

EPA Grant #: CE-99200221-2



**Applicant:**  
**Suffolk County Department of Health Services**

**Submitted by:**  
**PEP Management Conference**

**Start Date of Grant**  
**October 1, 2024**

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# Peconic Estuary Partnership

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## FY24 Workplan & Budget

# I. INTRODUCTION

## Peconic Estuary Partnership

The Peconic Estuary is one of 28 estuaries in the country designated by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as an “estuary of national significance” under Section 320 of the Federal Clean Water Act. The National Estuary Program (NEP) was established to protect and restore nationally significant estuaries threatened or impaired by pollution, development, and overuse. The Peconic Estuary was formally accepted as part of the NEP in 1992. Officially commenced in 1993, the Peconic Estuary Program includes numerous stakeholders, representing citizen and environmental groups, businesses and industries, academic institutions, and local, county, state and federal governments. The EPA, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and the Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDHS) are the sponsoring government agencies for the program. Stony Brook University is the host entity and this grant commences October 1, 2024.

The PEP 2020 Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) guides the priorities of the organization and as such all projects and plans detailed in this workplan relate directly to the actions established to achieve our four goals: strong partnerships and engagement, clean waters, resilient communities prepared for climate change, and a healthy ecosystem with abundant, diverse wildlife.

## Overall Funding Sources

The core FY24 budget reflects the following sources of funding:

EPA FY23 Base Funding:	\$850,000.00*
Non-Federal Match:	\$850,000.00**
Total:	\$1,700,000.00

## Resources Requested

The total Section 320 funds requested in this NEP grant to Suffolk County is \$215,000 which will be matched at the required 1:1 rate by Suffolk County, making the full budget of the Suffolk County award \$430,000

\*EPA FY24 Base funding will be provided to Stony Brook University in the amount of \$635,000 which will be matched at the required 1:1 rate, making the full budget of the Stony Brook award \$1,270,000. This award is submitted as a separate application.

\*\*The non-Federal match is provided by NYSDEC, The Town of Southampton, and SCDHS. New York State, Suffolk County, and other partners are expected to provide significant support above and beyond the committed match in the budget table in support of Peconic Estuary Partnership goals and objectives.

## II. SUMMARY OF FY23 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Operational

During this period PEP hired a full-time Outreach Assistant. This role is funded using Investment in Infrastructure and jobs Act (IIJA) funds. The main function of this role is to support outreach for the program office with a focus on projects accomplished with IIJA funding.

- PEP Five Year Plan for IIJA Approved (with EPA HQ Concurrence)
- PEP Habitat and Wildlife Monitoring Plan – final comments
- CCMP Progress Tracking System complete: <https://portal.gss.stonybrook.edu/ccmp/>
- PEP Program Evaluation - *The PE team has concluded that the PEP continues to make significant progress in implementing its CCMP and has rated the PEP as Proficient in the 2023 PE. The PEP will receive continued support from EPA.*
- [Policy Committee](#), [Management Committee](#), and [Technical Advisory Committee](#) minutes are available on the PEP website.

### Local Planning and Policy

PEP continues to play an active role in regional planning for key issues. PEP is a member of the NYS [Ocean Acidification Task Force](#) and co-authored the [final report](#) for the State of New York. PEP is an active participant in the Building Eelgrass Resiliency Regional Workshop, a member of the [Suffolk County Coastal Resilience and Sea Level Rise Task Force](#) and the [Suffolk County Pollinator Pathway Taskforce](#), and a member of the New York Marine Shellfish Restoration Plan Workgroup – a Pew Charitable Trust and Nature Conservancy initiative to create a roadmap for shellfish restoration in New York. PEP is also coordinating with other National Estuary Programs, the National Parks Service, and EPA on a regional effort to protect and restore seagrass.

### Monitoring and Implementation

#### *Water Quality*

PEP supports the SCDHS and USGS water quality monitoring systems and provides temporal and spatial sampling of the water quality conditions within the estuary. Data is publicly available in the following sites:

- Suffolk County Department of Health Service Discrete Monitoring:
  - [SCDHS Surface Water Quality Data](#)
  - [SCDHS Beach Monitoring data](#)
- USGS Continuous Water Quality Monitoring
  - [Peconic River Station](#)
  - [Shelter Island Station](#)
  - [Orient Harbor Station](#)
- National Atmospheric Deposition Program
  - [National Trends Network site NY96](#) at Cedar Beach, Southold, NY
  - [Mercury Deposition Network site NY96](#) at Cedar Beach, Southold, NY
  - [Ammonia Monitoring Network site NY96](#) at Cedar Beach, Southold, NY

#### *PEP Annual Water Quality Report*

The Peconic Estuary [Annual Water Quality Report](#) tracks whether we are meeting our identified water quality targets to achieve our goals for Peconic Estuary waters. Clean water supports fish, shellfish, and

wildlife ecosystem health, provides for safe recreation in and on the water, and seafood that is safe for consumption. The Peconic Estuary Water Quality Report enables PEP to track progress on meeting our CCMP goal of Clean Waters for Ecosystem Health and Safe Recreation.

#### *PEP Solute Transport Model*

PEP hosted stakeholder update meetings on the [USGS Solute Transport Model](#) on October 6th and November 17th of 2024. The model, supporting documents and online platform will be released in 2024. Once the model is complete it can then be applied to run a limited set of scenarios to estimate resulting nitrogen loading rates over time.

#### *HABs in PEP Priority Embayments*

PEP continued its partnership with the Gobler Lab at Stony Brook University and is working to develop nitrogen reduction end points for HABs.

#### *Eelgrass*

Due to Canadian wildfires and the resulting air quality in New York, the planned comprehensive **aerial survey of eelgrass in the Peconic Estuary** was not carried out in June 2023. This work will be carried in June 2024. During FY23, PEP began working with eelgrass experts from across the North East to develop a regional approach to eelgrass protection. The Technical Advisory Committee agreed to change the method of annual survey and the Quality Assurance Project Plan is complete and approved.

#### *Aquatic Connectivity Milestones Achieved*

#### **In FY23 PEP led projects that opened over 100 acres of diadromous fish habitat in the Peconic system.**

After the completion of the Byron Young fish pass in FY22, the FY23 time period has seen record numbers of alewife in the Peconic River system. PEP continues to work with partners at Suffolk County Community College to monitor the alewife population at the new fish pass and the historical site in Grangebél Park in Riverhead. Work has been ongoing with PEP, Suffolk County, the Long Island Power Authority, and the Town of Riverhead to complete a Land Use Agreement to pass the one barrier remaining on the main stem of the Peconic River at **Upper Mills Dam**. Engineering designs are complete and permits have been issued for this site and PEP is facilitating the land-use agreement to allow for the construction of the fish pass at this site.

**North Sea/Alewife Creek:** Southampton's Alewife Creek is currently recognized as Long Island's largest remaining river herring spawning run with close to 75,000 river herring when last formally assessed in 2009. This run concludes at Big Fresh Pond, **64 acres of ideal spawning habitat surrounded by an extensively protected watershed**. The culvert at Noyack Road was replaced with a larger, more appropriate culvert to allow alewife passage in March 2024. The culvert at North Sea Road is still a challenge for passage.

**Big Reed Pond:** Big Reed Pond is a 45-acre freshwater pond located within Montauk County Park with **extensive high-quality freshwater wetlands and surrounding woodlands**. PEP worked with Suffolk County to secure Capital funds to secure engineering designs and replace the culvert that leads to Big Reed Pond and work. As of March 2024, Suffolk County completed the needed culvert replacement to connect Lake Montauk and Big Reed Pond for fish and eel passage.

### *Wetland Project Progress*

#### **In FY23, PEP is planning and implementing over 90 acres of wetland restoration.**

PEP has continued its partnership with stakeholders of East Hampton Town's **Accabonac Harbor**. PEP is in contract to work with representatives of SMARTeams (Salt Marsh Adaptation & Resiliency Teams) to **restore over 30 acres of salt marsh in Accabonac Harbor**. Outreach on this project has continued as PEP has participated in Accabonac Protection Committee meetings and assisted in field work led by US Fish and Wildlife Service alongside The Nature Conservancy to survey for Saltmarsh Sparrow presence in the area, an indicator species for wetland health. The **Paul Stoutenburgh Habitat Restoration Project** aims to **restore six acres of salt marsh**. To date, this project has completed an assessment of the hydrology of the southwest portion of the Paul Stoutenburgh Preserve and presented findings in stakeholder meetings and Southold Town Trustees. These hydrological plans and alternatives will be used for the Town Engineering Department to make data-driven decisions for implementation on their property. Engineering plans are in process of being submitted for permits to upgrade and right size the culvert to hydrologically repair flow and restore wetland area. At **Indian Island County Park Wetland Complex** PEP is supporting the salt marsh restoration of 56 acres on Terry's Creek for habitat and water quality improvement. This wetland restoration is in progress.

**Shoreline Adaptation Initiative & Work Group:** In partnership with New York Sea Grant (NYSG), PEP program office is co-chairing an innovative and collaborative initiative devoted to moving Long Island forward in the realm of living shoreline implementation and nature-based adaptations. This work has successfully held a series of 1:1 information gathering meetings with town planning departments, elected officials, and permitting entities. All participants were brought together in a workshop with representation from the five east end town permitting entities. Workshop outcomes included the creation of a "permitting roadmap" of local government processes that also identified hurdles and experiences. This project also included partnerships with Stony Brook University's Sustainability students who worked to assess town code needs and the applicability of resources such as the New York State Department of State's Model Local Law document. PEP and Sea Grant are further working with NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to strategize the leveraging of Climate Smart Community grant funding to local municipalities, as well as, foster connections with environmental contractors and homeowners facing shoreline adaptation decisions. This project also included the **2023 Marine Conservation Policy Fellow** who created an educational story map and flowchart to document the findings of the Shoreline Adaptation Initiative and Shoreline Decision Workgroup. These deliverables were presented to the PEPTAC, and presented to local town government regulating body. This work will be part of the foundation of outreach materials to be created for the initiative and the first steps to the process of finding funding for and designing a Peconic - specific GIS model for shoreline adaptation potential strategy options for homeowners, consultants and local governments.

**PEP Mini Grant Program:** The program staff has successfully advertised, received applications, formed a review committee, and scored applications for the 2023 Mini Grant Program. winners were announced formally at the May 11th, PEP Biennial conference, as follows:

Shinnecock Indian Nation Kelp Farm Pilot Project: Program office worked closely with Shinnecock Environmental department to assist in the development of this mini-grant project. A scope of work and budget are currently being finalized for contract execution. Implementation includes bioextraction efforts in area adjacent to Shinnecock land in southern Great Peconic Bay and Heady Creek.

Seatuck: This project accomplished the following tasks

- Identified interests and engaged east end towns in oyster shell recovery and recycling program
- East Hampton's, town owned, shellfish hatchery fully engaged and signed-on with Half Shells for Habitat Partnership in shell recycling.
- Engaged the Peconic Baykeeper to help organize shell collection in the town of Southampton.
- Discussions with Southampton Town Waste Management Department have identified "shell storage space" as an obstacle to moving forward.
- There is a small recycling effort in Southold that we are working toward incorporating into a partnership with Half Shells for Habitat.

Peconic Baykeeper: Contracts were executed for this mini-grant to support Peconic Baykeeper's community science and outreach project, Project R.I.S.E. (Recording Inundation Surrounding the Estuary) to establish a community science tool called a Chronolog, (a 2x4 post/platform with a phone cradle, which aids participants in capturing the same photo scene each time) to foster public awareness and engagement about the present and future threats in the Peconic Estuary Watershed. Locations for the 15 Chronolog cradles have been finalized. Installation coming soon!

Cornell Cooperative Extension: Contracts were executed for this mini grant that looks to satellite tagging horseshoe crabs at key locations within the Peconic Estuary but no implementation has been accomplished thus far.

## Outreach

### *Community Science Long Island Webinar Series Winter 2023-2024*

PEP has partnered with Long Island Sound Study, New York Sea Grant, South Shore Estuary Reserve, and the Seatuck Environmental Association to host the Community Science Webinar Series. Community Science Long Island is an outreach series aimed at raising awareness for citizen science opportunities on Long Island and the importance of those projects in supporting research and local environmental management efforts. This season, the group has organized corresponding in-person training events to further engage and train volunteers in the survey process. PEP organized the River Herring and Eel Survey Webinar on February 7, 2024, with a corresponding in-person training event at the Byron Young Fish Passage at Woodhull Dam on March 23, 2024. (<https://seatuck.org/community-science-webinars/>).

### *Winter Walk Series with PEP and Peconic Baykeeper*

The PEP and Peconic Baykeeper hosted our second annual Winter Walk Series. Nature walks were held on alternating Friday and Saturdays, December 2023 through March 2024, at 5 parks/locations throughout the watershed.

### *PEP Citizens' Advisory Committee Albany Education Day*

PEP CAC held an Albany Education Day in February 2024. The purpose of this trip was to bring passionate stakeholders to meet with NYS representatives in order to discuss the importance of the Peconic Estuary and Watershed, and educate them on the environment within our watershed.

### *Nitrogen Reduction Outreach*

PEP continues outreach to the public to educate them on septic improvement, and encourage them to use available funding to upgrade their septic systems. PEP held an outreach event in East Hampton on December 13, 2023, and took part in a septic upgrade panel hosted by Peconic Baykeeper on May 8,

2024. Additionally, PEP tabled and gave a talk about green infrastructure, native plants, and fertilizer reduction at an Earth Day Event hosted by the Accabonac Protection Committee on April 20, 2024.

#### *A Day in the Life of the Peconic Estuary*

PEP held an annual ADITL event on October 23, 2023 with the Ross School at Cedar Beach in East Hampton. Students use hands-on field techniques to describe their sites, catch fish in nets, collect water and invertebrate samples, and examine biodiversity and water chemistry parameters. Beyond just a field trip, a “Day in the Life” allows students to collect real-time information about their communities’ environment and natural resources and explore how their piece of the river, the snapshot of their site fits into the larger ecosystem.

#### *Earth Day Alewife Walk with PEP and PBK*

On April 5, 2024, PEP partnered with Peconic Baykeeper for our annual event celebrating Earth Day and Long Island Migratory Fish Week, for a nature walk in Southampton’s Alewife Creek. Educational components included history of these threatened and ecologically important fish, current monitoring efforts, and restoration efforts.

#### *Homeowner Rewards Program*

The Peconic Estuary Partnership provides a unique opportunity for people who live within the Peconic Estuary watershed. The PEP will provide financial rewards for homeowners who remove turf and pavement, and add green alternatives to their properties that benefit the environment. Homeowners can earn up to \$500 to offset the expense of installing green infrastructure on their properties including rain barrels, rain gardens, and native plant gardens. PEP’s Homeowner Rewards Program opened for applications on March 15, 2023. In FY23, PEP funded the installation of 15,349 ft<sup>2</sup> of rain and native plant gardens in the watershed

#### *River Herring and Eel Survey*

The annual Long Island Volunteer River Herring & Eel Survey is one of Long Island’s longest running community science projects. Started in 2006, the survey engages community volunteer scientists to monitor runs of migratory river herring and American eels in rivers and streams across Long Island. The survey, organized by PEP, Seatuck, the Long Island Sound Study, and South Shore Estuary Reserve – aims to find the waterways where “remnant” runs of river herring still exist and then to monitor the size and timing of those runs. This information is vital to improve access and restore local populations of these ecologically important fish. (<https://seatuck.org/volunteer-river-herring-survey/>).

#### *Long Island Wildlife Monitoring Network*

PEP continued the highly successful citizen science partnership between Seatuck Environmental and PEP, the *Long Island Wildlife Monitoring Network* (<https://wildlifemonitoringnetworkli.org/>). This initiative has held training, workshops, and led citizen science with partners throughout the PEP watershed. PEP initiated the creation of the Long Island Wildlife Monitoring Network in 2020 to make it easier for partners to collaborate and avoid overlap, and for the public to become aware of all the efforts going on around Long Island and to get involved with multiple citizen science programs. With this brand and central website, citizen participation is increased, data collection centralized, and partner collaboration enhanced.

#### *Long Island Estuary Program Coordination*

In collaboration with the New York **Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan (LINAP)**, PEP has partnered on an island-wide estuary program collaborated outreach effort. This includes LINAP, the Long Island Sound



Study, The New York State South Shore Estuary Reserve, and PEP. Aligned outreach messaging targeted to nitrogen reduction on Long Island has led to a greater understanding of this issue. Through this partnership we are working to replicate PEP's long-running Homeowner Rewards Program (<https://www.peconicestuary.org/what-you-can-do/homeowner-rewards-program/>) into the other watersheds on Long Island. This partnership will continue through the next year as we move this initiative forward.

*Peconic "I-Fish" Program*

In October 2023, PEP facilitated the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's [I-Fish NY program](#) and partnered with NYSDEC and Slow Food East End carry out a fishing event for Hispanic communities in the Peconic watershed. This event provided marine education and a 'hands on' fishing experience with lunch for our Spanish speaking communities. Slow Food East End provided lunch for all participants.

### III. FY24 WORKPLAN

#### CCMP Goals

Strong Partnerships, Resilient Communities, Clean Water, and a Healthy Ecosystem are the four pillars of our foundation, The CCMP lays out 8 Objectives and 35 Actions that will guide PEP and our partners to address the challenges facing our watershed.

#### Budget and Staff Elements

##### Program Office Staff

All funding to be used for direct PEP Program Office staff time is covered under the SUNY Stony Brook Research Foundation portion of the NEP grant request. For information regarding staff funding of the Peconic Estuary Partnership staff in FY2024 , please see the Stony Brook workplan. However, time from the following staff will be used toward managing the projects funded via the NEP grant awarded to the Suffolk County Department of Health Services since this award supports the PEP:

##### **Executive Director**

Location: Suffolk County Department of Health Services, 300 Center Drive, Room 250S, Riverhead, NY

Responsibilities: Provides overall leadership to the program office, management and administration to the Program on behalf of the Management Conference.

##### **Outreach Assistant (Nutrient Reduction) – Part-time –Local Government Funds**

Location: Suffolk County Department of Health Services, 300 Center Drive, Room 250S, Riverhead, NY

Responsibilities: Assist the Outreach Coordinator with communication around nutrient reduction. Help to coordinate civic engagement about septic improvement and fertilizer use. Develop materials for distribution specifically focused on septic improvement and fertilizer reduction. Develop social media campaigns and update website regularly.

##### **Coastal Resilience and Communities Coordinator**

Location: Suffolk County Department of Health Services, 300 Center Drive, Room 250S, Riverhead, NY

Responsibilities: Coordinates PEP watershed resilience initiatives including wetland restoration projects, and builds partnerships with the PEP local communities to foster a stronger understanding of the estuarine challenges and assist local governments in finding solutions.

## Budget Summary

Table 1 outlines the Summary Budget for the FY24 EPA 320 spending covered under this grant request. Section IV, page 12 has details of this budget.

**Table 1: PEP FY24 Budget Summary – Suffolk County Request**

<b>FY24 EPA §320 Budget</b>	
<b>Personnel (+fringe)</b>	\$157,000
<b>Other (Subawards)</b>	
<i>SAV Monitoring</i>	\$50,000
<i>NADP Monitoring - Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene</i>	\$8,000
<b>Indirect</b>	\$0
<b>Total Suffolk County Request</b>	\$215,000
<b>Total Match Suffolk County</b>	\$215,000
<b>TOTAL EPA Grant</b>	<b>\$430,000</b>

## FY24 Workplan

### Ongoing Project Information – Suffolk County FY24 Workplan

Most of the water quality monitoring programming projects are ongoing. One project is new, the SAV annual monitoring has new methodology recommended by the PEP TAC and will move forward with a new method for more quantitative data to inform management decisions.

The FY23 initiative to support the maintenance of installed Innovative and Alternative Septic Systems (I/A Systems) was introduced in the FY23 workplan and includes funds from the PEP FY23 workplan (\$45,000) and PEP IJA Year 2 (\$50,000) funding. Table 2 lists all projects ongoing in the Peconic watershed and covered under this grant request.

**Table 2: PEP Projects in the Suffolk County FY24 Workplan**

<b>CCMP Action</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Funding requested from FY24 §320 award:</b>	<b>PEP Role</b>
Action 16	/A Maintenance support to LMI Households	Ongoing	\$45,000 FY23 EPA funding \$50,000 IJA Year 2 funding	Supporting partner (SC Lead)
Action 16	Water Quality Monitoring	New/Ongoing	\$157,000 FY24 request	Supporting partner
Action 16	NADP	New/Ongoing	\$8,000	Supporting Partner
Action 30	SAV Long Term Monitoring	New	\$50,000	Lead Partner

## CCMP GOAL: CLEAN WATERS

**Objective D:** Protect areas with clean water from degradation.

**Action 16:** Identify areas of clean water quality and deliver information that local governments and others can use to protect those areas.

**Action 17:** Plan science based for monitoring and reducing nutrient pollution

**Performance Measure:** Annual review of water quality data and water quality monitoring programs with assessment and recommendations regarding changes to water quality data collection in order to adequately monitor all waterbodies in the Estuary.

**Performance Measure:** Annual water quality data reports that support partner's efforts to increase local and regional stewardship of areas of clean water quality.

### *I/A System Maintenance Grant Program*

Ongoing

- a. **Estimated Budget:** \$45,000 §320 funds (FY23); \$50,000 IJA Year 2 funds
- b. **Partners and their roles:** Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDHS), Office of Ecology (Lead Partner), PEP (Supporting Partner).
- c. **Description and Objectives:** SCDHS has a long standing grant program to replace cesspools and septic systems with I/ Systems. Communities have stressed the need to continual funding o cover the cos of increased maintenance in installed systems. PEP is supporting a pilot grant program to support families to access funds for three years for continued maintenance on installed systems.
- d. **Outputs and Deliverables:** Suffolk County will set-up and administer a grant program for this. Continued grant applications and awarding of funds will report annually on progress.
- e. **Estimated Milestones:** Annual reporting.
- f. **Long Term Outcomes:** Water quality will improve in the watershed. .
- g. **Clean Water Act Core Programs:** Identifying Polluted Waters and Developing Plans to Restore Them (TMDLs): Assessment of progress toward TMDL goals; refinement of implementation plan and TMDL goals for land-based loads; Elements of this project prevent or mitigate the impacts of nutrient pollution.

### *Water Quality Monitoring*

Ongoing

- h. **Estimated Budget:** \$157,000 §320 funds Request in FY24 budget.
- i. **Partners and their roles:** Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDHS), Office of Ecology (Lead Partner), PEP (Supporting Partner).
- j. **Description and Objectives:** SCDHS monitors water quality of surface and marine waters within the Peconic Estuary. The water quality monitoring program conducted by the SCDHS Office of Ecology includes monthly monitoring at approx. 40 Peconic surface water quality stations throughout the year, periodic monitoring of approx. 30-point source and stream stations, and weekly monitoring at the NADP rain and atmospheric deposition gauge. Task funds will be used to support 2 Suffolk County personnel monitoring water quality of surface and marine waters

within the Peconic Estuary as part of the Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCHDS) Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program. The SCDHS Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program data will be analyzed by SCDHS Office of Ecology as part of the PEP Water Quality Monitoring Collaborative; a water quality monitoring report will be produced for the Peconic Estuary Partnership. FY24 funds will be used to support personnel time allocated to this task.

- k. Outputs and Deliverables:** Routine monitoring conducted in the Peconic Estuary makes it possible for the PEP to have accurate, up-to-date information regarding water quality conditions throughout the Estuary. All Suffolk County Department of Health Services Water Quality Data and Information is available upon request. And presented in the annual report.
- l. Estimated Milestones:** Annual water quality summary report.
- m. Long Term Outcomes:** Water quality data will be used to assess environmental conditions in the Peconic Estuary and refine management programs as necessary. Based on water quality data, priority projects and research initiatives can be identified and the PEP can continue its success in efforts to protect and restore the Estuary. Data collected by these monitoring efforts inform periodic reporting and adaptive management.
- n. Clean Water Act Core Programs:** Identifying Polluted Waters and Developing Plans to Restore Them (TMDLs): Assessment of progress toward TMDL goals; refinement of implementation plan and TMDL goals for land-based loads; Elements of this project prevent or mitigate the impacts of nutrient pollution.

#### *National Atmospheric Deposition Program*

New-Ongoing

- a. Estimated Budget:** \$8,000
- b. Partners and their roles:** Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Office of Ecology (Lead Partner) is responsible for sample collection; Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene (cations) and Frontier Global Sciences, Inc. (mercury) are responsible for data analysis; Wisconsin State Laboratory of Hygiene National Atmospheric Deposition Program is responsible for data assessment, reporting, and coordination with the national network; Mercury Deposition analyses are funded through a partnership with New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), PEP (Supporting Partner).
- c. Description and Objectives:** Monitor local atmospheric deposition of major cations in precipitation and local mercury deposition in precipitation at Site ID 96 at Cedar Beach Southold, NY. Objective is to evaluate success of Clean Air Act policies and program in reducing atmospheric deposition of nitrogen in the Peconic region and track progress toward nitrogen TMDL goals.
- d. Outputs and Deliverables:** Results published as part of the National Atmospheric Deposition Program system on their website:  
<http://nadp2.slh.wisc.edu/data/sites/siteDetails.aspx?net=NTN&id=NY96>
- e. Estimated Milestones:** Annual Reporting
- f. Long Term Outcomes:** To assess the long-term trends of nitrogen and mercury and nitrogen deposition in the Peconic watershed and Estuary. Utilize the results to understand the sources of nitrogen pollution and implement science-based approaches for monitoring and reducing nitrogen pollution. Results will be used to determine implications for coastal acidification.
- g. Clean Water Act Core Programs:** Identifying Polluted Waters and Developing Plans to Restore Them (TMDLs): Assessment of progress toward TMDL goals; refinement of implementation plan and TMDL goals for land-based loads; Elements of this project prevent or mitigate the impacts of nutrient pollution.

CCMP GOAL: HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS WITH ABUNDANT, DIVERSE WILDLIFE

**Objective H:** Restore and protect key habitats and species diversity in the Peconic Estuary

**Action 30:** Monitor and protect existing eelgrass beds; where appropriate, restore and expand eelgrass beds.

**Performance Measure:** Financial and logistical support for the Annual Long-term Eelgrass Monitoring Program to monitor changes in eelgrass density and extent.

*Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Long Term Monitoring and Management (SAV Monitoring)*  
New-Ongoing

- a. **Estimated Budget:** \$50,000
- b. **Partners and their roles:** Suffolk County (Lead Partner), PEP (Lead Partner)
- c. **Description and Objectives:** In FY22 the PEP Technical Advisory Committee voted to change the methodology used for the annual SAV monitoring program. In FY23, PEP resources were scheduled for use to carry out an aerial survey. Due to wildfires, this was not carried out. In June 2024, aerial surveys are due to take place and ground truthing will be supported by PEP. In FY 24 PEP will secure a contractor to carry out annual monitoring using the new and TAC approved method. Monitoring of seagrass survival and bed expansion at thirteen eelgrass beds located throughout the estuary has been carried out for almost two decades. Nine sites were monitored annually and four additional sites were monitored biennially. Long-term measurements of seagrass extent and deep edge location, eelgrass shoot density, measurements of light, temperature, macroalgae cover and sediment conditions were done at these sites. These funds will move forward a new more robust method for more informed management decisions.
- d. **Outputs and Deliverables:** Maps of individual eelgrass beds with shoot density, imagery, and bed alterations on an annual timescale.
- e. **Estimated Milestones:** Annual report generated in Spring.
- f. **Long Term Outcomes:** An extensive and accurate record of eelgrass beds on a micro scale to allow for successful management decisions.
- g. **Clean Water Act Core Programs:** Protecting Wetlands

## IV. BUDGET DETAILS

### Resources Requested

The total 320 funds requested in this PEP grant to Suffolk County Department of Health Services is **\$215,000**. This grant will be complimented by a request for PEP support to SUNY Stony Brook Research Foundation for and together these two components make up the full Peconic Estuary Partnership FFY2024 \$215,000 workplan for a total \$320 request of \$850,000 with a local match of \$850,000 for a total grant of \$1,700,000. Details of expenditures can be found in Table 3.

No trips are anticipated under this grant request and no travel funds are requested here.

Table 3: Detailed budget and spending FY24 Suffolk County request

BUDGET DETAIL 2024 Workplan		Total Requested from EPA=\$215,000	Total Match Provided by Applicant	Total
<b>Personnel: Salary</b>	<i>Monitoring Personnel: Chemist</i>	\$61,403	\$61,403	\$122,806
	<i>Monitoring Personnel: Boat Operator</i>	\$39,106	\$39,106	\$78,212
	<b>Personnel total:</b>	<b>\$100,509</b>	<b>\$100,509</b>	<b>\$201,018</b>
<b>Fringe</b>	<i>Monitoring Personnel: Chemist</i>	\$33,765	\$33,766	\$67,531
	<i>Monitoring Personnel: Boat Operator</i>	\$22,726	\$22,727	\$45,452
	<b>Fringe total:</b>	<b>\$56,491</b>	<b>\$56,491</b>	<b>\$112,982</b>
<b>Projects:</b>		SAV Monitoring	SC Project	
		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000
		<i>NADP Monitoring - Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene</i>	SC Project	
<b>Other</b>		\$8,000	\$8,000	\$16,000
	<b>Other total:</b>	<b>\$58,000</b>	<b>\$58,000</b>	<b>\$116,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$430,000</b>

## Non-Federal Contribution

### Suffolk County Match

Suffolk County Department of Health Services will provide the required 1:1 for this grant application totaling \$215,000 as detailed in the previous table. Suffolk County's expenditures to fund water quality monitoring and water quality protection and restoration through the Suffolk County General Budget and Suffolk County Capital Budget funding are approved to be allocated as the required 1:1 local match for Suffolk County's USEPA National Estuary Program Peconic Estuary Partnership Support grant.