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A Newsletter from the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
Exploring Long Island Sound - Issues and Opportunities

"A little less conversation, a little more action please..." Was Elvis Trying to Jump Start Climate Change Efforts in Connecticut?

OK, so Elvis was probably not thinking about climate change when he sang those words about conversation vs. action. But he did foreshadow a theme of a May 11, 2018 conference on [Creating a Resilient Connecticut: A CIRCA Forum on Science, Planning, Policy & Law](#) at the UConn School of Law in Hartford, Connecticut. In the conference keynote address, Harriet Tregoning, former HUD Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Office of Community Planning and Development, applauded Connecticut's efforts to address the resilience of vulnerable communities along our coast and inland waterways to the growing impacts of climate change.

She also admonished us to do more, pointing out that, despite a plethora of adaptation planning efforts, market signals continue to promote development in at-risk coastal areas. With all the conversation about climate change and sea level rise, can the Land of Steady Habits take action necessary to cope with sea levels that are anything but steady?

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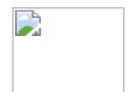
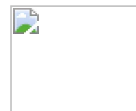
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Street flooding

Some at-risk communities, such as this
Beachland Avenue neighborhood in Milford,
already experience chronic flooding with no storms on the horizon
Photo Credit: Milford Engineering Department

One small step forward was recently taken in the form of [Public Act 18-82](#), An Act Concerning Climate Change Planning and Resiliency, introduced as the Governor's initiative and signed by Governor Malloy on June 6, 2018. While this statute contains a number of provisions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prepare the state for the ongoing effects of climate change and sea level rise, its most significant provision is the adoption of a consistent sea level rise threshold for state-level planning.

As *Sound Outlook* readers learned in our [last issue](#), the [Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation \(CIRCA\)](#) established a sea level rise planning scenario for Connecticut of 50 cm (approximately 20 inches) of sea level rise by the year 2050. Thanks to PA 18-82, all existing statutory references to sea level rise (or "sea level change" in the case of the Connecticut Coastal Management Act) will now be bench-marked to the CIRCA 50/50 scenario. As a result, the 50 cm scenario will be required to be considered in state and municipal plans of conservation and development, the state civil preparedness plan, and municipal evacuation or hazard mitigation plans, as well as in coastal planning. In addition, federally funded and state-funded projects within the coastal area will need to implement, where feasible, floodproofing measures reflecting the CIRCA scenario.

While the designation of an official state sea level rise planning threshold is significant and represents a great start, there remains more work to be done. Which will probably involve a little more conversation about the appropriate planning, regulatory, and other actions we can ultimately take to reduce risks to life and property in vulnerable areas.

If Elvis were with us today, he might suggest that considering and planning for a specified sea level rise is great, but we need to see a little more action on the ground. It's now or never!

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The Coastal Certificate Program Works with

First Impressions

Column Shares the "First Impressions" that Make an Environmental Difference

This column features the "First Impression" that set someone on his or her path to environmentalism. We hope *Sound Outlook* readers will relate to these "First Impressions" and recall their own experiences that led them to appreciate and care about Long Island Sound.

This issue features **Judy Preston**, Connecticut Outreach Coordinator for the Long Island Sound Study through Connecticut Sea Grant, and architect of the Master Gardener/Coastal Certificate Program.

 [Judy Preston](#)

Judy's "First Impression" took hold when she was a kid growing up in Connecticut. Her parents appreciated "the great outdoors" and allowed her to spend a lot of time in the woods and on the water:

I'm very thankful, I had very cool experiences as a kid just exploring nature. I grew up in Manchester and we moved to Glastonbury when I was 10, and I lived there until I went to college. Fortunately it was a time when kids could go out and explore, and my parents never thought twice about letting me. We also had boats on Long Island Sound, a small boat at first and then a larger one that my parents kept in Mystic.

She also recalls an experience at summer camp when she was a child that strengthened her love of the environment. The camp hired a married couple, Mr. and Mrs. Babbitt, to teach campers about nature, and Judy remembers them fondly:

They would take the campers on nature walks. Mr. Babbitt was deaf, and his wife helped interpret for him. He knew so much

Master Gardeners to Help Long Island Sound

Regular readers of *Sound Outlook* understand the connection between landscaping and water quality in Long Island Sound. This newsletter has run countless articles on how landscaping fertilizers contain nitrogen which contributes to low oxygen conditions (hypoxia) in the Sound (check out "It's NFL Season: No Fertilizing Lawns" and the other nitrogen-related articles in the [October/November 2017 issue](#) for a recent comprehensive reminder). But readers might not know that the University of Connecticut's (UConn's) Cooperative Extension Master Gardening Program has become a leader in teaching Connecticut's gardeners about this important connection.

The Coastal Certificate Program, the brainchild of Long Island Sound Study Connecticut Outreach Coordinator Judy Preston, was established in 2013 as a collaboration between [UConn Cooperative Extension](#), the [Long Island Sound Study](#), and [Connecticut Sea Grant](#). One of the program's core themes is the use of [native plants](#), which not only reduce the need to use nutrient-, chemical-, and water-intensive landscaping--lawn area, in particular--but also create buffers between water and land uses that can release pollutants, absorbing nutrients and breaking-down pollutants before they get to the water. Since 2013, Ms. Preston and the Coastal Certificate Program have unleashed a flotilla of informed and enthusiastic graduates that connect gardens to the health of Long Island Sound.

Over the past five years, Coastal Certificate volunteers armed with current information about both Long Island Sound and sustainable gardening practices have provided over 1,500 hours of diverse outreach and stewardship in Long Island Sound watershed communities. These efforts range from planting native plants to distributing thousands of pieces of educational literature to expose people to important information and ideas. One project even developed an original fertilizer-themed play that was performed by kids.



Volunteers, including Coastal Certificate participants,
help restore a dune and create a living shoreline in Milford.
Photo Credit: Steve Johnson

The Coastal Certificate Program has capitalized on Cooperative Extension as the tried-and-true method of diffusing current research and knowledge to a broad audience. The Extension model has long served the agricultural community nationwide. In Connecticut, the Master Gardener Program works through county

about nature, I just stuck right to him, I thought he was amazing.

Although Judy loved exploring outside, she didn't set out to study the natural world in college. She started school as an art major, in part because she felt intimidated by the coursework required for an environmental track. But little did she know that a science class would lead her to her "First Environmental Step":

I started as an art major, and part of that was because I made assumptions and was afraid that I wasn't smart enough--math and I have never really been good buddies. But I had to take a science class as part of the curriculum and I chose geology. That class completely changed everything.

Maybe it was because that professor was really great, or maybe it was her realization that she could handle the subject matter, but that geology class was a game-changer for Judy:

I still love art to this day and I incorporate it as part of my response to the natural world, the beauty I see in it. But because of that geology class, I changed my major. It took me to the next step and I never turned back from that.

Judy graduated from Skidmore College in 1980 with a degree in geology, and, like many other geology majors at the time, took a position in the petroleum industry. She moved to Denver and worked as a geologist for a small service company looking for "that next big oil discovery" in the American west. While the work wasn't particularly compelling, an interesting set of circumstances associated with the job delivered a rather significant "Behavior Change":

There was a day when all geologic staff, about 20 of us, were called up into the Vice President's office. He had a piece of paper on his table and a map on the wall, and he started talking about the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). He pointed to the map, showed us where ANWR was, and said, "Only 200 people visit there in a year, how important can it be?"

And I'm thinking, "That is exactly why it's important."

He then pointed to the piece of paper; it was a letter to the U.S. Congress on behalf of this company, stating that we unanimously agreed that ANWR should be opened up for oil and gas exploration. He wanted us all to sign it.

Extension Coordinators and offices, and combines current issues and science-based information with a mandatory outreach component. In the end, successful completion provides a respected credential, and for some, the camaraderie of going on for advanced certifications in gardening-related and, increasingly, environmental topics.

Each year, the program combines approximately 15 hours of training over three-weeks (including a field trip). Outreach generally plays-out over the summer months, and a graduation is held in the fall. While not all participants are Master Gardeners, anyone completing the program is one more person who takes what they have learned back to their own practices, and hopefully influences friends and family.

To date there have been five Coastal Certificate Programs offered through the [UConn Advanced Master Gardening Program](#), and one full-day workshop, "Emerging Issues and Sustainable Solutions," that was held in the fall of 2015. The Program has rotated to all of Connecticut's coastal counties, drawing 163 participants from 54 towns, as well as five people from the neighboring states of New York and Rhode Island.

The Coastal Certificate Program benefits considerably by partnering with local organizations, particularly non-profit conservation organizations such as land trusts, Long Island Sound advocacy organizations, and conservation districts. Outreach projects add substantially to this list of local partners, with Coastal Certificate volunteers working with, among others, scouting groups, corporate volunteers, municipal parks staff, and grade schools. Program speakers are recruited from academia including the University of Connecticut, Wesleyan University, Sacred Heart University, Connecticut College, and Naugatuck Community College; non-profit organizations (e.g., land trusts, Connecticut and National Audubon, and Pequotsepos Nature Center); for-profit businesses (e.g., NE Environmental, Colonial Seed, landscape architecture firms, Acer Gardens, and Green Earth Ag and Turf), and state and federal employees.

Public outreach is accomplished, in part, by Coastal Certificate participants partnering with Ms. Preston, housed at Connecticut Sea Grant. For those in the program who are averse to speaking in front of an audience, they may solicit a topic covered in or related to the class and have Ms. Preston give the talk in exchange for securing the venue, audience, and local publicity. This has resulted in close to thirty talks in twenty-three towns to garden clubs, land trusts, through library associations, watershed associations, state parks friend's groups, and senior living programs.

Coastal Certificate participants have also been involved with [Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development](#) projects, constructing and/or maintaining rain gardens, tree boxes, and pervious pavement for municipalities and non-profit groups. For example, volunteers have worked with Audubon Connecticut on the national [Schoolyard Habitat Program](#) in Fairfield County, and helped install rain gardens and native plant demonstration gardens at the [Connecticut Audubon Coastal Center in Milford](#); the [Bartlett Arboretum](#) and the non-profit Soundwaters organization, both in Stamford; and on Old Lyme Land Trust property.

Ultimately, the "value added" by the Coastal Certificate Program is quite bountiful and includes:

- the weaving together of estuarine science with landscape practice, environmental protection with urban landscaping;
- the intersection of goals that are met by partners from differing sectors; and
- leveraging resources and amplifying outreach and education with a modest output of financial resources: honorariums from Ms. Preston's public speaking engagements provide a working reserve that is funneled back into the program.

For more information about the Coastal Certificate Program, please contact [Judy Preston](#) at 860.405.9303.

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I spoke up and said I had some questions and needed a little more time to make my decision. He gave me 24 hours. Before taking the petroleum job, I had worked with a nonprofit in Denver doing wilderness protection, so I called some friends there and they gave me information on ANWR. The next morning I went to the Vice President's office and I told him I couldn't sign the letter.

He asked why, and I expressed my concern about the Porcupine Caribou Herd, and that the area intended for exploration was their calving grounds. He replied, "I liken what we can do for the Porcupine Caribou Herd is the same thing that we've done for the American Indian."

I dropped my jaw and said, "Are you kidding?!"

At that point he was clearly perturbed and responded, "Don't you think the American Indian is better off today than before westward expansion?"

Judy didn't answer his question.

But in that moment, her future path became crystal clear to her. She didn't sign the letter--although every one of the remaining geologic staff did--and she never once second-guessed her decision.

And while she wasn't fired on the spot, Judy knew that her time with the company was limited. But she was also at peace with her decision:

I've never felt so clear in my whole life that I needed to move to a different career. I'm so thankful, honestly, that that happened because I felt so calm when I left his office. Rather than feeling like, "Oh my God, I just lost my job!" it felt like, "OK, I'm going to go home now and figure out what my next career is going to be." And that career was going to have something to do with nature and conservation.

Judy's behavior change landed her back in college, pursuing a degree in landscape architecture because of its "marriage of art and science." She attended the University of Pennsylvania and studied with [Ian McHarg](#), and took a required summer field ecology class that was led by [Tom Siccama from Yale University](#). That class was a joint effort with the [Field Naturalist Program](#) (FNP) offered at the University of Vermont. And Judy became smitten with field ecology.

As much as she loved landscape architecture, she left the program for the greener fields of the FNP. The program's

Long Island Sound Blue Plan Update

Development of a Blue Plan for Long Island Sound continues to progress toward the completion deadline of March 1, 2019!

As announced in the [February/March 2018 issue of Sound Outlook](#), a public hearing was held on May 8, 2018 to solicit public input on the draft Long Island Sound Resource and Use Inventory. The audio and transcript of the hearing are available at www.ct.gov/deep/lisblueplaninventory, and the DEEP Hearing Officer's Report will be posted to that webpage once it is released in the coming months.

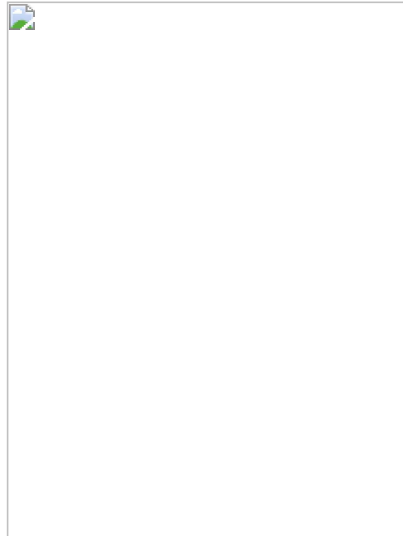
After two rounds of revisions, the Blue Plan Development Team is still accepting comments on the most recent draft of the Inventory. During the public hearing, the Team was made aware of the availability of additional data and is now in the process of gathering that data to help address key data gaps. The Team anticipates being able to accept comments on the Inventory until October 1, 2018, at which time all efforts will be focused on developing the Blue Plan.

In addition to their continued engagement with Connecticut stakeholders, the Blue Plan Development Team is also reaching out to stakeholders in New York as required by the Blue Plan statute (Connecticut General Statutes [Section 25-157t](#)).

The Team hosted a meeting in Port Jefferson on May 31, 2018 to present about the Blue Plan and Inventory and solicit input. The Team received great feedback and additional information about available data from attendees, and vowed to return to Long Island in the near future with additional events.

The Blue Plan Advisory Committee met on June 19, 2018 in New Haven to review and discuss two of the more important Plan developments thus far: maps identifying significant use areas, and a draft policy packet that contains comprehensive information about policy development and potential language. The Blue Plan Development Team anticipates posting these documents on the [Blue Plan website](#), (www.ct.gov/deep/lisblueplan) sometime in mid-July, once the Advisory Committee has provided their input. The public is always welcome at Advisory Committee meetings and is strongly encouraged to attend. The final two meetings of the year are scheduled for September 6, 2018 (at Earthplace in Westport) and December 4, 2018 (at the Vicki G. Duffy Pavilion in Old Saybrook), and [meeting agendas and minutes](#) can be found on the website as well.

We also encourage *Sound Outlook* readers to monitor the website for periodic updates, and the join the [Long Island Sound Blue Plan Listserv](#) to stay up-to-date on upcoming meetings, future Connecticut and New York public events, website



Port Jefferson audience at Blue Plan presentation



CT DEEP's Emily Hall and Brian Thompson address the audience at the Port Jefferson, NY outreach event on May 31, 2018 Photo Credit: CT DEEP

field science, applied science, and communications components were the perfect fit for Judy. As part of her coursework she traveled to Puerto Rico and, ironically, Alaska (Glacier Bay, not ANWR) where she spent an extraordinary 6 weeks studying glacial geomorphology and kayaking the back-country.

Once she finished the FNP, she had every intention of finishing her landscape architecture degree. But in 1991 a job opportunity at The Nature Conservancy (TNC) brought Judy back to Connecticut instead. She landed the position of Director of Science and Stewardship and started working on, among other things, invasive species issues and developing a grants program. She did that for almost 12 years, until her impending 50th birthday gave her another chance to take stock of her life's journey.

That's when she decided to start her own nonprofit organization, The Tidewater Institute focusing on the Connecticut River estuary. She also decided to go back to school yet again, reuniting with Tom Siccama and earning a master's degree from the Yale School of Forestry. She also studied with [Stephen Kellert](#) whose work focused on people's relationship to and innate connections with nature. She convinced Yale to allow her to attend part-time and earn the degree over the course of two years to enable her to establish Tidewater.

Judy is extremely proud of [her many accomplishments through The Tidewater Institute](#), and is thankful for the learning opportunity it presented to her. One of the more memorable projects was the Connecticut River Riparian Mapping project that documented the existence and condition of riparian buffers on over 800 riverfront parcels along the lower Connecticut River:

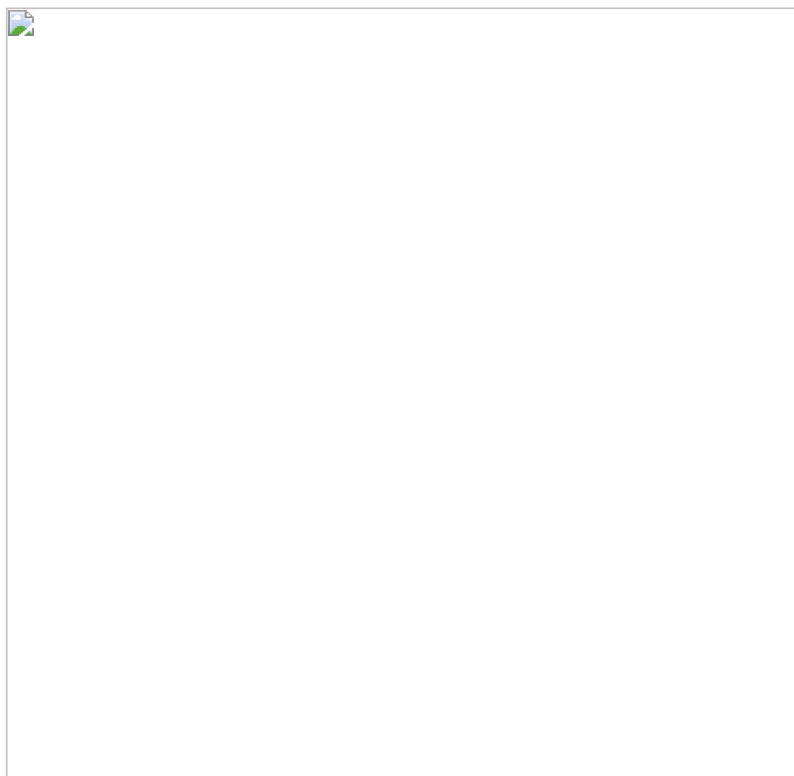
Using a Long Island Sound Futures Fund grant, I worked with Margo Burns from the Connecticut River Estuary Regional Planning Agency to assess riparian borders in the estuary. A friend let us borrow his Brockway boat, a big, heavy, flat-bottomed wooden boat made locally by [Earl Brockway](#). We took that boat--which had a fairly small engine on it--almost to Middletown, up one side of the river and down the other, identifying the percentage and condition of riparian buffers on every waterfront lot. It was a lot of work, but it was the first effort that actually gave us a sense of how much riparian buffer existed in the estuary and what shape it was in.

updates, and other Blue Plan-related information. Readers can also reach out to the Blue Plan Development Team anytime at DEEP.BluePlanLIS@ct.gov.

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East Lyme Public Trust Foundation Promotes Beach Ecosystem with New Pamphlets

Every summer more than 100,000 individuals visit Niantic Bay beaches between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Additionally, at least this many individuals utilize the 1.1 mile boardwalk along Niantic Bay year-round (please see the [October 2005 issue of Sound Outlook](#) for more information about the Niantic Bay Overlook boardwalk). The [East Lyme Public Trust Foundation](#) (ELPTF) has published new educational pamphlets in an effort to improve the public's understanding and protection of beach ecosystems to help develop a greater connection to the environment.



Niantic Beaches Living Ecosystem Project Pamphlets

This project was conceived by James Gallagher, a retired oceanographer who began developing the educational pamphlets in August of 2017 in the hopes of increasing public interest and knowledge and promoting conservation of this important local ecosystem. ELPTF submitted a grant application to Connecticut Sea Grant and was awarded approximately \$1,600 for the project in February 2018. The goal is to have these pamphlets make the public aware of the purpose and value of the sea shells, beach plants, and seaweed as components of the local beach domain.

The pamphlet series was designed and printed by a Foundation Board member which enabled ELPTF to increase the number of brochures that will be distributed from 3,000 to 15,000. Posters will mark the locations of pamphlet distribution boxes at Hole in the Wall beach, the McCook bathhouse, Cini Park, East Lyme Town Hall, the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Department, East Lyme High School, the Niantic Center School, and the Children's Museum. The pamphlets and posters are imprinted with a "QRCode," directing the reader to the Foundation website. This feature will enable individuals to have the information on their phones or devices without taking a pamphlet.

Another of Judy's favorite Tidewater memories is the walk-and-talks she conducted, which she thinks are one of the best ways to interact with people. Perhaps these nature presentations bring her back to her early experiences as a camper with Mr. Babbitt, but they would certainly prepare her for the next chapter in her life: a position as the Long Island Sound Study's (LISS) Connecticut Outreach Coordinator through Connecticut Sea Grant. During her tenure in this LISS outreach position, Judy developed the Coastal Certificate Program highlighted in this issue of *Sound Outlook*. The program gives her ample opportunity for walking and talking with people about ways to garden in an environmentally friendly way. But the message is so much bigger than gardening:

My degree from the FNP was in the botany department, so I felt like I had a strong background in plants. And I love to garden. The LISS was looking into ways to get people to change behaviors, and we had consulted with an employee for the National Park Service in Utah who said that one of the most successful behavior change programs he saw was in Louisiana, using master gardeners to communicate changing behaviors. It was successful because people like and trust master gardeners, they're perceived as regular people who are passionate and knowledgeable.

This all happened just at the beginning of the wave of understanding the value of native plants. And I knew I could wrap gardening into healthy coastal environments, into riparian buffers, into using fewer chemical and fertilizers, into erosion control and stormwater infiltration. I knew there were many different ways that the Master Gardener program could help with Long Island Sound water quality.

The Coastal Certificate Program just celebrated its 5th anniversary in 2018, and another round of classes is planned for 2019.

In looking back at her journey, Judy was reminded of advice often bestowed to college graduates at commencement: "Follow Your Passion." Because her career path has really been the antithesis of this advice:

It's very romantic to say, "Follow your passion," but it's not really what happens. There's no straight trajectory. In fact, there was an article in The Atlantic ("[Find Your Passion' is Awful Advice](#)") about how sometimes you have to take jobs that you wouldn't have thought to take or work in a

The complete pamphlet series is also posted on the [ELPTF website's Education section](#).

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SPOTLIGHTED COASTAL RESOURCE: Controlling Invasive *Phragmites* in Connecticut's Wetlands

At the turn of the 21st century, Sound Outlook reported on research conducted by Connecticut College with a Long Island Sound License Plate Fund grant that showed the harmful effects of *Phragmites* on tidal marsh birds (please see the [June 2000 issue](#)). In essence, the results of the study indicated that, while some birds like the Marsh Wren and Swamp Sparrow actually preferred sites with more *Phragmites* or cattails, overall, fewer bird species were found in *Phragmites*-dominated wetlands compared to the native *Spartina*-dominated marshes. Specifically, Seaside Sparrow and Sharp-tailed Sparrow, both listed as species of special concern, were absent from *Phragmites* marshes.

The study also found that the spread of *Phragmites* negatively affects many state-listed wading birds that use open pools and mud flats, since well-established stands of *Phragmites* can build up a thick layer of organic material on the floor of the marsh. This raises the elevation of the marsh, which reduces tidal inundation and converts open water areas, degrading the habitat value of the tidal marsh.

This research concluded that there is a need for continued salt marsh restoration, *Phragmites* control, and conservation of large marshes to protect and enhance coastal bird habitat.

Fast-forward to 2018, and the DEEP continues to take the findings of this research very seriously. In an effort to control *Phragmites*, as recommended by the 2000 study, the Wetland Habitat and Mosquito Management (WHAMM) Program recently released a fact sheet about [Controlling Invasive *Phragmites* in Connecticut's Wetlands](#).

The fact sheet contains information about the ecology of *Phragmites* and identifies methods to reduce stands of this invasive reed. In addition to reiterating many of the findings of the 2000 Connecticut College study, the fact sheet identifies other adverse impacts associated with *Phragmites*. These include forming barriers to the movement of animals and large birds such as waterfowl, shorebirds, and wading birds. According to the fact sheet, a few wildlife species such as Virginia rail, red-winged blackbird, white-tailed deer, and muskrat may take advantage of the cover provided by *Phragmites*, but most birds and animals avoid it.

We strongly encourage municipalities and any property owners with marshes containing large stands of *Phragmites* to review the fact sheet and contact WHAMM to take steps to control this invasive wetland scourge! The Seaside Sparrows will love you for it.

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field you didn't think you were interested in before you realize, it's all a part of building to a point where you know what you're doing is the right thing to do. And I thought, you know, that is so true.

I could never say I followed my bliss with my first job, but at every turn it became clear to me that my career would involve nature, understanding how it works and how to protect it. You just never know when something is going to be crystal clear, you don't really anticipate it. When I was young and got my first paying job, it didn't occur to me that I might really want to craft a career. I would have never anticipated my trajectory, but I also don't have any regrets.

Judy might not have initially followed her passion, but standing on the shoulders of "giants" in the field like Ian McHarg, Tom Siccama, [Ruth Patrick at the University of Pennsylvania](#), and [Dick Goodwin at TNC](#), her passion was well within reach. And one lesson in particular brings Judy back to the geology class that started it all :

If I had really thought about it, it wasn't the type of work done in the petroleum industry that I really liked. What I loved was that geology was the basis for understanding the bedrock, as it were, of the ecosystem. Ian McHarg introduced me to idea of the "layer cake," the idea that you can look at a landscape and deconstruct it according to its layers. So you look at bedrock geology, surficial geology, hydrology, soils, the vegetation and atmosphere, and you can piece those things together to understand how the ecosystem is interacting, and I love that. Because anywhere you go, you can go to the desert, you can go to the mountains, you can go anywhere and look at those pieces and deconstruct it and say, "OK what's going on here?" It will keep you fascinated forever.

Nowadays, if she gets discouraged that she's not getting anything accomplished, Judy simply heads out the door. When she's out in nature, it's clear why she does what she does for a living :

When I get that frustrated it's because I haven't gotten outside enough. Because what rejuvenates me is time in the woods or time on the water, where nobody's asking you about a deadline. Nobody's asking you to do anything but just enjoy it, just soak it in. And that's usually a pretty good remedy to feeling frustrated elsewhere.

I have to remember that when I get so absorbed and so frustrated with things.



Boating Infrastructure Grants Improve Boating Access

The U.S. Department of Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is providing another round of [Boating Infrastructure Grant Program](#) funding for the FY 2019 season. Congress created this program recognizing that insufficient tie-up facilities exist for transient boats for reasonable and convenient access from the nation's navigable waters. Specifically, boaters are unable to access many recreational, cultural, historic, scenic, and natural resources of the United States.

The USFWS is making an estimated total of \$13 million available for transient amenities for FY 2019. The grant is designed to provide federal funds to public and private agencies, marinas, and other facilities for the creation or renovation of tie-up facilities for transient recreational boats 26 feet or larger.

Previous recipients of Boating Infrastructure Grants in Connecticut include [Thamesport Marina](#) in New London, [Long Wharf Pier](#) in New Haven, and [Veterans Park](#) in Norwalk:

Because it turns you around and reminds you, I'm doing this because I love it and I know its threatened.

In light of Judy's strategy, maybe the best advice of all is, "Follow your passion...outside!"

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Look Out For Upcoming Events!

Free the Beaches!
[Andrew Kahrl Speaking Dates:](#)

Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, Hartford
August 9, 2018
5:00 pm - 7:30 pm

R.J. Julia Booksellers, Madison
August 13, 2018
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Fairfield Museum and History Center, Fairfield
August 14, 2018
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

[Blue Plan Advisory Committee](#) Meeting
September 6, 2018
10:00 am to 12:00 noon
[Earthplace](#), Westport, CT

Long Island Sound Study (LISS)
[Committee Meetings](#)

Please be sure to check the
[Calendar of Events](#) on
DEEP's website

Kelp Farming in Long Island Sound Featured on CBS's 60 Minutes

Regular readers of *Sound Outlook* might recall an article in the [October 2014 issue](#) heralding the benefits of seaweed farming in Long Island Sound, both as a food source and as a way to extract excess nitrogen from the water. We can't say for sure that journalist Leslie Stahl was inspired by that *Sound Outlook* article, but on Sunday April 29, 2018 she filed a *60 Minutes* report that featured Bren Smith and Charlie Yarish, two of Connecticut's seaweed-growing pioneers who are mentioned in the *Sound Outlook* article. Please visit the CBS news website and view Stahl's video report, "[Seaweed farming and its surprising benefits.](#)"

Shoreline Public Access Signs Available to Help the Public Find Their Way to Connecticut's Shoreline

Back by popular demand, Shoreline Public Access signs are available to coastal municipalities again through the CT DEEP -- free of charge--to help the public find their way to Connecticut's beautiful shoreline.



Transient docks at Thamesport Marina in New Londond

Thamesport Marina, New London

Photo Credit: DEEP Connecticut Facilities for Transient Boaters Atlas



View of Long Wharf Pier

Long Wharf Pier, New Haven

Photo Credit: DEEP Connecticut Facilities for Transient Boaters Atlas



Pubic access sign and arrow

Connecticut's Coastal Management Program started posting the signs in 1999 as part of an effort to better inform the public of little-known public access sites along coastal waterways described in the first edition of its popular Coastal Access Guide map, now available in an electronic format as the [Connecticut Coastal Access Guide](#) .

Municipal staff should contact [David Kozak](#) at 860.424.3608 to place their orders for signs.

Purchase of a LIS License Plate Supports the LIS Fund



The LIS fund supports projects in the areas of education, public access to the shoreline, habitat restoration, and research.



View of Veterans Park

Veterans Park, Norwalk

Photo Credit: DEEP Connecticut Facilities for Transient Boaters Atlas

Please visit the [map of amenities for transient boaters](#) for information about additional facilities funded through the Boating Infrastructure Grant program. And visit the [DEEP's Boating Safety website](#) for more tips on safe boating practices.

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SPOTLIGHTED COASTAL ACCESS: It's a "Pleasure" to take a "Long" Walk on the Beach in Bridgeport and Stratford

The summer season is now upon us, and for many that means a trip to the beach to escape the daily hustle and bustle in order to relax. But at [Pleasure Beach in Bridgeport](#) and [Long Beach in Stratford](#), you actually can relax *amid* the hustle and bustle, as the area provides a beautiful natural oasis juxtaposed with an exciting urban setting.

Pleasure Beach and Long Beach are actually one barrier beach, almost one mile long, located between Long Island Sound and Lewis Gut/Great Meadows tidal marsh and connected to the upland on the Stratford side. Because of the beach's unique setting, visitors to Pleasure Beach and Long Beach will experience birds nesting on the beach and helicopters landing at Sikorsky airport; horseshoe crabs crawling along the nearshore while ferries depart for far shores in New York; and sandy tracks along the dunes as trains whistle in the distance.



Aerial view of Pleasure Beach and Long Beach

Pleasure Beach in Bridgeport and Long Beach in Stratford are actually one barrier beach
Photo Credit: Google Maps



shells on the beach at Long Beach_ Stratford

The shells at Long Beach, Stratford are abundant and almost dune-like in their formation
Photo Credit: CT DEEP



A view along Pleasure Beach in Bridgeport

Pleasure Beach, Bridgeport
Photo Credit: CT DEEP

Once upon a time, a bridge connected the mainland of Bridgeport to Pleasure Beach, and over 40 cottages dotted Long Beach in Stratford. Then, on Father's Day in 1996, a fire destroyed the bridge. Soon thereafter, in 1997, the Town of Stratford decided to stop leasing cottages at Long Beach. These events sparked some very interesting changes for this barrier beach which visitors can now experience close-up.

Pleasure Beach, Bridgeport

Although the bridge from Bridgeport was never rebuilt, Pleasure Beach was reopened to the public in 2014 with a free water taxi service that makes getting to the beach almost as much fun as being there. Starting at 10:00 am, two water taxis (the 23-passenger Lewis H. Latimer and the 18-passenger Gustave Whitehead pictured below) officially run every 30 minutes from the fishing pier on Seaview Avenue at Central Avenue (on-street parking is available) to the T-pier at Pleasure Beach. After July 4th, the free water taxi service is available seven days a week. The two-minute ride transports visitors right to the dock. The last taxi to Pleasure Beach leaves the mainland at 4:30 pm, while the last taxi from Pleasure Beach departs the T-pier at 6:00 pm. Please call the Bridgeport Parks Department at 203.576.7233 for more information. Visitors are also welcome to fish from the T-pier.



Bridgeport water taxi to Pleasure Beach

One of the Bridgeport Water Taxis to Pleasure Beach
Photo Credit: CT DEEP



A person fishing from the T-pier at Pleasure Beach

Fishing from the T-pier at Pleasure Beach
Photo Credit: CT DEEP

Upon arrival at the T-pier, visitors can board golf carts for a ride to the pavilion, where you'll find a playground and relaxation area with several bathrooms, picnic tables and umbrellas, and a limited concession stand open from 10:00 am to 4:30 pm. From the pavilion, visitors can walk down a boardwalk (less than a half-mile) to the beach.



Golf cart with visitos to Pleasure Beach

Golf carts are available to transport visitors between the pier and the pavilion
Photo Credit: CT DEEP



Boardwalk from the pavilion to Pleasure Beach

Boardwalk from the pavilion to Pleasure Beach
Photo Credit: CT DEEP

During summer months, visitors will also encounter [Audubon "WildLife Guards"](#) who offer general information about the wildlife at the park, lead nature walks, and sponsor other outreach events. But even if visitors don't take a guided WildLife tour, they should be aware that several delicate wildlife species and plants make Pleasure Beach their home, so please be careful and respectful of any areas that are fenced-off.



Wilflife Guards at Pleasure Beach Pavilion

A crew of Audubon WildLife Guards [with supervisors Will Perret (back row) and Jamiya Williams (far right)] are on-hand at the pavilion to provide information about the wildlife present at the park, lead nature walks, and ask you to "Be a Good Egg" and respect the birds on the beach
Photo Credit: CT DEEP



Life guards in their chair at Pleasure Beach

Life guards are on duty seven days a week after July 4th
Photo Credit: CT DEEP



The pavilion at Pleasure Beach

View of the pavilion from the beach
Photo Credit: CT DEEP



Osprey on a nest and platform

Osprey on their nest at Pleasure Beach
Photo Credit: CT DEEP

Finally, we ask visitors to be thoughtful and responsible by bagging your garbage and disposing of it at the garbage cans provided at the beach, and by safely picking up and disposing of other litter you might encounter. This will make your experience at Pleasure Beach that much more "pleasurable" for the wildlife there!

Long Beach, Stratford

Although the town stopped leasing cottages on Long Beach in 1997, it took several years for the cottages to be "deconstructed" and the beach to be restored (in part with [Long Island Sound License Plate](#) funds). But the end result is improved habitat for native beach-nesting birds (e.g., [piping plovers](#) and [least terns](#)), [horseshoe crabs](#), and some rare and endangered barrier beach plants (please see the [February 2009](#) and [February 2011](#) issues of *Sound Outlook* for more details on the restoration of Long Beach).



Male and female horseshoe crabs on the shore

A female (larger, at top of photo) and male horseshoe crab cavorting in the lapping waves
Photo Credit: Emily Hall, CT DEEP

Summer visitors to Long Beach should be aware that many portions of the beach are fenced-off to protect plovers and terns and their nests. In fact, DEEP asks all beachgoers to "[Fish, Swim, and Play from 50 Yards Away](#)" of all bird nesting areas, so don't be surprised if you are dive-bombed by terns protecting their nests and babies if you get too close (they will "tern" you away!). Of course, no dogs are allowed on the beach, even on a leash, since their mere presence can cause the birds undue stress. The plovers and terns will be nesting throughout the summer months, leaving around Labor Day.



Bird Nesting Area Sign

Signs are posted along the beach alerting passersby to nesting birds
Photo Credit: Emily Hall CT DEEP



Piping Plover protection structure

Can you find the piping plover resting safely inside the protective enclosure?

Click on the photo to reveal the plover's whereabouts!

Photo Credit: Emily Hall, CT DEEP

Long Beach also sports several groins from which sure-footed fishermen can cast their lines. Just be sure to mind the tides, or you'll find yourself and your gear inundated at high tide.



A fisherman fishing off a groin at Long Beach_ Stratford

Fishing is allowed from the groins at Long Beach
Photo Credit: Emily Hall CT DEEP

Visitors to Long Beach can also launch their small watercraft and paddle around the sheltered tidal creeks and marshes in Lewis Gut. The best area for launching is on the north side of the barrier beach, accessible from the western-most end of the parking lot. As with fishing from the groins, paddlers should mind the tides; high tide is the best tide for launching.



Great Marsh in Lewis Gut

Visitors to Long Beach in Stratford can launch small watercraft and paddle amongst the marshes in Lewis Gut
Photo Credit: Emily Hall, CT DEEP

Long Beach and Pleasure Beach are components of the [National Audubon Society's Great Meadows Important Bird Area](#), which recognizes the statewide significance of this habitat. So bring binoculars and a [shorebird identification guide](#), or take this [quiz identifying shorebirds by their silhouettes](#) before you leave home!

Non-resident season passes to Long Beach are available for \$150, and daily parking goes for \$20. Contact the [Stratford Recreation Department](#) at 203.385.4052 or at recreation@townofstratford.com for more information.

Once you've had the pleasure of a long walk on this beautiful barrier beach, be sure to find even more summer fun by visiting the [Connecticut Coastal Access Guide](#). It contains information on more than 300 sites where the public can access Connecticut's coast.

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Climate Change Update: Resilience, Adaptation, and Sustainability: a Long Island Sound Partnership

Climate resilience, adaptation and sustainability will be key areas of action as the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) continues its 30-year partnership with the New York Department of Environmental Conservation (NYDEC) and the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through the Long Island Sound Study (LISS) National Estuary Program. The Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan ([CCMP 2015](#)) has adopted strategies and implementation actions (IAs) within four overarching themes to help Long Island Sound remain healthy in light of future climate change impacts. The LISS partners have made commitments to incorporating climate resilience, adaptation, and sustainability planning priorities into their management programs, and have committed to implementing 17 IAs to help municipalities protect the coastal areas within their boundaries from the impacts of climate change. And much of that implementation work will be accomplished with a new partner: the [Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation](#) (CIRCA).

By the time the 2015 CCMP was adopted, DEEP and CIRCA had already forged a collaborative partnership. CIRCA's mission is to increase the resilience and sustainability of vulnerable communities along Connecticut's coast and inland waterways to the growing impacts of climate change on the natural, built, and human environment. Their mission puts CIRCA in prime position to assist the LISS partners in helping coastal municipalities by providing staff resources and grants to develop and implement resiliency and sustainability plans and hazard mitigation plans.

For example, under the CCMP, DEEP has committed to collaborate with CIRCA on a target that [all coastal municipalities will have prepared plans](#) for shoreline resiliency and infrastructure sustainability and resiliency by 2025, with all future development compliant with those plans by 2035. The LISS has also developed [target web pages to track progress](#) on this and other CCMP targets.

As of this issue of *Sound Outlook*, thanks to CIRCA programs, DEEP is pleased to report that all 36 coastal communities in Connecticut are meeting the interim 2025 target in the CCMP and have either developed their own "Coastal Resiliency Plans" or have written a "Plan of Conservation and Development" or "Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan" with resiliency and sustainability sections. Thus, even though Public Act 18-82 highlighted in the first article in this issue does not specifically require coastal municipalities to consider CIRCA's projected 50/50 sea level rise scenario in any regulatory or land use/coastal site plan review decisions, coordination with CIRCA to meet the LISS CCMP targets will likely ensure that the scenario is incorporated into a wide range of municipal plans and, ultimately, into land use decisions.

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