

(d) *State agency* means an instrumentality of a coastal state to whom the coastal state has delegated the authority and responsibility for the creation and/or management/operation of a National Estuarine Research Reserve. Factors indicative of this authority may include the power to receive and expend funds on behalf of the Reserve, acquire and sell or convey real and personal property interests, adopt rules for the protection of the Reserve, enforce rules applicable to the Reserve, or develop and implement research and education programs for the reserve. For the purposes of these regulations, the terms "coastal state" and "State agency" shall be synonymous.

(e) *Estuary* means that part of a river or stream or other body of water having unimpaired connection with the open sea, where the sea water is measurably diluted with fresh water derived from land drainage. The term also includes estuary-type areas with measurable freshwater influence and having unimpaired connections with the open sea, and estuary-type areas of the Great Lakes and their connecting waters (see 16 U.S.C. 1453(7)).

(f) *National Estuarine Research Reserve* means an area that is a representative estuarine ecosystem suitable for long-term research, which may include all of the key land and water portion of an estuary, and adjacent transitional areas and uplands constituting to the extent feasible a natural unit, and which is set aside as a natural field laboratory to provide long-term opportunities for research, education, and interpretation on the ecological relationships within the area (see 16 U.S.C. 1453(8)) and meets the requirements of 16 U.S.C. 1461(b). This includes those areas designated as National Estuarine Sanctuaries or Reserves under section 315 of the Act prior to enactment of the Coastal Zone Act Reauthorization Amendments of 1990 and each area subsequently designated as a National Estuarine Research Reserve.

§921.3 National Estuarine Research Reserve System biogeographic classification scheme and estuarine typologies.

(a) National Estuarine Research Reserves are chosen to reflect regional

differences and to include a variety of ecosystem types. A biogeographic classification scheme based on regional variations in the nation's coastal zone has been developed. The biogeographic classification scheme is used to ensure that the National Estuarine Research Reserve System includes at least one site from each region. The estuarine typology system is utilized to ensure that sites in the System reflect the wide range of estuarine types within the United States.

(b) The biogeographic classification scheme, presented in appendix I, contains 29 regions. Figure 1 graphically depicts the biogeographic regions of the United States.

(c) The typology system is presented in appendix II.

§921.4 Relationship to other provisions of the Coastal Zone Management Act, and to the Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act.

(a) The National Estuarine Research Reserve System is intended to provide information to state agencies and other entities involved in addressing coastal management issues. Any coastal state, including those that do not have approved coastal management programs under section 306 of the Act, is eligible for an award under the National Estuarine Research Reserve Program (see §921.2(c)).

(b) For purposes of consistency review by states with a federally approved coastal management program, the designation of a National Estuarine Research Reserve is deemed to be a Federal activity, which, if directly affecting the state's coastal zone, must be undertaken in a manner consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the approved state coastal management program as provided by section 1456(c)(1) of the Act, and implementing regulations at 15 CFR part 930, subpart C. In accordance with section 1456(c)(1) of the Act and the applicable regulations NOAA will be responsible for certifying that designation of the Reserve is consistent with the state's approved coastal management program. The state must concur with or object to the certification. It is recommended that the lead state agency for Reserve designation consult, at the