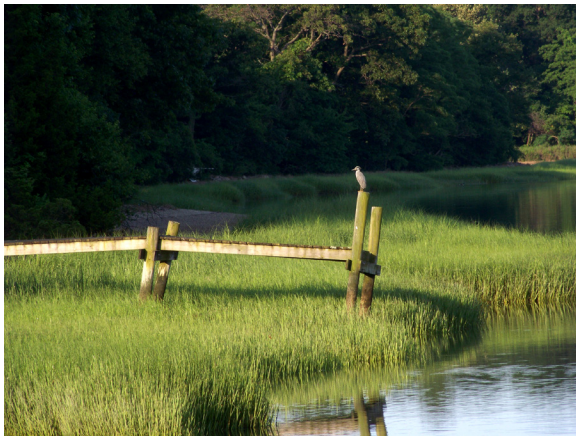


Ensuring Healthy Long Island Estuaries

Impacts to Long Island's valuable coastal resources have grown as development has escalated and polluted runoff has increased. Public health concerns have caused bathing and shellfishing restrictions. Degradation of the Island's estuaries has affected fishing, tourism, and recreational revenues, and has impaired the quality of life previously enjoyed by Long Islanders.

To address these issues, New York Sea Grant Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NYSG NEMO) has assisted the Island's localities in meeting the significant financial and technical challenges they face in complying with requirements mandated by 2003 federal and state Phase II stormwater regulations. In 2008 New York's regulations increased significantly in scope and complexity; further requirements are scheduled to come into effect in 2010.

In 2009, while reaching more than 100 municipalities Island-wide, NYSG NEMO worked closely with east end municipalities, many of which recently became newly designated for Phase II regulation. In-depth consultations were provided to the Towns of Shelter Island, East Hampton, Southold, and Southampton.



Municipal Stormwater Programs protect Long Island's estuaries (Stony Brook Harbor). Photos: Eileen Keenan, NYSG NEMO

NYSG NEMO assisted east end municipalities in planning their stormwater programs, and in establishing measurable goals for public education, illicit discharge detection, construction oversight, and pollution prevention programs.

While building understanding of the regulations, NYSG NEMO also provided examples of successful programs, delivered technical resources, and served as liaison between municipalities to promote leveraged experience and expertise.

NYSG NEMO continued to serve as Co-Chair of the Peconic Estuary Program's Inter-Municipal Stormwater Workgroup. As a result, east end municipalities have begun implementing joint stormwater projects, including sharing of equipment, GIS data, and stormsewer mapping protocols.

Looking forward, formal establishment of a Peconic Inter-Municipal Stormwater Consortium has advanced and efforts to initiate an inter-municipal agreement and first year work plan are underway. These important steps will solidify long-term cooperation, funding, and operational frameworks.

This project meets the performance measures of Sea Grant's Healthy New York Coastal Ecosystems focus area.

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