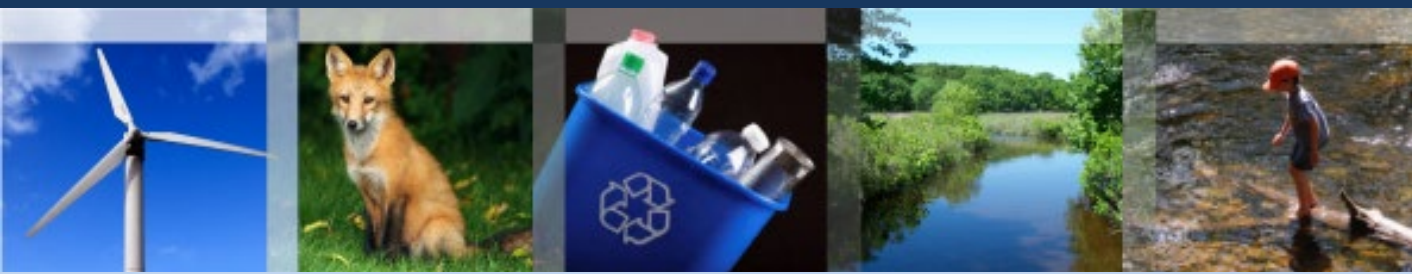




Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection



Long Island Sound Blue Plan Overview

November 15, 2022
LIS Blue Plan Advisory Committee
Public Hearing



Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

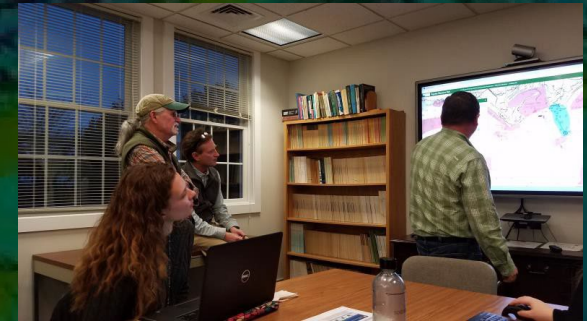
LIS needs the Blue Plan Because...

- Demands on LIS are increasing
 - Permitting process is reactive
 - Lack of information and guidance may impede projects and compromise resource protection
-



The Blue Plan Provides...

- Publicly accessible decision support tools
 - Detail and clarification to existing regulatory process
 - “Informal” benefits – relationship building, education, etc.
-



Principal Goals...

- Identify and protect places of ecological significance
- Identify and protect places of traditional human use
- Reduce potential user conflicts



Long Island Sound Blue Plan Progress

- Effective May 14, 2021; unanimous bi-partisan approval
- Driven by 2015 Legislation with Governor Malloy support
- Legislation established the Blue Plan Advisory Committee
 - Representing state agencies and stakeholders; appointed by Governor and legislative leadership
 - Quarterly meetings



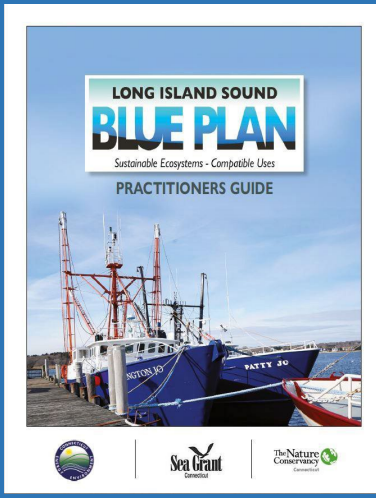
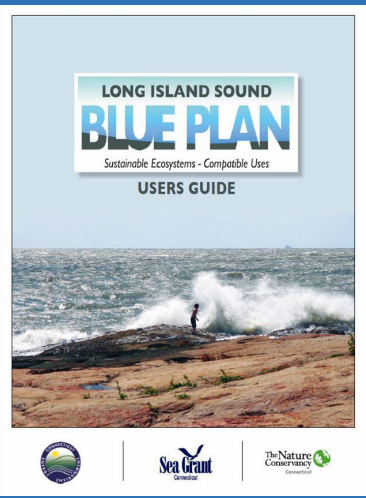
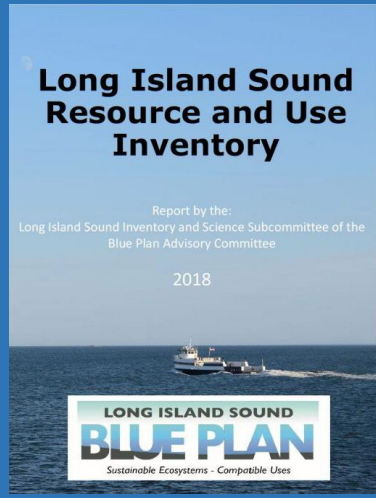
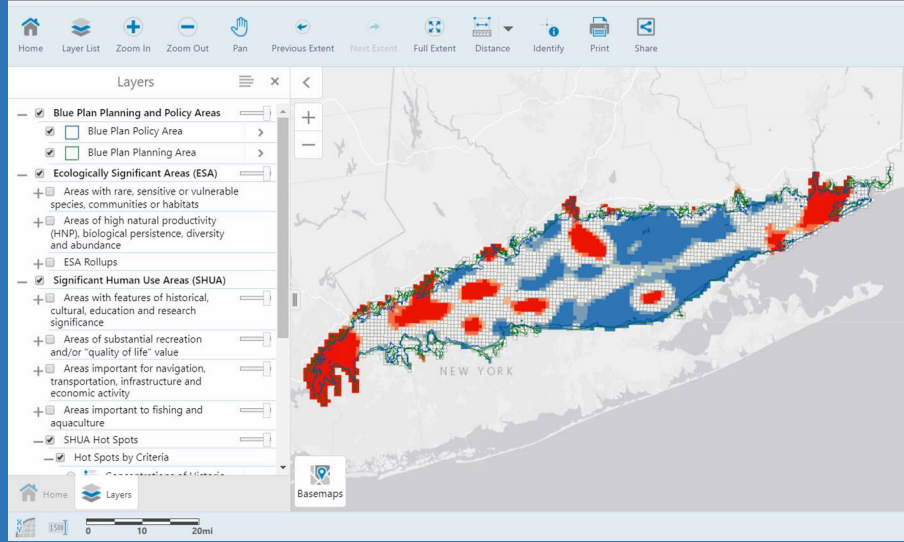
Long Island Sound Blue Plan Issues

- Plan updates at least every 5 years
 - Same legislative process as initial approval
- Data updates as needed, currently ongoing
- Enforceable policies incorporated into coastal management program for Federal Consistency



Blue Plan Components & Tools

- Interactive online map viewer
- Blue Plan document
- Resource and Use Inventory
- Ecological Characterization
- Users Guide
- Practitioners Guide



Blue Plan Video Series

Center for New
Media
Productions at
Middlesex
Community
College



What is the Blue Plan? (length: 3.5 min.): This video gives an introduction to and overview of the Long Island Sound Blue Plan, its focus and goals, and the process behind developing the Plan.



Ecologically Significant Areas (length 7 min.): This video includes interviews with ecological experts who illustrate the importance of Long Island Sound as a unique estuary and ecosystem and who helped identify its Ecologically Significant Areas, which guide the science-based decision-making process of the Blue Plan, which works to protect the places that matter the most.



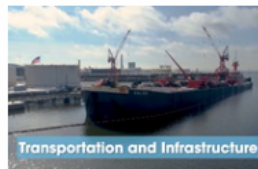
Commercial Fishing and Aquaculture (length: 5.5 min.): This video highlights the vital role of commercial fishing, shellfishing, and aquaculture to Connecticut's economy, as BPAC members and Connecticut fishermen explore how the Blue Plan can protect traditional uses by reducing conflicts between different sectors and the Sound's resources.



Cultural and Historic Features (length: 5 min.): In this video tribal leaders, state historians and archeologists, and BPAC members relate how Long Island Sound defines Connecticut and has shaped our lives, from archeological finds to historic districts and our long-standing maritime heritage, and ways the Blue Plan can preserve these attributes.



Recreation (length: 5.5 min.): This video explores the many recreational uses of Long Island Sound and how the Blue Plan can help properly site new uses to minimize conflicts with recreational uses through interviews of BPAC members and representatives of the recreational boating, fishing, charter boat, and SCUBA diving sectors. "There's fun out there!"



Transportation and Infrastructure (length 5 min.): In this video transportation and energy sector members emphasize the value of Long Island Sound to Connecticut's ports, which are vital to the economy and reduce highway congestion and greenhouse gas emissions, and how the Blue Plan can allay conflicts between future projects and existing uses.

Blue Plan Policy Area

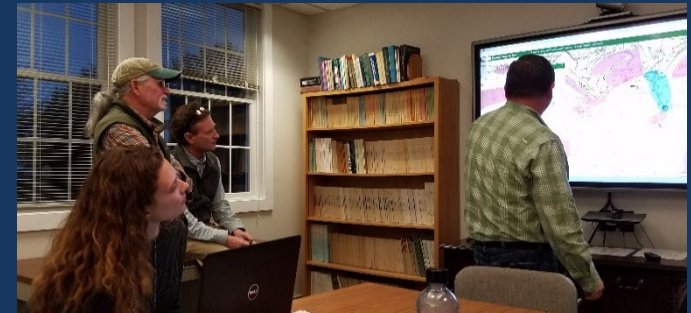
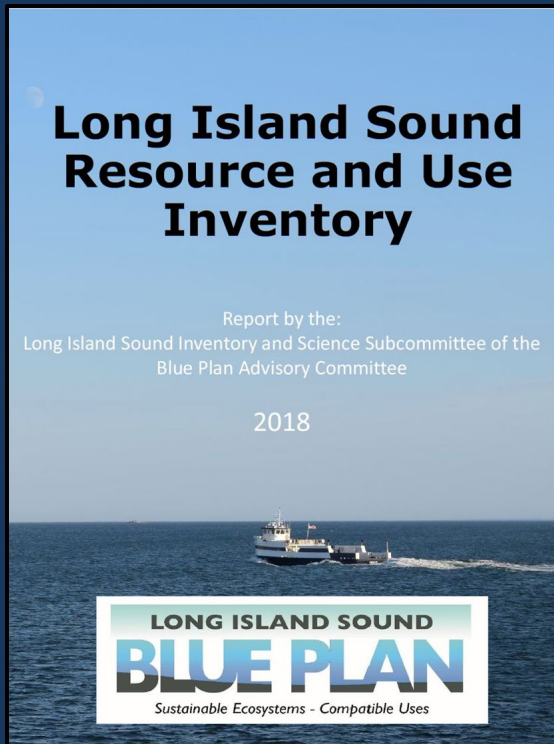


Finding the Significant Areas

Resource and Use Inventory

- 14 Ecologically Significant Areas (ESAs)
- 28 Significant Human Use Areas (SHUAs)
- Existing data

Participatory Mapping



Expert input: Ecological Experts Group

Significant expert, stakeholder, and public input

Finding the Significant Areas

Online Map Viewer: Significant Human Use Areas: Vessel Traffic Areas

LONG ISLAND SOUND BLUE PLAN Viewer

Search...

Home Layer List Zoom In Zoom Out Pan Previous Extent Next Extent Full Extent Distance Identify Plot Coordinates Print Share

Layers

- Areas with features of historical, cultural, education and research significance
 - Areas associated with lighthouses and other historic areas
 - Shipwrecks
 - Visual and scenic resources
 - Submerged and coastal archaeological areas
 - Discrete areas for research, education and monitoring
- Areas of substantial recreation and/or "quality of life" value
 - Sailing or rowing races
 - High activity recreational boating areas
 - Mooring fields and anchorage areas
 - Marinas, yacht clubs and boat launches
 - Waterfowl hunting areas
 - Dive Areas
 - Coastal public use areas
- Areas important for navigation, transportation, infrastructure and economic activity
 - Working waterfronts, ports and marine commercial areas
 - Designated navigational channels, fairways and basins
 - Designated anchorage areas
 - Security zones and other designated areas
 - Areas of lightering activity
 - Vessel traffic areas
 - Dredged material disposal areas (active and historic)
 - Cables, pipelines, and

Basemaps

Long Island Sound Blue Plan (CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection, 2019) | various | Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, EP...

CT ECO Home Viewer Info Map Layers Viewer Help Blue Plan at CT DEEP LIS Resource & Use Inventory

Finding the Significant Areas

Online Map Viewer: Ecologically Significant Areas: Hard Bottom and Complex Seafloor


The screenshot displays the 'Blue Plan Viewer' web application. The interface includes a search bar at the top right, a toolbar with navigation and tool icons, and a 'Layers' panel on the left. The map shows the Long Island Sound area with various colored overlays representing different ecological and human use areas. The 'Layers' panel is expanded to show 'Ecologically Significant Areas (ESA)' and 'Significant Human Use Areas (SHUA)'. The 'ESA' section includes 'Areas with rare, sensitive or vulnerable species, communities or habitats' (checked), 'Hard Bottom and Complex Seafloor' (checked), and several sub-categories like 'Submerged Aquatic Vegetation', 'Cold Water Corals', and 'Coastal Wetlands'. The 'SHUA' section includes 'Areas with features of historical, cultural, education and research significance' (unchecked) and 'Areas of substantial recreation and/or "quality of life" value' (unchecked).

Layers

- Ecologically Significant Areas (ESA)**
 - Areas with rare, sensitive or vulnerable species, communities or habitats
 - Hard Bottom and Complex Seafloor**
 - Submerged Aquatic Vegetation
 - Cold Water Corals
 - Coastal Wetlands
 - Endangered, Threatened, Species of Concern
 - Areas of high natural productivity (HNP), biological persistence, diversity and abundance
 - ESA Rollups
- Significant Human Use Areas (SHUA)**
 - Areas with features of historical, cultural, education and research significance
 - Areas associated with lighthouses and other historic areas
 - Shipwrecks
 - Visual and scenic resources
 - Submerged and coastal archaeological areas
 - Discrete areas for research, education and monitoring
 - Areas of substantial recreation and/or "quality of life" value
 - Sailing or rowing races
 - High activity recreational boating areas
 - Mooring fields and anchorage areas
 - Marinas, yacht clubs and boat launches
 - Waterfowl hunting areas

Long Island Sound Blue Plan (CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection, 2019) | various | Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, EP...

[CT ECO Home](#) [Viewer Info](#) [Map Layers](#) [Viewer Help](#) [Blue Plan at CT DEEP](#) [US Resource & Use Inventory](#)



Blue Plan Policies: mutual win for existing uses, the ecosystem, and new sustainable development

- Not a new permit program
- Proactively avoid conflict by identifying important areas
- Clarify how existing CT statutes will be implemented
- Provide consistency for regulators and applicants

Long Island Sound Blue Plan

The Blue Plan can help direct and shape future uses



Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

Long Island Sound Blue Plan Progress

- Implementation by
 - DEEP
 - Department of Agriculture/Bureau of Aquaculture
 - CT Siting Council
 - Municipal shellfish commissions



Long Island Sound Blue Plan Progress

- As of this date
 - Nothing has triggered a Blue Plan review
 - Several entities have used Blue Plan data and information
 - Wind developers using data to site cables

