



New York Sea Grant (NYSG) is a collaborative program of the State University of New York, Cornell University, and NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration).

With 3,400 miles of coastlines, New York is the only U.S. state bordering both the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean. More than 85% of NY's population lives in a coastal region.



14 Offices

NYSG provides research, education, and extension services enhancing coastal community economic vitality, environmental sustainability, and citizen awareness of NY's marine and Great Lakes resources.

New York Sea Grant
379 Roberts Hall
Cornell University
Ithaca, NY 14853
www.nyseagrant.org

**NYSG Focus Area
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***Written by**

**NYSG Great Lakes Coastal
Resiliency Specialist**

Lauren Darcy

315-849-4906

led222@cornell.edu

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AdaptTable: Enhancing Land Use Decision-Making

New York Sea Grant has created a hands-on learning experience that helps local leaders and stakeholders to better communicate with one another, build consensus, and solve complex problems through land-use decisions.

Building resilient communities requires thinking through complex systems and understanding the ways in which weather hazards act as threat multipliers to everyday land-use planning decisions. It is often difficult to incorporate this sort of thinking into routine land-use decisions at the local level, particularly as localized decisions may have farther-reaching regional impacts.



New York Sea Grant created AdaptTable as an engaging way for local community leaders and stakeholders to interact around community adaptation opportunities.

Photo: Lauren Darcy/New York Sea Grant

New York Sea Grant created AdaptTable as a way to educate local stakeholders and decision-makers about complex interactions and to build capacity to think through unintended consequences and weather hazards when making land-use planning or siting decisions. AdaptTable is a hands-on tool that uses a large tabletop map depicting water bodies, shoreline, and inland watershed. Participants discuss scenarios and consequences, placing notes on the map for potential problem areas, development opportunities, and other topics of interest. The tool can be used in various training and planning process contexts to build both conversational and complex decision-making capacity.

In 2025, the AdaptTable was presented at two conferences for professionals in environmental management and land-use planning in New York State. Feedback indicates that it is viewed as an engaging mode of teaching complex issues and for framing local conversations by planning practitioners. There is interest from at least two counties to include the AdaptTable exercise to use as part of their local government education and to engage their countywide planning community.

The AdaptTable is an effective and engaging tool for delivering local government education and facilitating community conversation around community adaptation.

***Co-authors: Great Lakes Coastal Community Development Specialist Mary Austerma and Great Lakes Outreach Coordinator Megan Cochran**