

New York Sea Grant NEMO Program Addresses Peconic Water Resource Protection

On September 20, 2010, **Eileen Keenan**, Manager of the New York Sea Grant Non-point Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO) Program, participated as a panelist at the Peconic Estuary Program's Call to Action Conference in Southampton, NY. Attended by over 200 municipal officials and local stakeholders, the conference offered action-oriented discussions that covered stormwater and nitrogen management, eelgrass protection, and habitat restoration.

Among the actions identified, were preservation of parcels in nitrogen sensitive watersheds, reduction of managed turf at government properties, establishment of additional eelgrass sanctuaries, mitigation of eelgrass disturbances, and allocation of funding for habitat restoration projects.

In addressing the pressing need for cost-effective stormwater management, Keenan acknowledged the continuing work of the Peconic Estuary Program's Stormwater Work-

group and called for strengthened support of watershed-based inter-municipal stormwater initiatives. The panel further highlighted the need for stormwater education, incentive programs, increased vegetative preservation requirements, reduction of impermeable surface allotments, increased buffer size regulations, establishment of a sustainable long-term funding mechanism, and adoption of Harbor Protection Overlay Districts.

In the final session, local officials expressed their intent to work together to advance priority action items. Following the conference, attendees expressed very positive feedback and strong support for carrying the important objectives of the Peconic Estuary program forward.

Photos, press coverage, and formal proceedings can be accessed on the Peconic Estuary Program's Web site at: www.peconicestuary-program.org/CAC2010.html

—Eileen Keenan



Members of the Peconic Estuary Call to Action Conference Stormwater Panel; left to right: Robert DeLuca, Group for The East End; Eileen Keenan, NYSG NEMO Program; Lorne Brousseau, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County; Mark Terry, Town of Southold.

