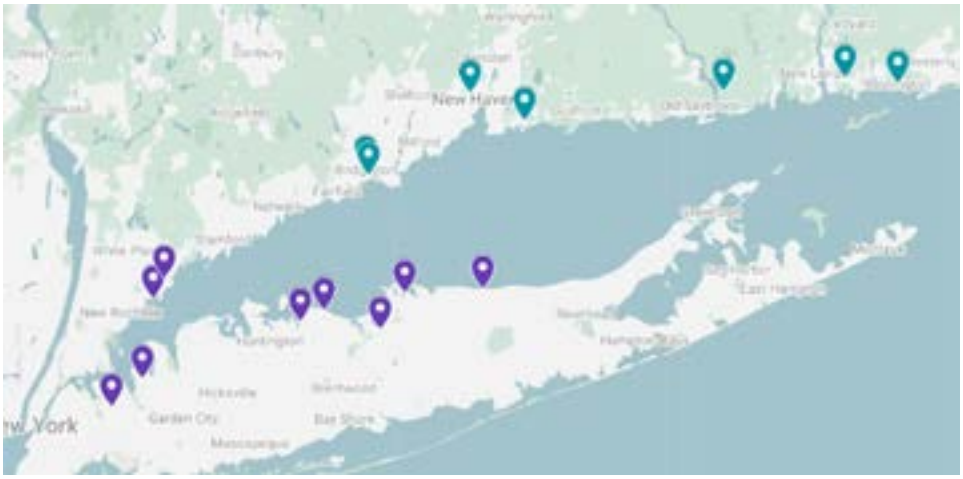
Long Island Sound Resilience Planning Support Program — *2025 Award Slate*



Map showing the locations of the 16 projects awarded support through the second round of the LIS Resilience Planning Support Program. Nine New York projects are shown with purple markers and seven Connecticut projects with teal markers.

OVERVIEW

Since 2021, a team of New York Sea Grant (NYSG) and Connecticut Sea Grant (CTSG) Sustainable and Resilient Communities (SRC) Extension Professionals has been working to develop resources and tools to help Long Island Sound communities achieve their sustainability and resilience goals. A major barrier for many communities is a lack of capacity and resources to identify, conceptualize, and develop climate resilience projects.

In response, the SRC team launched the Long Island Sound Resilience Planning Support Program in October 2023 with funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency through the Long Island Sound Partnership. The Program provides planning support by matching communities with qualified contractors to assist with their resilience project planning needs. By helping communities assess local climate risks, conceptualize project ideas, and conduct preliminary planning steps, the goal is that they will be better positioned to access other funding sources for further project design and implementation.

In this second round of the Program, NYSG and CTSG awarded $1,036,021 in planning support to advance climate resilience projects in 16 coastal communities in the Long Island Sound region. The fourteen projects—seven in CT and nine in NY—described below include climate vulnerability assessments and resilience plans, conceptual designs for flood mitigation opportunities, natural resource inventory reports, and strategic plans.

ABOUT LONG ISLAND SOUND PARTNERSHIP The Long Island Sound Partnership is a a collaborative effort involving researchers, regulators, user groups, and other concerned organizations and individuals who are working together to protect and improve the health of the Sound.

ABOUT CONNECTICUT SEA GRANT Connecticut Sea Grant, based at UConn's Avery Point campus in Groton, CT, is one of 34 Sea Grant programs supported by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration that encourage the wise stewardship of our marine resources through research, education, outreach, and technology transfer.

ABOUT NEW YORK SEA GRANT New York Sea Grant is a cooperative program of Cornell University and the State University of New York, under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Sea Grant College Program. Since 1971, New York Sea Grant has represented a statewide network of integrated research, education, and extension services promoting coastal community economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and citizen understanding about the State's marine and Great Lakes resources.

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CONNECTICUT AWARDEES

CITY OF BRIDGEPORT

Project: Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory Report
Contractor: GEI Consultants, Inc.
Award Amount: $39,448

View of Ash Creek in the City of Bridgeport. Credit: Deb Abibou.

The City of Bridgeport will use planning assistance to develop a Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory (NRWI) report to strengthen local understanding, coordination, and planning around the city's environmental assets. While Bridgeport has produced many valuable plans and studies addressing environmental needs, these efforts have often been fragmented and have not fully incorporated climate resilience. This project will synthesize existing information across conservation, sustainability, and resilience initiatives, while identifying gaps and opportunities for improvement. Building on this synthesis, a comprehensive NRWI will catalog the city's natural resources, habitats, and wildlife, providing maps and detailed descriptions to facilitate informed decision-making. The NRWI report will outline strategies and protocols for integrating ecosystem and conservation priorities into municipal planning, zoning, and development processes. It will also identify priority areas for ecological restoration and opportunities for nature-based solutions that enhance community resilience. In this way, the report will serve as a tool for coordination across City departments and partners, supporting long-term sustainability and accelerating the implementation of conservation-focused resilience projects that benefit Bridgeport's residents and environment.

NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSING SERVICE OF NEW HAVEN

Project: Strategic Plan for a Stormwater Management Consulting Program
Contractor: TPA Design Group
Award Amount: $35,000

From left to right: Mike Uhl, HomeEnergy ConneCT head energy engineer; Lucy Ferlauto, HomeEnergy ConneCT project manager; Kathy Fay, director of community sustainability at Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven; Geoff Stack, contractor partnership manager for HomeEnergy ConneCT. Credit: Lucy Marinelli.

Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS) of New Haven will use this support to develop a strategic plan for a Stormwater Management Counseling Program to help Connecticut residents in Long Island Sound coastal communities reduce stormwater runoff and related flooding risks. Building on NHS's existing HomeEnergy ConneCT energy efficiency counseling program, the project will assess gaps and opportunities, design systems, plan outreach, and explore partnerships that could facilitate a sustainable program. Efforts will focus on communities within or partially within the Long Island Sound coastal boundary that face heightened flooding challenges due to combined sewer overflow systems and other stressors (e.g., Bridgeport and New Haven, and potentially Norwalk and Norwich). The resulting strategic plan will outline an implementation path for a program that empowers residents to adopt green infrastructure practices while enhancing the region's resilience.

CONNECTICUT AWARDEES

PT PARTNERS

Project: Environmental Resilience Plan for the PT Barnum Public Housing Community and Surrounding Neighborhoods in Bridgeport, CT
Contractor: TPA Design Group
Award Amount: $38,500

PT Partners, a resident-led grassroots organization serving Bridgeport's public housing communities, will develop an Environmental Resilience Plan to address pressing environmental challenges in and around the PT Barnum Apartments. Building on previous planning efforts—including a $17 million greenway project proposal developed with EPA Community Resilience Technical Assistance—this initiative will help PT Partners strengthen and refine its strategies to better compete for funding and advance community-driven resilience solutions. The project will engage residents, local government agencies, and nonprofit partners to co-develop a comprehensive plan that responds to issues such as flooding, industrial activities, limited green space, and urban heat. Support will include reviewing past proposals, identifying community priorities, and researching successful models of community-led resilience. The resulting plan will outline clear goals, actionable strategies, and conceptual designs for two to three priority projects, complete with draft budgets and potential funding sources.

TOWN OF BRANFORD

Project: Branford Water Pollution Control Facility Resiliency Project Phase II−Feasibility Study & Conceptual Design

Contractor: Tighe and Bond
Award Amount: $69,000

The Town of Branford will use this planning assistance to advance Phase II of its Water Pollution Control Facility (WPCF) Resiliency Project to address significant flooding risks at the facility, which treats 3.5 million gallons of sewage per day. Located adjacent to the Branford River—which flows directly into Long Island Sound—the facility is recognized as a critical community asset, essential to protecting public health, water quality, and local economic stability. Following a 2023 vulnerability assessment that evaluated the WPCF and more than 50 pump stations, this phase will focus on feasibility and conceptual design alternatives for improving the WPCF's resilience to coastal flooding and future sea level rise. The work will evaluate a range of wet and dry floodproofing options, along with nature-based and hybrid strategies, and determine appropriate design standards based on current and future flood scenarios. It will also include cost considerations, implementation pathways, and evaluation of funding opportunities. A chosen alternative is intended to lead Branford to Phase III: Preliminary Design of the project.

An aerial view of the Branford Water Pollution Control Facility, center, shows its location on the Branford River and a nearby marina. Credit: Photo courtesy of the Town of Branford via Nearmap US Inc.

CONNECTICUT AWARDEES

TOWN OF GROTON

Project: Comprehensive Green Infrastructure Community Engagement Strategy
Contractor: SLR International Corporation
Award Amount: $101,300

Municipal officials leading the resilience project in the Mystic section of Groton are, left to right, Sabit Nasir, sustainability and resilience manager; Johathan Reiner, director of planning and development services; Alexis Torres, sustainability and resilience specialist; Geoff Foster, town engineer; and Dave Prescott, planner II/floodplain manager. They are standing at a public access area in a neighborhood that borders the Mystic River and is susceptible to flooding. Credit: Judy Benson/Connecticut Sea Grant.

The Town of Groton sought planning assistance to develop and pilot a comprehensive green infrastructure community engagement strategy in the Downtown Mystic portion of the Town. As recommended in the 2024 Downtown Mystic Resiliency and Sustainability Plan, green infrastructure education and outreach will primarily be conducted with private landowners in the 44 acres of land that drain into the Pearl Street stormwater system. The stormwater authority evaluation will focus on the portion of Groton within the Mystic River watershed. There are two sub-watersheds within this area, and the evaluation will help determine whether best management practices (BMPs) and a stormwater authority should be pursued in one or both of them. In summary, the intent of the report's recommendations will be to reduce the amount of stormwater flowing into Pearl Street by retaining it in the upper, largely residential watershed, while engaging private landowners in green infrastructure strategies and evaluating the potential for BMPs and a stormwater authority within the Mystic River watershed.

CONNECTICUT AWARDEES

TOWN OF OLD LYME

Project: Old Lyme Strategic Resiliency Action Plan

Contractor: SLR International Corporation
Award Amount: $57,900

The Sound View Beach neighborhood in Old Lyme is one of several in the town that is vulnerable to coastal flooding and sea level rise. Credit: Judy Benson/Connecticut Sea Grant.

The Town of Old Lyme will develop a townwide Strategic Resiliency Action Plan that reviews existing risk and vulnerability assessments and prioritizes actions for implementation. The Town of Old Lyme is currently updating their Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, and therefore, the Resiliency Action Plan would build on the 2021 Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan and incorporate new findings from the 2026 updated version as they become available.
As identified in the 2021 Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, the Town is vulnerable to sea-level rise, saltwater intrusion, coastal and riverine flooding, drought, and wildfires and the resulting impacts to town infrastructure including roads, public utilities, and residential neighborhoods. The Town has been working on implementing actions identified in the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan related to emergency response and fire preparedness and will now use this planning support to focus on actions that are specific to land use.

TOWN OF STONINGTON

Project: Sustainability and Resilience Plan
Contractor: Resilient Land and Water LLC
Award Amount: $53,800

Several tidal coves are found along Route 1 in Stonington, a main road through town. Credit: Judy Benson/Connecticut Sea Grant.

The Town of Stonington sought planning assistance to develop a townwide Sustainability and Resilience Plan that consolidates existing resilience projects, identifies data gaps through community engagement, and prioritizes projects for implementation. The Sustainability and Resilience Plan will help the town better understand its current conditions and future risks regarding sea level rise, severe storms, stormwater management, and tideland preservation. It will also provide a framework for addressing each concern with actionable solutions, recommended funding sources to pursue, timelines, and estimated project costs.

NEW YORK AWARDEES

GREAT NECK VILLAGE OFFICIALS ASSOCIATION

Project: Environmental Risk and Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan
Contractor: Woods Hole Group
Award Amount: $99,552

The Great Neck Village Officials Association (GNVOA), comprised of the nine incorporated villages on the Great Neck Peninsula (Villages of Great Neck, Great Neck Estates, Great Neck Plaza, Kensington, Kings Point, Lake Success, Russell Gardens, Saddle Rock, and Thomaston) and unincorporated sections of the Town of North Hempstead, in Nassau County, NY, sought planning assistance to develop an environmental risk and vulnerability assessment for the entire Great Neck Peninsula. The assessment will identify current and future environmental risks and vulnerabilities for the communities in the project area due to extreme weather events and a changing climate and will provide conceptual adaptation strategies and visualizations for two priority sites.

View of the Great Neck peninsula with the NYC skyline in the background. Credit: Sarah Schaefer-Brown.

HEN ISLAND NATURE SOCIETY, INC.

Project: Hen Island Shoreline Adaptation Plan
Contractor: EA Engineering & Geology, P.C.
Award Amount: $78,226

Hen Island Nature Society, Inc. sought planning assistance for the preparation of a shoreline adaptation plan for Hen Island, a barrier island marsh complex in Westchester County, NY, that provides valuable recreation, habitat, and ecosystem services to western Long Island Sound. The group seeks a holistic strategy for dealing with coastal erosion and options for protecting and restoring the undeveloped approximately 10-acre high marsh meadow between the south and middle island sections. The final shoreline adaptation plan will include a prioritized list of nature-based projects to improve shoreline resilience, a conceptual design for the high marsh meadow, and an outline of the required steps necessary to successfully design, permit, and implement identified priority projects.

The Hen Island Shoreline Adaptation Plan will focus on protecting and restoring an approximately 10-acre high marsh meadow – a portion of which is seen in this photo. Credit: Sara Powell.

NEW YORK AWARDEES

KISSENA SYNERGY

Project: Five-Year Strategic Plan for Kissena Synergy
Contractor: Lighthouse Consulting Group, Inc.
Award Amount: $36,148

Since 2018, Kissena Synergy has worked in collaboration with the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation to steward Kissena Park, a 237-acre multi-use community park in Flushing, Queens (Queens Community Board 7). Through their volunteer programs, Kissena Synergy engages youth and other community members in urban forestry, native planting, and ecological restoration of the park's natural areas, fostering both resilient park ecosystems and local environmental stewards. Upon recently attaining 501(c)3 status, Kissena Synergy sought planning support to help strengthen their organization's capacity through the development of a Five-year Strategic Plan. The Plan will help grow the organization's impact on Kissena Park for years to come by outlining operational procedures, prioritizing stewardship activities, engaging key partners, and establishing a development and fundraising strategy.

Kissena Synergy summer interns conduct water sampling at Kissena Lake during Summer 2025. A new five-year strategic plan will help grow the organization's impact through summer internships like this and other programs. Credit: Leona Chin.

The current status of the City of Rye's natural resources, including those on the Bird Homestead property seen above, will be assessed and compiled in a Natural Resources Inventory Report alongside recommendations and priorities for conservation and management. Credit: Sara Powell.

RYE SUSTAINABILITY FOUNDATION

Project: Natural Resources Inventory Report for the City of Rye, NY
Contractor: Biohabitats
Award Amount: $70,080

The Rye Sustainability Foundation sought planning support for development of a Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) report to help the City of Rye, in Westchester County, NY, understand the current status of their natural resources and achieve their Climate Smart Communities Silver Certification goals. The City's existing NRI dates back to the 1970s, so an update is needed in order to serve as a baseline for future planning efforts. The final NRI report will help to guide conservation and land use decisions in a coordinated way, and should help position the City to successfully secure grant funding for future sustainability and resilience-focused projects.

NEW YORK AWARDEES

SALONGA WETLAND ADVOCATES NETWORK (SWAN)

Project: Conservation and Management Plan for Fresh Pond in Fort Salonga, NY
Contractor: GEI Consultants, Inc.
Award Amount: $77,845


View of Fresh Pond. Credit: SWAN/Charlie Muller.

Fresh Pond is an 18-acre freshwater pond in Fort Salonga, Suffolk County, NY, that flows directly into the Sound over a wooden dam. The pond sustains life for many wildlife species and provides scenic and recreational benefits to the community. However, water quality in the pond is suffering from eutrophication, toxic algae, and invasive aquatic plants, primarily due to excess nutrients carried by stormwater runoff from surrounding roads, large residential properties, and a golf course. In addition, the dam is a barrier to fish passage and is failing. These issues are likely to worsen due to sea level rise and extreme weather events. Salonga Wetland Advocates Network, Inc. (SWAN), a nonprofit dedicated to revitalizing and protecting wetlands in Fort Salonga, sought planning assistance to conduct an environmental vulnerability assessment and develop a conservation and management plan for Fresh Pond and its contiguous wetlands, residential properties, and outflow to the Long Island Sound. This project will engage stakeholders and the community in the development of a prioritized list of feasible projects (e.g., green infrastructure, opportunities for fish passage, scientific monitoring, maintenance) that could help revitalize and protect Fresh Pond, surrounding properties, and Long Island Sound.

SETAUKET HARBOR TASK FORCE

Project: Establishment of a Harbor Management Model to Enhance Stewardship of the Port Jefferson-Setauket Harbor Complex
Contractor: Lighthouse Consulting Group, Inc.
Award Amount: $39,543


Oyster planting in Setauket Harbor. Credit: Elizabeth Hornstein.

The Port Jefferson Harbor Complex located on the North Shore of Long Island in Suffolk County, NY, encompasses four interconnected water bodies: Port Jefferson Harbor, Setauket Harbor, Conscience Bay, and Long Island Sound. The surface waters of the Harbor Complex are shared by five local governments: Brookhaven Town, Port Jefferson Village, Poquott Village, Belle Terre Village and Old Field Village. Inter-municipal Protection Committees have been established for several harbor and bay complexes across Long Island to coordinate monitoring and management across jurisdictions. Setauket Harbor Task Force, a 501(c)3 clean water group, sought planning support to develop the organizational framework for establishing a similar Protection Committee for the Port Jefferson Harbor Complex and an action plan to revitalize and protect the ecological resources of the harbors. The new Protection Committee would advance the goals of the Port Jefferson Harbor Complex Management Plan and the LIS Partnership Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan, with a focus on stormwater management, improving water quality, expanding shellfishing areas, collaborative environmental stewardship, promoting sustainable solutions to address flooding and erosion, and increased public access.

NEW YORK AWARDEES

VILLAGE OF HEAD OF THE HARBOR

Project: Conceptual Design Plans for Stormwater Remediation
Contractor: Hayduk Engineering, LLC
Award Amount: $58,700

The Village of Head of the Harbor, located in Suffolk County, NY, has many steep slopes which all point downhill to Stony Brook Harbor, predominantly to the southwest corner, which is the "head of the harbor." During significant rain events, Village roadways become conduits for all surface runoff from residential properties and public roads. After the significant rain event of August 18-19, 2024, during which 10 inches of rain fell in a period of two hours, extensive damage was sustained to the roadways and access to the harbor was lost. The Village of Head of the Harbor sought planning assistance for the development of conceptual design plans for two areas in need of remediation due to stormwater impacts: Hitherbrook Road (including Hitherbrook Road Extension, Hitherbrook Road, and Harbor Road adjacent to the Hitherbrook Rd intersection) and Thompson Lane (including Thompson Lane and Harbor Road adjacent to Thompson Lane). The aim of this project is to develop cost-effective and realistic solutions to capture and treat stormwater before it enters Stony Brook Harbor, utilizing as much green infrastructure as possible, and to restore natural habitat and public access to Stony Brook Harbor.

Erosion caused by stormwater runoff in the Hitherbrook Road area. Credit: Village of Head of the Harbor.

The Harbor Walk Study will focus on the Northport waterfront, a portion of which is shown here. Credit: Elizabeth Hornstein.

VILLAGE OF NORTHPORT

Project: Harbor Walk Study and Conceptual Design Plan
Contractor: NV5
Award Amount: $69,979

The Village of Northport, located in Suffolk County, NY, sought planning assistance to conduct a comprehensive environmental vulnerability assessment and explore innovative solutions to create a sustainable and resilient harborfront for the community and visitors. The goals of the project are to increase resilience to flooding and erosion, promote environmental sustainability, enhance public access, and support community and economic revitalization. The study will include a comprehensive assessment of current and future impacts of sea-level rise, storm surge, tidal flooding, and rainfall on the harborfront. The study will then assess the feasibility of innovative solutions including nature-based infrastructure (e.g., vegetative buffers, rain gardens, and permeable pavements) alongside gray infrastructure to absorb and mitigate the effects of natural disturbances, reduce runoff pollution, and stabilize the shoreline. The project will also explore opportunities to enhance public access to the waterfront, incorporate educational features, and foster community engagement. The final conceptual design plan will provide a vision to help Northport recover quickly from extreme weather events and adapt to a changing climate, while strengthening community ties and providing a shared sense of pride in the waterfront.

NEW YORK AWARDEES

VILLAGE OF SHOREHAM

Project: Conceptual Design Plans for Stormwater Remediation
Contractor: L.K. McLean Associates
Award Amount: $111,000

View of the Sound from Village Hall in Shoreham. The conceptual designs developed through this project will help improve stormwater management in the Village and ultimately water quality in Long Island Sound. Credit: Elizabeth Hornstein.

The Village of Shoreham, located in Suffolk County, NY, has an outdated and deteriorating stormwater management system. Much of the stormwater infrastructure is located on private property and breaches in the pipe impact the property owners when they occur. The Village stormwater collection system cannot collect and contain even moderate amounts of runoff, so during rainfall events, considerable volumes of stormwater run into the Long Island Sound carrying pollutants. Additionally, numerous properties front along the Long Island Sound bluff and are impacted by stormwater discharges to the beach from the surrounding area. The Village of Shoreham sought planning assistance to investigate various stormwater management solutions and to develop conceptual design plans for updated and new stormwater control facilities. The goals of this project are to: 1) reduce stormwater discharge to the Long Island Sound, 2) have the ability to absorb excess rain flow during intense rain events, 3) protect homeowners from the effects of flooding during these extreme weather events, and 4) absorb stormwater discharge environmentally through the use of bioswales and other types of detention basins in a cascading manner.