

## Integrating Management and Science to Address Coastal Breaches

Management of breaches and new inlets along New York’s barrier islands is a topic of intense interest among coastal planners, managers, decision makers and the public, especially when Sandy opened a breach on Fire Island.

Opinions among agency officials, coastal stakeholders, and the public differed on what should be done with this breach. Some felt it should be closed due to the threat of increased flooding on the mainland while others thought increased flushing was improving water quality and it should be left open.



*NYSG-facilitated Coastal Breach Management workshop. Photo: NYSG/James Pearce*

### **NYSG Responds**

NY Sea Grant (NYSG) provided rapid response funding to Stony Brook University to collect information to help managers assess the impacts of the breach on Great South Bay.

Building on work done by NYSG in 2001 on the impacts of breaches, NYSG recruited experts to review the existing information on breaches and revise and update it with new data collected post-Sandy. This information served as the basis for a workshop attended by 60 federal, state, and local managers, planners and agency personnel with coastal responsibilities.

The Chief of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s Bureau of Marine Resources stated he would use the workshop as a model to develop a briefing for the Department Commissioner and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers New York District Engineer.

A Town planner wrote the information presented at the workshop was:

*“Extremely valuable to form intelligent public policy to promote a cost-effective management of our natural resources...”*

Through research, funding, partnerships and educational outreach, NYSG enables stakeholders to make informed science-based decisions regarding management of marine resources.

### **Partners:**

- Stony Brook University
- National Park Service

### ***The Sea Grant Focus Area for this project is New York Resilient Communities and Economies***

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

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