



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Final Revised Management Plan for the Guana Tolomato Matanzas and Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserves

AGENCY: Office for Coastal Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of approval of final management plans.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Office for Coastal Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce, approves the revised management plans for the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve in Florida and the Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve in Rhode Island. In accordance with the Coastal Zone Management Act and its implementing regulations, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management revised their reserve's management plans, which replace the plans previously approved in 2009 and 2010 respectively.

ADDRESSES: The approved management plan for the Guana Tolomato Matanzas Research Reserve can be downloaded or viewed at <https://floridadep.gov/rcp/nerr-gtm/documents/guana-tolomato-matanzas-national-estuarine-research-reserve-management-plan>. The approved management plan for the Narragansett Bay Research Reserve can be downloaded or viewed at <https://nbnerr.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2024-2029-Management-Plan-.pdf>. The documents are also available by sending a written request to the point of contact identified below (see **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Guana Tolomato Matanzas: Matt Chasse, NOAA's Office for Coastal Management, *matt.chasse@noaa.gov*, (240) 628-5417; Narragansett Bay: Chris Kinkade, NOAA's Office for Coastal Management, *chris.kinkade@noaa.gov*, (401) 366-4880.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to 15 CFR 921.33(c), a state must revise the management plan for a reserve at least every five years. Major changes to a reserve's management plan may be made only after receiving written approval from NOAA. NOAA approves changes to management plans via notice in the *Federal Register*. On August 2, 2024, NOAA issued a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing a 30-day public comment period for the proposed revision of the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve management plan (89 FR 63165). On December 2, 2024, NOAA issued a notice in the *Federal Register* announcing a 30-day public comment period for the proposed revision of the Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve management plan (89 FR 95187). Each plan contains a summary of written and oral comments received and an explanation of how comments were incorporated into the final version of the management plan.

The management plan outlines a reserve's strategic goals and objectives; administrative structure; programs for conducting research and monitoring, education, and training; resource protection, restoration, and manipulation plans; public access and visitor use plans; consideration for future land acquisition; and facility development to support reserve operations.

Revised Management Plan for the Guana Tolomato Matanzas NERR

In particular, the revised management plan for the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve focuses on changes to the strategic plan, physical boundaries, and enhanced programmatic alignment across the reserve's sectors. Since the last management plan, the reserve received approval for an expansion of the site's

boundary— approved in March 2020— to include the City of St. Augustine’s sovereign submerged lands within the Matanzas River and Salt Run, the state’s sovereign submerged lands along the Matanzas and Tolomato Rivers that connect the City of St. Augustine’s portion to the previous boundary, and the Marshview parcel in the southern portion of the reserve. In addition, the reserve completed several facility-construction projects: the Princess Place Preserve Legacy House and cabins for visiting investigator use, a freshwater wetland boardwalk, a freshwater marsh boardwalk on the Guana River Yellow Trail, and a storage facility (pole barn). The reserve also installed redesigned interpretive displays at the Visitor Center and along several trails within the reserve. This revised management plan will serve as the guiding document for the Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve for the next five years.

Revised Management Plan for the Narragansett Bay NERR

The revised plan for the Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve provides information on new staff positions and new staff hired, describes the reserve’s updated position within the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, and reflects an expansion of the site’s boundary approved in May 2024. Additionally, the updated plan describes strategic goals and objectives and identifies topic areas where additional planning will be conducted to identify and develop new goals and objectives over the next five years. This revised management plan will serve as the guiding document for the Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve for the next five years.

NOAA reviewed the environmental impacts of the revised management plans and determined that this action is categorically excluded from further analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*).

(Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1451 *et seq.*; 15 CFR 921.33.)

Keelin S. Kuipers,

Acting Director, Office for Coastal Management,

National Ocean Service,

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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