

**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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**NYSG Focus Area for this project:**  
**Resilient NY Communities and Economies**  
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## Seiche and Sandy Shorelines Workshop in Sunset Bay

New York Sea Grant and partners respond to stakeholders' request for education on how to manage shoreline erosion and flooding along eastern Lake Erie.

Eastern Lake Erie features a shallow basin along the shoreline and a long fetch (the distance in which wind and waves can build across a large body of water). In recent years, especially those without long-term winter ice, the lake's shoreline communities have been directly affected by more frequent and increasingly destructive seiche events. In a seiche event, long periods of strong winds "pile up" waves along the eastern shoreline of Lake Erie, causing extensive flooding and erosion of shorelines, including sandy beaches and dunes.



Water Resources Engineer Shaimus Ryan with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation presents information on the State's Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas to area residents at the "Seiche and Sandy Shorelines" workshop at the Sunset Bay Fire Hall.

Photo: Roy Widrig/New York Sea Grant

The Sunset Bay Association approached New York Sea Grant in winter 2025 to request an educational event for the residents of Sunset and Hanford Bays in Chautauqua County. Working with the Sunset Bay Association, New York Sea Grant's Coastal Processes and Hazards Specialist in the Great Lakes region walked the affected beaches and dunes in April 2025 with Association representatives to aid in planning a workshop as requested.

A "Seiche and Sandy Shorelines" workshop was delivered to the community at the Sunset Bay Fire Hall in June 2025. Attendance included thirty shoreline residents who learned about the coastal processes impacting Lake Erie, sandy shoreline dynamics, and the requirements for permitting shoreline restoration projects. Presentations were made by New York Sea Grant and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Due to repeated, destructive storms and waves causing erosion and flooding along eastern Lake Erie, NYSG and partners have developed and presented a "Seiche and Sandy Shorelines" workshop to educate shoreline residents and community leaders on managing sandy shorelines impacted by destructive seiche events along Lake Erie.

### Project Partners:

- Hanford Bay Association, Silver Creek, NY
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- Sunset Bay Association, Irving, NY