

Peconic Estuary Partnership

Fall 2024 Newsletter



What's Inside?

Projects

Read about our current projects!

Ways you can benefit

Learn about programs like our septic improvement program and how you can attend our next CAC meeting!

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Get Involved!

Find out how you can get involved!



**Scan to
Access
Website**

We are delighted to share the latest updates from the Peconic Estuary Partnership (PEP), where we work to protect and restore the ecological health of the Peconic Estuary. This issue showcases the work of our passionate team, provides insights into our key initiatives, and highlights opportunities to get involved. We aim to keep you informed and engaged with our progress, as we continue to strive towards our goals. Thank you for being a part of our community and supporting our mission as we work together to ensure a vibrant and thriving estuary.



**STRONG
PARTNERSHIPS**
and engagement



**RESILIENT
COMMUNITIES**
*prepared for
climate change*



**CLEAN
WATERS**
*for ecosystem health
and safe recreation*



**HEALTHY
ECOSYSTEM**
*with abundant,
diverse wildlife*



Project Updates

Wetland Restoration

Indian Island Wetland Restoration

This project involves the restoration of a functional tidal wetland located within the Indian Island County Park that adjoins Terry Creek and Flanders Bay.



Land Preservation

Broad Cove Preserve

A 100-acre waterfront parcel of land owned by The Peconic Land Trust, is being turned into a nature preserve to benefit the environment and the people living in the nearby communities.



Meetinghouse Creek Wetland Restoration

Management of stormwater, climate change, and water quality in the Meetinghouse Creek watershed by treatment of runoff using green infrastructure.



C.H.A.N.G.E.S

With SBU SoMAS, the Peterson Lab, and the Gobler Lab. Address coastal resilience, sea level rise, excess nutrients leading to harmful algal blooms, and loss of habitat utilizing kelp, oysters, and seagrasses



Stormwater Remediation

Goose Creek Discharge Elimination

This project seeks to eliminate direct stormwater discharge in Goose Creek by updating our stormwater management practices and outdated infrastructure, while continuously monitoring the water quality.



Water Quality

Microplastics In The Peconics

SoMAS researchers Gordon Taylor & Luis Medina are taking water samples throughout the Peconic to study and trace the origin of nanoparticles of microplastics.



Sag Harbor Stormwater Control Project

This project will provide stormwater remediation and filtration of pollutants in Sag Harbor Cove and Havens Beach with three green infrastructure installations.



Community Preservation Fund (CPF)

PEP attended the 25th anniversary CPF in Southampton. The CPF has generated over \$2 billion for the East End of Long Island, supporting habitats, nutrient pollution, and water quality.



Septic Improvement Program

Nitrogen pollution from cesspools and septic systems has been identified as the largest single cause of degraded water quality contributing to beach closures, restrictions on shellfishing, toxic algae blooms, and massive fish kills. Grants are available through Suffolk County and New York State to assist in the purchase and installation of a nitrogen removal septic systems.

[For more information, visit the Reclaim Our Water website.](#)

Get Involved

Monofilament Fishing Line Collection Receptacles



PEP has installed monofilament fishing line receptacles at various location around the estuary to provide a place for fishermen to discard their excess fishing line and help combat marine plastic debris. Check out our website for specific locations.

Thank You All

Volunteers & Participants!

We extend our gratitude to all the incredible volunteers who dedicated their time and effort to our programs this year. Your invaluable contributions to horseshoe crab monitoring, river herring surveys, eelgrass restoration, invasive species removal, and more, have been instrumental to our work.

Thank you to everyone who participated in meetings, or joined any of our events and programs. Your commitment and passion are the driving forces behind our success. Thank you for being an essential part of our community and for making a significant impact on the Peconic Estuary.

Citizens Advisory Committee

The PEP Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) consists of members of the public that have interest in preserving and protecting the Peconic Estuary.

PEP holds regularly scheduled events for the public to participate in! Join our mailing list to learn about opportunities for nature hikes, horseshoe crab monitoring, native plant workshops, lectures and more!

[Join the CAC email List!](#)



Meet Our Staff!

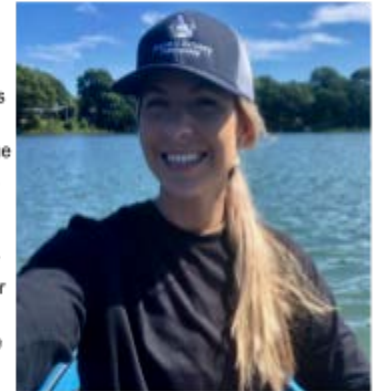
Joyce Novak PhD

Joyce has served as the Executive Director of the Peconic National Estuary Program since 2018 working closely with federal, state, and local partners to create and carry out strategies for clean water and healthy habitats in the Peconic Estuary watershed. Planning for the future of the Peconics involves an understanding of the communities that reside in the watershed; the natural systems that surround us, and how these will evolve as our changing climate creates rapidly altering processes and conditions.



Valerie Virgona

Valerie Virgona has worked with the Peconic Estuary Partnership since November 2021. As PEP's Outreach and Communications Manager, she works to educate and engage the public and local government representatives. The goal of this outreach is to expand knowledge and appreciation, and create beneficial change within the Peconic Estuary and watershed. Always feel free to contact her to increase your general awareness or participate in PEP's rewarding citizen science opportunities!



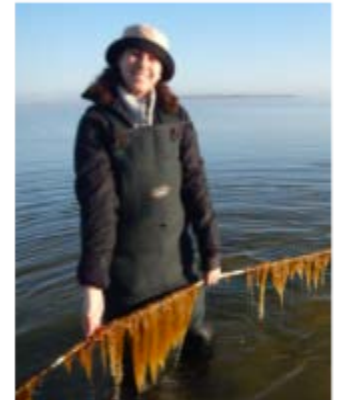
Jade Blennau

Jade's role with PEP involves supporting any and all projects and programs we take on! Jade works to create and support local partnerships, secure funding for future projects, manage and develop new project contracts as well as assist in field assessment for future climate resiliency initiatives. You can find her and her amateur birding skills in her favorite Peconic habitat, our coastal salt marshes!



Rachel Friedman

Rachel Friedman serves as the Outreach Assistant for the Peconic Estuary Partnership (PEP). She has a deep passion for raising awareness and educating the community on critical environmental issues. She holds a Bachelor's of Science in Environmental Sustainability and has dedicated the past 11 years to environmental and animal activism. Rachel is eager to support PEP's projects and engage the public in meaningful environmental initiatives within the Peconic Estuary.



Jill Moretto

Jill is our Grants Coordinator, bringing over a decade of public service experience. An avid outdoors enthusiast, she loves being outside and frequently spends time on Noyack Bay. She is passionate about improving environmental conditions and is excited to have her professional role align more closely with her personal interests. She is thrilled to join a program whose mission resonates deeply with her passions and looks forward to making a meaningful impact.



Marissa Velasquez-Rosante

Marissa is our Natural Resource Program Manager. She has spent majority of her career working on a wide variety of marine restoration projects in the Peconic Bays. She hopes to utilize her previous hands-on experience to aid in the development of current and future projects that continue to protect and preserve the Peconic Estuary and its watershed.

