



## The Long Island Sound Office

of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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*A Partnership to Restore and Protect the  
Sound*

# NEWS RELEASE

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### **Nearly \$1 Million Awarded for Projects to Improve Health of Long Island Sound** *Funding for Habitat Restoration, Water Quality and Wildlife Conservation among Initiatives*

(Rye, N.Y.) – Sept. 26, 2008) – Gathering near the shores of the Long Island Sound in Westchester County, federal and state environmental officials today announced 35 grants to state and local government and community groups under the Long Island Sound Futures Fund. The \$912,994 in grants will be leveraged by \$1.4 million raised by the recipients themselves, providing a total of nearly \$2.3 million towards on-the-ground conservation in Connecticut and New York.

"The Long Island Sound Futures Fund grew out of a partnership that achieves environmental protection through collaboration and shared resources," said Alan J. Steinberg, Regional Administrator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Region 2, which includes New York. "These grants help local experts achieve results that will benefit the Sound and its inhabitants for generations."

"EPA's actions continue to show our lasting commitment to a healthy Long Island Sound," said Robert Varney, Regional Administrator for EPA's New England region, which includes Connecticut. "EPA's funding for these important projects, along with the support from other organizations, substantially boosts our efforts to target environmental concerns and take action to protect the Sound."

The Sound Futures Fund was initiated in 2005 by the Long Island Sound Study through EPA's Long Island Sound Office and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

This year's grant program funded 17 grants in New York and 18 grants in Connecticut. Four grants were awarded for habitat restoration; five grants for planning and stewardship; five for education; three for improving water quality and three for conservation of native fish and bird species. Thirteen small grants totaling \$68,000 were awarded to increase understanding and appreciation of the Long Island Sound through community events and activities.

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Using the funding, groups will restore 17.45 acres of grassland for birds, beaches and aquatic eelgrass, which benefits fish and water quality. A project at Sunken Meadow Park will open 111 acres of salt marsh and underwater areas, which currently have restricted natural tidal flow. The award for Barn Island Wildlife Management Area will be used to help acquire 48 acres of tidal wetlands. Nassau County will seed 2 million shellfish to repopulate Hempstead Harbor, once an abundant fishery. Approximately 300,000 gallons of stormwater will be treated by a green roof at Randall's Island Park in New York City. Seventy communities and more than 100 municipal officials and community leaders will develop a range of tools to deal with water pollution and to prepare watershed plans for their communities. More than 13,000 citizens will help create awareness of and a commitment to high-value natural resources, and some 2,700 volunteers will be involved in cleaning up 233 miles of beaches.

Since 2005, the Sound Futures Fund has provided \$3.6 million to 117 projects in communities surrounding the Sound. With a grantee match of more than \$10 million, over \$14 million in locally-based conservation has been, in part, galvanized by the grant program. The projects will open up 33 river miles for fish passage, and restore 193 acres of critical fish and wildlife habitat, including lakes, underwater grasses, woodlands, meadows, tidal wetlands and park frontage.

The grant program pools funds from the EPA, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Shell Marine Habitat Program for projects to restore the health and living resources of Long Island Sound. Long Island Sound is an estuary that provides economic and recreational benefits to millions of people, while also providing natural habitats to more than 1,200 invertebrate species, 170 species of fish, and dozens of species of migratory birds.

"One of the greatest environmental challenges facing our communities is the protection and restoration of estuaries," said Michael Slattery, Regional Director, Eastern Partnership Office, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. "The funding awarded today represents the Foundation's continuing commitment, as well as the commitment of our federal and state partners, to further restoration efforts aimed at improving the overall health of the Long Island Sound."

"The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proud to be part of the innovative and creative partnership that is the Long Island Sound Futures Fund," said the Service's Northeast Regional Director Marvin E. Moriarty. "Together, we are helping to ensure the future of our nation's fish and wildlife resources as we connect people with nature through these community grants."

"New York State is happy to support the Long Island Sound Future's Fund which assists efforts to restore and protect the Sound," said James Gilmore, Director of the Bureau of Marine Resources for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. "These funds will support endeavors that reduce stormwater runoff, restore habitat and tidal flow, develop watershed plans, and create educational programs in order to ensure a protected and preserved Sound for the future."

"As an active partner in the Long Island Sound Study, Connecticut DEP is very pleased to work with an energetic group of federal, state and local partners to make this program a success, and we are particularly pleased with the work that the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has done again this year with the Long Island Sound Futures Fund projects," said Brian P. Thompson, Director of the Coastal Program at the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection. "Our staff really enjoys reviewing the project proposals and taking part in a process that leverages significant environmental dollars for local habitat restoration, education and land use projects that help to preserve and protect Long Island Sound."

The Long Island Sound Study, developed under the EPA's National Estuary Program, is a cooperative effort between EPA and the states of Connecticut and New York to protect and restore the Sound and its ecosystem. In 1994, it created a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan to guide federal, state

and local governments to improve water quality, restore and protect habitats, and reach out to the public to foster environmental stewardship.

A non-profit established by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation sustains, restores and enhances the Nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Through leadership conservation investments with public and private partners, NFWF is dedicated to achieving maximum conservation impact by developing and applying best practices and innovative methods for measurable outcomes. Since its establishment, NFWF has awarded over 10,000 grants to over 3,500 organizations in the United States and abroad and leveraged – with its partners – more than \$400 million in federal funds into more than \$1.4 billion for on-the-ground conservation.

More information:

- [EPA information on Long Island Sound website](http://www.epa.gov/region1/eco/lis) (www.epa.gov/region1/eco/lis)
- [Long Island Sound Study and Futures Fund website](http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net) (www.longislandsoundstudy.net)
- [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation website](http://www.nfwf.org) (www.nfwf.org)

### 17 Large and Small Grants in New York

Grantee	Project	Award
The Nature Conservancy	Orient Point County Park Grasslands Restoration	\$71,800
New York City Department of Parks and Recreation	Parks Citywide Greenroof Pilot Project	50,000
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation	Engineering and Modeling Study at Sunken Meadow Creek	30,000
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County	Eastern Long Island Eelgrass Restoration Initiative	75,000
County of Nassau, Department of Public Works	Shellfish Seeding in Hempstead Harbor	72,000
Village of Sea Cliff, Hempstead Harbor Protection Committee	Hempstead Harbor 2008 Water Monitoring Program	35,000
Town of Southold	Matituck Inlet Stormwater Reduction and Education	48,100
Friends of the Bay	Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor Watershed Action Plan	15,000
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County	Citizen Water Quality Monitoring	33,000
Rocking the Boat	Water Quality Monitoring Project	35,000
Town of Huntington	Huntington Stormwater Video	12,000
American Littoral Society-Northeast Chapter	Long Island Sound Component 2008 New York State Beach Cleanup	6,000
Three Village Community Trust	Harbor Day Children's Theater: The Ghost Net	6,000
Alley Pond Environmental Center	Festival of Little Neck Bay and Long Island Sound	5,000

Long Island Seaport and Eco Center	Fourth Annual Family Day Celebrating National Estuary Day	5,000
Friends of the Bay	2008 Water Quality Monitoring Program	6,000
Coastal Steward	Mt. Misery Beach Cleanup	6,000

## 18 Large and Small Grants in Connecticut

Grantee	Project	Award
Tributary Mill Conservancy	Streamside Incubation Facility	\$22,500
Sacred Heart University, Project Limulus	An Integrated Management Plan for Milford Point	40,000
The Nature Conservancy	Crowley Parcel Acquisition at Barn Island	57,500
The Nature Conservancy	Land Use Policy Evaluation for the Salmon River	48,600
Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Area	Land Use Leadership Alliance for Connecticut Land Use Decision Makers	29,800
Permitting and Pollutant Trading Strategies for the Long Island Sound	Hydroqual	61,150
Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, State Parks Division	Nature Center – Display Habitats, Homes	27,000
Housatonic Valley Association	Housatonic Estuary Low Impact Development Partners	35,000
Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor	Making Sound Choices from Source to Sea	29,944
Document Video Services	Caring for the Long Island Sound: A Video Series	35,000
Solar Youth	Hands-on Outdoor Learning Adventure	35,000
Mianus River Watershed Council	Video Monitoring of Diadromous Fish Migration	6,000
Town of Greenwich	Snorkeling for Eels Below Dams on the Byram River	2,000
Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation District (for Thames River Basin Partnership)	Thames River Partnership's Floating Workshop	6,000
Mitchell College	Mitchell Beach Restoration Project	5,000
Document Video Services	Duplication Costs for Caring for the Long Island Sound: A Video Series	3,000
Solar Youth	Wintergreen Beach Warriors	6,000

Sea Research Foundation	National Estuary Day at Mystic Aquarium and Institute for Exploration	6,000
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