

New York Sea Grant NEMO: Promoting Regional Water Quality Protection Initiatives

Long Island's beaches, bays, and harbors have long been renowned for their beauty and their bounty. They are prized by more than seven million residents and they drive the Island's coastal business, tourism, and fishing industries.

However, as development and population pressures have grown, impacts to water quality, fisheries, and beaches have become costly. To facilitate cost-effective municipal efforts to mitigate such impacts, the New York Sea Grant Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials Program (NYSG NEMO) has promoted inter-municipal initiatives to reduce the pollutants transported to the coast by runoff.

Specifically, NYSG NEMO began working with partners to support formalized establishment of a cross-jurisdictional watershed protection committee in the Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor drainage area in 2009. Support among the 18 municipalities in the watershed for the protection committee was built gradually.

Presentations and consultations were provided during which NYSG NEMO explained the potential to reduce costs and improve stormwater management by leveraging expertise, equipment, and funding. Further, NYSG NEMO assisted in the development of a successful grant application, which provided for a Coordinator.

In August 2012, efforts came to fruition when 14 municipalities signed an agreement to work together to protect water quality and to establish



*Stormwater mitigation projects protect water quality.
Photo: Eileen Keenan, NYSG NEMO*

the Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor Protection Committee. Members include the Villages of Glen Cove, Center Island, Cove Neck, Laurel Hollow, Bayville, Lloyd Harbor, Mill Neck, Lattingtown, Muttontown, Upper Brookville, and Oyster Bay Cove; the Towns of Oyster Bay and Huntington; and Nassau County.

Partnering with New York Sea Grant in this effort are the Hempstead Harbor Protection Committee, Manhasset Bay Protection Committee, Town of Oyster Bay, and Friends of the Bay.

The Committee plans to heighten awareness of the need to protect Oyster Bay and Cold Spring Harbor and to obtain increased funding for protective measures in 2013.

**Oyster Bay and Cold Spring Harbor, with their economic and environmental benefits,
are "important to our quality of life."**

-- Nassau County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton

This project meets the performance goals of Sea Grant's Hazard Resilience in Coastal Communities Focus Area.

New York Sea Grant is a joint program of Cornell University, the State University of New York, and NOAA. New York Sea Grant Extension administration is located at 112 Rice Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.

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