

**SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS  
ON THE STEWARDSHIP OF  
LONG ISLAND SOUND'S  
ECOLOGICAL and RECREATIONAL  
RESOURCES**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative is an effort to identify places with significant biological, scientific, or recreational value throughout the Sound and develop a strategy to protect and enhance these special places. It is based on recommendations made in the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan and the 2003 Long Island Sound Agreement. A series of eight public meetings were held in strategic locations around the Sound, to share information regarding efforts to date and to get input from organizations and individuals about how to better protect the Sound's coastal resources.

Meetings were held in a variety of easily accessible settings, such as town halls, university facilities, schools and environmental centers. Dates and locations were as follows:

- University of Connecticut, Stamford, CT, 2/23/04
- New Rochelle City Hall, New Rochelle, NY, 2/26/04
- Yale University, New Haven, CT, 3/1/04
- Alley Pond Environmental Center, Queens, NY, 3/2/04
- Stony Brook University, Marine Sciences Research Center, Stony Brook, NY, 3/3/04
- East Lyme High School, East Lyme, CT, 3/4/04
- Cornell Cooperative Extension, Riverhead, NY, 3/15/04
- Huntington Town Hall, Huntington, NY, 3/30/04

Publicity efforts included a mass mailing to over 11,000 recipients, press releases and newspaper announcements, magazine and newsletter articles, list serve announcements, and personal emails and phone calls. Diverse special interest groups were included in this outreach effort, generating strong interest in the project.

Each meeting opened with a presentation outlining the goals of the initiative and work to date, as well as offering potential options for continuing stewardship efforts. A summary version of this presentation is contained in **Appendix A** of this document. Following a short question and answer period, attendees were invited to view the inventory maps and information displayed around the room. Staff members were available to assist with interpretation of the maps and answer specific questions, as well as more general questions about the initiative and options presented.

Surveys were collected to identify areas with special ecological or recreational resources or issues and to gather input on preferences for the stewardship options. **(See Appendix B.)** This document presents these survey results in detail, for use in guiding future decisions about the stewardship of Long Island Sound's resources.

Approximately 250 people attended the eight meetings described above, and of these about 86 returned completed surveys. Each meeting included a general question and answer period, and these additional comments and questions were recorded. Both the

Regional Plan Association and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Coastal Program provided binders along with the inventory maps to allow the public to record any specific areas of concern and to note omissions or errors on the maps. This information is being reviewed by these agencies and the appropriate changes made to the resource maps.

In general, the public was supportive of this effort to improve stewardship around Long Island Sound, and many submitted their contact information to stay informed about the project. Some expressed a desire to see a broader range of interest groups represented on the work group, specifically to include commercial interests. They also articulated the need for coordination among the various agencies and organizations working on related programs, to gain efficiency, avoid redundancy, and present a strong and complete proposal to the public.

**Appendix C** is a list of organizations and groups that were represented at the public meetings. In addition, over 180 people indicated an interest in staying informed and involved in the Stewardship Initiative by submitting their contact information to receive updates. These names were collected via the flyer announcing the meeting and the survey, and they are maintained in a database. **Appendix D, Meeting Notes**, contains a breakdown by meeting of the number of people in attendance, followed by a list of the questions and comments that were received during the question and answer period at each meeting. Specific local threats and areas of concern are listed as well, as indicated on the survey forms, binders, and oral comments. **Appendix E** summarizes the public responses to the questions posed by the survey, both quantitative and qualitative. A few groups and individuals submitted written comments, and these are included in **Appendix F**.

## **Appendix A: Presentation Summary**

The Stewardship Initiative focuses on recommendations of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan and the 2003 LIS Agreement that the Long Island Sound Study identify places with significant biological, scientific, or recreational value throughout the Sound and develop a strategy to protect and enhance those special places. The purpose of the public meetings is to share information regarding our efforts to date and to hear from communities around the Sound regarding ways we can better protect the Sound's coastal resources.

### **Stewardship Challenges**

The Long Island Sound Study identified four key challenges to the stewardship of the Sound's resources:

- Preserving Open Space: Due to development pressure, open space around Long Island Sound is increasingly threatened. Open space is valuable for water quality protection and for the recreational opportunities and wildlife habitat it provides. Efforts to preserve and manage these remaining undeveloped areas exist, but are limited by the availability of funds.
- Increasing Access to the Sound: Opportunities to explore, enjoy and learn about Long Island Sound are limited. How can we expand and enhance access opportunities in a manner that supports a variety of activities and minimizes impacts to the natural environment? Open space and access are intimately linked – decreasing open space increases the demand on existing public access sites.
- Protecting Important Habitats: Long Island Sound supports an array of living resources – from microscopic plants to birds and economically important finfish and shellfish. However, habitat loss through coastal development jeopardizes the countless species with which we share the Sound. Habitats are also important for their roles as outdoor classrooms and sites for scientific research. Many of these important habitats are currently protected as state parks or wildlife refuges, but they need to be managed more effectively in order to address resource needs and user conflicts.
- Resolving Use Conflicts: While many plants and animals rely on the Sound for important habitat, stewardship efforts must also account for the fact that many people rely on the Sound for their livelihood. For any effort to succeed, it must balance conservation, recreation and commercial uses.

The Long Island Sound Study Stewardship Initiative is working to address these challenges.

### **Coastal Resource Inventory**

To begin the process of identifying the special places throughout the Sound, the Long Island Sound Study is conducting a comprehensive analysis of the Sound's coastal

resources. We're inventorying two resource types: 1) recreation and open space; and 2) ecological and scientific.

#### *Important Recreation and Open Space Areas*

The inventory of important recreation and open space areas throughout Long Island Sound is being led by the Regional Plan Association. The process of inventorying these sites involves combining input from resource managers and the public with available information regarding existing recreational facilities and parks. The first step in the analysis was to meet with public and private natural resource managers and planners to identify criteria and landscape attributes that were important for open space and water-dependent recreation areas. Approximately 30 criteria and attributes were mapped in the following four categories:

- Public Access to the Water: Areas that provide access to waters that support swimming, boating, fishing or hunting facilities or those with high potential to allow such uses;
- Recreation and Conservation Need: Areas with high population density, limited existing parkland or public access, high rates of population growth, or populations with special needs, such as the elderly;
- Water Resource Protection: Includes landscape attributes such as wetlands, riparian zones, or important groundwater recharge areas; and
- Open Space, Cultural and Water-dependent Recreational Resources: Existing parks, conservation areas, and greenways; large contiguous tracts of unprotected forests, wetlands, or beaches; and important farmlands, historic or cultural sites.

#### *Important Ecological and Scientific Areas*

The inventory of important ecological and scientific areas is being led by the US Fish & Wildlife Service Coastal Program, in cooperation with NY and CT resource experts. As a basis for the analysis, the following categories were developed to inventory the ecological and scientific resources throughout Long Island Sound:

- Exemplary Sites: Natural habitat types or ecosystems typical to Long Island Sound;
- Outstanding Sites: Unique or rare habitats or ecosystems, such as unditched tidal marshes;
- Rare Species Habitat Sites: Habitat for Federal- or State-listed threatened or endangered species; and
- Research/Educational Sites: Provide opportunities for research on and education about Long Island Sound.

### *Identifying Special Places throughout the Sound*

The Regional Plan Association and the US Fish & Wildlife Service are working with natural resource managers and planners to begin identifying the special ecological and recreation areas throughout Long Island Sound. Maps displaying our initial efforts will be available for viewing at the public meetings. We are looking to you, as local experts, to help ensure that we've captured what's special about the Sound.

### **Long Island Sound's Underwater Resources**

To date, the Stewardship Initiative has focused on Long Island Sound's coastal resources, but there are also important ecological and recreational resources in the underwater areas of the Sound. We've just begun looking at the Sound's underwater resources, which present a different set of stewardship challenges. First, much less information exists for underwater areas compared to coastal areas. Second, underwater areas of the Sound are already in the public trust. NY and CT, in coordination with federal authorities, manage the Sound's underwater resources for the benefit of all citizens. A third challenge is that there are clearly established commercial and public uses of the Sound. Any discussion of the stewardship of underwater resources must consider the full range of activities that the Sound supports, commercial as well as recreational.

Our efforts, which are being led by US Fish & Wildlife Service Coastal Program, are focused on mapping Long Island Sound's physical and benthic characteristics. Features that are being mapped include surf clam areas, mud flats, coastal bays, sand shoals, and sediment texture. Seafloor mapping – also called benthic mapping – using methods such as side-scan sonar and benthic species sampling, is useful for describing the condition and characteristics of the bottom. This information supports efforts to describe and evaluate habitat types and locations in the Sound that are important to fish, shellfish, and other sealife, and has been used elsewhere to inform resource management decisions.

We have just begun evaluating the Sound's underwater resources and look forward to future discussions regarding potential ways these resources could be incorporated into stewardship efforts.

### **How Can We Improve the Stewardship of the Sound's Coastal Resources?**

The inventory of Long Island Sound's ecological and recreational resources is still underway, but we've begun looking ahead to determine how we can use this information to improve the stewardship of Long Island Sound's coastal resources. We've developed three potential options and, as the people who live near, work on, and play in the Sound, we need your input. We'd like you to think of these options as starting points for your ideas, and we'd like your feedback regarding this broad spectrum of possibilities. Our goal is to move from these broad concepts to a workable system based upon your suggestions.

1. Use Data to Enhance Existing Programs: This alternative assumes that the results of the resource inventory would be used to help focus efforts on identified priorities for existing programs. We would work through current local, state, federal and non-profit programs to target conservation, management and land

acquisition efforts on these special places. To implement this option in Long Island Sound, we would use the list of sites developed from the resource inventory and with your input as a guide to focus conservation, enhancement, and management efforts on these areas. We would work with existing programs to highlight these areas as priorities for the stewardship of the Sound's resources.

This option would be similar to the Long Island Sound Study's habitat restoration initiative. In 1996, the Long Island Sound Study solicited input from agency staff, municipal governments, scientists, citizens' groups and the general public regarding degraded areas in need of restoration. This solicitation resulted in the identification of over 400 sites, from which a list of high priority restoration sites was created. This list helps prioritize the efforts of the Habitat Restoration Initiative.

2. Establish a Formal Network of Sites: This option assumes that the special places identified through the resource inventory would be formally linked within a Long Island Sound Study Stewardship System. This network would consist of cooperative, voluntary partnerships among resource managers, environmental organizations, and local, state, and federal governments. Formally linking these important areas in a network would help raise awareness of their value and focus attention on the threats to these special places. The Stewardship System would provide a framework for promoting funding for open space preservation and habitat protection and for sharing technical assistance. The sites would be recognized for their ecological, scientific, open space and/or recreational value, but use and access decisions would remain in the hands of the resource managers. Currently, the responsibility for identifying priorities for resource protection and public recreation rests with various public agencies and private nonprofit organizations. Each entity has its own mission, priorities and procedures for resource stewardship. By developing a Stewardship System, the Long Island Sound Study could help coordinate the complementary efforts provided by these parties and therefore improve the effectiveness of existing programs.
3. Through Legislation, Create a New Program: This alternative assumes that a new program would be developed to ensure the protection and enhancement of these special places. For Long Island Sound, a program could be created by Congress or through bi-state legislation.

A current initiative that is similar to this option is the Hudson River Valley Greenways program. This program, which is sponsored by New York State, was created to help develop a regional strategy for preserving scenic, natural, historic, cultural, and recreational resources while encouraging compatible economic development. Communities that volunteer to participate receive technical assistance and funding for parkland acquisition and management, trail creation, and local land use planning projects.

Another example is the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, which was authorized by the Chesapeake Bay Initiative Act of 1998 and is coordinated by the National Park Service. The Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network links natural, cultural, historical and recreational sites through partnerships among over 120 parks, wildlife refuges, museums, historic communities and trails in the Bay's watershed. Visitors to the Gateway sites learn about the Bay's resources, experience its history and enjoy its natural beauty.

We'd like to hear what you think of these concepts. Which, if any, will best enhance and protect the treasures of Long Island Sound? Do you have a better idea? We want to know what you suggest, and we need your help to develop the best option for Long Island Sound.

**Appendix B: Stewardship Initiative Survey (Distributed at public meetings)**

- 1) Do you understand the justification for and the goals of the Long Island Sound Study Stewardship Initiative?  
Yes    No    If no, specify areas needing further explanation or clarification.
  
- 2) Do the criteria used for the inventory described in this presentation capture the important ecological and recreational resources of Long Island Sound?  
Yes    No    If no, please provide information to help better define these special places.
  
- 3) Can you identify any specific threats, use conflicts or pressing needs for protecting habitat or open space in your community that have not been considered?  
No    Yes    If yes, what are they? Please specify your community.
  
- 4) Do you know of a specific place along Long Island Sound that we should identify as a special ecological or recreational area? If so, please describe, including name and location.
  
- 5) Please rank the relative importance of these stewardship objectives, with 1 being the most important and 3 being the least important.  
  
\_\_\_ Enhancing opportunities for Long Island Sound-related scientific research, monitoring and education  
  
\_\_\_ Increasing coastal land conservation and compatible recreational opportunities through land protection (i.e., acquisition, easements, or other protective mechanisms)  
  
\_\_\_ Improving management of conflicting uses at important ecological or recreation areas (e.g. public access vs. habitat protection at state wildlife management areas, etc.)  
  
Other - please explain

6) Please rank these potential options for improving the stewardship of Long Island Sound's resources, with 1 being your preferred option and 3 being the least preferred.

\_\_\_ Using the data resulting from the resource inventory to enhance existing programs

\_\_\_ Establishing a formal network of sites within a Long Island Sound Study Stewardship System

\_\_\_ Creating a new program that could be established by Congress or through bi-state legislation

If none of the above, please describe your vision for improving stewardship efforts around Long Island Sound.

7) Why do you prefer the option you selected in Question 6?

Are interested in: (check those that apply)

- Being added to our mailing list to receive future updates regarding the Long Island Sound Study Stewardship Initiative?
- Participating in future discussions regarding the stewardship of underwater resources?

If so, please provide your contact information below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional comments or concerns:

Please indicate which meeting you attended \_\_\_\_\_

Drop in box or mail to: Robin Kriesberg, Save the Sound, Inc. 18 Reynolds St.,  
E. Norwalk, CT 06855. FAX: 203-354-0041

## **Appendix C: Groups and organizations represented at the public meetings**

### **Stamford:**

Darien Coastal Waters  
Shippan Pond Association  
Coastal Water Commission, Darien and EPA Citizen's Advisory Committee  
CT Conservation Association  
Darien Sail and Power Squadron  
Friends of Weed Beach  
Farm Creek Association  
Teacher, Milford Public Schools  
Friends of Greenwich Point  
Representative Gibbons, 150\* District Conservation  
Fairfield County Commodores Association  
Cong. Shays Office  
Save the Sound  
Maritime Aquarium  
ECOS/SoundWaters  
Stamford Land Conservation Trust  
Westchester County Dept. of Planning  
Greenwich Conservation Commission  
Greenwich Shellfish Commission  
Friends of Seaside Park  
Audubon Greenwich  
Stamford Museum and Nature Center  
New Rochelle Citizens Reform Club

### **New Rochelle:**

Westchester County Dept. of Environmental Facilities  
Westchester County Parks Dept.  
New Rochelle Waterfront Committee  
Friends of Marshlands  
Westchester County Health Dept.  
Hudson River Estuary Program  
Flint Park Conservancy  
Glenwood Lake Neighborhood Association  
Save Davids Island  
Wykagyl Estates Homeowners Assn.  
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation  
Central Westchester Audubon Society  
Westchester County Dept. of Planning  
County Legislator Jim Maisano  
NYS Assemblywoman Amy Paulin

**New Haven:**

Senator Lieberman's office  
Federated Conservationists of Westchester County  
Westchester County Nonpoint Source Pollution Committee  
Branford Conservation and Environment Commission  
Branford Land Trust  
CT Department of Environmental Protection Water Bureau  
Branford Planning and Zoning  
Trumbull Land Trust  
Office of Urban Affairs, Archdiocese of Hartford  
Farm River Protective Association  
City of New Haven Delegate, Long Island Sound Assembly  
Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies  
CT Stop the Pipeline  
Thimble Island Shellfish Commission  
New Haven Urban Design League  
Friends of Farm River Estuary  
Connecticut Fund for the Environment  
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
Yale Center for Coastal and Watershed Systems  
Branford Town Hall  
New Haven Environmental Commission  
Audubon CT  
Town of Trumbull Public Works Director

**Alley Pond:**

Alley Pond Environmental Center  
NYC DEP  
Great Neck Park District  
Nassau Hiking and Outdoor Club  
NYC Audubon  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
Udall's Cove Preservation Committee

**Stony Brook:**

Marine Sciences Research Center, Stony Brook University  
Conservationists United for Long Island  
Town of Smithtown Planning Dept.  
Environmental Conservation Commission, Old Field NY  
Environmental Conservation Commission, Head of the Harbor  
Long Island Seaport & Eco. Center  
Suffolk County Department of Health Services  
Conservation Board Lloyd Harbor  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research

Friends of Flax Pond  
Coalition to Save Hempstead Harbor  
NY Sea Grant Extension  
Adelphi University  
LISS Science and Technical Advisory Committee

**East Lyme:**

Groton Open Space Association  
Avalonia Land Conservation  
Old Lyme Harbor Control Commission  
Essex Island Marina  
Connecticut River Museum  
Connecticut Fishermen  
Save the Rivers/Save the Hills  
Ocean Conservancy (member)  
Southeastern CT River Estuary Stewardship  
S. NE Chapter American Fisherman Society  
Fish Advisory Council, CT DEP  
Dominion  
Southeastern CT Council of Governments  
Conservation and Inland Wetland Commission, Groton  
AMC  
East Lyme Land Trust  
CT Marine Trades Association  
Project Oceanology  
CT Coalition Against Millstone  
Trust for Public Land  
E. Lyme Harbor Management/Shellfish  
Congressman Rob Simmons office  
Old Saybrook Land Trust  
Waterford-East Lyme Shellfish Commission  
CT DEP/LISS  
Islander East Pipeline

**Riverhead:**

Riverhead Citizens Advisory Committee  
Great South Bay Audubon  
NY Sea Grant  
Moriches Bay Audubon Society  
Southold Sound/Mattituck Inlet Preservation League  
Suffolk County Department of Health Services  
Town of Riverhead

**Huntington:**

Citizens Campaign for the Environment  
Huntington Audubon  
Town of Huntington Maritime  
Manhasset Bay Protection Committee  
Town of North Hempstead  
Farm Island Conservancy  
Hempstead Harbor Protection Committee  
NY Sportfishing Federation, Inc.  
LISS/CAC Town of Huntington  
Neighborhood Network  
The Observer Newspaper  
Old Cluster Hills Civic Assn.  
Cornell Cooperative Extension Marine

## **Appendix D: Meeting Details**

### **UCONN Meeting: 2/23/04**

Attendance: 37 people

General questions/comments:

1. Where is the money for this work?
2. What good is this data without knowing specific threats and conflicts?
3. Solutions are needed, especially models to deal with conflicts on underwater lands.
4. Local issues are most important
5. How will this reduce pollution?
6. What are appropriate uses for coastal recreation? Are basketball or skate parks appropriate?

Specific threats cited:

Greenwich

Invasion of Phragmites, Ailanthus, Rosa multiflora

Recreation/beach erosion

Hi-speed power boats noise

Tidal flow gates

Special places:

Morningside in Milford

Ash Creek in Bridgeport 2x

St. Mary's by the Sea in Black Rock section of Bridgeport

Fairfield/Black Rock border – passive recreation area

Manresa

Norwalk Islands and River

Farm Creek, Rowayton

Seaside Park, Bridgeport, Lighthouse

Cummings Park/Beach

Milton Harbor Rye

Scotts Cove Darien

Tower Island, Byram Harbor, Greenwich

### **New Rochelle Meeting 2/26/04**

Attendance: 39

General questions/comments:

1. How many sites have been restored around LIS?
2. What is the health of the Sound?
3. What is the political value of linking open space issues around the Sound? What is the gain?

4. Legislator Maisano stated that this scientific, independent evaluation will be useful for informing open space acquisitions
5. Davids Island should be a priority
6. Robert Funicello stated that the County is committed to the acquisition of David's Island
7. How can this help with project to provide public access to Flint Park?
8. Can inland sites be restored?
9. Does the Greenway program do enforcement?
10. Open access in Westchester is not for everybody, partner with communities and provide more opportunities
11. Where can you put in a kayak in Westchester? Need more access
12. Mamaroneck Harbor plan will reduce number of parking spaces
13. Adopt a habitat program promotes corporate wetlands partnerships
14. Oakland Beach is dirty

Special Places/concerns:

Dredging

Premium Point, New Rochelle – concern for major beach erosion and encroachment into Premium Pond, wildlife preservation

Echo Bay – sediment building up

Mamaroneck jetty system causing increased erosion at Premium Point Beach

Echo Bay/Hudson Park – concerned with proposed development, access to Hudson Park

Inland causes to sewage problem at Hudson Park Beach

Lack of kayak access along Westchester coastline

Davids Island should be saved for use by public

Street ends in Mamaroneck should be accessible for kayak launching

Flint Park – public access to Sound

**New Haven Meeting 3/1/04**

42 Attended

General questions:

1. Recreational angler asked about menhaden population
2. What are the next steps for the Stewardship Initiative?
3. How is the health of LIS compared to 40 years ago?
4. Is there additional funding available for open space acquisition?
5. Does the Chesapeake Gateways program include any money for acquisition?
6. TPL and Branford Land Trust are concerned about private organizations being left out of the process, especially for receiving funding.
7. Volunteer organizations need the data and maps available online. Locals need this information to help make issues more understandable to the public.
8. New York City sewage treatment plants are a major source of problems. Need to focus on major causes first
9. Is there a chance to identify sites or is this done already?
10. Can this information be made available online?

Special places/concerns:

Fragmentation of areas within ecosystem

Quinnipiac Marsh – no public access

Hammonasset boat launch is too narrow and unsafe

Parking at Lighthouse Point Park inadequate

Thimble Islands – should be focus, meet with local groups

New Haven – needs better system for water quality monitoring year round

Old Saybrook – the Preserve, threatened with development

Bridgeport Harbor

E. Haven and Branford – Farm River

Kelsey Island, Branford – East Shore River to Farm River

Oyster River – Milford/Old Saybrook - Oyster Cover River to Sandy Point

**Alley Pond Meeting 3/2/04**

17 attended

General questions/comments:

1. Udall's Cove has been granted septic exceptions on their applications so 100 foot setbacks are not required. If this is granted it will degrade the water quality. Can this program help?
2. In Great Neck there is industrial land for sale that the community wants to recapture and restore. Can your program help?
3. How are the lobsters doing?
4. Use conflicts in Little Neck Bay – there are no controls on personal watercraft, should be included in planning and controlled
5. Fort Totten is now available, with 170 new acres of public land
6. Make permitting people aware of inventory, make connection to agencies, eg. Flag on NYS Tidal Wetlands maps, use for Environmental Impact Statements
7. College Pt./Flushing Airport – wetlands development is proposed, bond act restoration at airport.

Special areas/concerns:

Address challenge of mixed uses/ecological conflicts

Fort Totten is going to be public park – use conflicts

Flushing Airport – wetlands threatened with development

Great Neck – Water Mill property

Lower Manhasset Bay restoration

College Point, Flushing, Bayside, Oakland Lake

Udalls Cove – need to stop further degradation of shoreline, permit variances for septic systems within the 100 foot setback

West End of Little Bay Park – should allow kayak access, need walkway from street parking to allow access

Parking access

## **SUNY Stony Brook, 3/3/04**

26 attended

General questions/comments:

1. Avoid ranking and naming winners and losers. Leverage programs that already have a lot of energy, like the Flax Pond group
2. Make data available to help focus and implement existing projects
3. Is there adequate funding for this initiative?
4. Suffolk has dedicated funds for restoration.
5. How can we help support your efforts? We need a concrete proposal to focus advocacy.
6. How can resources be shared to fulfill multiple purposes in a harmonious way?
7. To develop Marine Wilderness Areas, need to map benthic areas the way land is mapped, then engage the public and identify needs and goals.
8. Will sanctuaries be established? Regarding the benthic mapping, why are the water columns left out?
9. Address dredging/dumping issues – LIS is a system
10. Is federal control an advantage, as in National Wildlife Refuge in Oyster Bay harbor, or eg. Peconics managed by TNC
11. The timeline is critical – by 2010 all acres will be developed. Need action now. States already have open space management plans, this will help refine, provide another tool and information, should act quickly and decisively
12. Are wind changes due to development considered as a reason for restoration?
13. If there are no spatially explicit zones, all will decline. Once sensitive areas are mapped, allocate uses, eg. marine zoning, where to dump, sanctuaries
14. Regarding use conflicts, the Freedom to Fish Act prevents creation of sanctuaries with no-take zones.

Special areas/concerns:

Underwater cable conflicts

Designated dredge disposal sites

Critical habitat preservation

Oyster Bay Harbor

Flax Pond

West Meadow Beach

King Park Boat ramp area

Conscience Bay, Pirates Cove – Port Jefferson

Mt. Sinai Harbor

Caumsett State Historic Park – salt marsh (near critical bird area)

Stony Brook Harbor

West Pond, Glen Cove

Duck Pond, Cutchogue

## East Lyme Meeting 3/4/04

46 Attended

### General questions/comments:

1. Was this meeting adequately advertised to encourage diverse groups to attend?  
Commercial considerations are barely mentioned/not truly a partner, no private representation on the work group, user groups opposed
2. Most of the LISS activities focus on the other end of the Sound (western)
3. There are no regulations on traps near Mashintuckets, and no restrictions/protection from jetskis
4. Runoff from development impacts river, Oswegatchie Hills
5. Once eelgrass critical habitats are mapped, would this impact permits for docks?
6. Look upland to control development
7. Regulators should use data and consider areas with submerged aquatic vegetation in decisions. This Initiative can provide needed data and address information gaps.
8. Ansonia Land Trust – The clock is ticking, damage to habitats is ongoing, eelgrass areas are threatened, and there has been no response to stop this. A more active response is needed to protect remaining sensitive areas.
9. Could you describe the pros and cons of each option in order to determine which is the best option?
10. Grant Westerson of the CT Marine Trades Association stated that the presentation sounded more optimistic than earlier versions. He expressed concern that this Initiative would restrict the commercial interests needing permits to expand, and over the lack of commercial representation on the work group. He explained that the marines trades do provide stewardship of the Sound's resources, and this Initiative terrifies members of the Marine Trades Association because they are concerned about their jobs.

Written statements, included in Attachment F, were submitted by the Southeastern CT River Estuary Stewardship (SE\*GRES), William Spicer, and other individuals.

### Special areas/concerns:

Upland impacts

Niantic Bay is critical

Head of Niantic – Golden Spur, Black Point are unsewered

Oswegatchie is important open space for Niantic River Ecosystem

Saybrook – important 1000 acre preserve that is threatened with development – Lyons

Stonington – Barn Island, Bluff Point – eelgrass areas

E. Lyme/Waterford – Niantic River Estuary

Millstone Nuclear Plant – Waterford

Juniper Point

Thimbles

Mile Creek Marsh – Old Lyme

Essex – near mouth of CT River, significant ecological/recreational/historical area

Watch Rock Preserve – Old Lyme

### **Riverhead Meeting 3/15/04**

15 Attended

General questions:

1. Why do we need another program (as in option 3)?
2. How can we combine efforts for the public benefit?
3. Avoid duplication with the Local Waterfront Revitalization program
4. How close is the Stewardship area to the water? How does it compare to the Coastal Zone Management boundary?
5. Need to look beyond the town level, raise the profile to attract more money for Long Island Sound.
6. Suffolk was successful in open space development rights/farmland protection

Special areas/concerns:

Mattituck Creek/inlet – significant wetland on east side, needs jetty indicators, boat ramp is proposed

Pumpout needed on N Shore in Southhold Town

### **Huntington Meeting, 3/30/04**

Attendance: 18

General Questions:

1. Who are the resource managers you refer to? Does that mean government will take over?
2. For option 3, new legislation, have you considered how this would interact with the new bill proposed by Englebright? Make sure there is no conflict.
3. What is the real goal of the program? What have you done to formally embrace those most impacted, such as fisheries groups? The process is important, but the project is still nebulous. Need buy-in from all groups, focus on areas where you can hit a “home run” rather than targeting such a broad area. Be more specific, like the restoration initiative.
4. Why not resurrect the LIS Coastal Advisory Commission initiated by DOS in 1999? This would bring together diverse interests representing all sectors.
5. Are you doing this just because it is in the CCMP? Have you considered whether it is doable?
6. Specific area suggested near Vanderbilt Museum where three sites could be connected by paths using easements to allow access.
7. Lobstermen are nervous – more access for public may have negative impact on them. Fisheries were barely mentioned in the presentation – utilities and cables were stressed.

8. Concerns about dumping of dredged materials by Cold Spring Harbor Civic Assn. If Lloyd Neck is considered a valuable area, why is dumping allowed? Isn't this contributing to the lobster problem?
9. Commercial shellfishermen have seen the impact of fiber optic cable. Shellfishermen and others that work in these areas are local experts and should be consulted regarding projects such as cables and other utility crossings.
10. Concerned about LISS focus of gathering general information. Should find a place and fix it or gather information and talk. Need to be more specific.
11. What is the timetable for this work?

Special areas/concerns:

Cables and gas lines

Scudder's Cove – kayak launch study as part of Blueway System

N. Hempstead south of Bar Beach – trail is under construction

Centerport Beach in Huntington, Camp Alvernea, Vanderbilt Museum – should be connected for pedestrian access

Mill Pond, Centerport Shore Rd. and 25A - preserve open land, restaurant should allow walks around the pond

Exxon Mobil Oil Terminal – Cold Spring Harbor as site for education and access

Mill Pond near Duck Harbor – north of Northport Bay

Lloyd Harbor – threat from dumping

## Appendix E: Public Responses

The survey, contained in **Appendix B**, included 7 questions; 1-3 required a yes or no answer, and 5 and 6 asked for rankings of preferences. The remaining questions were qualitative, requiring a written response, and these responses are included below as well.

1. Do you understand the justification for and the goals of the Long Island Sound Study Stewardship Initiative?  
Yes - 71      No - 6      Blank - 7
2. Do the criteria used for the inventory described in this presentation capture the important ecological and recreational resources of Long Island Sound?  
Yes - 59      No - 7      Blank - 18
3. Can you identify any specific threats, use conflicts, or pressing needs for protecting habitat or open space in your community that have not been considered?  
Yes - 38      No - 18      Blank - 30

These responses are included in the list of concerns.

4. Do you know of a specific place along Long Island Sound that we should identify as a special ecological or recreational area? If so, please describe, including name and location.  
These responses are included in the list of special areas.
5. Please rank the relative importance of these stewardship objectives, with 1 being the most important and 3 being the least important.

The majority of respondents indicated that increasing coastal land conservation and compatible recreational opportunities through land protection was the most important stewardship objective. Survey ranking of the three choices is detailed below.

*Enhancing opportunities for Long Island Sound-related scientific research, monitoring and education.* 1 = 7, 2 = 26, 3 = 45

*Increasing coastal land conservation and compatible recreational opportunities through land protection (i.e., acquisition, easements, or other protective mechanisms)* 1 = 53, 2 = 19, 3 = 8

*Improving management of conflicting uses at important ecological or recreational areas (e.g. public access vs. habitat protection at state wildlife management areas, etc.)* 1 = 22, 2 = 36, 3 = 20

6. Please rank these potential options for improving the stewardship of Long Island Sound's resources, with 1 being your preferred option and 3 being the least preferred.

The preferred option was option 2 – Establish a formal network of sites within a Long Island Sound Study Stewardship System. However, the responses were fairly evenly split among the three choices, as detailed below.

*Using the data resulting from the resource inventory to enhance existing programs.*

1 = 15, 2 = 21, 3 = 31

*Establishing a formal network of sites within a Long Island Sound Study Stewardship System*

1 = 33, 2 = 30, 3 = 5

*Creating a new program that could be established by Congress or through bi-state legislation.*

1 = 24, 2 = 15, 3 = 27

Question 6 Written Comments: Describe your vision for improving stewardship efforts around Long Island Sound.

- Municipal land use decision makers need to know how to use the data and make better land use decisions
- Stewardship needs to be personalized. Develop curriculum materials for use in schools
- The current study seems to rely 100% on the public will in order to protect certain habitats. It may be more prudent to also think of pushing for zoning restrictions in critical zones.
- Above "options" too succinct. Presentation clarified – start improving habitat – devil in details
- None of the above can be successful without adequate funding
- Sewage treatment, runoff and controlled development need additional resources to improve the goal of this initiative
- Adopt a habitat program to include commercial, industrial, clubs, etc.
- I can't see any contradiction. They all seem to be necessary and interrelated approaches.
- Creating a new program would be useful only if all agencies co-operate.
- Make more foot accessibility along roads and highways.

## Question 7 Comments – Why do you prefer the option you selected in question 6?

Responses were varied. Some common responses were that a new program could be useful in getting states to cooperate, while others preferred not to add another level of administration to the process. Many would prefer to expedite the process and do whatever is quickest.

### **Option 1:**

- It is best to link existing resources, set common goals, reduce redundant efforts. Ultimately, stewardship must be personalized. Why should I care? What can I do?
- I think it will probably end up being the most efficient approach with a greater fraction of the resources made available going into actual programs
- Faster to implement without needing to establish new roles and responsibilities and authorities
- It's easier to expand existing structures/orgs than to start from scratch.
- How many other studies are being done – pool resources.
- We don't yet know enough to be creating new programs, laws and restrictions

### **Option 2:**

- If specific valuable sites are selected to be protected/restored then funds can be pursued to improve those sites.
- Believe there is strength in uniting areas. Not convinced state or federal governments would do good job.
- Best builds on the existing work that has been done throughout the watershed
- I believe it stands the best chance of actually happening!
- Seems more feasible within short timeframe
- Picking sites to start saving them, the longer we wait the less chance we have of making a difference
- Most practical (?)
- Fastest/easiest to implement through state and localities
- A formal network of sites might be a more powerful constituency to push for improvement
- I think it could lead to a beneficial system for planning land purchases, and executing and financing them.
- As described in the presentation a formal network would act as a framework to access funding for land preservation and acquisition and may supply some funds of its own.
- We have many worthy sites by providing a network we would link sites in an environmentally enhancing way
- Probably take too long to start a new program. Work at improving existing programs and establish a network of site to protect. The Cold Spring Harbor and Lloyd Harbor areas need to be protected.

**Option 3:**

- Money and acquisition for permanent protection
- More monitoring resources, broader overview, tougher compliance
- Other models exist around the country and it is more likely to work
- The biggest need is for money for acquisition
- A new program that has authority beyond an advisory role is necessary
- Need both states to clean up Sound
- I think it best helps to educate public users of the ecological concerns and make them more aware of their everyday activities that impact the Sound
- I consider the Sound a system that is affected widely by changes that occur locally. From that idea the only way to improve/protect the ecology is as a whole
- Hoping for a program with a strong stewardship/preservation mandate
- No new programs and studies. No public authorities taking over such efforts. The first two options should not be mutually exclusive. A relatively unspoiled harbor should be preserved – keep its natural attributes.
- Number 3 will be the only way to finalize
- Need a top down approach because of the varying degree of resources and motivation that exist among the numerous municipalities that are affected by this initiative.
- Need a central coordinator
- Major commitment rather than piecemeal catch-up is needed to reverse the destruction
- Larger base in small area of LIS

**Appendix F:** Written comments submitted by individuals and organizations.

Andrew J. Spano  
County Executive

February 26, 2004

Long Island Sound Study  
EPA, Long Island Sound Office  
888 Washington Boulevard  
Stamford, CT 06904-2152

Attention: Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative Work Group  
Mr. Mark Tedesco

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Welcome to Westchester County and thank you for convening the second of seven public meetings on the "Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative" here in New Rochelle, 'Queen City of the Sound'.

Through representatives from our Parks, Recreation and Conservation Department, Westchester County government actively participates in the Stewardship Initiative Work Group. We fully support the goal of developing strategies for protecting the Sound and its biological, scientific, and recreational areas. My administration will give careful attention to the record of these public meetings when making decisions that affect the Sound.

One of the jewels of the Sound is right here in New Rochelle – Davids Island. David Island has been recognized by all levels of government, by the environmental and historic preservation community, as the Sound's most significant coastal open space, recreational and biological resource. Unfortunately, the island still remains 'at risk', and it is important that we save Davids Island if the Stewardship Initiative is truly to be a success.

My administration remains committed to the county acquiring Davids Island from the City of New Rochelle for use as county parkland. But we need your help to identify state and federal funding to offset the costs of cleanup, as well as assistance in coordinating the complicated permitting process.

By making Davids Island the 'poster child' for the Stewardship Initiative you can help us to ensure that its enormous potential as a public resource is fully realized and that it is preserved as lasting legacy.

Sincerely,



Andrew J. Spano  
County Executive

CC: Ms. Robin Kriesberg  
Director, Environmental Project  
Office of the County Executive

Michaelian Office Building  
White Plains, New York 10601

Telephone: (914)995-2900 E-mail: ceo@westchestergov.com

**LONG ISLAND SOUND STUDY  
STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE SURVEY  
EAST LYME 3/4/02**

Thank you for a thorough presentation, the beautifully executed topography maps and your dedicated staff. It was obvious that much work and thought went into the March meeting at East Lyme High School and I am most appreciative.

I left the meeting wondering how my specific concerns might have been better met. Here are two of my impressions.

1. Your presentation was brilliant but lengthy. In a large group, it takes time for some folks to feel comfortable enough to ask questions and some of those questions may have gone unanswered due to the late hour.
2. Most concerns were specific to an individual and his/her area and may not have been of interest to the group as a whole.

I would like to offer a possible future meeting scenario that would have worked better for me. As people arrive, separate them into small discussion groups. These groups would consist of folks from specific areas of Southeastern CT such as Stonington, New London, Waterford/East Lyme, Saybrook, off-shore. Each member of the group would be given a map of his/her specific area to facilitate the individual's close study. Each group would be led by one of your staff whose primary function would be to collect data. (I wonder how much information you received through the blue forms? Were they productive?)

I believe such small group discussions would help me to better understand my area. Bouncing off neighbors might bring to mind further details about my own area and the concerns I have for it. Voicing those concerns freely within my small group I could help the group formulate a clearer, more complete picture of our area's concerns. In this way your staff gets more detailed information – and I think that was your purpose in the first place.

Granted, a much larger meeting space and individual maps would be required and a way to get your own presentation across. Perhaps a handout with the same information outlined on your white two-fold board would be enough to tell us about your excellent work. I understand that our discussions would eliminate your own very thoughtful presentation, but they might also eliminate the platform Mr. Spicer came to claim.

Cordette Grimsey  
35 Oswegatchie Road  
Waterford, CT 06385  
860-442-8349  
3/10/04

Comments of William C. Spicer III  
93 Marsh Road, Noank Ct  
for

Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative Public Meeting March 4, 2004

We need to spend a few moments looking at the background of this initiative.

I believe this is approximately the third reincarnation of an idea spawned by Audubon New York in conjunction with Save the Sound and the Regional Plan Association. In a "Listen to the Sound 2000" series of hearings, it was called "The need for a reserve system" and expressed a desire to sequester "underwater lands" of Long Island Sound. Testimony was taken and a report published.

I testified at the May 30, 2000 hearing at the Essex Connecticut Town Hall and carefully outlined difficulties and dangers inherent in this reserve concept and vigorously opposed any inclusion of underwater lands in any Long Island Sound reserve concept. Guess what happened next? I received a nice letter thanking me for my support and when I read the report of the proceedings, I found my comments were either left out or twisted beyond comprehension. Evidently the hearing holders were not about to publish any articulate opposition to their scheme.

A second reincarnation of this scheme surfaced as the Long Island Sound Stewardship System at a meeting hosted by the Connecticut Marine Trades Association (CMTA) April 9, 2003. A Save the Sound lead person with two assistants joined to explain that **"there are going to be areas (of Long Island Sound) that I can't let you use."** Questioning by CMTA members brought out that the proposed program was being organized by a very limited steering group, notably excluding any user or commercial groups and they admitted **"We don't have a lot of private representation."**

The CMTA members in attendance made very clear their disapproval of the scheme with numerous well-taken objections. The CMTA write up of this meeting is attached to these comments.

None the less, the schemers pressed on and I read minutes of LISS Management and CAC meetings where discussions were engaged in to try to improve wording of the scheme and suggestions were made relative to trying to keep who was actually behind the scheme a lot less discernible.

Tonight we are participating in the third reincarnation of this scheme. The initiators are still the same. The idea of including under water lands has not gone away, but is not being quite as conspicuously flaunted. The marine trades groups and commercial users are not listed in the masthead as supporters and the problems and dangers remain the same as in earlier reincarnations.

The footprints of man lie heavy on Long Island Sound, but we have made considerable progress in improving its water quality. **The creation of marine protected areas in the waters of Long Island Sound is not justified. It has not been scientifically supported by extensive long term studies. The idea is a feel good thing, but doesn't belong in Long Island Sound which is a highly used very valuable waterway. In fact the Army Corps of Engineers has called Long Island Sound the most over regulated water body in the United States.**

What could be the motive for trying to redline areas of water in Long Island Sound? One motive could be that if so-called “Marine protected areas of special or exceptional significance” were somehow created then our dredge materials relocation sites could be attacked on some trumped up basis of possible adverse conditions possibly effecting these areas or dredging projects could be similarly challenged. If one looks back to see who spawned the “Listen to the Sound 2000” so-called hearings and compares that grouping with who has supported the Ambro Amendment attacks on Long Island Sound dredging projects and relocation sites, we realize this motive appears the likely reason for these persistent reincarnations.

**Long Island Sound is a very highly used, very important economic waterway. It is not a suitable location for marine protected areas.** Long Island Sound is not pristine, but it needs to be protected from do-gooders acting without very substantial scientific justification. **The water quality of Long Island Sound has improved consistently over the last thirty years. Let’s not cripple our Sound with any marine protected areas. They are simply not justified here. The reincarnations have to stop.**

## Not in Our Sound you don't!

At a recent presentation to CMTA members, one of the three advocates of the proposed Long Island Sound Stewardship System stated, "**There are going to be areas (of Long Island Sound) that I can't let you use.**"

Pretty strong words by an advocacy group purporting to protect this resource specifically so future generations may enjoy it. What about this generation enjoying it? Initial concepts for this proposal would redline (make unavailable for any use) areas on land as well as in the water. Setting aside an area to remain as a special preserve is not a new idea. Pristine waters in the Florida Keys have been preserved to protect special corals. Waters off Hawaii have been closed to fishing to protect some specific specie and an area off Cape Canaveral is off-limits for basic security reasons alone. Just to close off an area, especially one like Long Island Sound where the footprints of man are so deeply impressed, does not make sense.

This program is being organized by a very limited steering group, notably excluding any user or commercial groups, that fully admits that "**we don't have a lot of private representation.**" They have yet to display what endangered life form or what esthetic criteria might be damaged if this preserve is not authorized. The subject has been studied by the US Fish & Wildlife Service, spending \$50,000 during the past two years on its geography. This hardly seems adequate to support closure of any area from the public.

Billions of investment dollars, millions of labor hours and thousands of jobs could be completely at jeopardy if portions of Long Island Sound are ruled off limits. There is a good argument to protect some specific wetland and tidal areas, probably the finest on the east coast. But closing off areas in the water is just exclusionary and serves no purpose.

Long Island Sound is a very highly used, important economic waterway for New England. Its history as the birthplace of the industrial revolution has created some on-going problems but private industry is dealing with the historical debris that helped get civilization to where it is today. It's just not a suitable location for marine protected areas, the waters will not support it. The Sound is not pristine and does need some protection but environmentally it has improved consistently over the past thirty years. It is an economic engine for the area and should not be closed to anyone without full justification and input from all user groups and stake holders. A step that has not yet been made.

# SE\*CRES

Southeastern Connecticut River Estuary Stewardship, Inc.  
We put life back into the river

Mar. 8, 2004

Robin Kriesberg  
Save the Sound, Inc.  
18 Reynolds St.  
E. Norwalk, CT. 06855

Dear Ms. Kriesberg,

I was at the Mar. 4<sup>th</sup> meeting at East Lyme H.S. representing SE\*CRES, Southeastern CT. River/Estuary Stewardship, Inc. Thank you for an informative meeting.

After hearing goal #2, "Establish a formal network of sites within a LISS stewardship system", I was very excited and hope you meant Stewardship organizations like SE\*CRES when you used the term "sites". We could use your data and information along with our own to influence positive change in our area and supply you with critical timely information of our area.

I look forward to hearing from you and working with LISS.



Bruce MacMahon  
Managing Director

**Action for Preservation and Conservation of the North Shore of Long Island**  
PO Box 492, Huntington, NY 11734  
(516) 922-7345

Statement at Long Island Sound Study Stewardship Hearing  
Presented by Caroline S. DuBois, March 16, 2004

1. **Many thanks to the Stewardship Team** for their hard work advancing the goal of creating an “emerald necklace” of permanently protected open spaces around the Sound. This project, designed to strengthen the protections offered by mutual support, will help create lasting **individual management plans** for our fragile shoreline, while being mindful of the competing needs of public access and habitat protection. We urge the **community to maintain the political will and financial support for this effort** in the years to come.
2. Next steps should focus on **educating municipal officials** in the “**tool kit**” of options available for local land preservation including: Land Trusts, conservation easements, and creative zoning, in addition to outright purchase of target sites. This education effort could be modeled after the very successful **NEMO** (Non-point Education for Municipal Officials) program, and should create a handbook of techniques available to local governments as they seek to manage and protect their remaining shoreline treasures.
3. To accomplish this protection faster, the shoreline of the Sound should be divided into **smaller management areas**. **Interdisciplinary local teams** should be created to identify the **local sites** available for preservation and apply the best management techniques for **local conditions**. The cooperation exhibited in Hempstead Harbor is a wonderful model to follow, showing how all the local municipalities can focus on the health of their shared natural resource.
4. In addition, existing **environmental protection statutes need to be aggressively enforced**. We have plenty of sensible regulations already, but lack the manpower to stop careless or greedy individuals from ignoring their personal stewardship responsibilities.
5. Finally, I wish to bring your attention to a particular site worthy of protection for public access. The **Exxon Mobile Oil Terminal in Cold Spring Harbor** is being phased out. This waterfront site could be used for marine education, kayak and non-motorized small craft launching. In particular, the historic oyster sloop, Christeen, could help link the site with the marine education center being built in Oyster Bay at the former Jacobson Shipyard. The ship could take bus loads of school kids back and forth across the twin harbor ecosystem as they **learn about their maritime heritage**. This is my long-term dream of the proper application of stewardship techniques in my own harbor. Thank you.