine Research Reserve Association and its 36,000+ supporters, we urge you to approve the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) before you adjourn in 2022.

Over 50 years—and through many crises—National Estuarine Research Reserves have supported coastal communities with data, science, technical assistance, and education programs that mitigate the impacts of pollution, drought, erosion, and flooding. In this work, Reserves depend on partners like the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for projects that not only protect people, places, and businesses, but also sustain the natural infrastructure that is our best defense against flooding and pollution.

The WRDA is essential to American life—particularly in the Coastal Zone, where half of our citizens live, work, and recreate and which contributes some \$143 billion to the national economy each year. Healthy natural infrastructure, such as the USACE and Reserves promote, is critical to our economy. For this reason, we are pleased to see provisions in the WRDA to address harmful algal blooms and guidance to manage invasive species. This complements Reserve efforts and will help protect tourism-dependent industries, recreational fishing, and public health.

Likewise, the WRDA's focus on protecting and restoring shorelines and riverbanks will enhance Reserves' ongoing efforts to empower communities through coastal hazard planning, vulnerability assessment, and nature-based infrastructure demonstration. Specifically, we applaud the bill's support for shoreline protection and restoration, for states, and for those communities most vulnerable to coastal hazards.

The progress of this bill has been highly bipartisan, and its passage in 2022 will benefit coastal communities along every coast. On behalf of Reserves and their many supporters, we appreciate your consideration of this request and thank you for your leadership on this critical issue.

Respectfully,

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