

Dannel P. Malloy

GOVERNOR
STATE OF CONNECTICUT

December 21, 2018

The Honorable Timothy Gallaudet, Ph.D.
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy (Ret.)
Acting Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere / NOAA Administrator
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Room 51030
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Connecticut National Estuarine Research Reserve Nomination

Dear Rear Admiral Gallaudet:

On behalf of the State of Connecticut, I am pleased to nominate a Connecticut site for inclusion in the National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) program. Please find the attached site nomination report for the details. After an extensive review process, the proposed site includes portions of the lower Connecticut River and eastern Long Island Sound and is comprised of the following state-owned land and water areas: Lord Cove Wildlife Management Area; Great Island Wildlife Management Area; Bluff Point State Park, Coastal Reserve and Natural Area Preserve; Haley Farm State Park; and the public trust portions of waterbodies defined by:

- (a) Long Island Sound ranging approximately West to East from the mouth of the Connecticut River to Mason's Island, and ranging North to South waterward of the mean high water shoreline to just before the Connecticut/New York state boundary in Long Island Sound;
- (b) the area waterward of the mean high shoreline of the lower Thames River from approximately the Gold Star Bridge ranging South to the area described in (a);
- (c) the area waterward of the mean high shoreline of the lower Connecticut River from approximately Lord Cove ranging South to the area described in (a).

The proposed site will contribute significantly to the research, education, and natural resource stewardship goals of the national NERR program, and was selected to meet the guidelines of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) policy on NERR expansion. Establishing a NERR in Connecticut will:

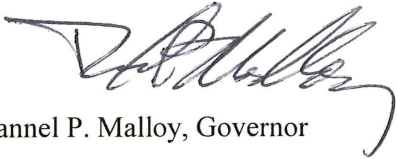
- add value to the nationwide NERR system by siting a reserve in Long Island Sound, designated as an "Estuary of National Significance" by Congress in 1987 due to the critical natural resources, human uses, and economic drivers it supports;

- bring the NERR System to a state not currently represented;
- strengthen existing, and create new, partnerships and programs for environmental stewardship, education and scientific research across private and public organizations at the local, state, regional, and federal levels; and
- add new and important estuarine habitats that are not currently represented by existing reserves in the Northeast.

The selection process identified the proposed site through a multi-year effort, examining more than two dozen locations and engaging individuals from a variety of state agencies, academic institutions, and non-governmental organizations. The site nomination effort was coordinated among staff from the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP), the University of Connecticut (UCONN) Department of Marine Sciences, and Connecticut Sea Grant (CTSG) who worked closely with NERR Program staff from the NOAA Office for Coastal Management (OCM) to ensure that the proposed site met or exceeded NERR program guidelines and state management needs. During the public engagement phases, local governments and numerous organizations at local and regional levels have expressed support for a Connecticut NERR. The proposed site would be managed by a partnership between UCONN and DEEP, and include opportunities to develop collaborations with other organizations where programmatic interests and expertise may align.

The State of Connecticut looks forward to your favorable review of this nomination and the beginning of a new partnership with your agency.

Sincerely yours,



Dannel P. Malloy, Governor

Cc: Connecticut Congressional Delegation
Commissioner Robert Klee, DEEP
Sylvain DeGuise, Ph.D., CTSG
J. Evan Ward, Ph.D., UCONN
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For more information, please contact:

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