

ACE Basin Research Reserve

Education is Change on the Ground



2022

Connect



99,308 acres

1,433 people participated
in public programs



Prepare

210 teachers trained

5,677 students engaged

14,489 student contact hours

Improve



802 students restored marsh

3,729 marsh grasses planted

"I felt confident enough to lead a field trip to the coast (which I elected not to do in my previous year of teaching)."

Teachers on the Estuary workshop participant

"Estuaries make me feel like a scientist because I learn and help the environment by not littering and helping the little animals where their shelter has been polluted."

ACE Basin field trip participant

Teachers BACK on the Estuary

After more than a year with only virtual options for lessons and workshops, teachers were able to participate in our Teachers on the Estuary workshop in person. This three day workshop was hosted at the McKenzie Field Station in the heart of the ACE Basin, where teachers stayed on site and received hands-on experiences with researchers and educators to bring back to their classroom. Teachers enjoyed the opportunities to network with each other and reserve staff as they learned how to incorporate field experiences into their classrooms and prepare to go on field trips again.

Marsh Madness:

A Competition for Survival in the Estuary

Marsh Madness is a fun spin on the well known NCAA basketball tournament, pitting estuarine species against one another for survival of the fittest. Students did background research on each species and filled out a bracket to decide who out competes whom in this natural competition. Each week, species battle and the winner is based on the animal's ability to survive in its own habitat, using its defense mechanisms, adaptations, diet and agility. In the first year, over 850 students participated in this virtual activity; teachers were excited to incorporate the competition into their curriculum.

Summer Library Programs: Bringing the Salt Marsh to All!

The educators at the ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve took the show on the road this summer after several libraries expressed interest in our place-based programs. Their summer reading theme was Oceans of Possibilities, and librarians and reserve staff immediately saw the connection between our world ocean and local salt marsh ecosystems. The salt marsh is such a prominent and important ecosystem in South Carolina, yet many kids that live along the coast aren't aware of the importance of it in their everyday lives. This dynamic place helps protect our coastal communities from water pollution and flooding, and is inextricably linked to the ocean, opening an Ocean of Possibilities for experiential learning. And so "Bringing the Salt Marsh to You!" was born. Education staff visited 18 libraries in four different counties in coastal South Carolina, reaching over 300 participants. These free programs, close to home at the local library, provided access to open kids' imaginations and expanded knowledge of these amazing natural resources.

The ACE Basin Reserve is one of 30 sites in the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. Each site is a state federal partnership that combines research, monitoring, and education to advance the understanding and management of estuarine environments.



National Estuarine Research Reserve Education

Change on the Ground in 2022



Connects

People to Estuaries

**1 million+
ACRES**

of natural classrooms & living laboratories with



**26 INTERPRETIVE
CENTERS**



Hello to the Connecticut Reserve, designated in 2022!



296,131 VISITORS

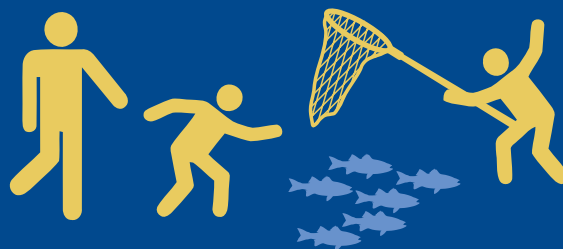
learn about estuaries through Research Reserve outreach & education

Prepares

the Next Generation

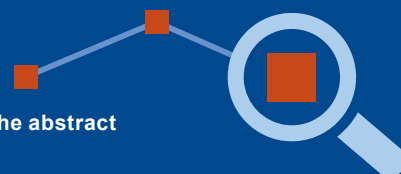
4,347 TEACHERS

are trained in the estuary & supported in the classroom



54,773 STUDENTS

take learning out of the abstract & into the outdoors



SKILLS BUILT

- ✓ Observation
- ✓ Asking research questions
- ✓ Problem solving
- ✓ Data driven decision making

ESTUARY SCIENCE

LOCAL DATA

LAB WORK

FIELD INVESTIGATION

Improves

the Environment

10,570 CITIZENS

are trained & inspired to protect their coasts & estuaries



VOLUNTEER ACTIONS

- ✓ Protect wildlife
- ✓ Monitor water quality
- ✓ Plant native species
- ✓ Clean up the coasts

30 RESEARCH RESERVE EDUCATORS

lead programs that foster coastal stewardship in communities in 25 states



Creating value through education
37,371 volunteer hours = \$1,119,261*