



**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.



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.

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## Celebrating 40 Years of Long Island Sound Partnership with Public Access, Belonging, and New Vision

Public access is an important gateway to learning about, valuing and caring for the Sound.

Experiencing the beauty of the Long Island Sound inspires people to care for it. Thus, public access and fostering a sense of belonging have become new objectives, as noted in the newly-named Long Island Sound Partnership\* and the Informed and Engaged Public goal of its 2025 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. Written with the help and guidance of New York Sea Grant educators, these new objectives will open the pathway to deeper education and lasting stewardship of the Sound.



Long Island Sound Partnership 40th anniversary public event: a Sea Lab learning group heads out aboard a State University of New York Maritime College research boat.

Photo: Lillit Genovesi/New York Sea Grant

In 2025, the 40th anniversary of the Long Island Sound Partnership offered a timely opportunity to center this message. New York Sea Grant educators led events at the State University of New York Maritime in the Bronx and at Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Park in Oyster Bay, including boat trips to celebrate improved water quality in the Sound and provide exciting hands-on shoreline activities for families. As Captain Joe Sullivan led a boat trip to Stepping Stone Lighthouse, participants measured water quality, observed oyster restoration, and enjoyed views of New York City. Captain Joe pointed out that water once described as root beer in color is now clear.

Participants who experienced the Sound firsthand expressed renewed enthusiasm for learning about local ecosystems and supporting sustainable behaviors, demonstrating how access builds a personal connection to the environment. The events also strengthened partnerships among community groups across a wider geographic reach. The project resulted in a request for annual celebrations that will invite the public to learn about local waterways, participate in taking care of the estuary, and share the successes of a cleaner, healthier Long Island Sound.

### Project Partners:

- Connecticut Department of Energy and Environment
- Connecticut Sea Grant
- New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- State University of New York Maritime College
- Waterfront Center at Oyster Bay

\*Formerly known as the Long Island Sound Study