

# ACCABONAC HARBOR RESTORATION PROJECT



## OVERVIEW

Accabonac Harbor in East Hampton has lost approximately 46.5 acres of high marsh between 1974 and 2005, one of the highest rates on Long Island (NYS). Hydrological disruptions are causing high marsh to convert to intertidal marsh, impacting ecosystem health.

## KEY ISSUES

- **High Marsh Loss**
  - Nearly 50% decline from 1974-2005.
- **Mosquito Breeding & Hydrology Disruptions:**
  - Citizen scientists identified hot spots of mosquito breeding due to improperly impounded water on the marsh surface.
- **Integrated Marsh Management:**
  - Data from the citizen science mosquito program enabled Suffolk County Vector Control to target breeding hotspots, reducing pesticide spray, increasing transparency, saving money, and vector control flight time.

## INNOVATIVE RESTORATION TECHNIQUES

### Tideshed-Based Approach

Focuses on site-specific understanding of how water, salt, and sediment move within the marsh system.

### Single-Channel Hydrology Restoration

Dedicated to restoring the marsh's natural healing mechanisms, designs focus on enhancing existing features to improve tidal flow.

### Runnel Techniques & Cordgrass Fill

Small, shallow channels are used to improve drainage, and overly ditched areas are addressed with cordgrass fill to restore natural hydrology and support native vegetation regrowth.

### Continuous Learning & Adaptation

Regular assessments refine and improve restoration practices over time.

## PEP LEVERAGING FUNDS FOR PUBLIC LANDS RESTORATION

The Peconic Estuary Partnership (PEP) and Suffolk County have funded the expansion of current restoration designs and permitting for the restoration of public parcels in Accabonac Harbor. This funding supports a minimally invasive approach, promoting 'light touch' restoration techniques that work with natural marsh processes rather than large-scale regrading.

## WORKSHOPS & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- **Technical and Educational Outreach**
  - Designed to help regulators understand and support this restoration technique in response to sea level rise.
- **May 2025 Workshops**
  - One general public session and one regulator-specific session to promote awareness and adoption of these methods.

## ECOLOGICAL AND COMMUNITY BENEFITS

- **Resilient Salt Marsh**
  - Restores natural tidal flow and vegetation.
- **Saltmarsh Sparrow Habitat**
  - Supports this threatened species.
- **Mosquito Control & Public Health**
  - Reduces pesticide reliance and improves transparency.



For more information on this project reach out to  
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