

Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund

Project Design & Building Partnerships



RESTORE
AMERICA'S
ESTUARIES



The Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) is a partnership between:

- Restore America's Estuaries
 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 - Long Island Sound Partnership
-

Purpose:

The Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund aims to build capacity for organizations located in communities affected by environmental and human health risks.

Additionally, the Fund seeks to provide technical assistance for communities and support proposals which ultimately improve access to the Long Island Sound, while reducing overall environmental health risks.



Long Island Sound: The Urban Sea

The Long Island Sound Partnership formed in 1985, a bi-state partnership of federal and state agencies, user groups, and concerned groups and individuals dedicated to protecting and restoring this vital estuary.

Home to more than 1200 invertebrates, 170 fish species, and dozens of migratory birds; 9 million people on the watershed.



Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)



4 Themes:

Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds

Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife

Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Informed and Engaged Public

Goals

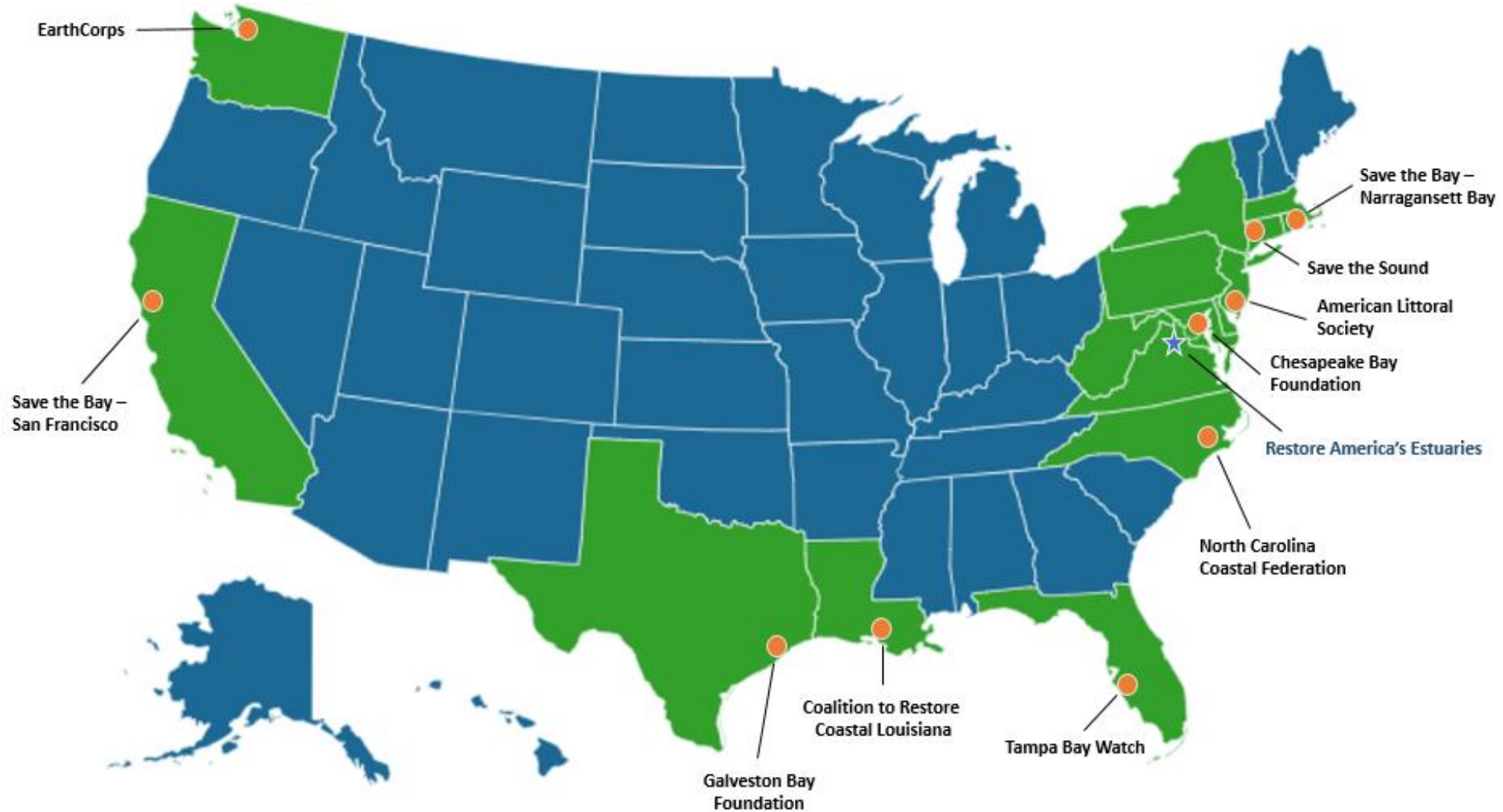
Objectives

Actions

[Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan](#)

[CCMP Actions](#)

Restore America's Estuaries is dedicated to the protection and restoration of bays and estuaries as essential resources for our nation



Affiliate Members

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay | Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership | Audubon Society | Billion Oyster Project | Black in Marine Science | Bonefish & Tarpon Trust | Buzzards Bay Coalition | Choctawatchee Basin Alliance | Clean Foundation | Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation | Ducks Unlimited | Ecosphere Restoration Institute | Environmental Defense Fund | Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Land Trust Alliance | The Nature Conservancy | National Wildlife Federation | Ocean Conservancy | Pontchartrain Conservancy | Restore the Mississippi River Delta | Women's Aquatic Network

RAE Team



- **Shahela Begum, Program Director**
Day-to-day lead on program including management, design, implementation and adaption
- **Kellie Marty, Program Associate**
Communications and outreach
- **Undria Polley, Grants Administrator**
Manage finance and administrative aspects for awardees
- **Daniel Hayden, RAE President & CEO**
Project oversight and integration into other RAE initiatives
- **Dr. Philip McAdoo, Senior Advisor Inclusive Coasts Initiative**
Advise on program content and training
- **Alex Rodriguez, Program Specialist, Save the Sound**
Support with community outreach and engagement
- **Brad Williamson, Manager of Government Affairs & Communications**
Communications planning, external communications, leverage partner content
- **Ashley Ross, VP, Program Administration & Finance**
Ensure compliance with all federal rules and regulations, review budgets and workplans

Long Island Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) - Program Goals

- **Program Overview**

- Three rounds of grant funding of roughly \$1,200,000 million per year
- Maximum grant size about \$5,000 to \$100,000
- Annual and State specific learning exchanges among regional institutions, including stipends to attend
- Investment in training programs and grants

- **Restore America's Estuaries Role**

- Manage three rounds of grants; oversee implementation, support awardees
- Prioritize and design training programs and training grants
- Design and manage learning exchanges
- Prepare local organizations to apply for grant funding through this program and others
- Strengthen and diversify connections within Long Island Sound region
- Review successes and lessons learned



Funding Priorities

LISCIF's funding priorities are aligned with the [CCMP](#) themes and [Actions](#):

For 2026, LISCIF's main funding themes are:

- Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds
- Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife
- Sustainable and Resilient Communities
- Informed and Engaged Public

Eligible projects and activities will be community driven and address challenges/risks faced by communities affected by environmental and human health risks.



Themes and Goals of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)

Source: <https://lispartnership.org/2025/06/2025-comprehensive-conservation-and-management-plan-ccmp/>



Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds

Restore and maintain water quality in Long Island Sound and its watershed.

Source: CCMP, The Lower Connecticut River, a Long Island Sound Stewardship Area, Old Lyme, CT. (Photo by Jerry Monkman/Ecophotography)

Source: CCMP, Great Gull Island supports the largest nesting populations of common terns in the world. (Photo by Venu Challa)



Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife

Restore and protect the health and resilience of habitats and wildlife in Long Island Sound and its ecosystems.



Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Empower Long Island Sound communities to plan and respond to environmental challenges in ways that prioritize well-being for all.

Source: CCMP, Youth from Rocking the Boat, a Bronx environmental organization, on board a student-built boat on the Bronx River. (Photo by Joaquin Cotten)

Source: CCMP, CTDEEP Scientists conduct trawl surveys of the Sound's marine life, including horseshoe crabs, on board the Research Vessel John Dempsey. (Photo by Richard Howard)



Informed and Engaged Public

Inspire and empower the public to appreciate, value, and protect Long Island Sound and the waters that flow into the Sound.

Program Priorities

Alignment with the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)

Main Funding Themes:

Clean Waters & Healthy Watersheds

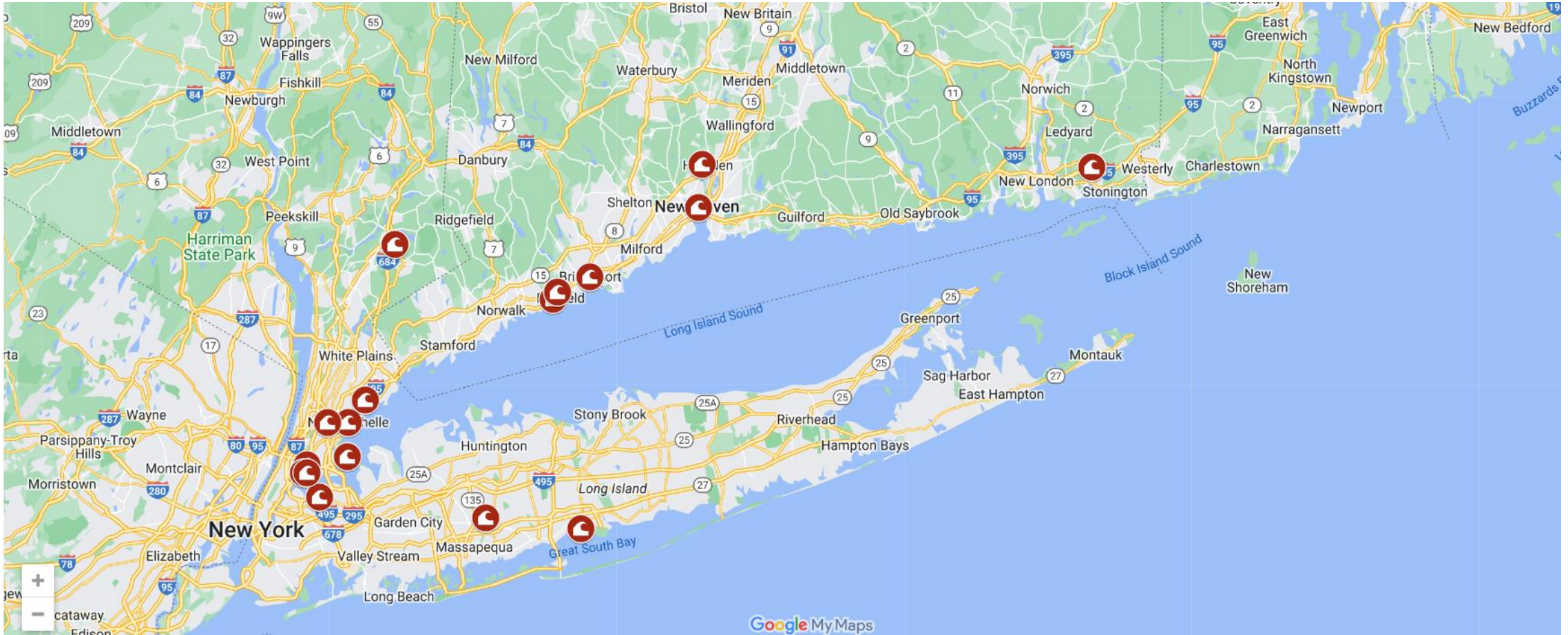
Thriving Habitats & Abundant Wildlife

Sustainable & Resilient Communities

Informed & Engaged Public

1. Projects that result in quantifiable pollutant prevention or reduction
2. Restoring habitat within the Important Coastal Habitat Types targeted by LIS Partnership
3. Projects that foster diverse, balanced and abundant populations of fish, birds and wildlife
4. Public engagement, knowledge and stewardship
5. Projects that enhance community resilience and sustainability
6. Planning and design that set the stage for implementation of water quality projects, eligible habitat restoration projects and resilience projects
7. Community-based science projects
8. Data management and integration projects
9. Other similar activities that the applicant proposes

Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) 2024 Grant Recipients



Find the full LISCIF 2024 Grant Sheet here:

<https://estuaries.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/LISCIF-Subawardee-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

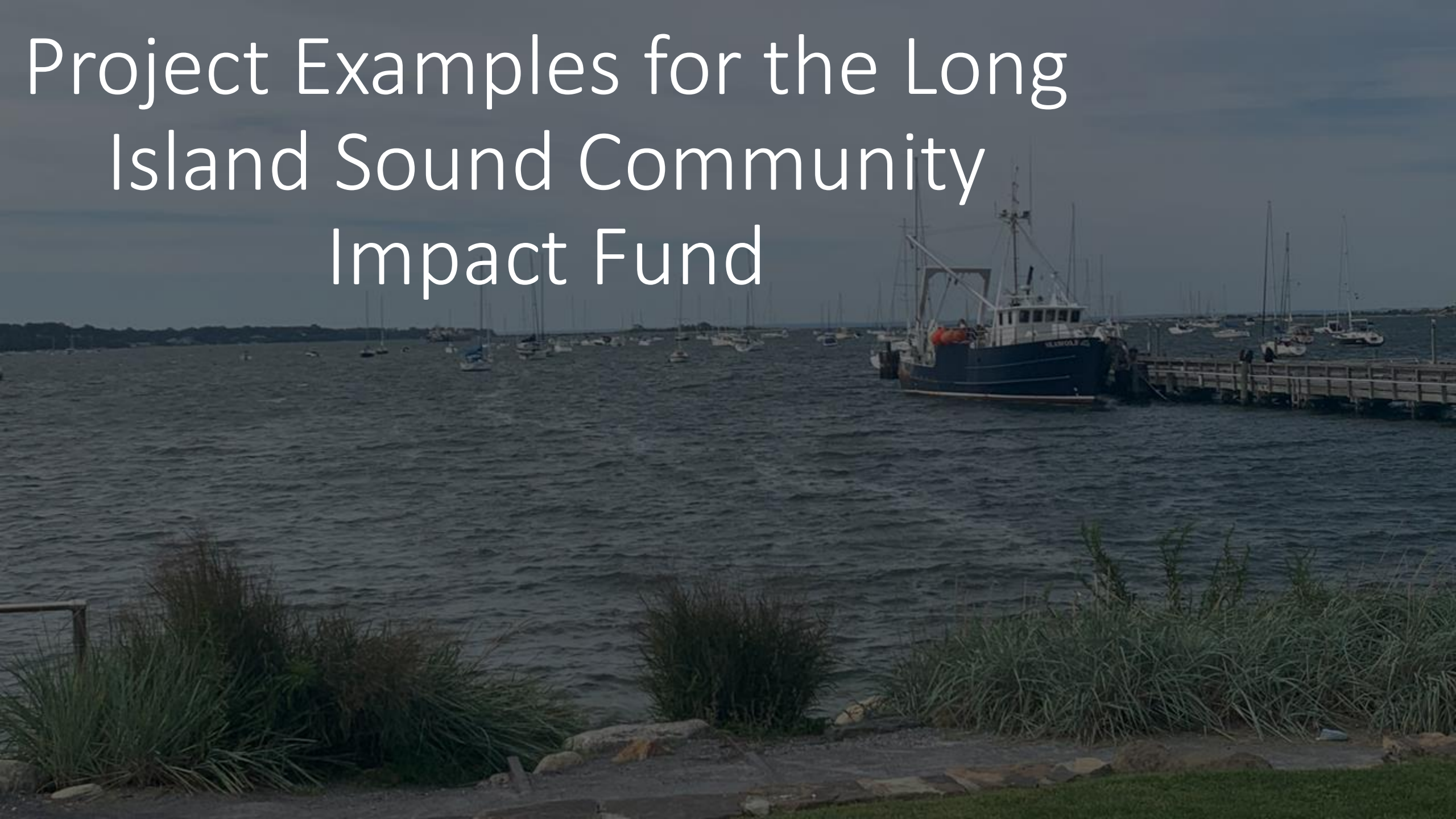
Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) 2025 Grant Recipients



Find the full LISCIF 2025 Grant Sheet here:

<https://estuaries.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/LISCIF25-Awardee-Fact-Sheet-1.pdf>

Project Examples for the Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund



Theme: Clean Water and Healthy Watersheds

Example from LISCIF 2024

Project: Identifying Industrial Pollution Along the Hutchinson River and Its Community Impact

Grantee: Hutchinson River Restoration Project

Project Area: Hutchinson River, New York

Description:

There are industrial and commercial companies along the river such as scrap metal recycling, asphalt production, bus depots, auto body shops, shopping centers, etc.

Project plans to propose a preliminary study to look for the probable harmful contaminants along the shoreline and water near the industrial settings to set the stage for further study and mitigation planning.

We will take water and soil samples at specific locations and time frames and send those samples to a private laboratory to be analyzed and to determine the presence of harmful chemical contaminants.

HRRP will reach out to the public to increase their knowledge about industrial pollution in the river and help to create the appropriate mitigation and stewardship of the river. Create an access point for communities to be on the river.

Source: The Hutchinson River Restoration Project



Theme: Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife

Example from LISCIF 2024

Project: Long Island Sound Oyster Shell Recovery Expansion Project

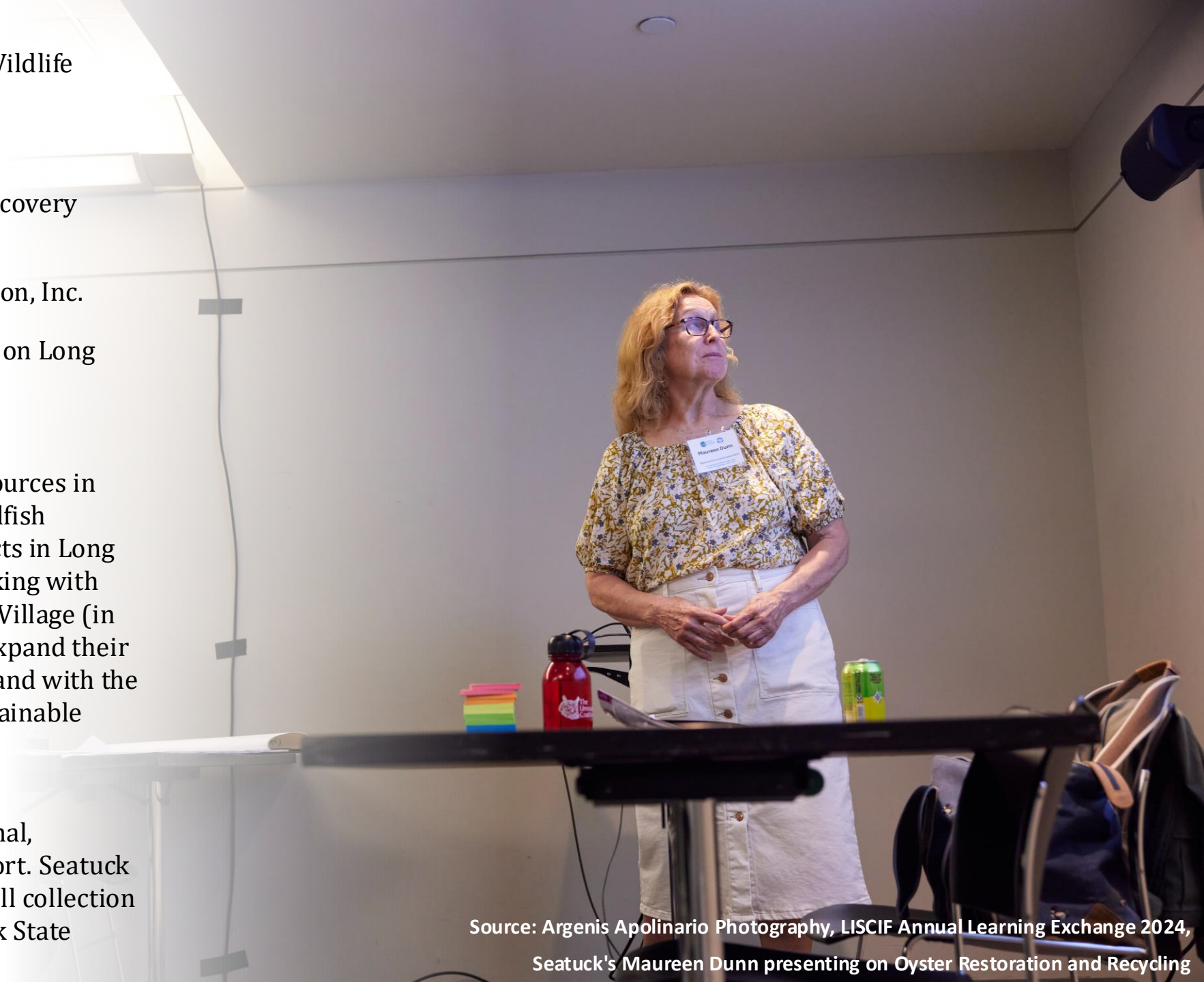
Grantee: Seatuck Environmental Association, Inc.

Project Area: Nassau and Suffolk Counties on Long Island

Description:

Increase collection of local oyster shell resources in Nassau and Suffolk Counties for use in shellfish restoration and shoreline protection projects in Long Island Sound. The project will include working with the Town of Huntington and Port Jefferson Village (in the Town of Brookhaven) to improve and expand their fledgling oyster shell collection initiatives, and with the Town of North Hempstead to initiate a sustainable shell collection program.

Seatuck will provide scientific, organizational, technical and outreach expertise and support. Seatuck will also maintain a system for tracking shell collection efforts to ensure compliance with New York State guidance.



Source: Argenis Apolinario Photography, LISCIF Annual Learning Exchange 2024,

Seatuck's Maureen Dunn presenting on Oyster Restoration and Recycling

Theme: Sustainable and Resilient Communities

Example from LISCIF 2025

Project: Establishing a Center for Indigenous, Regenerative, and Community Learning (CIRCL) in SE Connecticut in Support of Resilient Long Island Sound Watersheds

Grantee: Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed

Project Area: Mystic River Watershed, Connecticut

Description:

To support a diverse array of local and regional resilience interventions, we propose the development of a coherent, accessible, and inclusive curriculum and learning ecosystem, aligning current best practices in regenerative built environment design, green infrastructure, nature-based solutions, and other forms of land-based design (e.g. ecological restoration) with Tribal cultural values and knowledge systems.

This curriculum will directly inform community and youth-led place-based interventions for social and ecological (community) resilience and stimulate further co-design efforts.

This work builds on the last two years of work by The Alliance for the Mystic River Watershed (AMRW) to build relationships and community education, engagement, and outreach capacity in support of developing our Watershed Resilience Action Plan (WRAP).



Theme: Informed and Engaged Public

Example from LISCIF 2025

Project: Preserving and Protecting the Connecticut River Watershed through Advocacy, Environmental Awareness, and Education

Grantee: Connecticut River Museum

Project Area: Connecticut River, Essex, Connecticut

Description:

The Connecticut River Museum offers an array of environmentally focused programs that support environmental literacy; raise awareness of the River’s ecosystems and the interconnection of our cultural stories and the River’s ecology (past, present and future); foster critical thinking and creativity to identify environmental challenges facing the River; and empower people to take action and contribute to positive change.

The museum offers educational programs for learners of all ages, reaching more than 30,000 people, as we raise awareness about the River.

Source: Connecticut River Museum,
Exhibit: Rising Waters: Flooding on the Connecticut River,
June – August 2025



Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF26)

Project Impact Model Examples



Example 1: Rainwater Garden Swales

Project:
Rainwater Garden
Swales



LISCIF Funding
Priority:
Projects that result
in quantifiable
pollutant
prevention or
reduction.



CCMP Funding
Theme:
Clean Waters and
Healthy
Watersheds



Impact:
Redirect excess
rainwater
to garden
spaces, reducing
stormwater
runoff and
removing
pollutants in the
Sound.



CCMP Action:
CWHW 2-2:
Implement
nature-based
solutions and
other practices
that improve and
maintain water
quality and
ecosystem health.

Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF26)

Project Impact Model Examples



Example 2: Shellfish Aquaculture and Restoration

Project:
Shellfish
Aquaculture and
Restoration



LISCIF Funding
Priority:
Projects that
foster a diverse
balance and
abundant
populations of fish,
birds, and wildlife.



CCMP Funding
Theme:
Thriving and
Abundant Wildlife



Impact:
Increase
populations of
oysters, clams, and
scallops with the
implementation of
a shellfish
management
plan which also
supports coastal
restoration efforts.



CCMP Action:
THAW 1-1:
Restore coastal
habitat by
supporting
projects that
implement
established
restoration
techniques or help
validate innovative
techniques and
include broad
collaboration and
communication.

Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF26)

Project Impact Model Examples



Example 3: Community Resilience Preparedness

Project:
Community
Resilience
Preparedness



LISCIF Funding
Priority:
Projects that
enhance
community
resilience and
sustainability.



CCMP Funding
Theme:
Sustainable and
Resilient
Communities



Impact:
Create community
decision-making
opportunities for
resilience
preparedness
through training
programs.



CCMP Action:
SRC 1-1:
Develop, deliver,
and facilitate
training programs
relevant and
responsive to
community needs
that assist with
sustainability and
resilience.

Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF26)

Project Impact Model Examples



Example 4: Communicating Water Quality Reports & Findings

Project:
Communicating
Water Quality
Reports & Findings



LISCIF Funding
Priority:
Data
management and
integration projects.



CCMP Funding
Theme:
Informed and
Engaged Public



Impact:
Effectively
communicate water
quality findings
using environmental
indicators and
reports to educate
diverse communities
on the health of the
Long Island Sound
watershed.



CCMP Action:
IEP 2-4:
Support efforts to
assess the public's
understanding of
Long Island Sound
and its watershed.



Save the Sound®

Action for our region's environment.

The mission of Save the Sound is to protect and improve the land, air, and water of Connecticut and Long Island Sound. We use legal and scientific expertise and bring people together to achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.

Save the Sound works to ensure that:

- Long Island Sound, rivers, and lakes are safe for swimming, fishing, and boating, and our waters and coastal habitats support thriving populations of fish, shellfish, whales, turtles, seals, and birds;
- Your family has clean air to breathe, communities are healthy and vibrant, and Connecticut leads the nation in slowing climate change and building a clean energy economy;
- Our last great open spaces and the lands that filter your drinking water are protected from over-development, and critical natural areas can support wildlife, recreation, and clean water; and
- The laws that protect natural resources, public health, and environmental justice are strong, and the region's residents are empowered to use them.

Source: Save the Sound, [Hyde Pond/Whitford Brook Dam Removal and Planting](#)



Building Partnerships in the Long Island Sound Region

- Personal connections
- Honesty
- Showing up
- Regular meet-ups/check-ins
- Take time to grow relationships
- Pause and reflect on state of relationship
- Respectful disengagement when things don't click
- Center and honor people who share their stories
- Prepare to have uncomfortable conversations
- Craft and solidify community agreements



Save the Sound[®]
Action for our region's environment.





Fairness in Public Participation is Essential to Building Partnerships

Public Participation Guidance

1. Transparent and Accountable Decision Making
2. Accessible and Inclusive Decision Making
3. Equal Partnerships, Co-Production, and Self-Determination
4. Respect, Efficiency, and Non-Exploitation



Save the Sound[®]

Action for our region's environment.

Equal and Meaningful Partnerships

- Organization 1 has asked Organization 2 to partner with them to hold a neighborhood conversation in New Rochelle on water quality.
- Org. 1 is a 30-year-old statewide nonprofit with 40+ staff and a wealth of resources.
- Org. 2 is a 5-year-old neighborhood group that works with a much smaller funding capacity but is more influential in New Rochelle than Org. 1.
- Org. 2 is on the ground knocking on doors each weekend to promote this event.
- They have committed resources for media, food, and translation services while Org. 1 has only submitted a press advisory and one social post in lead up to the event.
- **Is this an equal and meaningful partnership?**



Equal and Meaningful Partnerships

- Organization 1 wants to increase public participation in quarterly meetings they have arranged with a water utility provider per a private grant they received.
- Organization 2 is concerned about rising utility costs for their members but doesn't know where to relay their concerns.
- Org. 1 offers Org. 2 guidance on how to participate in the quarterly utility meetings, helps their members prepare comments, and offers them honorariums in recognition of their time and labor.
- As a result of Org. 1's investment, Org. 2 becomes better informed on how to relay concerns to their water utility and asks Org. 1 to form a partnership to provide community education to their membership on this issue.
- **Is this an equal and meaningful partnership?**

Thank You - Questions?

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Kellie Marty

Email: kmarty@estuaries.org

Alex Rodriguez

Email: alexrodriguez@savethesound.org



Resources

- Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) Web Page -
<https://estuaries.org/liscif/>
- Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) -
<https://lispartnership.org/2025/06/2025-comprehensive-conservation-and-management-plan-ccmp/>
- CCMP Actions -
<https://lispartnership.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Vision-Mission-Values-and-Goals.pdf>



Post-Webinar Survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Y5Z9GHB>

- Please take a moment to answer questions to this post-webinar survey.
- Let us know if this webinar was helpful for you and future trainings you would like to see.
- Help us understand your organizational priorities to build your capacity.
- Inform us of barriers you are facing when applying for federal grants.

Thank You!



Upcoming Trainings and Events:

- **Creating a Federal Budget**

- **Description:** The budget template needed for the Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund application will be reviewed. Learn ways to budget a solid project proposal. Analyze costs and learn to fill out necessary budget templates accurately. Applicants will have the opportunity to seek clarification for any confusion during the application process and ask questions about budgeting.
- **Registration**
Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?secret=Z8xC59gATCadYbDd1zqOw>
- **Date/Time:** October 9, 2025, 1 – 2 pm
- **Facilitator:** Undria Polley

- **Grant Writing: Building a Strong Narrative**

- **Description:** Applicants will learn strategies in writing a strong narrative for the Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund. In conjunction with the RFA webinars, get a clear understanding of what is required in a narrative statement. Learn to effectively communicate your organization's mission and project proposal.
- **Registration**
Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/join/zoom-join?secret=2b94ZSmcTaehovZPxGGRkQ>
- **Date/Time:** October 21, 2025, 3 – 4 pm
- **Facilitators:** Connor Yakaitis



Registration:

[2025 Living Shorelines Tech Transfer Workshop ~ Restore America's Estuaries](#)