



2020 FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership (CHNEP) is a partnership of federal and state agency officials, citizens, local government elected leaders, resource managers, and commercial and recreational resource users across multiple estuary watersheds within 10 counties and 25 cities in Central and Southwest Florida. CHNEP is part of the National Estuary Program (NEP) authorized by Congress, which fosters natural resource management that is consensus-based, non-regulatory, and based on sound science. CHNEP's federal legislative priorities for 2020 include:

- **REAUTHORIZATION OF THE NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM (HR 4044, S3171)**
 - Reauthorization of the National Estuary Program is required to maintain important federal natural resource protection initiatives (last authorized in 2016).
 - The House Transportation Committee has approved HR 4044, which authorized funding for the NEP at \$50 million per year, up from \$26.5 million.
 - The Senate Environment and Public Works Committee will soon hear recently filed S3171, companion bill to HR4044.
 - Approval of HR 4044 and S3171 will ensure critical water and habitat protection projects continue.
- **CONTINUED NATIONAL ESTUARY PROGRAM FUNDING UNDER CURRENT AUTHORIZATION**
 - Funding provided in the House Interior Appropriations Bill for FY 2020 of \$750 thousand per NEP entity and \$4 million for Competitive Grant funding.
 - The Senate Interior Appropriations Committee has provided \$675 thousand per NEP entity for FY 2020.
 - Funding levels of \$750 thousand per NEP entity would put more funding in the field, consistent with the funding formula in the 2016 reauthorization.
- **COMPETITIVE GRANT FUNDING UNDER CURRENT AUTHORIZATION**
 - The House-passed Appropriations Bill would fund a previously authorized Competitive Grant program at \$4 million for FY 2020; allowing entities within the National Estuary Program to apply to meet urgent community resiliency and resource protection needs.
 - The Senate measure does not include Competitive Grant program funding at this time.
 - Competitive Grant funding at the House-proposed level of \$4 million for FY 2020 would put more funding in the field, consistent with the 2016 reauthorization.
- **ESTUARY CAUCUS MEMBERSHIP EXPANSION**
 - The bi-partisan Congressional Estuary Caucus seeks additional members to support water quality protection and vibrant coastal economies (<https://estuaries.org/get-involved/estuary-caucus>, contact Maxine.Sugarman@mail.house.gov).