



SUMMARY

Sustainable and Resilient Communities Work Group Meeting November 12, 2024 1:00-3:00 pm Zoom Meeting

Attendees:

Sara Powell	Kristen Laccetti	Sylvain De Guise
Elizabeth Hornstein	Nicole Govert	Alison Branco
Sarah Schaefer-Brown	Owen Placido	Alexa Fournier
Deb Visco Abibou	Paul Stacey	Liv Herdman
Anjali Khanna	Becky Shuford	Shahela Begum
David Kozak	Nikki Tachiki	Debbie Einhorn
Kathleen Fallon	Sarah Watson	Harry Yamalis
Kathy Bunting-Howarth	Shauna Kamath	

Welcome and Introductions – Becky Shuford

- Starting January 2, 2025, we will have a 6th SRC Extension Professional based in NYC! Ben Goldberg will be joining the NYSG team and working out of Queens in the NYC DEP office.
- Collect any feedback on [SRCWG Meeting 08.13.2024 Summary](#)

3rd Annual Sustainable & Resilient Communities Workshop & Field Trips - Sara Powell

- SRC Team is planning two field trips leading up to our Annual Workshop, CT field trip to bioretention project in Hamden, CT is scheduled for December 5th, NY field trip to living shoreline project in Rye, NY is scheduled for December 6th.
- 3rd Annual SRC Workshop will be held over two days this year, instead of one half-day virtual session - this decision was made in response to feedback from last year's workshop attendees.
- Three workshop sessions - SRC Resilience Assistance Programs, new Resilience Tools, panel on Planning for Inundation.
- All details, including registration information can be found here: <https://www.lisresilience.org/annual-workshop/>

Break Down Barriers Planning Support Program Updates - Sarah Schaefer-Brown



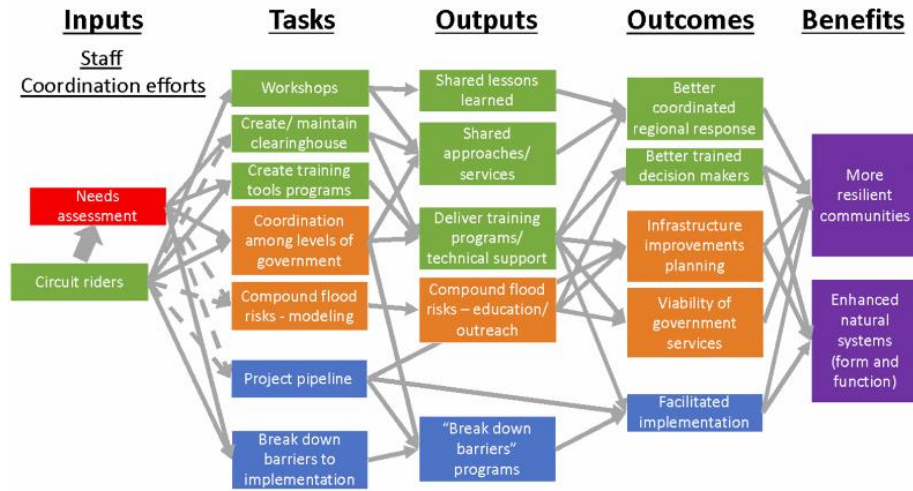
- All information on our Grant Writing and Planning Support Programs is now available on the Resource Hub here: <https://www.lisresilience.org/assistance-programs/>
- We continue to accept applications for Grant Writing Assistance program (open on a rolling basis), plan to release of 2nd Round of the Long Island Sound Resilience Planning Support Program in early December
- SRC Team is planning a Press Event to celebrate 15 Awardees of the first round of the Planning Support Program and announce the 2nd round of the program on Friday, December 6th in Rye, NY. More details to follow!
 - We are also putting together an interactive map showing the locations of the Awardees with associated project information. This will be live on the Resource Hub soon, and also shared out in the press release.

Long Island Sound Study CCMP - Sarah Schaefer-Brown

- <https://longislandsoundstudy.net/about/ccmp-revision-updates/>
- Deadline for Public Comment – November 22, 2024
- We encourage all SRC Work Group members to review the draft and provide comments if you haven't already!
- Thank you to all Work Group members who have already given comments and/or participated in the SRC Writing Team.

Self-Assessment of Progress on SRC 5-Year Work Plan - SRC Team

- **Timeline**
 - Next 5-year work plan will cover October 2026-September 2031
 - Kicking off discussion today, we plan to meet in person in February to really dive into brainstorming and considering what should be included in our next 5-year work plan
 - By June 2025, goal is to present a draft work plan for Work Group discussion
 - August 2025 - finalize draft and submit to EPA in September
 - Goal is to have the new work plan finalized by November 2025. Implementation would begin October 1, 2026.
- **Self Assessment of Progress Implementing the Current Work Plan**
 - SRC Team has prepared our perspectives on our progress to date, want to hear your opinions on our progress and areas for more development/opportunity. This discussion will set us up for a productive conversation during our February 2025 meeting. Will be doing some live polling at the end of our slides today and will also take notes.
- **Current 5-Year Work Plan Tasks & Outcomes**



- We've just begun Year 4 of our original Tasks:



Work Plan Task	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Needs assessment	█				
Hold annual workshops		█	█	█	█
Develop and maintain clearinghouse		█	█	█	█
Develop training programs		█	█	█	█
Improve coordination among levels of government		█	█	█	█
Support a compound flood risk modeling initiative	█	█	█	█	█
Create a project pipeline		█	█	█	█
Understand and break down barriers to implementation		█	█	█	█

- Task 1: Needs Assessment
 - In 2022, SRC team reviewed existing studies and identified knowledge gaps, compiled a list of target communities and audiences to reach out to, developed a list of open-ended questions for an informal assessment, and after about 6 months of speaking with stakeholders we worked to synthesize our findings in order to identify common themes across the Sound and across stakeholder groups (and identify any notable differences).
 - Each dot on the map shown in the slides represents one or more stakeholder conversations. In total we had over 300 stakeholder conversations and we connected with ~60% of municipalities in the coastal boundary (includes counties, towns, cities, villages), represented by the yellow line on this map.



- We then made a one-pager that is available online to outline our findings https://longislandsoundstudy.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/SRC-NA-fact-sheet_final_checked.pdf
- The top environmental threat identified across all regions was stormwater-driven flooding, although SLR & coastal flooding, along with extreme weather/storms, water quality, coastal erosion, habitat loss & degradation, development impacts, invasive species, tree loss, and shifting of seasons/species were also identified as issues for a number of Sound communities.
- The challenges we heard about fell into four main buckets: Limited Capacity, Governance Challenges, Funding, and Institutional Inequities. These challenges are tied to the Needs that we heard about: namely the need for leadership/champions for resilience issues, increased capacity, coordinated planning efforts, more knowledge-sharing, and help identifying funding opportunities and the most relevant tools/resources.
- **Task 2: Annual Workshop**
 - Annual Workshops are a valued experience for communities to share experiences, learn from demonstrations of tools, learn about new resources, and network with others.
 - When the WG put together the work plan, we think you were envisioning in-person events, but so far to date, we have held our workshops virtually although last year we did start a series of related field trips. Virtual events of course became necessary during 2020 and have become more routine since, but we do feel that virtual enables the most participation given the large geography we are covering.
 - The first year of our workshop brought together 262 people for a half day workshop focused on opportunities to increase the resilience of the Sound's communities to climate change and other environmental threats.
 - 425 people registered and subsequently received all follow-up materials from the workshop.
 - Interactive sessions included opportunities to learn more about our needs assessment findings and recommendations, the newly released Long Island Sound Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program, and tips for success with Long Island Sound funding opportunities. Concurrent breakout sessions highlighted the work of partners related to shoreline planning and implementation, using green infrastructure for stormwater management, sustainable climate planning for relocation, and new sustainability/resilience tools available in both New York and Connecticut.
 - Year 2 of our workshop, we decided to hold a series of field trips leading up to the workshop to give our stakeholders the opportunity to meet in



person to network and learn from resilience projects and initiatives recently completed or in progress around the region.

- Five field trips were held in October and November 2023 - one in each region - and in total engaged more than 170 people.
- On December 7, 192 people joined us for our 2nd half-day virtual workshop. 292 people registered and subsequently received all follow-up materials.
- Interactive sessions included opportunities to learn more about the new Long Island Sound Resilience Resource Hub and community resilience-building around Long Island Sound, while concurrent breakout sessions highlighted the work of partners related to environmental justice, tools for coastal planning, and considerations for updating codes & ordinances in both CT and NY. Videos of and materials from all workshop sessions are available online.
- For Year 3, as mentioned before, we are holding two field trips (one in each state) and we are trying a new format for the workshop itself. Instead of one 3.5-hour workshop, we are holding three sessions over two days. We are hoping this will allow more flexibility for people to participate and will prevent people from having to choose between concurrent sessions. All videos and associated materials will continue to be available online.
- Feedback from workshop participants will continue to be valuable in building future programming. We are thinking we will continue to invest in in-person experiences when it makes sense, but keep the workshop virtual to enable the greatest participation. But we will see what everyone says!
- Task 3: Resource Hub
 - Objective: Create a user-friendly website to meet needs of LIS communities - accessing curated resources, finding funding opportunities to support projects, navigating a decision-making framework to help prioritize initiatives, and connecting with upcoming events and training sessions relevant to building resilience.
 - Website was developed during 2023 and officially launched in February 2024.
 - Project was guided by an oversight committee that conducted multiple rounds of review and feedback and involved an invited group of testers to improve the website.
 - Started collecting Google Analytics a month after launch in April 2024
 - Have collected over 2,500 NEW users
 - Can correlate spikes in users with events like emails and webinars; we will continue to use Google Analytics to help understand what is successful in driving use of the website.



- We're seeing a gradual increase in the number of returning users - tracking this helps us understand how useful the site may be to our stakeholders.
- Funding Database is our most popular page (after the homepage)
- We would like to ensure that we continue to grow the number of users who find the website relevant and useful enough to return.
- For the SRC Team, at times, some of our maintenance needs have been slow to progress and keeping it up to date is challenging during busy times.
- The team is considering evaluating the Resource Hub next year to help inform future directions; We see the potential to add more features beyond what we can add on our own (such as integrated registration, etc.). Accordingly, we anticipate needing additional funding to support more features and/or a student worker.
- **Task 4: Training Programs**
 - In 2023, SRC Team held two Steps to Resilience Webinars meant to introduce participants to local climate impacts and projections, resilience planning steps and strategies, and NY & CT State climate certification programs.
 - In 2024, we held regional funding workshops to connect participants directly with funders and learn tips and tricks for success. These workshops were very popular and we are planning to do them again.
 - Some of our training programs we have coordinated on as a team, but have also done more regionally-specific trainings, including:
 - Coastal Resilience forums on Long Island in 2023 & 2024 - addressed best practices for addressing shoreline erosion. 90 participants in 2023, 100 participants in 2024.
 - Land Use Leadership Alliance Training on Long Island (Fall 2024) - partnered with Pace University to train 28 municipal staff/community leaders representing 18 LIS communities. May hold one of these in Westchester in 2025, exploring possibility of another on Long Island in the future.
 - In CT, with NART funding, various workshops have been held to build relationships with bridge organizations, test alternative stakeholder engagement strategies and incentives, and facilitate discussions on climate resilience and equity.
 - Training needs addressed through programs so far:
 - Training need that still needs attention: identifying priorities and communicating effectively.
 - Upcoming trainings in early 2025:
 - Funding Workshops
 - Trainings on USGS Compound Flood Risk Mapper



- **Task 5: Coordination**

- Through all our tasks we are increasing coordination among levels of government and communities. We are bringing communities together through our Annual Workshops and Training Programs, and are encouraging groups/communities to work together to implement high impact projects.
- In the updated CCMP currently out for public comment, we have an action dedicated to Collaboration
 - Action 2-2: Coordinate across municipal boundaries to advance collective resilience priorities.
- There is external coordination with our communities, but also internal coordination through this Work Group.
 - We are considering whether or not we want to modify the structure of the SRC Work Group moving forward.
 - Changes to LISS Work Group structure upon finalization of the CCMP may impact roles and reporting responsibilities.
 - Will be asking for your feedback on if you think there are any modifications we should make, etc.

- **Task 6: USGS Compound Flood Risk Model**

- Phase 1:
 - Looking back at the information shared during the August Work Group Meeting, we can see that we have moved further into Phase 1 of the report review and mapper release. In August and September, it was anticipated that the USGS team would Submit papers and data releases to internal USGS review, address review comments and submit to journals with an open access/public review process (making data releases/GIS layers available to the public).
 - At this stage USGS has anticipated that the live release of the Compound Flood Risk Mapper will happen later this fall in coordination with LISS and will be accompanied by fact sheets.
 - Later this year, there will be planning for Sea Grant workshops and training sessions.
- Phase 2:
 - During Phase 2, USGS indicated that there would be more focus on specific areas in the Long Island Sound region to look at compound flood risk using process-based models. The locations included Greenport, NY, Port Jefferson, NY, and New Haven, CT.
- Based on what we've learned through developing this tool, we are curious if anyone else would like to highlight other research/tool needs that we would want to request funding for in the future?



- **Task 7: Project Pipeline**

- PERSISTS criteria that we adapted & adopted from CIRCA
- Link to page on RH: [A Guide to Resilience Planning – Resilience Hub](#)
- Series of questions for communities to consider as they are working on identifying, prioritizing, and implementing resilience projects.
- On the Resource Hub, we have resources associated with each of the criteria.
- We also created a printable guide that we now have available to hand out to communities.
- So far, the SRC Team has assisted more than 70 communities with project planning and implementation. Some examples:
 - Marsh Conservation Planning for Westchester, Nassau, and Suffolk Counties in NY
 - Working with partners on Implementation of the Crab Meadow Watershed Plan
 - Community Bluff Restoration project in Riverhead
 - Climate Vulnerability Assessment for the Mystic River Watershed in CT
 - Finalizing designs for “Sliver by the River” with the TPL and Groundwork Bridgeport
 - Advancing the Bostwick Avenue Greenway Equitable Resilience project with PT Partners in Bridgeport, CT
 - In new CCMP, have an Objective on Resilience Project Implementation and a series of related Actions
 - Goal is to implement 200 initiatives over the next 10 years
 - Will be asking for WG feedback - is there anything else you envisioned us doing for this task?

- **Task 8: Break Down Barriers**

- Have established the Grant Writing Assistance Program and Planning Support Program to address needs heard through Needs Assessment and implementation of the GWA.
- Have a page on our Resource Hub with all information, including an interactive flowchart to help communities determine which program is the best fit for their needs: [Assistance Programs – Resilience Hub](#)
- Grant Writing Assistance Program launched November 15th, 2022
 - Help communities get grant funding for sustainable and resilience-focused grant projects
 - Awards up to \$9,950 directly to a contractor, no match required
 - To date, we have received 39 applications
 - 24 have been awarded funding
 - \$218,770 allocated



- See slide for number of awards per region in FY22 and FY23
- For FY22: 20% success rate (meaning communities received the grant they were targeting); \$3.66 to \$1 ROI
- Project types included watershed plans, engineering and feasibility studies, habitat restoration, green infrastructure implementation, shell recycling and oyster gardening, community outreach/engagement, vacuum truck purchase
- Planning Support Program - Round 1 launched October 16, 2023 (*Round 2 anticipated December 6, 2024*)
 - This program was built based on feedback and our experience with the first year of the Grant Writing Assistance Program
 - Goal is to provide assistance scoping and planning for sustainable/resilience projects.
 - No match is required, no funds are given to applicants, funds are reimbursed directly to contractors through Cornell and UConn.
 - In the first round, we received 28 applications
 - 18 advanced to candidate status (included in RFP)
 - 15 awards made - 10 NY communities, 5 CT communities
 - \$1,088,788 allocated
 - Multiple project types including climate vulnerability assessments, preliminary project planning, conceptual designs, flood studies, landscape design plan, natural resources inventory, watershed plan updates
 - CT Awardees
 - Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed
 - Groton Long Point Association
 - Towns of Essex, Deep River, and Chester
 - Town of Madison
 - Southeast Conservation District
 - NY Awardees
 - Rye Town Park Commission
 - Village of Larchmont
 - Village of Mamaroneck
 - Town of Mamaroneck
 - Village of Rye Brook
 - Village of Pelham
 - Seatuck
 - Village of Lattingtown
 - St. John's Episcopal Church (Cold Spring Harbor)
 - SUNY Maritime



- SRC Team will soon post an interactive map showing more information on the 15 awards made through the first round of the program

- **Summary of Task Progress**

Workplan Task	Progress (0-5)	Progress Bar	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Needs assessment	5		As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)			
Hold annual workshops	3		As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)
Develop and maintain clearinghouse	4		As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)
Develop training programs	3			As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)
Improve the coordination among levels of government	3		As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)
Support a compound flood risk modeling initiative	4		As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)
Create a project pipeline	2		As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)
Break down barriers to implementation	3		As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)	As planned (focal)

As planned (focal)

As planned (maintenance)

Developing (focal)

- Green items - tasks will continue to evolve in response to feedback and/or CCMP revision
- Light blue items - maintenance or final tasks. Development of the Resource Hub is complete but we have ongoing maintenance/improvements to make. Also, we are nearing the end of the USGS compound flood risk model, but there are still some outreach tasks.
- Dark blue items - we know generally what will occur, although minor adjustments may be made as needed.

- **Discussion - Review 5-Year Work Plan Tasks & Outcomes / Successes / Challenges & Opportunities**

- Some challenges identified by the SRC Team:
 - Getting communities to take action and implement projects; change takes time
 - Some communities are not interested in engaging or are 'late adopters'
 - Limited capacity - both within the SRC Team and within our communities
- Opportunities identified by the SRC Team:



- Unique extension model niche: as non-regulatory, non-advocacy, neutral knowledge brokers, we can facilitate partnerships to take advantage of different strengths
- Sylvain - would like to hear about what has been done that is novel; or, what is overdone that we should consider de-emphasizing - any thoughts from the Work Group?
 - Will a needs assessment be done by the new person in NYC?
 - Yes, intent is that he will do something similar. Likely less intensive - he has contacts already in NYC, will work with Lilli Genovesi to connect with her contacts as well.
 - Deb noted that Sarah Schechter had to do something similar when she started (she is away at a conference today), so we all appreciate that that is essential to getting up and running with this group.
- Dave Kozak - concerned that sharing results of USGS CFRM work only via a web-viewer will not be sufficient. Think that for this to be most useful, there will need to be a lot of hand-holding to get people to use the tool effectively. We should consider how to best do this.
- Alison Branco - Agreed with David's point and suggested that the SRC team strategize about the outreach for the CFRM.
- Alison Branco - Totally understand the neutral knowledge broker role, but there is a lot of space between advocacy and neutral knowledge broker, communities may need additional help to see the advantages and disadvantages of a decision.
- Sylvain DeGuise - Sees the role of the Working Group to assist in the areas Sea Grant employees may have restrictions.
- Becky Shuford - Sea Grant SRCs are providing the pros and cons of a decision to ensure the information is out there through extension.
- Kathy Bunting-Howarth - Has been trying to encourage the SRCs to continue communicating with the "early adopters" and communities that are not engaging with our Programs. Try to establish a "train the trainers" framework to encourage the municipalities to support each other and continue to promote shared knowledge, lessons learned. We want to empower municipal staff who may not turn over as much as elected leaders.
- Deb - agree with Kathy, I think there is more we can do to share stories - we know this is effective and we can consider ways to work more with LISS & SG Comms staff to do this more effectively.
- Alison - field trips are a great way to shine a light on communities that are doing things well and get the word out there to other communities.



- Becky - video could be useful, too. not everyone can attend a field trip, but having a video or series of short videos to show what has been done... a 'virtual field trip' perhaps.
- Becky - sounds like trainings & field trips should continue to expand and be built upon.
- Dave - are there any early adopters of innovative techniques outside of LIS that we might want to tap into? especially for hot button topics (e.g., retreat) that NY & CT may not be really receptive to yet. could be good to bring in guest speakers or highlight case studies to begin the conversation on more potentially controversial topics.
- Deb - agree, the SRCs have been discussing this. For this year's workshop, we have a speaker from Maine joining us to discuss planned relocation/retreat.
- Kathy Bunting-Howarth (chat) - Have you ever reached out to any of the other NEPs, say the Chesapeake Program, to learn more about their Local Government workgroup? It would be good to know the background and whether there might be tips/ideas for how to grow this group

Wrap Up & Next Steps – Sylvain DeGuise

- 4 years ago, we had nothing! 3 years ago, the SRCs were just beginning - we have accomplished a lot as a Work Group! We really appreciate your time.
- We are moving from building programs to how do we improve what we have built? We are still a young program, but are beginning to be able to quantify success.
- In our next 5-year plan, how do we get more active in project implementation to improve resilience and identify metrics that measure success?
- Looking forward to meeting in person in February, for ideas for the next 5-year plan but also for ideas we can go ahead & implement in 2025 & 2026. Please [RSVP here for the February 26th, 2025](#) in-person meeting.
- 2025 meetings:
 - 2/26/2025 (*in-person meeting at Stony Brook)
 - 6/3/2025
 - 8/12/2025
 - 11/12/2025 (shifted a day for Veterans day)