

# Memorandum of Understanding

September 27, 2000

## RESTORATION OF COASTAL HABITATS OF LONG ISLAND SOUND

**R**ecognizing that the coastal habitats of Long Island Sound have historically been an exceptionally productive and biologically diverse ecosystem important to the economics and ecological integrity of the Northeast and the nation,

**F**inding that the acreage of these key habitats for fish, shellfish, birds and other wildlife has greatly declined or degraded over the last century, in part due in large part to hydromodification (dredging, ditching, diking, filling), pollution, and other impacts associated with development,

**R**ecognizing the economic and environmental benefits of coastal habitats, including flood moderation, pollutant filtration, fish and wildlife habitat, recreation, tourism, and other important functions and values.

**W**e the undersigned, to the extent permitted by our respective authorities and subject to the availability of financial and human resources; resolve to use the expertise of our agencies focused through the Long Island Sound Study's Habitat Restoration Initiative, to:

- ❖ *Work together to restore at least 2000 acres of coastal habitat and 100 miles of riverine migratory corridor over the ten year period from 1998 to 2008.*
- ❖ *Periodically review and update the Habitat Restoration Strategy and list of potential restoration sites, and report on progress,*
- ❖ *Involve interested and affected parties in the process,*

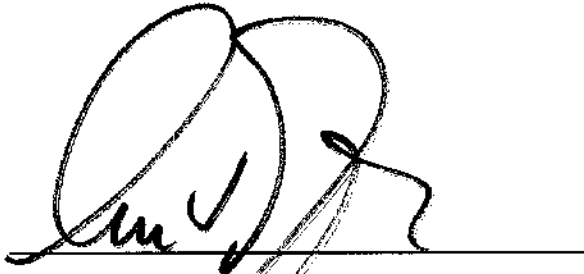
In addition, the specific roles and responsibilities of the partners are attached and made part of this document.

**Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection  
and New York Department of Environmental Conservation**

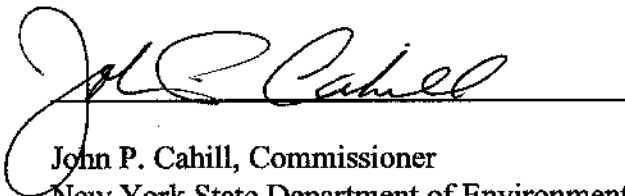
The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation agree to provide general coordination functions including the maintenance and updating of the habitat restoration Geographic Information System (GIS) for the purpose of tracking habitat restoration progress, convening meetings with the partners, and assisting all of the partners in identifying and securing funding for projects.

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection will take lead or co-lead responsibility for the restoration of specific coastal habitats in Connecticut, including Tidal Wetlands, Beaches and Dunes, Coastal Embayments, Submerged Aquatic Vegetation, and Riverine Migratory Corridors. Responsibilities will include providing technical assistance, assistance in developing restoration plans, securing necessary permissions to conduct restoration activities, and identifying or applying for necessary funding to implement habitat restoration projects.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation will continue to provide support and guidance to New York municipalities in identifying and planning habitat restoration projects on Long Island Sound. In addition, NYSDEC will agree to provide general coordination functions including supplying updated material to CTDEP for the habitat restoration Geographic Information System (GIS) for the purpose of tracking habitat restoration progress, convening meetings with the partners, and assisting all of the partners in identifying and securing funding for projects, and guide partners through the state permit application process.

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Arthur J. Rocque, Commissioner  
Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

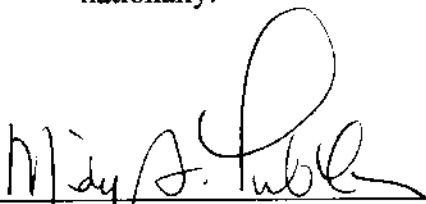
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John P. Cahill', written over a horizontal line.

John P. Cahill, Commissioner  
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

## U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The EPA, through its Regional Offices in New York and Boston and its Long Island Sound Office, has provided funding to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection and New York Department of Environmental Conservation in support of the Long Island Sound Study's Habitat Restoration Initiative. The EPA agrees to support implementation of the Habitat Restoration Strategy in the following ways:

- The EPA LIS Office will continue to coordinate the effort, including tracking and reporting on progress toward commitments
- The EPA LIS Office will support continued public involvement and educational activities on habitat restoration, including the development of fact sheets, pamphlets, and information on its World Wide Web homepage.
- EPA will encourage the application of eligible habitat restoration projects for funding under various programs, such as the CWA Section 319 nonpoint source control program.
- EPA will advocate habitat restoration in watershed protection activities around the Sound.
- EPA will encourage the application of eligible habitat restoration projects for funding through Supplemental Environmental Projects.
- EPA will provide technical support and promote technology transfer of the program nationally.



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Mindy S. Lubber, Regional Administrator  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
New England Region



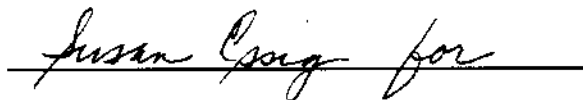
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*for* Jeanne M.. Fox, Regional Administrator  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
Region II

## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) through its Southern New England - New York Bight Coastal Ecosystems Program, Long Island Ecological Services Field Office, Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge, Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex, and Connecticut River-Long Island Sound Ecosystem Team will support the restoration of coastal habitats associated with Long Island Sound. Specifically, the Service will work with partners to identify appropriate projects from those identified by the Long Island Sound Study Habitat Restoration Initiative and support the funding and implementation of these projects. Appropriate projects will be considered for funding through the Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife program. The Service will also attempt to match projects or sets of projects with appropriate Service and other related competitive grants programs and work with partners to apply for these grants including North American Wetland Conservation Act grants, National Coastal Wetland grants, and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grants.

Priority habitats and areas for the Service include: nesting and foraging habitats for colonial waterbirds (especially long-legged waders and roseate tern), habitats on and adjacent to National Wildlife Refuges, habitats that support federally endangered and threatened species, tidal wetland habitats in the Lower Connecticut River (Ramsar area), fish passage in riverine migratory corridors feeding into Long Island Sound, beach strand habitats (especially existing and potential piping plover habitats), and sandplain grasslands. On Long Island, the habitat restoration efforts of the Long Island Wetland Restoration Initiative (a partnership among the Service, State of New York, Ducks Unlimited, Suffolk County, and other partners) will be coordinated with the Long Island Sound Study Habitat Restoration Initiative.



Mamie Parker, Acting Director  
US Fish and Wildlife Service  
Region 5

## **New York State Department of State**

The Department of State will continue to participate in the Long Island Sound Study's Habitat Restoration Initiative through fostering local support and commitment for habitat restoration planning and construction. The Department will encourage Long Island Sound communities to apply for Environmental Protection Funds to identify, prioritize, plan, design and implement habitat restoration projects consistent with the goals of the Long Island Sound Study and the Long Island Sound Coastal Management Program. The Department will continue to provide staff coordination for meetings, field inspections and technical assistance to communities for funding, planning and implementing habitat restoration projects.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alexander F. Treadwell". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined.

Alexander F. Treadwell  
Secretary of State  
State of New York

## USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

The USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a state-based federal conservation agency that works primarily on private and non-federal public lands to conserve and sustain natural resources. NRCS staff works with individuals, organizations and governmental agencies to deliver a wide range of technical services that reduce impacts to natural systems from agricultural, urban, and suburban landscapes.

NRCS recognizes Long Island Sound as a priority for protection. While NRCS traditionally works on lands in watersheds that outlet into the coastal area, it can assist with restoration projects in coves and embayments. The agency will continue working with landowners to enhance the quality of the natural resources within the Long Island Sound Ecosystem.

*Adolfo Perez Acting*

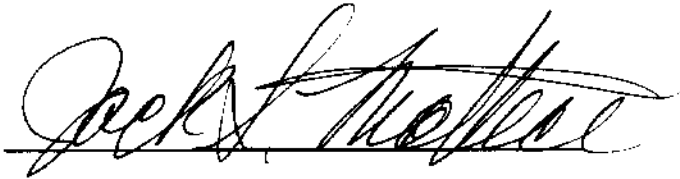
Melvin Womack, Acting New York State Conservationist  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

*Margo L. Wallace*

Margo L. Wallace, Connecticut State Conservationist  
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

## **New York Sea Grant Extension**

The New York Sea Grant Extension program will work to provide the latest scientific information on habitat restoration from the National Sea Grant College Program to groups and organizations conducting restoration projects, provide technical assistance to groups performing habitat restoration projects, especially in the areas of coastal processes and dune habitats, fisheries restoration, and use of native plants. Sea Grant will sponsor habitat restoration workshops, and promote restoration through its newsletters.

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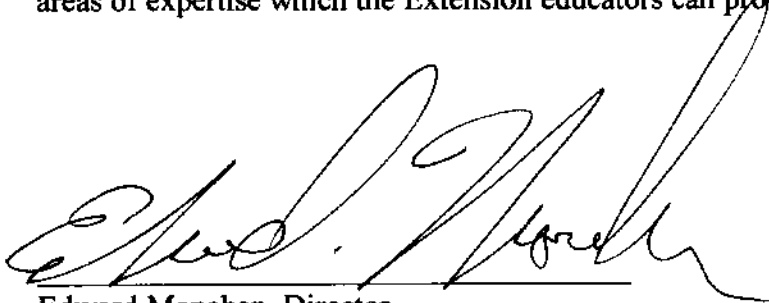
Jack Mattice, Director  
New York Sea Grant

## **Connecticut Sea Grant College Program**

The CTSG program, a partnership between the federal government (NOAA) and the University of Connecticut, will continue to support habitat restoration efforts as it has done in the past: by

- (1) soliciting proposals for relevant research, and**
- (2) by conducting workshops and other outreach activities, and**
- (3) providing educational materials through its Communications and Education offices.**

CTSG will continue to distribute "Research in New England Marsh-Estuary Ecosystems: Directions and Priorities into the Next Millennium", a publication resulting from a recent workshop. CTSG Extension staff will continue to work with municipal officials, the State DEP, nonprofit organizations such as Save the Sound, and the Sea Grant network to assist with restoration projects, hold workshops, and assist in technology transfer to user groups. Long Island Sound ecosystem health, water quality, aquatic nuisance species, and fisheries are specific areas of expertise which the Extension educators can provide.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Edward Monahan", written over a horizontal line.

Edward Monahan, Director  
Connecticut Sea Grant College Program

## **City of New York/Parks & Recreation**

The City of New York/Parks & Recreation's Natural Resources Group (NRG) was established in 1984 and is comprised of scientists, restoration ecologists, and GIS mapping specialists. NRG develops and implements management programs for protection and restoration of the City's natural resources, including a 28, 000 acre park system. More than \$70 million is earmarked for restoration of salt marshes, freshwater wetlands, riparian forests, and grasslands within the City's critical watersheds.

Parks, through its Natural Resources Group, will continue to support the Long Island Sound Study Habitat Restoration Initiative in implementing habitat restoration priorities, non-point source pollution reduction through habitat enhancements, and protection and management of the Sound's most important natural resources. In addition, Parks will continue to seek support through community education, and government and private grants to augment parkland acquisition, research, monitoring, and restoration goals established by LISS.



Henry J. Stern, Commissioner  
City of New York  
Parks & Recreation

## Save the Sound, Inc.

Save the Sound, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the restoration, protection, and appreciation of Long Island Sound and its watershed through education, research, and advocacy. Founded in 1972, Save the Sound has offices in Stamford, Connecticut and Glen Cove, New York. As a member of the Long Island Sound Habitat Restoration Initiative, Save the Sound commits to the following:

### 1. Advocacy

- as a member of Restore America's Estuaries, press for appropriate legislation such as the Chafee Estuary Restoration Bill;
- meet with elected officials (DC, Hartford, Albany, local);
- track and monitor legislation;
- encourage adequate funds for restoration and pursue new funding sources;
- streamline the permit process for restoration projects.

### 2. Education and outreach

*(audiences: elementary, middle, and high school faculty and students; municipal/elected officials; adult general public; landowners)*

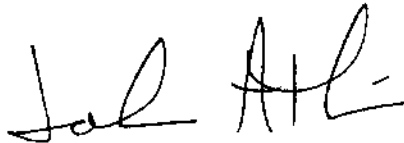
- public speaking engagements;
- conduct technical assistance workshops for municipalities and community groups;
- classroom visits/field trips;
- media outreach (radio, television, print) - site visits, editorial board meetings, press releases.

### 3. Habitat Restoration

- at the grassroots level, coordinate and assist habitat restoration projects in Connecticut and New York;
- assist LIS organizations by building partnerships, locating funds, and providing or locating technical assistance for restoration projects;
- publish and distribute The LIS Conservation Blueprint - Building the Case for Habitat Restoration In and Around the Sound (a citizen's guide for habitat restoration).

### 4. Research

- continue to assist non-governmental agencies of both states in developing water quality monitoring programs, similar to ours, that operate under US EPA Quality Assurance Project Plans;
- continue to participate in the network of LIS agencies and organizations that monitor water quality;
- continue to provide our water quality data to federal and state agencies.



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John Atkin, President  
Save the Sound, Inc.

## **National Audubon Society of New York State**

The National Audubon Society of New York State strongly supports this Memorandum of Understanding for the Restoration of the Coastal Habitats of Long Island Sound. Long Island Sound Study Habitat Restoration Strategy is a critical component to the future protection and stewardship of Long Island Sound.

The National Audubon Society of New York State agrees to assist the Long Island Sound Study Habitat Restoration Initiative through our advocacy, science and education programs. Audubon will provide the Initiative with information from the Listen to the Sound 2000 project, which will further advance habitat restoration efforts. Audubon will assist in outreach to local communities to identify future projects and assist in promoting funding for restoration projects.

The National Audubon Society of New York State will also provide input from our science and bird conservation staff on habitat restoration efforts that relate to Important Bird Areas.

Finally, National Audubon Society of New York State will continue to advocate for the habitat restoration strategy in relation to its role on governmental advisory bodies, in the public realm, and in conjunction with discussions of the creation of a Long Island Sound Reserve Program.



David J. Miller, Executive Director  
National Audubon Society of New York State and  
LISS CAC Co-Chair-NY