Wells Reserve Research Reserve

Education is Change on the Ground

Preparation of the Next Generation

The Wells Reserve’s school and camp programs provide outdoor opportunities for K-12 learners, who explore and discover forest, field, salt marsh, and beach habitats first-hand. Students analyze water samples from salt pools with specialized equipment. They observe plankton while engineering their own microscopic drifters. They investigate the effects of pollution on watersheds and think holistically about solutions they can implement. Walking along the trails, they are employing all their senses. They learn by doing and have fun!

Improving Community Education

The Wells Reserve offers visitor programs during all seasons. Noontime and evening lectures inform and inspire people on topics such as climate change, current reserve research, and wildlife. Kayaking programs encourage visitors to discover the estuary while paddling through it. Walks in nature connect people to wildflowers, trees, birds, and insects. Visitors extend their learning by reading trailside interpretive signs and exploring interactive exhibits.

Connecting Educators to Training

Throughout the year, Wells Reserve educators facilitate trainings that help teachers, docents, and interpreters to share their knowledge and passion with learners of all ages. Teachers on the Estuary workshops bring teachers from many states together to learn about estuaries, with a focus on environmental change. Docent trainings prepare local volunteers to lead trailside school programs and summer walks. Reserve educators certified by the National Association of Interpretation lead trainings for interpreters from across the country, enabling them to effectively facilitate meaningful visitor experiences.

“Everything at this facility has always been excellent since I first began attending some 16 years ago!”

“Wells Reserve puts on a highly engaging and experience-rich workshop. Definitely worth the trip to Maine.”
National Estuarine Research Reserve Education

Change on the Ground in 2017

Connects
People to Estuaries

1 million+ ACRES
of natural classrooms & living laboratories with
28 INTERPRETIVE CENTERS

29 RESEARCH RESERVES

ALASKA  PUERTO RICO  HAWAII

650,340 VISITORS
learn about estuaries through Research Reserve outreach & education

Aloha to our Hawai‘i Reserve, designated in 2017!

Preparing
the Next Generation

87,899 STUDENTS
take learning out of the abstract & into the outdoors

3,079 TEACHERS
are trained in the estuary & supported in the classroom

ESTUARY SCIENCE
LOCAL DATA
LAB WORK
FIELD INVESTIGATION

SKILLS BUILT

Observation
Asking research questions
Problem solving
Data driven decision making

Improves
the Environment

12,849 CITIZENS
are trained & inspired to protect their coasts & estuaries

28 RESEARCH RESERVE EDUCATORS
lead programs that foster coastal stewardship in communities in 23 states

coast.noaa.gov/estuaries

Volunteer Actions

Protect wildlife
Monitor water quality
Plant native species
Clean up the coasts

Creating value through education
39,035 volunteer hours = $942,305*

*Value of a volunteer hour is calculated at $24.14 based on data from the Independent Sector.