



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
& Economies

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Innovative Resilience Planning and Grant Support Initiatives in the Long Island Sound Region

New York Sea Grant is successfully implementing responsive programming to address complex challenges in coastal communities.

Lack of capacity, expertise, and resources to prepare and apply for funding are the main barriers to planning, designing, and implementing sustainability and resilience-focused projects for communities across New York and Connecticut. These issues were identified by a regional Needs Assessment conducted in 2021 by New York Sea Grant's (NYSG) Long Island Sound Study (LISS) Sustainable and Resilient Communities (SRC) Extension Professionals.



Long Island Sound Resilience Planning Support Program press event, Rye Town Park, December 6, 2024. See more below. Photo: Robert Burg/LISS*

To address these barriers, NYSG and Connecticut Sea Grant launched a Grant Writing Assistance Program in 2022 with funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through LISS. This program facilitates the contracting of a grant writing consultant to help communities develop successful grant proposals. In 2023, a Planning Support Program was launched, matching participating communities with qualified contractors to help them with the identification and development of resilience projects.

The first two years of the Grant Writing Assistance Program reduced staffing and capacity barriers in 24 communities and helped communities receive \$672,969 in grants from state and regional funding opportunities, e.g., the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Water Quality Improvement Program and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Long Island Sound Futures Fund.

In the first year of the Planning Support Program, nearly \$1.1 million was awarded to 15 Long Island Sound coastal communities (10 in NY) to support climate vulnerability assessments and resilience plans, watershed-based conservation plans, natural resource inventories, conceptual design plans, and flood mitigation studies.

NYSG developed the Long Island Sound Grant Writing Assistance and Planning Support programs as innovative and responsive approaches for tackling complex barriers to advance the implementation of sustainability and resilience-focused projects across the Long Island Sound coastal watershed.

** Left to right: LIS SRC Extension Professionals Deb Visco Abibou, Elizabeth Hornstein, Sarah Schechter, Sarah Schaefer-Brown, Sara Powell; Village of Rye Brook Mayor Jason Klein, US EPA LISS Director Mark Tedesco, CT Sea Grant Director Sylvain De Guise, Town of Rye Administrator Debbie Reisner, NY Sea Grant Director Rebecca Shuford, Town of Rye Supervisor Gary Zuckerman, Westchester County Executive/Incoming U.S. Congressman George Latimer.*

Project Partners/Funders:

- Long Island Sound Study
- Connecticut Sea Grant
- Funding: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency