

NYSG Partnership Helps Anglers with Special Needs

Anglers require designated areas where they can prepare bait, clean fish, and remove tackle from their catch. While several municipalities provide bait stations for anglers, these structures do not meet the special needs of anglers in wheelchairs.

It is extremely rare to find ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)-compliant structures for anglers in New York City. To address this need, New York Sea Grant funded a project to fabricate and pilot an ADA-compliant bait station prototype. This unique bait station design was possible through a partnership between private sector, NGO, and government entities.

The Friends of the East River Esplanade designed and developed the prototype in consultation with anglers and an architecture firm. Funding was provided through the New York State Marine and Coastal District Small Grants Program, which is supported by sales of a custom license plate.

Funds were used to fabricate this prototype for a bait station that allows anglers in wheelchairs to cut bait and clean catch. A fish identification guide is provided to educate anglers about common species in the area.



This prototype was erected along the esplanade in East Harlem at a prime fishing spot where residents use the waterfront for recreation.

*Left: An angler tests the first ADA-compliant bait station in East Harlem.
Photo: Chris O'Brien, Friends of the East River Esplanade*



Ribbon cutting ceremony for the first ADA-compliant bait station in East Harlem. Photo: Paul Focazio, NYSG

This new bait station installation enables anglers from East Harlem's diverse immigrant neighborhoods and low income households improved access to the waterfront, and establishes a designated space for anglers at this popular fishing access point.

Constructing ADA-compliant structures for anglers reduces concerns about safe handling, increases accessibility, and enhances the waterfront environment for all users.

Project Partners:

- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- Friends of the East River Esplanade
- New York City Parks
- El Barrio Fishermen
- New York State Marine and Coastal District Small Grants Program (funding)

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

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA. Contact: New York Sea Grant Extension, 112 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853; www.nyseagrant.org. Project summary was written by Marine Fisheries Specialist Antoinette Clemetson, 631-632-8730, aoc5@cornell.edu.

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Left: The universal symbol for wheelchair accessibility is painted on the new bait station. Right: A fish identification guide at the station educates anglers about common species in this prime fishing area along the esplanade in East Harlem.

Photos: Chris O'Brien, Friends of the East River Esplanade

The bait station is made of weathering steel and requires little to no maintenance. Other important features of the station include:

- solar panels
- lighting
- battery and inverter access panel
- street identification
- manual non-potable water pump
- measuring device for catch
- polyethylene cutting surfaces
- fish illustrations.

Learn about New York State Marine and Coastal District Small Grants:
www.nyseagrant.org/marinesmallgrants



This bait station project was funded through New York State Marine & Coastal District custom license plate sales.

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