

Outreach Coordinator Increases Stewardship for Long Island Sound

New York Sea Grant's Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative was created to protect the areas around the Sound that are not only important for plants and animals, but also for residents that use these areas for recreational purposes.

In 2006, the Long Island Sound Study (LISS) Stewardship Initiative Work Group identified 33 Inaugural Stewardship Areas around the Sound with significant recreational and ecological values. The LISS NY Outreach Coordinator developed various programs to promote stewardship among students, volunteers, and community members for these areas.

Stewardship Days

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYSOPRHP) and LISS held four volunteer events in the fall of 2012 at LISS Stewardship Areas. The events were organized to improve the ecological conditions at these Areas. Activities included:

- invasive plant pulls and invasive snail removal at Sunken Meadow State Park and Brookhaven State Park,
- native tree planting at Orient Point State Park, and
- native seed collection at Caumsett State Park and Preserve.

More than 50 volunteers participated in these events.

Stewardship Web Pages

The LISS Communications staff developed Web pages for each of the LISS Stewardship Areas, highlighting the ecological importance, recreational



Volunteers stand next to the bags of native seeds they collected for a grassland restoration project at a local Long Island Sound Study Stewardship Area. Photo: Larissa Graham, NYSG

opportunities, nearby places to visit, and links to learn more about each Area. These Web pages will be launched in the spring of 2013.

Student Research Projects

In 2008, the Sound Stewards program was developed to involve middle and high school students in research projects in LISS Stewardship Areas. New York Sea Grant worked closely with partners, including the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NYSOPRHP, Stony Brook University, and LISS, to develop research projects that allow students to learn about the problems facing Long Island Sound, while collecting data that will be used by partner agencies. To date, more than 1,900 students have been involved in these research projects.

NYSG partners in LISS programming that educates stakeholders and instills a sense of stewardship for the important natural areas of the Long Island Sound.

This project meets the performance goals of Sea Grant's Healthy New York Coastal Ecosystems Focus Area.

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

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