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of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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NEWS RELEASE

Long Island Sound Study Funds 20 National Estuary Day, Exotic Species and Public Participation Projects

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Mark Tedesco, EPA LIS Office, (203) 977-1541
Kimberly Zimmer, NY Sea Grant (631) 632-9216

Stony Brook, NY, October 27, 2003 — The Long Island Sound Study announced today that more than \$80,000 has been awarded to 20 Connecticut and New York community groups and researchers dedicated to restoring and protecting the Sound.

The projects, funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and administered by New York Sea Grant, include public participation in controlling floatable debris, dog waste collection stations, children and family education programs and festivals, maintaining aquaculture platforms, and tracking diamondback terrapins. For the first time this year, grants were specifically targeted to programs that celebrate National Estuaries Day, held the fourth Saturday of every September, and to increase awareness of the concerns over invasive plant and animal species.

This is the tenth year of funding for the Long Island Sound Study Public Participation, Information, and Education Small Grants. A total of 99 projects have been funded since 1995, amounting to more than \$391,000.

“It is exciting to see diverse projects that center on Long Island Sound and encourage the public to get involved,” said Kimberly Zimmer, a New York Sea Grant educator and public outreach coordinator for the Long Island Sound Study. “We are particularly excited we were able to expand the

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State University of New York at Stony Brook
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program this year to fund projects to celebrate National Estuaries Day and to increase awareness of exotic species in and around the Sound.”

Mark Tedesco, director of the EPA Long Island Sound Office, also noted the importance of the small grant awards.

“This program continues to bring together civic groups, government officials, environmental organizations, and universities to work on projects in their communities that will improve the health of Long Island Sound,” he said.

A total of 43 groups competed this year for the small grants. The next request for proposals will be distributed during the summer of 2004. If you are interested in being placed on the mailing list please contact Kimberly Zimmer at the New York Sea Grant office at (631) 632-9216 or visit the Long Island Sound Study web site at www.longislandsoundstudy.net for more information.

The Long Island Sound Study is a cooperative effort sponsored by the EPA and the states of Connecticut and New York to analyze and correct the Sound’s most pressing environmental problems.

AWARD WINNERS

Connecticut

Title: Branford River Project (National Estuaries Day project)

Project Design: The Branford River Project sponsors a river celebration with kayak and canoeing, sea chanteys, children’s activities and educational displays. To explain the river’s role as part of the Long Island Sound estuary the project will create and print a four panel map brochure of the river and its connection to the Sound highlighting spots of interest. Along with the brochure a display will be designed detailing the river and the habitats as well as the effects of nonpoint source pollution.

Organization: Branford River Project

Location of Project: Branford

Contact: Maria Storm

Address: PO Box 254, Branford, CT 06405

Phone: 203-481-5765

Web Site: None

LISS Funding: \$1,300

Title: Clean Sound Fall Marsh/Beach/Island Clean-up and Restoration

Project Design: Clean Sound will conduct six clean ups of salt marshes, beaches and island wildlife refuges between October and May in Norwalk, Milford, Stratford and Shelton. During spring and summer these sites are nesting areas. A boat will be used to transport people to the island for clean up.

Organization: Clean Sound Inc.

Location of Project: Norwalk, Milford, Stratford, and Shelton.

Contact: John Toth

Address: 20 Ojibwa Road, Shelton, CT 06484

Phone: 203-509-8876

Web Site: www.cleansound.org

LISS Funding: \$4,500

Title: Exotic Species in LIS: Raising Awareness through Education (invasive species project)

Project Design: Connecticut Sea Grant will develop a website, poster, and field cards to help control the introduction, spread, and impacts of invasive species. The project will identify the exotic species inhabiting the Long Island Sound, the pathways of marine invasive species and the effects on the ecology and/or economy that invasive species have. The project will help teachers and students (grades 5-12) learn more about local marine invasive species and provide access to educational resources. The field cards will help maritime industries minimize the cost and time spent dealing with biofouling invasive species.

Organization: University of CT/Connecticut Sea Grant

Location of Project: Connecticut

Contact: Nancy Balcom

Address: 438 Whitney Road Ext., Unit 1133, Storrs, CT 06269-1133

Phone: 860-405-9107

Web Site: www.osp.uconn.edu

LISS Funding: \$8,864

Title: Identifying Sources of Indicator Bacteria in the Silvermine River

Project Design: Harbor Watch/River Watch program at Earthplace (formerly the Nature Center of Environmental Activities in Westport) will continue a water quality monitoring study of the Silvermine River. The focus will be finding additional sources of indicator, enteric bacteria for remedial action. Research carried out in 2003 discovered major sources of bacterial input and has further identified areas for continued research. The sources are larger than originally anticipated and Earthplace is planning to walk the riverbanks taking samples as well as establishing permanent testing sites. As sources are identified they will push for remedial action.

Organization: Earthplace

Location of Project: Silvermine River, Norwalk

Contact: Richard Harris

Address: 10 Woodside Lane, Westport, CT 06880

Phone: 203-227-5937

Web Site: www.earthplace.org

LISS Funding: \$4,982

Title: Increasing the Number of Housatonic Estuary Towns with Protective Buffer Regulations

Project Design: The Housatonic Valley Association will be inventorying the five Housatonic River estuary municipalities – Stratford, Shelton, Derby, Orange, and Milford for buffer ordinances and regulations. A presentation will be developed and resources provided to communities regarding the importance of buffers. A buffer checklist and a list of suggestions for ordinances that could be adopted by local planning and zoning, inland wetland, and conservation commissions will be created. The goal is to improve municipal buffer regulations and the subsequent establishment of stream buffers to help address the problem of habitat loss and degradation of water quality due to current land use and development.

Organization: Housatonic Valley Association

Location of Project: Housatonic River Estuary

Contact: Elaine LaBella

Address: PO Box 28, Cornwall Bridge, CT 06754

Phone: 860.672.6678

Web Site: www.hvathewatershedgroup.org

LISS Funding: \$5,000

Title: Land Care in the Watershed

Project Design: The Arboretum plans to develop land care provider education programs designed to teach land care professionals and do-it yourselves about gardening and lawn care techniques. The program's aim is to prevent nonpoint source pollution by teaching specific practices and actions to take to reduce the amount of runoff from properties they manage. Each land care company in Fairfield County will be contacted and education credits will be offered that can be applied toward recertification requirements by DEP licensing. Four lectures will be offered in September during the one day seminar.

Organization: Bartlett Arboretum and Gardens

Location of Project: Fairfield County

Contact: Lars Cherichetti

Address: 151 Brookdale Rd, Stamford, CT 06903

Phone: 203-322-6971

Web Site: bartlettarboretum.org

LISS Funding: \$5,000

Title: Neighborhood Steward Teams

Project Design: Neighborhood Steward Teams are community based after-school environmental education and action programs that provide urban youth with the knowledge, skills and motivation to address environmental problems in their community. During 2004 the program will expand to initiate eight steward teams, directly serve up to 90 youth from low-income neighborhoods, and perform at least 12 community service action projects. The teams will meet twice a week for two hours and are composed of 10 youth from grades 4 to 8. Local teenagers are trained and hired to assist with teaching and team leadership.

Organization: Solar Youth Inc.

Location of Project: New Haven

Contact: Joanne Sciulli

Address: 100-F Brookside Ave, New Haven, CT 06515

Phone: 203-387-4189

Web Site: www.solaryouth.com

LISS Funding: \$5,000

Title: 2004 New Haven Harbor and LIS Cleanup

Project Design: On April 24, 2004, the Peabody Museum of Natural History, along with local businesses and organizations, will sponsor a major cleanup effort at the beach and estuarine areas of Long Wharf Nature Preserve, the Quinnipiac and Mill Rivers, and the shoreline east of the Quinnipiac River. The event will start at Criscuolo Park where there will be tabling by various organizations and microscopes to aquatic life up close. The day will conclude with participants visiting the Peabody Museum.

Organization: Yale University – Peabody Museum

Location of Project: New Haven Harbor

Contact: Michael Donoghue

Address: Grants and Contracts, PO Box 208337, New Haven, CT 06520-8337

Phone: 203-432-3776

Web Site: www.yale.edu/grants

LISS Funding: \$2,082

Title: Senior Marine Ecology

Project Design: SoundWaters will continue senior research volunteer program with the local senior centers. Senior citizens will be recruited to volunteer and participate in activities at the SoundWaters center. The seniors will be involved in research projects as well as assisting in the environmental field trips for students in grades 4 to 8, assist with family events at the center, and staff the exhibit room at the center.

Organization: SoundWaters, Inc

Location of Project: Holly Pond Stamford CT

Contact: Carla Schneider

Address: 1281 Cove Road, Cove Island Park, Stamford, CT 06902

Phone: 203-323-1978

Web Site: www.soundwaters.org

LISS Funding: \$5,000

Title: Where the City Meets the Sea

Project Design: Where the City Meets the Sea is in its third year of offering free programs. The successful program is designed to help the people of Hartford understand their connection to Long Island Sound and how their actions have an impact on the estuary. The Mystic Education Center will provide classes on marine organisms and their habitat for 1300 school children in grades pre-K through 8, three teacher workshops, and three community events, all to foster greater appreciation for the Sound. Students will receive programs on the organisms that live in the Sound. Teachers will be provided with activities and materials for use in classrooms and the community will be provided with events, exhibits, videos and strengthening partnerships with various other Hartford organizations.

Organization: Sea Research Foundation

Location of Project: Hartford, CT

Contact: Joseph Bumpers

Address: 55 Coogan Blvd, Mystic, CT 06355

Phone: 860-572-5955

Web Site: www.mysticaquarium.org

LISS Funding: \$5,000

New York

Title: Conservation of Diamondback Terrapins

Project Design: This project will continue to increase public awareness of the diamondback terrapin through two public lectures and two public events as well as distributing a terrapin fact sheet and publishing papers, presenting posters and seminars at professional meetings. The students will conduct field research on nesting ecology and will also trap, seine net, snorkel, and SCUBA dive to track the terrapins as well as man a hotline. The turtles that are caught are tagged and several receive sonic tracking tags to study their daily movements. The health of the turtle has also been threatened by rodent and raccoon populations as well as traffic. A fence will be installed to designate a nature trail and create a safe zone for nesting turtles.

Organization: Long Island University, CW Post

Location of Project: Oyster Bay

Contact: Matthew Draud

Address: Biology, 720 Northern Blvd, Brookville, NY 11548-1300

Phone: 516-299-4154

Web Site: www.liu.edu

LISS Funding: \$5,000

Title: Long Island Sound component of 2004 NY State Beach Cleanup

Project Design: The American Littoral Society will coordinate the 2004 International Coastal Cleanup at beaches in New York State that affect Long Island Sound. Outreach will focus on grassroots environmental organizations,

youth groups, students, and corporate volunteers who will be asked to document and remove debris from beaches and waterways, as well as to adopt a site for continued monitoring. Beverage containers will be separated into those with five cent deposit and those with out. This information will be used in the drive for a bigger and better bottle bill. Beach captains will receive information and supplies. Data collected will be used to devise strategies to combat marine pollution.

Organization: American Littoral Society

Location of Project: New York Long Island Sound Beaches

Contact: Don Riepe

Address: 28 West 9th Road, Broad Channel, NY 11693

Phone: 718-318-9344

Web Site: www.alsnyc.org

LISS Funding: \$5,000

Title: Manhasset Bay Shoreline Trail Program

Project Design: The program will continue with third graders with activities regarding water pollution in Long Island Sound through classroom lessons, nature walks, hands-on experiment, and post-trip experiments. This program will also be expanded in the Port Washington school to include fourth graders and enhance what they learned last year. Students will be learning about water pollution and road runoff, and they will discuss the origins of litter and take notes on the plant and animal species they see.

Organization: Residents for a More Beautiful Port Washington

Location of Project: Manhasset Bay, Port Washington

Contact: Jennifer Rimmer

Address: PO Box 864, Port Washington, NY 11050

Phone: 516-767-9151

Web Site: www.pwresidents.org

LISS Funding: \$5,000

Title: My Pet Protects Hempstead Harbor Campaign (National Estuaries Day event)

Project Design: Hempstead Harbor Protection Committee will kick off a “My Pet Protects Hempstead Harbor” Campaign on National Estuaries Day. The campaign will educate the public about the damage of pet waste on the harbor and provide a means to do something about it. The “Dogipot” pet waste disposal stations will be installed in key locations around the harbor each will have a waste bag dispenser, a trash receptacle for the filled bags and an educational sign. This will be a pilot program for possible expansion to the nine other municipalities on the committee.

Organization: Hempstead Harbor Protection Committee

Location of Project: Hempstead Harbor Watershed

Contact: Eric Swenson

Address: Village of Sea Cliff, Sea Cliff Ave, Sea Cliff, NY 11579

Phone: 516-677-5790

Web Site: None

LISS Funding: \$2,000

Title: National Estuaries Day Celebration at the Waterfront Center

Project Design: The Center and Kips Bay Boys and Girls Club (100 members ages 10-15 from the Bronx) and the Boys and Girls Club of Oyster Bay (approximately 12 to be facilitators) will participate in a National Estuaries Day Celebration. The event will include hands on educational activities like seining, touch tank; recreational activities like kayaking and sailing; and stewardship activities like a beach clean-up to excite students about the importance of estuaries. Kips Bay will receive a pre-trip lesson before coming to Oyster Bay.

Organization: The Waterfront Center

Location of Project: Oyster Bay

Contact: Amy Cross

Address: PO Box 187, Oyster Bay, NY 11771

Phone: 516-624-7900

Web Site: www.thewaterfrontcenter.org

LISS Funding: \$2,000

Title: National Estuaries Day Celebration

Project Design: Long Island Seaport and Eco Center (LISEC) will hold a Celebration for National Estuaries Day 2004 in Port Jefferson, Setauket, and Mt Sinai harbors. LISEC will host a variety of family activities in different locations. Events would include beach cleanup, shellfish restoration, creek and harbor walks, clamming, boat building, boat trips, fishing clinics and an evening seaside picnic with sea chanteys and story tellers.

Organization: Long Island Seaport and Eco Center

Location of Project: Port Jefferson Harbor

Contact: Kathleen O'Sullivan

Address: PO Box 750, Port Jefferson, NY 11777

Phone: 631-474-4725

Web Site: www.lisec.org

LISS Funding: \$2,000

Title: National Estuaries Day: Stony Brook Harbor

Project Design: The Joint Village Coastal Commission plans to expand Harbor Day into an environmental education festival with exhibits and continue the non-motorized boat paddle around Stony Brook Harbor. The Commission plans to work with other villages as well as local environmental organizations to encourage participation in National Estuaries Day

Organization: Joint Village Coastal Commission

Location of Project: Stony Brook Harbor

Contact: Kaylee Engellenner

Address: Nissequogue Village Hall, 631 Moriches Rd, St James, NY 11780

Phone: 631-584-6346

Web Site: www.harborday.net

LISS Funding: \$2,000

Title: Port Jefferson Harbor Shellfish Restoration Project

Project Design: The Long Island Seaport and Eco Center has retrofitted two floating docks into aquaculture platforms to grow and maintain 100,000 oysters and 3,500 scallops. LISEC has also been recording the growth, mortality, water temperature, and water visibility. Over the next 18 months the 500 cages will need bi-weekly gear change (involving cleaning cages and animals, counting, sorting, removal of predators, and re-caging). A strong volunteer base is needed for the maintenance. LISEC also will be expanding the web site to include this project, will provide articles in its newsletter, will create training materials for volunteers, and will provide materials for local schools on the project.

Organization: Long Island Seaport and Eco Center

Location of Project: Port Jefferson Harbor

Contact: Kathleen O'Sullivan

Address: PO Box 750, Port Jefferson, NY 11777

Phone: 631-474-4725

Web Site: www.lisec.org

LISS Funding: \$5,000

Title: Public Education: Storm Drain Marking Program

Project Design: The Town of Huntington will permanently mark 250 storm water collection structures with “duracast polyethylene storm drain markers” surrounding the bay complex. Each colored marker will read “No Dumping – Flows to Bays and Sound”. This project will be part of a town-wide public education and outreach program on storm water impacts. The town will provide schools, recreational enthusiasts, commercial/industry groups and the community at large with educational materials, pamphlets, booklets, displays, video tapes, website and public service announcements.

Location of Project: Huntington and Northport Bay Complex

Contact: Glen Hulse

Address: 100 Main St. Room 310, Huntington, NY 11743

Phone: 631-351-3192

Web Site: <http://town.huntington.ny.us>

LISS Funding: \$3,700

Title: Remote Sensing

Project Design: Students will use remote sensing to study the changes that have taken place along the shore line of the Sound in Sunken Meadow State Park as well as the tidal estuary within the park. Students will use archival photos from different eras in the Park’s history in order to understand the changes that have taken place to the watershed. After this classroom work students will proceed to the beach and the estuary, where they will inventory the flora and fauna using a transect line. Students will also seine and catalog the organisms found in the ecosystem. Students will use global positioning systems to mark their research locations so that the coordinates can be matched to the maps and aerial photos.

Organization: Western Suffolk BOCES

Location of Project: Sunken Meadow State Park

Contact: Peter Walsh

Address: 810 Meadow Road, Smithtown, NY 11730

Phone: 631-269-4343

Web Site: www.wsboces.org

LISS Funding: \$4,869