

Southern New England – New York Bight

Coastal Program in Rhode Island

Represented by Members of Congress:

Senator Jack Reed (D)
Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D)
Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy (D-1st)
Rep. James R. Langevin (D-2nd)

Contact

Sharon Marino, Project Leader
S. New England-New York Bight
Coastal Ecosystems Program
50 Bend Road
Charlestown, RI 02813-2503
Phone: 401/364 9124
Fax: 401/364 0170
TDD: 800/877 8339
E-mail: sharon_marino@fws.gov
<http://www.fws.gov/r5snep>

Purpose

The Coastal Program works through partnerships to conserve the ecological integrity of the area's heavily populated coastal zone. The program supports coastal resources in the area from Cape Cod, Massachusetts to Cape May, New Jersey. This area includes two of the largest, most heavily impacted estuaries in the country: Long Island Sound and New York/New Jersey Harbor.

The work of the Coastal Program is guided by several laws and legislative authorities, including:
Clean Water Act
Endangered Species Act
Oil Pollution Act
Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act
Coastal Barrier Improvement Act
Coastal Wetland Planning, Protection and Restoration Act

Program Activities

To protect and restore coastal habitats, the Coastal Program uses biological expertise to assess landscape and site-specific natural resources. The staff works with government and private partners and uses computer map and database tools to identify valuable and threatened areas and species needing protection.



©Mark Wilson

Piping plover

The office also actively seeks grant funds to support implementation.

Current partners include *Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, NOAA, EPA, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Coast Guard, Rhode Island Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership, Save the Bay, University of Rhode Island, The Nature Conservancy, Washington County Land Trust, Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex, Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council, and the Coastal Resources Management Council*

Highlights

- Ongoing work to restore river habitat for migratory fish in the Pawcatuck River system in Shannock; provided biological and engineering assistance for by-pass or removal of three dams obstructing passage by four species of migratory fishes.
- Assisted the Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex with grassland habitat restoration near Trustom Pond, and exhibit design for the visitor center in Charlestown.
- Provided GIS services and ecological expertise to South County land trusts to identify priority lands for conservation.
- Provided technical assistance and funds to design and arrange for fish passage alternatives in the Pawtuxet River off Narragansett Bay in Warwick.

Issues

Land in the Northeast is in high demand with competing commercial and residential interests encouraging high sale prices. Land acquisition as a means of habitat protection is often seen as a short-term expense rather than a long-term investment.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1 800/344 WILD
<http://www.fws.gov>

July 2008

