



New York Sea Grant: On the Air with Coastal Issues and Information

In early 2006, New York Sea Grant's Recreation/Tourism Specialist initiated a six-month pilot initiative with WWNY TV 7, a CBS and Fox affiliate in Watertown, to bring Sea Grant's "message" to the morning masses. Airing during one of the highest rated TV blocks in the "wake-up hours" - the 6:30-7am stretch, the live interviews feature such topics as clean and safe boating, invasive species, diving, the Lake Ontario Dune/Salmon River steward program, shoreline land issues, coastal tourism, and marine safety. These monthly "chats," potentially reach 10,000 viewers in Jefferson, Northern Oswego and Southern St. Lawrence counties.

WWNY Producer Jack Miller notes, "The interviews have exposed a large number of people to the wide variety of coastal issues being addressed by programming that New York Sea Grant organizes and participates in."

As a result of the pilot effort, WWNY renewed the series through 2006 and into 2007. Says Miller, "I look forward to working with Sea Grant on other topics in the coming months."

Before or after the television interviews, NYSG personnel visit WTNV Radio 790 AM in Watertown and are heard by Morning Show listeners and commuters. NYSG's five-minute



NYSG's David White (left) talks with WWNY TV 7 Morning News hosts Beth Hall and Jeff Cole about boating safety. Photos courtesy of WWNY TV 7, Watertown

segment, now a regular feature, usually airs during one of the show's highest rated times, the 7:30-8 am slot.

The interviews conducted by WTNV Radio News Director Nathan Lehman and Morning Show Host George Neher are relaxed in nature and cover a great deal of information, often in a light-hearted manner that helps listeners remember "who to call" for more details on everything from diving sites to invasive species.

Neher says the NYSG series has helped local listeners realize the value of their own backyard. "People are often not aware of the advantages of their own area. They vacation elsewhere so the Sea Grant series is good for sharing information about local coastal resources," Neher says.

New York Sea Grant is a cooperative program of the State University of New York and Cornell University. Sea Grant Extension administration is located at 112 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.

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