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April 10, 2013

Representative William Keating
315 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Keating:

Estuaries are one of the most productive habitats on earth, but are increasingly affected by impacts of human population growth along the coast. In 1987, Congress established the National Estuary Program (NEP) to identify, protect, and restore "estuaries of national significance." Now located within 28 different watersheds, the National Estuary Program is recognized as a model for building partnerships to protect the coastal environment, sustain coastal economies and the jobs that come with it, and improve our quality of life.

Two NEPs, the Massachusetts Bays Program and the Buzzards Bay National Estuary Program, each serve a vital role in helping to protect coastal ecosystems in the Cape Cod region.

The Association to Preserve Cape Cod (APCC), the Cape's leading nonprofit environmental advocacy and education organization, writes to ask you to support a continuing investment in the stewardship of our nation's coasts by helping ensure that each of the 28 NEPs in the field receives level funding of \$600,000 in FY 2014.

Each National Estuary Program:

- Demonstrates real environmental results through on-the-ground habitat restoration and protection.
- Reflects local environmental and economic priorities.
- Involves the community as equal partners and engages the public throughout the decision-making process.
- Demonstrates the ability to secure and leverage funds from multiple sources.
- Ensures decisions are based on the best science available.
- Builds on water quality control measures and tailors them to specific places and communities.
- Is non-regulatory and cost-effective.

Collectively, NEPs have restored and protected more than 1.5 million acres of land

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since 2000 alone.

As the health of our coastal ecosystems decline, NEPs work to ensure that federal agencies work together and with state, regional, NGO and private partners to better manage ocean and coastal resources for the benefit of the nation and to reduce conflicts, redundancies, and inefficiencies that waste time and money. The people who live and work near and on our estuaries have the greatest stake in sound coastal management, best understand the unique challenges and opportunities in those places, and know the right stakeholders to engage in crafting durable and effective solutions. NEPs play a key role in implementing national policies that result in better, more cost-effective coastal management that benefits states and local communities.

APCC believes the NEPs in the field should continue to receive \$600,000 each in order to continue ongoing work to help ensure the ecological and economic viability of our nation's estuaries. We ask for your assistance in helping maintain this level funding in the FY 2014 budget.

Thank you for your past support of this program, and for considering this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Edi DeWitt', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Edi DeWitt
Executive Director