



A Partnership to Restore and Protect the Sound

The Long Island Sound Office

of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Website: <http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net>

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

More than \$1 Million for Projects to Improve the Health of Long Island Sound

Funding for Water Quality, Education and Stewardship, and Rivers and Beaches

(Waterford, Connecticut) – October 29, 2009) – Gathering together on the shores of Long Island Sound, top federal and state environmental officials announced 33 grants to state and local government and community groups under *the Long Island Sound Futures Fund (Sound Futures Fund)*. The \$1,011,878 will be leveraged by \$1.92 million contributed by the recipients, providing a total of nearly \$2.94 million for on-the-ground conservation in Connecticut and New York.

"These funds will go to real on-the-ground projects in communities that represent the diverse interests of Long Island Sound," said Ira Leighton, acting regional administrator of EPA's New England office. "From innovative green practices to restoring habitat to improving water quality, these partnership projects will result in direct benefits as we work to restore the health of Long Island 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. Including this year's grants, the program has provided \$4.5 million to 138 projects in communities surrounding the Sound. With grantee match of almost \$12 million, more than \$16 million in locally-based conservation has been galvanized by the grant program. In all, funded projects will open up 40 river miles for fish passage, and restore 290-acres of critical fish and wildlife habitat including lakes, underwater grasses, woodlands, meadows, wetlands, beaches, dunes, and park frontage.

This year's grant program funded 21 large grants (grants greater than \$10,000) totaling \$943,755. Five grants were awarded for water quality; four for habitat restoration; one for watershed planning; one for invasive species control; seven for education; and three for stewardship projects. Twelve small grants totaling \$68,123 were awarded for educational activities to increase understanding and appreciation of Long Island Sound through community events and activities.

With the funding announced today, grant recipients will restore 103 acres of tidal marsh, freshwater marsh, and dune and barrier beach thereby benefitting fish and wildlife. For example, projects in the Town of Smithtown, New York will restore 0.35 acres of freshwater wetland and



provide access to the Nissequogue River. Ducks Unlimited will restore a 100-acre tidal marsh along the Little River in Connecticut. A project developed by The Nature Conservancy in the Saugatuck River of Connecticut will eventually open three miles of access for River herring and four miles of access for American eel.

Projects will also contribute to improved water quality. The Hempstead Harbor Protection Committee will continue water quality monitoring to help target water quality improvement initiatives. Going Coastal will operate a pumpout boat to remove a projected 28,800 gallons of sewage that would have been discharged to the Sound in New York waters. GreenApple Corps will construct a greenroof to capture 250,000 gallons of polluted stormwater annually in New York. The Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut will engage 150 homeowners and landscaping professionals in workshops focused on practices to reduce pesticide and nitrogen pollution from lawns and gardens to the Long Island Sound. In all, projects will engage seventy communities in developing a range of tools to deal with water quality problems.

Public engagement in projects is high. More than 181,180 citizens will be exposed to education and stewardship projects. Examples of public engagement include: 5,200 volunteers involved in cleanup of 198-miles of beaches lead by Save the Sound in Connecticut and the American Littoral Society in New York. The Friends of Flax Pond in New York will reach 300 volunteers and community members of all ages through its summer and winter lectures and field studies to create greater public awareness of estuary ecology through study and hands-on projects. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, New York will promote a greater understanding of Long Island Sound by educating 575 students (grades 4-8) from schools in underserved communities in Suffolk and Nassau County on Long Island. The Mystic Aquarium in Connecticut will reach 750 elementary and middle school students with an aim of increasing their knowledge of Long Island Sound and interest in protecting it.

“Communities, fish and wildlife are the real winners of the Long Island Sound Futures Fund grants,” said Regional Director Marvin Moriarty of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Northeast Region. “This year, grants will go to projects like restoring eelgrass near Southold, New York, benefiting aquatic creatures, including fish like winter flounder and striped bass; and to support environmental education on Outer Island off Branford, Connecticut, for children who may be the future conservation stewards of the Long Island Sound ecosystem. We are a proud member of this partnership.”

The grant program pools funds from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, 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 invertebrates, 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 Shell Marine Habitat Program is pleased to again contribute to the Long Island Sound Study projects. We are impressed with the breadth of proposed projects and believe that this year's grants will make a substantial contribution toward enhancing the estuarine environment,” commented Mary Margaret Hamilton, Social Investment Manager, Shell Oil Company. “

““Connecticut DEP is pleased to be a partner in the Long Island Sound Study, and to work with our neighbors in New York as well as the EPA, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA to preserve and protect Long Island Sound.” said Connecticut DEP Commissioner Amey Marrella. “This year, \$535,500 in Long Island Sound Futures Funds grants are being awarded to 19 important Connecticut projects. These projects will build on our efforts to protect and improve Long Island Sound by focusing on everything from water quality, habitat restoration and coastal clean ups to public awareness and education. “

“New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Commissioner Pete Grannis said, "The projects receiving grants today take a variety of approaches to achieve tangible benefits and increase the public's appreciation for Long Island Sound's natural resources. We look forward to continuing to work with our many partners to restore habitat and prevent future degradation of this critical ecosystem."

The Long Island Sound Study, developed under the EPA's National Estuary Program, is a cooperative effort between the 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 nonprofit 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](http://epa.gov/region1/eco/lis) (epa.gov/region1/eco/lis)
- [Long Island Sound Study and Futures Fund](http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net) (www.longislandsoundstudy.net)
- [National Fish and Wildlife Foundation](http://www.nfwf.org) (www.nfwf.org)



Twenty-one LISFF Large Grant Awards 2009

Organization & Type of Project	Title	Award
Water Quality		
Hempstead Harbor Protection Committee Village of Sea Cliff	Hempstead Harbor 2009 Expanded Water Monitoring Program, NY	\$45,000.00
Going Coastal, Inc.	Western Long Island Pumpout Boat, NY	\$34,350.00
NYC Department of Parks and Recreation - Green Apple Corps	Parks Citywide Greenroof Pilot Project:Phase II, NY	\$50,000.00
Clean Up Stonington Harbors, Inc (CUSH)	Water-testing utilized to implement pollution solutions, CT	\$11,096.84
Northeast Organic Farming Association of Connecticut	Organic landscaping for non-point source pollution control, CT	\$17,251.00
Habitat Restoration		
Town of Smithtown, NY	Harrison Pond Park Wetland Restoration and Dam Removal, NY	\$94,993.00
The Nature Conservancy	Saugatuck River Watershed Diadromous Fish Passage, CT	\$87,976.00
The Trust for Public Land	Removal of Cottages and Restoration of Dunes on Long Beach, CT	\$100,000.00
Ducks Unlimited, Inc.	Little River Tidal Restoration, New Haven County, CT	\$49,620.00
Watershed Planning		
Regional Plan Association	Implementing the Nissequogue River Stewardship Action Plan, NY	\$54,000.00
Invasive Species		
Town of Brookhaven, NY	Perennial Pepperweed Removal-West Meadow Beach, Brookhaven, NY	\$38,538.00
Education		
Cornell University Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County	Sound Experiences: From Ship to Shore III, NY	\$35,000.00
National Audubon Society, Inc.	Social Marketing Campaign: Beach-Nesting Birds, Long Island's North Shore, NY	\$26,749.54



Friends of Flax Pond, Inc.	Habitat Monitoring in Flax Pond, NY	\$25,000.00
Friends of Outer Island	Outer Island Marine Environmental Education/Research Center, CT	\$34,975.68
Sea Research Foundation, Inc. (Mystic Aquarium)	Long Island Sound Curricula Outreach to CT's Inner Cities, CT	\$28,835.00
Yale University	Yale Peabody Museum Outreach in Long Island Sound, CT	\$35,000.00
The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk, Inc.	Creature Encounters Large, CT	\$27,870.00
Stewardship		
The Nature Conservancy	Coastal Resilience on Suffolk County Long Island Sound Shore, NY	\$50,000.00
University of Connecticut	Riparian Buffers in the Niantic River Watershed, CT	\$39,601.50
The Nature Conservancy	Implementing Stormwater Solutions for the Salmon River, CT	\$57,899.25
		\$943,755.81

Twelve LISFF Small Grant Awards 2009

Organization	Title	Award
Nunataks Ltd. d/b/a Greenburgh Nature Center	Development of Bronx River Watershed Education Exhibit, NY	\$5,704.00
American Littoral Society	Long Island Sound Component - 2009 NY Beach Cleanup, NY	\$6,000.00
Alley Pond Environmental Center	Festival of Little Neck Bay and Long Island Sound, NY	\$5,000.03
City Parks Foundation	Coastal Classroom, NY	\$6,000.00
Save the Sound, Inc.	Save the Sound Coastal Cleanup Program, CT	\$6,000.00
Sea Research Foundation, Inc.	Estuary Celebration Weekend, CT	\$5,420.00
Town of Stratford, CT	Town of Stratford, CT Storm Sewer Stenciling Project, CT	\$6,000.00
Town of Westport-Septic Main. Committee-Conserv. Dept.	Septic System Management Education Campaign, CT	\$6,000.00
Save The River-Save The Hills, Inc.	"Sound Decisions" Radio, Podcast, Print, Social Marketing, CT	\$6,000.00



Earthplace-The Nature Discovery Center	Indicator Bacteria and Nutrients Levels in the Norwalk River, CT	\$6,000.00
Norwalk Seaport Association, Inc.	Sheffield Island, Norwalk Habitat Restoration, CT	\$6,000.00
CT Department of Environmental Protection	Signage at Silver Sands State Park for Habitat Conservation, CT	\$3,999.75
		\$68,123

