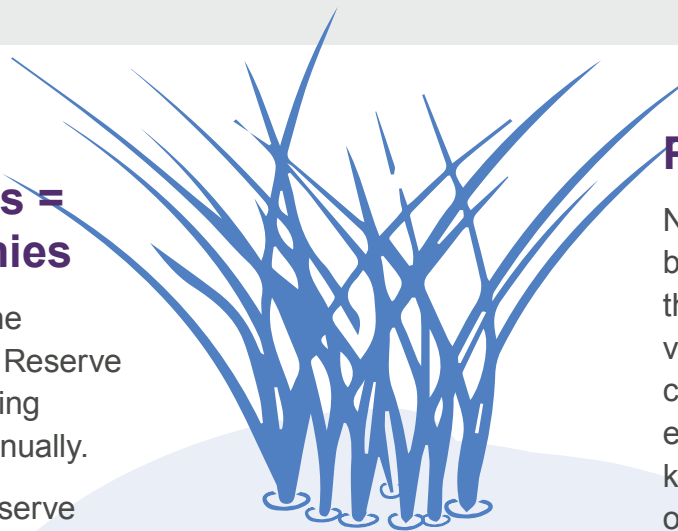# Florida's Research Reserves
Strengthens economic resilience

Florida's National Estuarine Research Reserves are a positive influence on the state's economy. Through programs and partnerships, the Apalachicola, Guana Tolomato Matanzas (GTM), and Rookery Bay Research Reserves support local jobs and contribute to revenues that build the economic resilience of businesses and communities. Collectively, Reserves and their partners help to protect and manage **418,000+ acres of coastal lands and waters** that provide many valuable benefits to Florida's natural resource-dependent industries.

Resilient habitats = resilient economies

- Habitats managed by the Apalachicola Research Reserve help sustain a local fishing industry worth **$16M** annually.

- The GTM Research Reserve studies and protects habitats that are essential to St. Johns and Flagler counties' white shrimp industry, valued at **$1M** annually.

- Home of the Rookery Bay Reserve, habitats in Collier County support a local fishing industry that nets an average of **$7.2M** each year.

Power economies

Natural resources managed by Research Reserves and their partners attract **2.1M** visitors whose spending contributes **$114.1M** to local economies as they enjoy kayaking, fishing, hiking, and other activities.

Contribute to revenues

Through investments in staff salaries, facilities maintenance, operations, and partnerships, Florida's Research Reserves enhance local revenues by **$45M**.

Support local jobs

Research Reserves support **1,697 jobs** in the transit, tourism, food, and hotel industries in Collier, Duval, Flagler, Franklin, St. Johns, & Lee counties.

Ecotourism at Rookery Bay

Mangrove tunnels, rookery islands, oyster reefs—a kayak through the Rookery Bay Research Reserve offers a rare view of the Everglades' pristine habitats. Through a partnership with a local ecotourism operator, more than **13,000** paddlers and passengers explore the Reserve's **110,000** acres each year. These visits generate more than **$1M** in revenues and support stewardship of these special places.

Keeping watch on Apalachicola Bay

Long-term monitoring led by the Apalachicola Bay Research Reserve supports the local fishing industry and surrounding communities. The Reserve's monitoring program tracks the influences of land use, climate change, and storm events on water quality—critical information to support decisions to reopen a world-famous oyster industry that recently closed after years of drought and other pressures.

Protecting people and places

Amid intensifying storms, the bottom line for Florida's tourism and fisheries industries relies on stable coasts and healthy habitats. A project led by the GTM Research Reserve combined oyster reefs and built structures in an innovative approach to shoreline stabilization that can withstand high-energy waves and boat wakes. The design is now being installed in other estuaries around the state.

Reserves benefit coastal communities nationwide.

- The **29 Reserves** in the National Estuarine Research Reserve System benefit coastal communities nationwide.

- Across the **1.3+ million acres** of coastal lands and waters that Reserves help to protect, there are **4,500 miles** of waterfront, **889 miles** of hiking and paddle trails, and **337 species** of flora and fauna that are rare, endangered, or of concern.

- Each year, reserves create experiences for more than **600,000 visitors** through educational programs for teachers, the public, and students of all ages.

- Reserves **energize economies** by sustaining jobs, contributing to local revenues, helping to protect habitats for commercial and recreational fishing, and leading programs to restore and manage habitats that provide many benefits for surrounding communities.

NATIONAL ESTUARINE RESEARCH RESERVES

Alaska   Hawaii   Puerto Rico   U.S Virgin Islands

● designated reserve
● proposed reserve
● designation in process

NERRA
National Estuarine Research Reserve
ASSOCIATION

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