

Great Lakes Coastal Resilience & Climate Change Curriculum Workshop

Climate change has various impacts across the planet. Focusing globally can make this topic difficult for students to understand on a local level. Teachers and educators in New York's Great Lakes region want to learn about and visit local and regional examples of climate change impacts and to better understand efforts to address these impacts and create more resilient coastal communities. Once familiar with these impacts and localized efforts, they can more easily integrate climate change concepts into their classrooms and programs.

In August of 2022, New York Sea Grant (NYSG) hosted a two-day workshop in Buffalo to 10 introduce teachers and educators from New York's Great Lakes region to experts on coastal resilience and climate change, 2) take them on site tours of coastal resilience projects and climate change impacts, and 3) work collaboratively to develop Great Lakes-specific classroom lessons and activities on this topic.

Eighteen workshop participants learned from experts from the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning, Western New York Land Conservancy, National Wildlife Federation, and NYSG. They toured coastal resilience projects at Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park along the Buffalo River and Times Beach Nature Preserve along Lake Erie. They discussed how to incorporate new resources into their teaching programs, shared examples of current lessons, and brainstormed new methods of covering climate-related topics.

In a post-workshop survey, participants indicated they increased their knowledge of the Great Lakes (80%) and of coastal resilience and climate change educational resources (100%). Workshop participants were eligible to receive classroom supplies such as tabletop steam tables to demonstrate shoreline erosion from extreme weather events and tabletop weather tanks to demonstrate seiches on the Great Lakes.



NYSG Climate Change Curriculum workshop participants learn about local resiliency efforts from Erie County Parks Rangers at Seneca Bluffs Natural Habitat Park along the Buffalo River. Photo: Nate Drag/NYSG



Partners:

- Center for Great Lakes Literacy
- Erie County Department of Environment and Planning
- Western New York Land Conservancy
- National Wildlife Federation

NYSG 2022 Climate Change Curriculum workshop participants had the first-hand opportunity to see climate change impacts in local habitats. Photo: Nate Drag/NYSG

The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is Environmental Literacy and Workforce Development in NY.

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