

## NY and Connecticut Sea Grant Interns Bring Long Island Sound Habitats to Virtual Classroom

As New York adapted to the pandemic, some schools switched to hybrid models of teaching. Educator exhaustion, limited professional development opportunities directly related to adapting to new learning models, and limited opportunities to take students into the field for contact with local environmental resources created a need for innovative resources.

In 2021, with support from the Long Island Sound Study (LISS) National Estuary Program, New York Sea Grant's LISS Outreach Coordinator and Connecticut Sea Grant's Education Coordinator each hired a student intern to help produce an educational opportunity for teachers. The interns, Charlotte Burger of Barnard College and Nicole Govert of the University of New Haven, developed a Next Generation Science Standards-aligned Story Map focused on Long Island Sound habitats. The map highlighted seven habitats, videos from local experts, an exploration of habitat threats, and much more.

In August, the team held a webinar presenting this new educational tool, with breakout groups providing 24 participants (K-12, college, environmental organizations) the opportunity to offer input and exchange ideas on how to incorporate the Long Island Sound Habitats Story Map into their classes. A facilitated Q&A panel session facilitated teacher access to some of the experts featured in the Story Map. The participants reach an estimated 1,300 students.

The Long Island Sound Habitats Story Map is being shared through the New York Master Teacher program cohort, and among agency staff at the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), with one staff member calling it "a great training tool especially for new DEEP coastal-type staff."

**Project Partners:** Long Island Sound Study • Connecticut Sea Grant



*The Long Island Sound Habitat Story Map included photos of wildlife and plants commonly found in each of the map's featured habitats. Photo: Nicole Govert.*

### Teacher Comments on the LIS StoryMap Tool Webinar

*"I look forward to learning more about StoryMaps and incorporating them into my curriculum."*

*"The webinar was one of the most professional and well organized I have attended."*

*"I think this would work really well for us and our human impact standards. I LOVE that the kids can see LI examples of positive and negative human impact."*

*Learn more at <https://longislandsoundstudy.net/long-island-sound-habitat-edu-storymap/>.*

**NYSG Focus Areas for this project: Environmental Literacy & Workforce Development, 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.  
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