

## **Estuary Restoration Act**

**Agencies:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**Citation:** [33 U.S.C. §§ 2901 et seq.](#)

**Enacted as:** the “Estuary Restoration Act of 2000”, on November 7, 2000 as Title I of the “Estuaries and Clean Waters Act of 2000”

### **Summary:**

The [Estuary Restoration Act \(ERA\)](#) was enacted to: promote a coordinated Federal approach to estuary habitat restoration; forge effective partnerships among public agencies and between the public and private sectors; provide financial and technical assistance for estuary habitat restoration projects; and, develop and enhance monitoring and research capabilities.

The Act established an interagency [Council](#) to carry out these directives, and required the Council to develop an [Estuary Habitat Restoration Strategy](#). The Act also directed NOAA to develop [monitoring protocols](#) for estuary habitat restoration projects, and to create and maintain a [national database of restoration projects](#).

In 2007 the ERA was modified by [amendments](#) to the Water Resources Development Act of 2007. The 2007 amendments made the following significant changes to the ERA:

- Allows the Army Corps of Engineers to use cooperative agreements and contracts with project sponsors.
- Monitoring costs associated with an ERA-funded project may be included in the total cost of the project.
- Small projects are to be considered as those less than \$1,000,000.
- The Secretary of the Army may delegate implementation of a small project to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the National Resources Conservation Science (NRCS).
- Requires reports to Congress every two years beginning in 2008.
- Authorizes \$2.5 million each to NOAA, FWS, EPA, and NRCS in fiscal years 2008-2012 to carry out restoration projects under the ERA.

Under the ERA, NOAA developed and maintains a [restoration project database](#), the National Estuaries Restoration Inventory (NERI) and [established standards](#) for restoration. NOAA became Chair of the Estuary Habitat Restoration Council in 2009 for a three-year term.

NOAA compiles project information for the restoration project database by working with other federal agencies; continues to refine restoration monitoring protocols as the science improves; and is currently developing metrics to determine the economic value and impact of restoration.

**Source:** <http://www.era.noaa.gov/information/act.html>

**Information last updated:** September 20, 2012