



# Long Island Sound Futures Fund

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## FUNDING PARTNERS

- Long Island Sound Study
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Long Island Sound Funders Collaborative
- Zoetis Foundation
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## ABOUT NFWF

Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than 6,800 organizations and generated a total conservation impact of more than \$10 billion.

Learn more at [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org)

## NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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Crab Meadow Marsh, Huntington, New York | Credit: National Audubon Society

## OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), in partnership with the Long Island Sound Study and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, announced a 2024-year round of funding for Long Island Sound Futures Fund (Futures Fund) projects. Thirty-one new grants totaling \$12.5 million were awarded. The 31 awards announced leverage \$12.2 million in matching contributions from the grantees, providing a total conservation impact of more than \$24.7 million.

Long Island Sound is the second largest estuary on the East Coast and one of North America's most biologically diverse, an amazing fact, considering that more than 23 million people live within 50 miles of the sound. Its watershed stretches 16,820 square miles across five states. Fresh water from 16,000 miles of river fuels the sound's productivity. Its waters and surrounding lands are busy and complex, playing a vital role in the environment and in the lives of residents. The sound faces many of the same issues that impact coastal communities across the United States. Diffuse sources of pollution, from plastics to fertilizer, drain into rivers and streams that feed into the sound. Sewage pollution from wastewater treatment plants and aging residential septic systems force the closure of beaches and shellfish beds. The loss of wetlands reduces the sound's value as habitat and its ability to buffer communities against storms, floods and sea-level rise. The Futures Fund supports efforts to address these problems by providing grants which test innovative approaches to conservation, deliver transformative projects and support people and communities who value the sound and take a direct role in its future.

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## CLEAN WATERS AND HEALTHY WATERSHEDS CONNECTICUT

### Developing a Mystic River Watershed Resilience Action Plan Using Equitable Community Engagement (CT)

Grantee: Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed  
Grant Amount:..... \$419,900  
Matching Funds:..... \$234,900  
Total Project Amount:..... \$654,800

Launch a robust engagement effort and planning process throughout four municipalities and two Tribal Nations within Mystic, Connecticut, in order to initiate efforts to improve the watershed health along the 30.6-square-mile Mystic River Watershed. Project will develop a community- and stakeholder-supported EPA Nine Element watershed-based plan, which will strive to address water quality impairments, community inequities and resilience challenges in the watershed.

### Implementation of the Brookfield Sewer Extension (CT)

Grantee: Brookfield Water Pollution Control Authority  
Grant Amount:..... \$1,500,000  
Matching Funds:..... \$750,000  
Total Project Amount:..... \$2,250,000

Construct a sewer extension to 91 parcels located on low-lying lots along the Still River in Brookfield, Connecticut, which are not conducive to the use of On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems. Project will reduce 34 pounds of nitrogen, reduce 24 pounds of phosphorus and reduce the potential risks to public health and wildlife habitats due to water quality issues.

### Improving Water Quality in Long Island Sound by Managing Farm Waste on Laurelbrook Farm (CT)

Grantee: Northwest Conservation District  
Grant Amount:..... \$390,300  
Matching Funds:..... \$226,600  
Total Project Amount:..... \$616,900

Expand the manure storage capacity on Laurelbrook Farm in East Canaan, Connecticut, through the installation of a 3.9 million-gallon storage tank. Project will reduce 138,205 pounds of nitrogen, reduce 110,710 pounds of phosphorus and enhance outreach opportunities for the public, students and the farming community to learn about sustainable manure management and its significance to protecting the Long Island Sound.

### Managing Silage Leachate in a Local Dairy Farm to Reduce Nitrogen in Long Island Sound (CT)

Grantee: Eastern Connecticut Conservation District  
Grant Amount:..... \$1,500,000  
Matching Funds:..... \$750,000  
Total Project Amount:..... \$2,250,000

Construct a 3.8-acre concrete silage bunker with a silage

leachate collection system at the Speilman Farm in Sprague, Connecticut. Project will remove the risks associated with leachate, reduce 2,873 pounds of nitrogen and reduce 439 pounds of phosphorus from the dairy farm.

### Piloting an Innovative Wastewater Denitrifying Process at the Mystic Aquarium (CT)

Grantee: Sea Research Foundation  
Grant Amount:..... \$172,100  
Matching Funds:..... \$134,200  
Total Project Amount:..... \$306,300

Implement an innovative wastewater denitrifying process to replace the industry-standard water filtration systems at the Mystic Aquarium in Connecticut. Project will reduce 375 pounds of nitrogen from the aquarium's nitrate-nitrogen output; educate the public on how to reduce their own nitrogen footprint through concurrent workshops, signage and field trips; and produce five plans to share with other zoos and aquariums whose discharge water also impact the Long Island Sound.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

### Upgrading the Hanover Water Reclamation Facility to Improve Water Quality in Long Island Sound (NH)

Grantee: Town of Hanover, NH  
Grant Amount:..... \$1,500,000  
Matching Funds:..... \$750,000  
Total Project Amount:..... \$2,250,000

Construct and install treatment process upgrades and new equipment at the Water Reclamation Facility in Hanover, New Hampshire, which discharges into the Connecticut River. Project will eliminate 127,385 pounds of nitrogen through the improvement of facility operations, modification of the treatment processes to allow for reliable nutrient removal from discharged effluent, and support meeting current and future permitted nutrient limits.

### Upgrading the Newport Wastewater Treatment Plant to Improve Water Quality in Long Island Sound (NH)

Grantee: Town of Newport  
Grant Amount:..... \$450,000  
Matching Funds:..... \$750,000  
Total Project Amount:..... \$1,200,000

Upgrade the Newport Wastewater Treatment Plant to meet federal and state agency standards by adding Sequencing Batch Reactor treatment, sludge dewatering and effluent filtering to the plant process as well as upgrading the plant's ultraviolet disinfection system. Project will integrate innovative processes at the plant that will improve effluent quality, ensure environmental compliance and aid in protecting the water quality of the Sugar River, a tributary of the Long Island Sound.



**NEW YORK**

**Expanded Water Capture Green Schoolyard at PS 224X in Mott Haven, Bronx (NY)**

Grantee: The Trust for Public Land  
 Grant Amount:..... \$324,300  
 Matching Funds:..... \$2,300,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$2,624,300  
 Engage 25 students in project design and 200 people in environmental education to construct a 22,000-square-foot green infrastructure schoolyard at IS 224, HS 334 and MS 343 in the South Bronx, New York. Project will enhance school and community environmental education and outdoor recreational space in an underserved community and store 1.7 million gallons of stormwater through the use of expanded water capture, preventing the runoff into local waterways.

**Final Design and Permitting of Nitrogen Removing Biofilters at Local Sites in Suffolk County (NY)**

Grantee: The Research Foundation for the State University of New York  
 Grant Amount:..... \$95,800  
 Matching Funds:..... \$60,300  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$156,100  
 Complete final design and permitting plans for 10 Nitrogen Removing Biofilter septic installations at zones designated priority one or two for nitrogen remediation by Suffolk County, New York. Project will deliver the final design and permitting plans that will lay the groundwork for shovel-ready installations at the sites, which will reduce the amount of nitrogen from these unsewered residences that could enter the Long Island Sound.

**MULTIPLE STATES**

**Harnessing Perennial Cover Crops to Reduce Nitrogen in Long Island Sound (CT, MA, VT)**

Grantee: EcoAg Collaborative  
 Grant Amount:..... \$306,500  
 Matching Funds:..... \$171,500  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$478,000  
 Implement an innovative perennial Clover Living Mulch System at 15 farms across the Long Island Sound. Project will reduce 1,020 pounds of nitrogen, place 50 acres under improved management and provide farmer-to-farmer outreach opportunities to support the adoption of this approach.

**Integrating the QuickDrops Water Quality Management Tool throughout the Long Island Sound Watershed**

Grantee: Save the Sound  
 Grant Amount:..... \$155,400  
 Matching Funds:..... \$80,300  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$235,700  
 Develop and conduct outreach, educational programming, and user support to facilitate the widespread adoption of QuickDrops, a centralized digital water quality data management and visualization tool throughout the Long



Engaging people in stewardship of sound waters | Credit: Bronx River Alliance

Island Sound watershed. Project will integrate the QuickDrops tool, which will enable 56 water quality monitoring groups in the watershed to easily store, retrieve and visualize local and Long Island Sound Watershed-wide data.

**THRIVING HABITATS AND ABUNDANT WILDLIFE CONNECTICUT**

**Building a Coastal Crossings Inventory to Evaluate and Prioritize Fish Passage Efforts (CT)**

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy  
 Grant Amount:..... \$384,200  
 Matching Funds:..... \$192,500  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$576,700  
 Build an inventory of the locations of crossings within the Long Island Sound Coastal Watershed Boundary in Connecticut, train practitioners in North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative protocols and begin evaluating crossings for aquatic connectivity in southeastern Connecticut. Project will establish a joint effort between eight community organizations and agencies to adopt a coordinated approach to assessing fish passage in Connecticut.

**Constructing a Park with a Living Shoreline Using Nature-Based Solutions along the Mystic River (CT)**

Grantee: Town of Stonington, Connecticut  
 Grant Amount:..... \$1,255,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$3,454,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$4,709,000  
 Employ nature-based solutions to repurpose a brownfield site in Mystic, Connecticut, into a park with a living shoreline through the engagement of local community leaders and organizations to implement a transformative living shoreline model. Project will construct a 0.2-acre living shoreline that restores the coastal habitats and protects the coastal community of the Mystic River shoreline.

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### **Managing Invasive Plant Species and Restoring Coastal Habitat at Ocean Beach Park, New London (CT)**

Grantee: University of Connecticut  
 Grant Amount:..... \$82,900  
 Matching Funds:..... \$41,500  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$124,400  
 Remove invasive plant species and replant native coastal vegetation to restore the riparian habitat along the nature trail at the Ocean Beach Park in New London, Connecticut. Project will restore and reopen public access to 3.5 acres of critical coastal habitat bordering the Alewife Cove and Long Island Sound estuaries.

### **Planning to Restore Chalker and Chapman Beach Marshes and Mitigate Marsh-Associated Flooding (CT)**

Grantee: Town of Old Saybrook  
 Grant Amount:..... \$323,400  
 Matching Funds:..... \$191,500  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$514,900  
 Conduct a feasibility analysis for restoring the degraded Chalker Beach Marsh and mitigate erosion of Cold Spring Brook marsh, examine potential residential neighborhood flood mitigation strategies and evaluate alternative concepts to restore the Cold Spring Brook marsh. Project will provide Chalker Beach marsh restoration plan and design alternatives, concept-level neighborhood-scale flood mitigation strategies and a concept-level Cold Spring Brook marsh erosion control/restoration practices.

## **NEW YORK**

### **Enhancing Coastal Resiliency with Tidal Marsh Restoration at Crab Meadow Marsh (NY)**

Grantee: National Audubon Society  
 Grant Amount:..... \$429,600  
 Matching Funds:..... \$215,200  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$644,800  
 Work with the Town of Huntington and Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct biological and hydrological assessments of the marsh, run models, complete permits and develop 100 percent design for the priority Crab Meadow Marsh in Huntington, New York. Project will produce a permit-ready 100 percent restoration design for the marsh, which will lay the groundwork to implement resilience efforts that protect coastal habitat for shorebirds and the local communities.

### **Final Design and Planning for Implementing Eco-moorings/Seagrass Area Buoys on Fishers Island (NY)**

Grantee: Henry L. Ferguson Museum  
 Grant Amount:..... \$50,200  
 Matching Funds:..... \$43,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$93,200  
 Create the final design and placement plan for the implementation of eco-moorings and seagrass area buoys on Fishers Island alongside the development of a

comprehensive, community-based social marketing plan in order to ensure community engagement and involvement. Project will create two plans that set the stage for the implementation of the eco-moorings and seagrass area buoys that will protect eelgrass from disturbance and support shorebird habitat.

## **MULTIPLE STATES**

### **Long Island Sound River Restoration Network III (CT, NY)**

Grantee: Save the Sound  
 Grant Amount:..... \$500,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$250,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$750,000  
 Coordinate the Long Island Sound River Restoration Network in collaboration with eight of the partner organizations, including establishing seven of the 11 collaborative pathways identified by the network members and state and federal agency partners. Project will accelerate the pace and scale of stream barrier removals across the Long Island Sound by improving public outreach as well as expanding and deepening the coordination between the network and partners.

### **Reducing Disturbances to Protect Beach and Island Nesting Birds in the Long Island Sound (CT, NY)**

Grantee: National Audubon Society  
 Grant Amount:..... \$677,700  
 Matching Funds:..... \$376,600  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$1,054,300  
 Establish stewardship and monitoring activities and strategies to reduce and manage threats to focal coastal bird species, including piping plover, American oystercatcher and least tern, at nesting sites along the New York and Connecticut coast during the 2025 and 2026 breeding season. Project will monitor 70 coastal and island sites, implement Best Management Practices at 34 sites and engage 700 volunteers in project activities.

## **SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES CONNECTICUT**

### **Cultivating the Next Generation of Long Island Sound Stewards through Environmental Education (CT)**

Grantee: Sea Research Foundation  
 Grant Amount:..... \$165,100  
 Matching Funds:..... \$103,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$268,100  
 Engage 120 high school students from Stonington, Connecticut, in both classroom-based and field trip-based environmental education programs geared toward environmental issues impacting the water quality of the Long Island Sound. Project will provide students with conservation-based STEM skills, understanding of community-level solutions and empower the next generation of environmental stewards for a more resilient Long Island Sound.



Least terns

**Deploying the MyCoast Coastal Monitoring Tool to Improve Community Awareness of Flooding Events (CT)**

Grantee: University of Connecticut  
 Grant Amount:..... \$162,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$81,400  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$243,400  
 Implement the MyCoast coastal monitoring, community science tool in New London, Groton and Stonington, Connecticut, to capture photos of flooding and high tide events through submissions by community members. Project will provide a means to capture photo locations and compare water level measurements using local tide gauges, offer evidence of flooding in the area and provide the community with the most accurate information about where to prioritize resilience actions.

**Delivering an Oyster Conservation Education Program in the Long Island Sound (CT)**

Grantee: New England Science & Sailing Foundation (NESS)  
 Grant Amount:..... \$79,400  
 Matching Funds:..... \$40,300  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$119,700  
 Provide hands-on experiential learning activities for 760 secondary school students, professional development activities that will bolster local capacity and deliver enhanced Long Island Sound oyster lessons through various community and school-based events within coastal Connecticut. Project will educate students and communities on the ecological significance of oysters on the water quality of the Long Island Sound.

**Engaging Farmington Communities in River Smart Stormwater Management and Nature-Based Solutions (CT)**

Grantee: Farmington River Watershed Association  
 Grant Amount:..... \$75,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$54,700  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$129,700  
 Introduce the River Smart environmental education program to the Farmington River Watershed, which educates communities on stormwater pollution and provides hands-on engagement through the implementation of nature-based solutions, including green infrastructure. Project will construct 4,500 square feet of green infrastructure through the installation of a rain garden/riparian buffer and a bioswale and engage 25,000 people through workshops, volunteer days, field trips, cleanups and social media.

**Marine Debris Prevention Education in the Long Island Sound II (CT)**

Grantee: Connecticut Audubon Society  
 Grant Amount:..... \$247,100  
 Matching Funds:..... \$174,900  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$422,000  
 Educate and engage 1,600 students and their teachers from 15 elementary and middle schools in Connecticut through hands-on marine debris prevention activities. Project will educate students on marine debris prevention, coastal ecology and the Long Island Sound in the classroom, conduct a coastal cleanup at a location within their community as well as design and implement a schoolwide debris prevention awareness and action campaign.

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**NEW YORK****Building Capacity for Green Infrastructure Stewardship in the Flushing Waterways (NY)**

Grantee: Guardians of Flushing Bay

Grant Amount:.....\$333,200

Matching Funds:.....\$167,100

Total Project Amount:.....\$500,300

Implement a two-pronged approach for improving green infrastructure maintenance efforts in Corona and Flushing, New York, for 800 community members. Project will build the internal capacity to expand the rain garden maintenance program model into Flushing and develop a pilot partnership with a RAIN Coalition workforce development partner to leverage the watershed as a green job training ground.

**Educating Bronx Communities on Floatable Trash Collection and Prevention (NY)**

Grantee: Bronx River Alliance

Grant Amount:.....\$137,800

Matching Funds:.....\$70,400

Total Project Amount:.....\$208,200

Engage residents along the Bronx River in hands-on conservation through on-water and on-land trash collection and education on water-borne trash issues impacting the Bronx River and greater Long Island Sound. Project will remove 11,600 pounds of marine debris from the Bronx River and reach 35,740 people through cleanup events, educational materials and outreach campaigns to provide education on how to prevent floatable trash from entering the river and impairing habitat.

**Engaging Community Stewards to Manage Trails in Pelham Bay Park (NY)**

Grantee: Natural Areas Conservancy

Grant Amount:.....\$80,500

Matching Funds:.....\$80,500

Total Project Amount:.....\$161,000

Implement a high-impact training education project in the Bronx, New York, through a targeted training series and volunteer program for 155 community members and park stewards in coastal, maritime forest management of Pelham Bay Park. Project will lead to a long-term strategy for community management and restoration of nature trails that cut through coastal hardwood forest in the Long Island Sound.

**Expanding and Enhancing the City Island Oyster Reef Stewardship and Educational Programs (NY)**

Grantee: City Island Oyster Reef

Grant Amount:.....\$337,300

Matching Funds:.....\$212,200

Total Project Amount:.....\$549,500

Continue to expand the stewardship, oyster reef restoration

and educational programs at City Island, New York. Project will enhance the capacity of this grassroots organization to provide projects and activities for the City Island community that are geared toward building stewardship of the Long Island Sound's coastal habitats.

**Integrating the Estuary Explorers Program into Community Organizations to Build Stewardship (NY)**

Grantee: Waterfront Alliance

Grant Amount:.....\$59,400

Matching Funds:.....\$30,000

Total Project Amount:.....\$89,400

Integrate the established Estuary Explorers STEM-based education program into the Castle Hill YMCA's annual multi-week summer camp and organize 46 coastal clean-ups that engage the 380 community members in the Bronx, New York. Project will facilitate direct engagement of participants with the local waterfront and remove 375 pounds of marine debris through cleanup events, fostering experiential learning and hands-on stewardship activities of the Long Island Sound.

**Reef Raisers and Meadow Makers: Inspiring Young Stewards through Classroom Restoration Programs (NY)**

Grantee: Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County

Grant Amount:.....\$153,700

Matching Funds:.....\$126,300

Total Project Amount:.....\$280,000

Engage students through the "Reef Raisers + Meadow Makers" program providing students with the unique opportunity to care for tanks of spat-on-shell oysters, deployed to bolster existing oyster reef restoration projects and complete coastal plant propagation activities. Project will educate 300 students on the significance of coastal and marine ecosystems and inspire a new generation of stewards of the Long Island Sound.

**Stewarding the Sound: Building Capacity for Community-Based Stewardship of New York City Parks (NY)**

Grantee: New York City Department of Parks and Recreation

Grant Amount:.....\$168,700

Matching Funds:.....\$84,400

Total Project Amount:.....\$253,100

Collaborate with community partners to expand the Super Steward/NAVigator network, building capacity for 30 community members and four local community organizations to plan and host volunteer events to care for the maritime forests of Udall's Cove Park Preserve, Pugsley Creek Park Preserve and Soundview Park in New York. Project will develop long-term management plans for three community organizations, laying the foundation for sustainable local stewardship capacity.