

Chesateach: Educating and Engaging Coastal Stewards



The primary goal of the NERRS General Education and Public Outreach Program is to enhance people's ability and willingness to make informed decisions and take responsible actions that affect coastal communities and ecosystems. The Chesapeake Bay NERR focuses on increasing awareness, understanding, appreciation, and responsible use of the Chesapeake Bay estuary through informal and formal education programs for K-12 and college audiences, teacher-training workshops, and programs for the general public.

For the past 21 years, the Reserve's K-12 Estuarine Education Program (KEEP) has increased estuarine and ocean literacy of students and teachers throughout the region. The Reserve's education program uses hands-on, investigative field and laboratory experiences coupled with estuarine science curricula that align with state and national science education standards. Efforts are made to provide students with multiple-exposure opportunities throughout their K-12 education experience in order to promote a sense of stewardship of the Bay.

In 2005, funded by the NOAA Bay Watershed Educational Experiences (B-WET) grant, the Reserve began a stronger partnership with the local schools in order to accomplish multiple-exposure opportunities. Development of the B-WET program, Chesapeake Studies, has successfully pulled together estuarine curricula, classroom activities, technology, lab work and field studies to provide a meaningful Chesapeake Bay experience for those students.



Chesapeake Bay
 National Estuarine
 Research Reserve
 in Virginia



CBNERRS Education and Outreach Results

- Designed the National Estuaries 101 and Chesapeake Exploration curricula that are correlated to national standards of learning for middle and high school grade levels.
- Reaching over 4,000 middle school students in Gloucester, Mathews and York Counties through the Chesapeake Studies program, funded in part by NOAA's Bay Watershed Education and Training Program (B-WET).
- Implementing day and residential summer programs for 1st-8th grade students.
- Offering professional teacher development opportunities focusing on building capacity of teachers to conduct meaningful field experiences and enhance classroom instruction in topics such as water quality, habitat restoration and estuarine aquarium keeping.
- Created the System Wide Monitoring System (SWMP) Education Interface, available on estuaries.noaa.gov, an educational application for the Internet that provides K-12 audiences with access to the NERRS SWMP data.
- Reaching over 1,500 life-long learners annually through family-friendly, Bay oriented learning opportunities such as the NERRS Discovery Labs.
- Recently completed Environmental Education Market Analysis and Needs Assessment for the Hampton Roads area that will provide guidance in the development and implementation of instructional programs that better fill regional needs.

For more details about the CBNERR education and outreach programs:

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