

Elkhorn Slough Research Reserve

Reopening and Rebirth in 2022

2022

Connect



25,000 visitors

2,400 adults and children
through outreach



Prepare

27 teachers trained

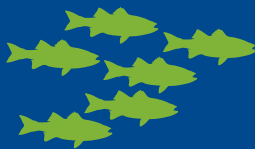
3,000 students engaged
18,000 student contact hours

Improve



Over 100 volunteer stewards activated

1,000 native plants planted



"We concluded that *Zostera marina* [eelgrass] would be a good idea to send up to space because it has so many benefits that could one day be helpful to future colonies on moons, Mars, or anywhere in space."

Teya and Caydin B. the Eel Grass Girls

In 2022 their Reserve eelgrass experiment from the did go to space with NASA and returned!



Exciting Changes for Public Programs

This year was a true celebration of resiliency with the return of public and educational programs to the Elkhorn Slough Reserve. After forced closures during 2020, and parts of 2021, education staff were thrilled to throw the doors open to the Visitor Center and share all the exciting new exhibits and other many changes at the Reserve!

Improved Access for All Visitors

During Reserve closures big changes took place to improve access for all visitors. With NOAA Procurement, Acquisition, and Construction (PAC) funds the parking lot was reconfigured to improve safety and create a more welcoming entrance. Education staff and volunteers worked side by side to plant natives creating a pollinators paradise! With state funds a new Oak Grove Amphitheater was built with all mobility access. This space now welcomes school children from all over the region. Finally, aging boardwalks were replaced and expanded to allow for estuarine exploration for K-12 school visits.

A Volunteer Renaissance

The Stewardship Education and Action (SEA) Program returned to give students a window into habitat restoration and conservation careers. SEA students planted 2,500 native plants and harvested the seeds for next year's propagation.

Demand was high for adult volunteer programs as well! Opportunities were provided in the native plant demonstration garden for excited new volunteers.

And after a two-year hiatus, docent training brought a new team of interpreters to the Reserve, including several Spanish-speaking educators who have made community events more accessible to bilingual audiences.



California's Elkhorn Slough 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

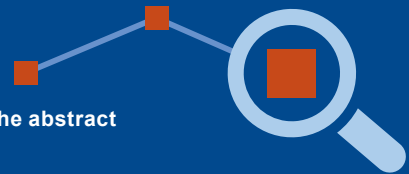
learn about estuaries through Research Reserve outreach & education

Prepares

the Next Generation

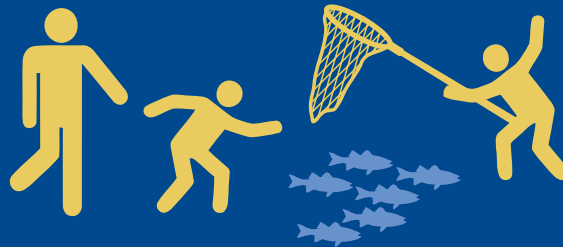
54,773 STUDENTS

take learning out of the abstract & into the outdoors



4,347 TEACHERS

are trained in the estuary & supported in the classroom



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*