



New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

New York State has 3,400 miles of diverse coastline and is the only state in the U.S. bordering both the Great Lakes and Atlantic Ocean. More than 85% of NY's population lives in a coastal region.



New York Sea Grant regional offices provide innovative research, technical assistance, and outreach on such issues as water quality, coastal resilience, marine & freshwater fisheries, invasive species, algal blooms, aquaculture & seafood, coastal literacy, and shoreline community development.

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NYSG Focus Area
for this project summary:
Resilient NY Communities and Economies

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January 2024

Empowering Great Lakes Communities: Climate-Resilient Local Government Training Initiatives

Local government training focused on climate resilience, land use planning, and floodplain management is crucial as it empowers communities to mitigate environmental risks, fostering long-term sustainability and resilience, especially in light of the escalating impacts of climate change

New York's Great Lakes region faces climate threats, including increased risk of extreme weather events, changes in precipitation patterns, temperature fluctuations affecting lake ecosystems, and potential impacts on water levels, and ice cover. In recent years Lakes Erie and Ontario have experienced record high water levels that resulted in catastrophic flooding along their shorelines, exposing community vulnerabilities.

From 2017 to 2023, New York Sea Grant (NYSG) established a timely climate-resiliency training initiative in the Great Lakes region. Recognizing the imminent threats posed by climate change, the organization designed a series of training events tailored specifically for local government officials. Focused on climate resilience, land use planning, and floodplain administration, these events addressed the critical need for informed decision-making in the face of environmental challenges.

With partners, NYSG coordinated and held 10 events, reaching more than 400 individuals, each representing more than 50 municipalities from 15 different counties. Participants were engaged in hands-on workshops and immersive training sessions and gained tangible experience with the latest strategies and best practices. NYSG fostered an environment for collaboration to thrive, connecting leaders with a shared commitment to safeguarding their communities.

These innovative training events led by NYSG were dynamic experiences that equipped officials with practical tools to navigate the complexities of climate adaptation.

Project Partners:

Central New York Regional Planning and Development Council • Chautauqua Watershed Conservancy • Environmental Finance Center at Syracuse University • Erie County Planning • Finger Lakes-Lake Ontario Watershed Protection Alliance • Genesee/Finger Lakes Regional Planning Council • Lake Erie Watershed Protection Alliance • NYS Department of Environmental Conservation • NYS Department of State • Tug Hill Commission



NYSG provided climate resiliency training to local government representatives to enhance their land-use planning and management. Photos: NYSG/M. Austerman