

News Release

Northeast Region

External Affairs Office

For immediate release March 23, 2015

Contact: Margie Brenner, 413/992-8132, Margie_Brenner@fws.gov
Michelle Potter, refuge manager, 631/286-0485 x2112, Michelle_Potter@fws.gov

Post-Sandy debris cleanup at Long Island national wildlife refuges clears way for marsh restoration to build a stronger coast

Shirley, N.Y. – Nearly 280 tons of debris and 290 downed trees left behind by Hurricane Sandy have been removed from eight national wildlife refuges units on Long Island. The \$3 million project overseen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cleaned up approximately 790 acres of saltmarsh and coastal habitat at Wertheim, Seatuck, Morton, Target Rock, Amagansett, Conscience Point, and Oyster Bay National Wildlife Refuges, as well as Lido Beach Wildlife Management Area.

Refuge Manager Michelle Potter said removing this debris will allow marshes to recover from storm impacts which will provide healthier habitat for native wildlife. Additionally, the clean up sets the stage for marsh restoration projects scheduled to begin this fall at Wertheim, Seatuck and Lido Beach units.

“We have recovered important areas for wildlife by removing close to 300 tons of debris and trees from national wildlife refuges. This work allows us to embark on projects to restore marshes at Long Island refuges to create a stronger, more resilient, coast as protection against future storms,” said Potter.

The contracts awarded to complete the debris and tree removal created more than 30 jobs, and provided economic benefit to local businesses.

Debris collected included roofs, docks, gazebos, small boats, and empty drums, among other household items. Service biologists and independent project inspectors provided oversight of the clean up.

The debris removal and the future marsh restoration projects are funded through the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013, which last spring provided the Service with nearly \$65 million in federal emergency funding for repair projects at national wildlife refuges and fish hatcheries along the Atlantic Coast damaged during the 2012 hurricane.

Long Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex consists of seven national wildlife refuges, two refuge sub-units and one wildlife management area. Collectively, the 10 units comprise approximately 6,500 acres.

To read more about the recovery projects at the refuge complex, [click here](#). View photos of [Hurricane Sandy damages to the complex](#), and photos of [recovery projects at the complex](#). To learn more about other U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Hurricane Sandy recovery and resilience projects, [visit the Hurricane Sandy Recovery website](#).

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen in the Northeast region, visit www.fws.gov/northeast. Connect with our [Facebook page](#), follow our [tweets](#), watch our [YouTube Channel](#) and download photos from our [Flickr page](#).



News releases are available electronically at <http://www.fws.gov/hurricane/sandy>