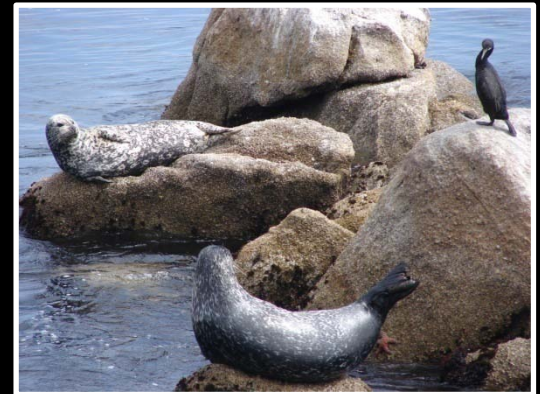


# Estuary Restoration Act

## Five Agencies, Four Coasts, One Goal

November 16, 2010







# History of the Act

- Estuary Restoration Act passed in 2000
- First Strategy finalized in 2002
- ERA was amended in 2007 through the Water Resources Development Act
- Army has chaired the Council through 2009; now it is chaired by NOAA



# The Council

- Estuary Habitat Restoration Council members - Army, NOAA, EPA, FWS, and USDA
- Responsibilities
  - Develop/Update a Strategy and cooperate in its' implementation
  - Solicit, review, evaluate and recommend restoration project proposals for funding
  - Advise on database, monitoring standards and required reports



# Accomplishments

- Database/Project Tracking:
  - National Estuaries Restoration Inventory (NERI)
- Monitoring:
  - Minimum monitoring requirements for funded projects
  - Science based Restoration Monitoring of Coastal Habitats Volume 1 &2
  - Measuring Restoration Success Using Reserves as Reference Sites
- Socio-economic Monitoring Studies
  - Investigating Socioeconomic Value of NOAA Wetlands Restoration Projects (*Report due 2011*)
  - Restore America's Estuaries Blue Ribbon Socio-economics Panel



# Accomplishments

- Since 2003 - ~\$11 Million appropriated for projects
- 21 completed or active projects
  - Northeast = 3
  - Southeast = 9
  - Northwest = 2
  - Southwest = 4
  - Pacific = 1
  - Great Lakes = 2



# Funding

- Authorized appropriations for technical assistance and project implementation for 2008-2012:
  - Corps : \$25,000,000 per year
  - FWS : \$2,500,000 per year
  - NOAA : \$2,500,000 per year
  - EPA : \$2,500,000 per year
  - USDA : \$2,500,000 per year
- Annual appropriations average \$1 to 2 million



# Current ERA Strategy

- Purpose
  - Ensure a comprehensive approach to maximize benefits
  - Foster coordination of Federal and non-Federal activities
- Goal
  - Restore 1,000,000 acres by 2010
- Factors
  - Elements of the strategy are discussed in section 106(d) of the Act.



## Sec. 106 (d) Strategy Elements

- Promote restoration projects in estuary habitat
- Promote the creation of new public/private partnerships to carry out estuary restoration projects
- Ensure consistency with existing state and federal restoration plans
- Address historic losses, current rate of loss, and future loss or degradation of each type of estuary habitat
- Select a balance of small and large restoration projects
- Ensure equitable geographic distribution



# Why Revise the Strategy?

- Outdated - Strategy was developed 7 years ago
- Section 106(f) of the Act authorizes the Council to periodically review and update the estuary habitat restoration strategy
- Should take into account new emerging issues and priorities
  - Adaptation to climate change and sea level rise
  - Balance of economic, social, and environmental factors
- Need to integrate the amendments from the 2007 Water Resources Development Act
- Several ambitious activities not accomplished due to underfunding and understaffing



# Strategy Revision Process

- Stakeholder Input Meeting –June 24, 2010
- Public Comments requested through Federal Register to Guide Revision (July 21, 2010)
- Draft Revised Strategy developed in coordination with the Council
- Draft Revised Strategy published in the Federal Register (Nov. 15, 2010)
- Outreach at national conferences, meetings, etc.



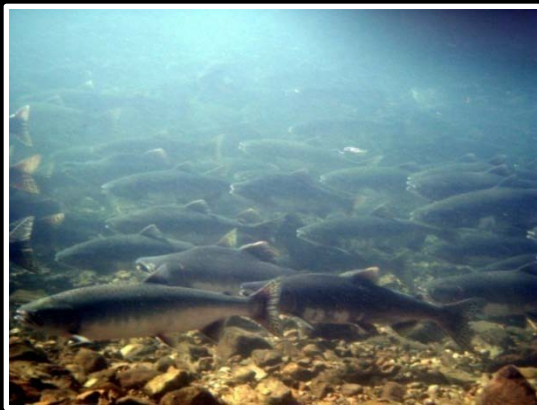
# Stakeholder Comments

- Demonstrate leadership
- Leverage support and collective action by all levels of partnerships
- Increase visibility and advocacy
- Make connections to broader policy efforts such as the National Ocean Policy
- Strengthen project management practices
- Address climate adaptation, mitigation and sea-level rise
- Develop a clear set of program metrics, including socio-economic indicators



# ERA Strategy Focus Areas

- Climate change adaptation and mitigation
- Continue to place emphasis on monitoring as a key component of projects
- Recognize socio-economic benefits of restoration
- Highlight quality and outputs versus acreage in solicitations, reports and other program communications



# What's in the draft Revised Strategy?

- Meets the requirements in 106(d)
- Takes into account new emerging issues
  - Adaptation to climate change and sea level rise
  - Balance of economic, social, and environmental factors
- Aligns with National Ocean Policy



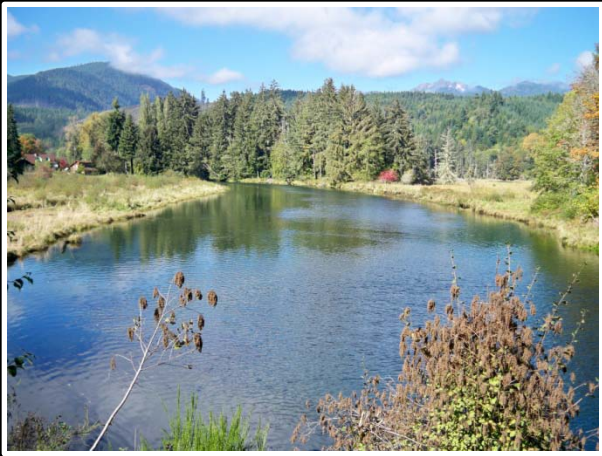
# Vision Statement

- The primary objectives of this strategy are to:
  - restore estuarine habitats in a manner that allows for adaptation to stressors associated with climate change
  - build conservation partnerships
  - provide incentives to partners to develop innovative restoration technology
  - enhance monitoring capabilities



# Overarching Principles

- Public/Private Partnerships
- Ecosystem Level Approach
- Regional Ocean Governance and National Ocean Policy
- To support this Strategy's identified focus these three principles will be viewed through the lens of climate change adaptation.



# Objectives

- Restore estuarine habitats in a manner that allows for adaptation to stressors associated with climate change
- Build conservation partnerships
- Support innovative restoration technology
- Enhance monitoring capabilities

# Mechanisms to Support the ERA Strategy



- Solicitation Process
- Efficient Project Financing and Implementation
- Science of Restoration Monitoring
- Socio-economic Monitoring
- National Estuaries Restoration Inventory
- Trends



# Two- Year Action Plan

- The ERA Council will develop an Action Plan to support implementation of the strategy
- The Council will routinely seek stakeholder and partner input to aid in development of future action items



# Moving Forward

- Finalize Strategy in February 2011
- Solicitation for projects—January 2011
  - Focus on climate adaptation projects
- Complete Report to Congress
- Work with partners on strategic outreach, education and marketing for the Program



# How to Provide Comments

- Online Form at: <http://www.era.noaa.gov>
- Email to: [estuaryrestorationact@noaa.gov](mailto:estuaryrestorationact@noaa.gov)
- Snail Mail to: Estuary Habitat Restoration Strategy, NOAA Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 14730, Silver Spring, MD 20910.



# Discussion Questions

- The strategy is supposed to “ensure a comprehensive approach to maximize benefits derived from estuary habitat restoration projects and to foster the coordination of Federal and non-Federal activities related to restoration of estuary habitat.”
  - In your opinion, does the revised strategy meet the intended purposes? If it does not - How would you improve it?
- Are the elements of the revised strategy appropriate relative to the purposes of the Act (e.g. overall principles, objectives and support mechanisms)?
- What other recommendations or concerns do you have regarding the strategy?
- Based on the slide “Moving Forward” are there any other actions that you could recommend to help implement the strategy?