

## Shoreline Management Tour: Education for Resilient Communities and Economies

Many areas of New York State's shorelines are naturally subject to erosion, which becomes a concern particularly where there are homes, businesses, or other structures. Too frequently, shoreline management, engineering, and design considerations are overlooked or poorly understood in erosion-prone and erosion hazard areas. Many actions undertaken to cope with erosion, therefore, either fail to work as intended or do not last long enough to realize a practical or financial benefit to property owners. They may even compound the problem for that site or for neighboring areas of the shoreline.

Helping stakeholders understand why and how waterfront projects are implemented can improve decision-making related to shoreline management and lead to more successful outcomes.

### **NYSG Responds**

To educate stakeholders on various shoreline management projects permissible in New York State, New York Sea Grant organized a one-day tour along Wayne County's Lake Ontario shoreline. The tour covered the spectrum of shoreline management with examples from vegetative to structural approaches.

The tour was open to local organizations, agency staff, Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and others involved in shoreline management. Participants included representatives of the Port Bay Improvement Association citizens' group and the Finger Lakes Watershed Protection Alliance, a coalition of all 25 counties in New York State's Lake Ontario drainage basin.

By learning about the process used at each site, participants gained an understanding of different options, challenges and opportunities associated with these waterfront projects, and how and why these specific projects were implemented. Site hosts reviewed different phases of the projects, including initial problem, design, environmental considerations, permitting, costs, and implementation. Assessing these and other key factors can lead to a better



*NYSG shoreline tour participants view a bluff protection and stabilization project along Lake Ontario. Photo: H. Weitzner*

understanding of shoreline management and more successful informed, science-based decisions.

### **Community Leaders Respond**

According to a post-tour survey, all the participants learned something new about shoreline management techniques. Comments indicated that as a result of the tour and seeing real-world applications of projects in the field participants have a better understanding of processes and projects, and will be more likely to research different shoreline management techniques for their future decision making and project implementation.

### **Partners:**

- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- University of Wisconsin Sea Grant

### ***The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is New York Resilient Communities & Economies***

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA.

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