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Applicant:
Suffolk County Department of Health Services

FY26 WORKPLAN

Submitted by:
PEP Management Conference
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Peconic Estuary Partnership

FY26 Workplan & Budget

Peconic Estuary Partnership FY26
Suffolk County Workplan
CE-99200222-2

I. INTRODUCTION	3
Peconic Estuary Partnership	3
Overall Funding Sources	4
II. SUMMARY OF FY24 ACCOMPLISHMENTS	4
III. FY25 WORKPLAN	9
Budget and Staff Elements	9
Program Office Staff	9
Budget Summary	10
FY25 Workplan	11
Ongoing Project Information – Suffolk County FY25 Workplan	11
CCMP GOAL: CLEAN WATERS	11
CCMP GOAL: HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS WITH ABUNDANT, DIVERSE WILDLIFE	14
IV. BUDGET DETAILS	15
Resources Requested	15
Non-Federal Contribution	16

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 (CWA). 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 Partnership (PEP) 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. This grant amendment will commence October 1, 2026.

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, and a healthy ecosystem with abundant, diverse wildlife.

In 2025, the EPA administrator released five key priorities:

1. Clean air, land, and water for every American;
2. Restoring American energy dominance;
3. Streamlining permitting processes, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross Agency Partnership;
4. Making the U.S. the AI capital of the world; and
5. Potentially revitalizing the American auto industry.

These priorities build upon the core mission of protecting human health and the environment while also focusing on economic growth and technological advancement. The Peconic Estuary Partnership I aligns with the first key priority of clean water for every American and the third priority of Cooperative Federalism and Cross Agency Partnerships. This workplan outlines a series of projects that seek to bring clean water to the residents of the Peconic watershed and further our mission outlined under CWA section 320 as a non-regulatory and non-enforcement entity. The way PEP carries these priorities out includes partnerships across several federal agencies including the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), United States Geological Survey (USGS), and the Army Corp of Engineers (ACOE). PEP brings together local, county, state and federal governments to share decision making responsibilities and collaborate on policies to implement projects.

Overall Funding Sources

The core FY26 budget reflects the following sources of funding:

EPA FY26 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 \$140,000 which will be matched at the required 1:1 rate by Suffolk County, making the full budget of the Suffolk County award \$280,000

*EPA FY26 Base funding will be provided to Stony Brook University in the amount of \$710,000 which will be matched at the required 1:1 rate, making the full budget of the Stony Brook award \$1,420,000. 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 FY24 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Operational Accomplishments

The PEP program office is growing, and PEP hired a Grant Manager and a Nutrient Reduction Educator and has hired new staff to fill the Outreach Assistant and Project Manager positions during this period using IJJA funds. The following operational updates occurred and are ongoing:

- Tracking System <https://portal.gss.stonybrook.edu/ccmp/>
- PEP Data Hubs: <https://data.gss.stonybrook.edu/organization/pep>;
- PEP Communication Strategy - Complete
- PEP Finance Strategy – Complete
- CCMP five-year review – Complete
- Vulnerability Assessment update and alignment – in process

PEP Committees

The PEP committees held the following meetings:

- PEP Policy Committee October 29, 2026 (Joint MC and PC meeting), April 29, 2026. Minutes and agendas can be found [here](#).
- PEP Management Committee October 29, 2026 (Joint MC and PC meeting), January 14, 2026, April 15, 2026 Minutes and agendas can be found [here](#).
- PEP Technical Advisory Committee consists of representatives from agencies and entities dealing in technical issues as it relates to the Peconic Estuary. February 4th, April 8th, August 19th Minutes and agendas can be found [here](#).

- PEP Natural Resources Subcommittee February 5, 2025, August 20, 2025; January 7, 2026, (NRSC) meeting agendas and minutes can be found [here](#).
- PEP Local Government Committee: December 10, 2025, March 11, 2026
- PEP Citizens' Advisory Committee: January 7, 2026, March 4, 2026
- Peconic Bay Scallop Technical Advisory Committee: July 16, 2025
- Agriculture Workgroup: February 25, 2025

Clean Waters for ecosystem health and safe recreation

PEP continues to support the SCDHS and USGS water quality monitoring systems including Suffolk County Department of Health Service [Bathing Beach](#) and [Surface water](#); USGS continuous water quality monitoring at [Peconic River Station](#); [Shelter Island Station](#); [Orient Harbor Station](#). Nitrogen Atmospheric Deposition Monitoring Program results are here ([NADP](#)). PEP launched the PEP Long Island Water Quality App (Downloadable on iOS platforms [here](#).)

PEP continues to monitor the oil injection Permeable Reactive Barrier (PRB) in Three Mile Harbor at Tanbark Creek in East Hampton. All reports can be found [here](#). [The USGS-PEP Solute Transport Modeling Project](#) is finalizing the dashboard for public use. PEP continues to support the Suffolk County Reclaim Our Water [Initiative](#) which provides increased protection of water resources. The Initiative used existing legal framework and County and Town grant and loan opportunities to assist homeowners in upgrading to Innovative and Alternative On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems ([I/A OWTS](#)). PEP is partnering with Suffolk County to host and lead outreach events to promote the I/A OWTS program and disseminate information about the financial programs available. PEP is finalizing the research on microplastics in the Peconics with the identification of polymers, additives, and pigments that can potentially tell us product source of microplastics. [Identification of microplastic pollution](#) is complete, the most recent report found [here](#).

[HABs in the Peconic Estuary Priority Embayments](#) - PEP continues to work with the Gobler lab at Stony Brook to develop end points for Nitrogen and HABs species. Year 4 of study completed in summer of 2025, most recent reports can be found [here](#). Ashawagh Hall Stormwater Abatement Project in East Hampton was initiated. Request for proposal found [here](#).

Healthy Ecosystems with Abundant Diverse Wildlife

Eelgrass

PEP continues to collaborate with eelgrass experts from across the Northeast to develop a regional approach to eelgrass restoration while acting with local conditions and data. The TAC agreed to change the method of annual survey and the [Quality Assurance Project Plan](#) is complete. PEP finalized six new SeagrassNET Sites (based off [2024 Aerial Flyovers](#)): Bullhead Bay, Sag Harbor, Cedar Point, Coecles Harbor, Napeague Harbor, Orient Point. The Seagrass Monitoring Strategy can be found [here](#). Partnership with citizen science seagrass monitoring groups at additional sites in Lake Montauk, East Hampton, and Southampton: Concerned Citizens of Montauk, Peconic Bay Keeper, South Fork Sea Farmers & Springs School. Protocol can be found [here](#). Regionally, PEP is collaborating with partners to coordinate seagrass monitoring, restoration, and research throughout the Northeast including other National Estuary Programs to create a seagrass workgroup to discuss all NEP work and future program plans relating to seagrass. Most recent updates on this work can be found [here](#). PEP is continuing the processing of aerial imaging and radon tracing for groundwater refugia areas in the Peconic Estuary to identify areas for

potential future restoration in mapped groundwater refugia areas. This is based on the success of the Coastal Watershed Grant project - most recent reports can be found [here](#).

Aquatic Connectivity

The annual diadromous fish monitoring at Grangebel Park and the Byron Young Fish Pass occurs March 2026-June 2026. QAPP for this project can be found [here](#). Fish pass work at Upper Mills Dam has experienced severe delays due to the Land Use Agreement with the Town of Riverhead and the Long Island Power Authority. PEP is actively looking for funding sources to create the fish passage. eDNA pilot study for alewife and American eels with NYSDEC are underway with sampling from February 2026 to June 2026; validate citizen science and determine passage of diadromous fish throughout the Peconic River System. A draft of the sampling plan can be found [here](#). An “eelevtor” has been constructed and PEP is working with the Town of Riverhead and NYSDEC on appropriate siting and monitoring for next year. This is in response to a 2024 glass eel-kill that occurred in Grangebel Park.

Wetland Project Progress

The Shelter Island wetland assessment project has successfully been awarded to a team to carry out the work. The RFP can be found [here](#). PEP has continued its partnership with stakeholders of East Hampton Town’s **Accabonac Harbor**. We are working to **restore 140 acres of salt marsh in Accabonac Harbor**. Outreach on this project has continued as PEP has participated in Accabonac Protection Committee meetings, assisted in fieldwork led by US Fish and Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy to survey for Saltmarsh Sparrows and attended training workshops. The **Paul Stoutenburgh Habitat Restoration Project** aims to **restore six acres of salt marsh** and has completed an assessment of the hydrology of the southwest portion of the Paul Stoutenburgh Preserve. Engineering plans were completed and permits drafted for the town to correct the culvert to repair hydrologic flow to restore wetland area. The wetland restoration at **Indian Island is complete and restored 56 acres** on Terry’s Creek.

Wildlife Conservation Initiatives

The Horseshoe Crab Action Plan was finalized and approved by PEP Committees. The suggested action plan can be found [here](#). Diamondback Terrapin work conducted under the 2023 PEP Mini Grant for satellite tagging of horseshoe crabs and diamondback terrapins was completed and the report can be found [here](#). A continuation of this work was proposed and approved by the Management Committee, the proposal can be found [here](#). The completion of the 2025 River Otter surveys conducted by Seatuck Environmental were approved by the TAC and monitoring will occur every five years. The final report and otter sighting map can be found [here](#). The Otter map [here](#). The project Sea Turtles and SAV Interactions is still underway, the most recent report can be found [here](#).

Research

The Ecosystem-Based Model of the Peconic Estuary has been severely delayed due to staffing issues. This will continue in April 2026 and updates on this project can be found [here](#). The PEP Aquaculture Impact Study Phase I is complete and final reporting is underway [here](#). Phase II involves the investigation of aquaculture operations and their effect on invertebrates, sediment analysis, and discreet microenvironments in and around aquaculture operations. Phase II has completed the lab portion of the study and aims to continue the study with field experimentation and analysis. Link to Phase II presentation can be found [here](#).

Resilient Communities

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 is a series of 1:1 information-gathering interviews with town planning departments, elected officials, and permitting entities. Progress is underway on a needs assessment and set of recommendations. The initiative began the contracting process with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science to adapt the established [Shoreline Management Model](#) used in the permitting process in Maryland to the Peconic estuary.

PEP and New York Sea Grant partnered to advance the Shoreline Adaptation Initiative & Work Group by coordinating with towns, state agencies, contractors, and homeowners to streamline permitting, improve access to funding, and expand awareness of state programs supporting shoreline adaptation. Additionally, The *Peconic Estuary Shoreline Adaptation Viability Assessment* identified a clear set of needs, regulatory challenges, and opportunities to strengthen shoreline adaptation. The assessment directly informed the development of several next-stage resources that will support municipalities, contractors, and homeowners. The Viability Assessment does the following:

- Synthesis of stakeholder needs and challenges
- Recommendations based on research, existing resources, and regional precedent
- Next steps for regulatory and technical support development
- Process maps outlining shoreline regulation across all jurisdictions and six townships

The Peconic Estuary Shoreline Site Suitability Model Contracting Phase; the Partnership with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) to address data gaps in permitting, the PEP Hardened Shoreline Assessment Ground Truthing Completed; Final Report [here](#). The PEP Critical Lands Protection Strategy 2026 Update: Website interface drafted; tool to be developed with local government staff for highest impact.

Strong Partnerships and Engagement

PEP staff has continued local and regional partnerships including the Atlantic Coast Joint Venture (ACJV) [Saltmarsh Sparrow restoration priority planning](#), Coastal Habitat and Resources Restoration and Management (CHaRRM) facilitating collaboration and communication among the mid-Atlantic coastal management stakeholders. PEP is also coordinating with other National Estuary Programs, the National Parks Service, and EPA on a regional effort to protect and restore seagrass.

[The Long Island Watershed Program \(LIWP\)](#) (formerly the Long Island Nitrogen Action Plan; LINAP), PEP has partnered on an island-wide estuary program and collaborative outreach effort. This includes LIWP, the Long Island Sound Study, The New York State South Shore Estuary Reserve, and PEP. Aligned outreach messaging targeted to nitrogen reduction and clean water and health habitats on Long Island has led to a greater understanding of these issues. Through this partnership, PEP's long-running [Homeowner Rewards Program](#), has been expanded throughout Long Island. The Long Island Garden Reward Program expands to the other watersheds on Long Island using NYS and other funding.

PEP participates in the Seatuck's [Long Island Diadromous Fish Work Group](#) along with other diadromous fish experts in order to discuss activities as it relates to diadromous fish on Long Island, as well as Seatuck's Beach Nesting Birds Workgroup. The Peconic Estuary Horseshoe Crab Workgroup was convened in 2024 to develop a draft [Horseshoe Crab Action Plan](#) to advance horseshoe crab conservation in the Peconic

Estuary. PEP is an advisory member of the [Preserve Plum Island Coalition](#) and the [Peconic Estuary Protection Committee](#), an advisory member of the [Collaborative for the Earth at Stony Brook University](#), and served on the Suffolk County Working Waterfront Committee, and the Long Island Watershed Acton Plan planning committee.

Suffolk Alliance of Pollinators (SAP): SAP is a coalition of local groups making Suffolk County a greener pollinator corridor through good gardening practices.

Suffolk County Hazardous Mitigation Steering Committee: Since the beginning of 2026, PEP has participated in the SC Hazardous Mitigation Steering Committee bi-monthly meetings. This group is tasked with developing a hazardous mitigation plan for Suffolk County in regard to emergency response protocols.

Conferences

PEP staff attended several regional and local conferences including [Long Island Natural History Conference](#); and presented two posters on active fish passage in the Peconics and PEP's seagrass management strategy. Zosterapalooza, an EPA-led regional seagrass conference, where our work with the University of Maryland was presented. Our work on initiatives to further engage other NEPs for increased collaboration and streamlined goals for seagrass management across NEPs on 3/25 and 3/26/2026. The ANEP TECH TRANSFER in Mobile Alabama occurred 11/11-11/14 2025 and the annual EPA-NEP meeting was March 17-18/2026. RAE Living Shoreline Summit: October 28-30th 2025. Accabonac Workshops: co-lead with The Nature Conservancy May 15-16th 2025 focused on engaging regulators in better understanding current scientific thinking regarding salt marsh stressors, impairments, and remedies. Mashomack Preserve two workshops lead by The Nature Conservancy, funded by the RAE Coastal Watershed Grant held Sept 11-12, 2025 and January 7-8, 2026.

[2025 PEP Mini Grants – Peconic Estuary Partnership](#)

PEP launched the [2025 Mini Grant program](#) to implement projects that assists in accomplishing PEP's 2020 Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) goal of Clean Waters for Ecosystem Health and Safe Recreation. The program staff has successfully advertised, received applications, formed a review committee, and scored applications for the 2025 Mini Grant Program. Winners were selected in December 2025, as follows:

- Peconic River Litter Trap - **Peconic Baykeeper**
- Creating an on-farm weather monitoring network to improve agricultural stewardship - **Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, Agricultural Stewardship Program**
- Green Infrastructure Installation: Stormwater Abatement at the East End of Harding Terrace (NB-2) to Protect Little Northwest Creek - **Ninevah Beach Property Owners' Association (NBPOA)**

[Community Science Long Island Webinar Series 2026](#)

PEP has partnered with Long Island Sound Partnership, 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.

[Winter Walk Series with Peconic Estuary Partnership and Peconic Baykeeper 2025/26](#)

The Peconic Estuary Partnership and Peconic Baykeeper hosted our fourth annual [Winter Walk Series](#). Nature walks were held on December 12th at Montauk Point Trails, East Hampton, January 10th at Laurel Lake Preserve, Mattituck, March 27th Long Pond Greenbelt, Southampton, and March 14th Mashomack Preserve, Shelter Island.

[PEP Citizens' Advisory Committee Albany Education Day](#)

[PEP CAC](#) held their third annual Albany Education Day in February 2026. The purpose of this trip was to bring passionate stakeholders to meet with NYS representatives and DEC in Albany in order to discuss the importance of the Peconic Estuary and Watershed, and 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's water quality outreach specialist holds continual presentations to civic and homeowner groups throughout the Estuary, informing homeowners on why they should upgrade and how to utilize grant funding to do so. During 2025, PEP Septic Improvement Outreach efforts reached 12,511 residents through post cards, and 360 people attended the 9 total presentations.

[Homeowner Rewards Program](#)

The Peconic Estuary Partnership provides the [Homeowner Rewards Program](#), a unique opportunity for people who live within the Peconic Estuary watershed by providing up to \$500 to homeowners who replace turf and pavement with green alternatives. This includes rain barrels, rain gardens, and native plant gardens. PEP's Homeowner Rewards Program will open for applications on March 16, 2026. During 2025, 23 homeowners received reimbursement through the program. In total, 3,580 sqft of native plant/rain gardens were installed and 7 rain barrels.

[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. 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. PEP held training events for several community groups willing to participate in the program. March 28th at The Mattituck-Laurel Library with Turtleback Environmental Education Center and March 23 at Big Reed Pond with Concerned Citizens of Montauk and Third House Nature Center.

[Horseshoe Crab Monitoring at Squire's Pond](#)

Each spring, Atlantic Horseshoe Crabs, *Limulus polyphemus*, come to shore during the new and full moon high tide in the evening to spawn. PEP is part of the [Horseshoe Crab Monitoring Network](#) hosting a monitoring site at Squires Pond at the end of East Landing Road in Hampton Bays. Info gathered by volunteers helps scientists learn more about the population by measuring size and tagging used to assess the status of horseshoe crabs in NY State, and will help determine the management and conservation of this important species.

[Long Island Wildlife Monitoring Network](#)

PEP continued the highly successful citizen science partnership between Seatuck Environmental and PEP, the [Long Island Wildlife Monitoring Network](#). 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.

[General Events](#)

Since October 1, 2025 various events have been held including the following:

- [Spooky Stroll with PEP & PBK](#), Saturday, October 18, 2025 1, Hubbard County Park
- [Broad Cove Open Day with PLT](#), Saturday, November 15, 2025
- 2026 Montauk School Science Fair, Friday, February 6, 2026

III. FY26 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 FY2026, please see the Stony Brook workplan. However, time from the following staff will be used to manage the projects funded via the NEP grant awarded to the Suffolk County Department of Health Services since this award supports the PEP:

Executive Director – EPA and Local Government funding

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.

Water Quality Outreach Assistant – Local Government and New York State funding

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 – EPA and Local Government funding

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 challenges we face related to coastal flooding, property loss, and assists local governments in finding solutions.

Budget Summary

Table 1 outlines the Summary Budget for the FY26 EPA 320 spending covered under this grant request. Section IV, page 15 has details of this budget.

Table 1: PEP FY26 Budget Summary – Suffolk County Request

FY26	FY26 EPA §320 Budget		Project
	Personnel (+fringe)	\$0	
	Other		
	NADP Monitoring	-	
	Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene	\$10,000	
	Oyster Aquaculture Microgrant Program	\$130,000	
	Indirect	\$0	
	Total Suffolk County Request	\$140,000	
	Total Match Suffolk County	\$140,000	
	TOTAL EPA Grant	\$280,000	

Information

Ongoing Project Information – Suffolk County FY26 Workplan

All water quality monitoring programming and projects are ongoing.

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 IIA Year 2 (\$50,000) funding. This project is underway. Table 2 lists all projects ongoing in the Peconic watershed and covered under this grant request.

Previous Suffolk County FY24, and FY25 workplans are being amended to update projects scopes. Previous earmarks of \$50,000 for Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV) in FY 2024 and \$20,000 for Pharmaceutical Disposal Program in FY 2025 are being reallocated to support the FY26 new project focusing on an oyster aquaculture microgrant program to be administered by Suffolk County Department of Economic Development and Planning. FY 24 funds (\$50,000) will be reallocated and FY 25 funds (\$20,000) will be combined with this FY 26 funding (\$130,000) request, for a total funding of \$200,000 for this project. This program will support the aquaculture industry recover from extreme weather events and increase their resiliency, as well as assist with quantifying the value of the resource and support a sustainable commercial use of the Peconic Estuary. This grant project will not collect any data on the ecological value of the resource but rely on the previous work funded by NYS Department of Environmental Protection which quantifies ecological benefit of oyster aquaculture in the Peconics. Additionally, the benefit to the local economy will be tracked based on landings as a result of the farms supported. Workplan amendments will be submitted to EPA in conjunction with the FY 26 workplan submission.

Table 2 New & Ongoing PEP Projects

<u>CCMP Action</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Project Type</u>	<u>Funding requested from FY26 §320 award:</u>	<u>PEP Role</u>
Action 16	I/A Maintenance support	Ongoing	\$45,000 FY23 EPA funding \$50,000 IIJA Year 2 funding	Supporting partner (SC Lead)
Action 16	NADP	Ongoing	\$9,000 FY25 Request	Supporting Partner
Action 27	SC Oyster Aquaculture Microgrant	New	\$130,000 FY26 Request	Supporting partner (SC Lead)
Action 16	NADP	New	\$10,000 FY26 Request	Supporting partner

CCMP GOAL: Resilient Communities

Objective C: Help local communities to take meaningful, well-informed action to prepare for and adapt to changes in the Peconic Estuary.

Action 11: Provide tools and assistance to local government to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of coastal change

CCMP GOAL: Healthy Ecosystem with abundant and diverse wildlife

Objective G: Expand scientific understanding of the Peconic Estuary ecosystem and deliver information that supports management decision making.

Action 25: Quantify the recreational use and value of the natural resources within the Peconic Estuary.

Action 26: Quantify the impacts of fishing, aquaculture, boating, navigational dredging, and hardened shoreline structures on habitats and vulnerable species, to foster sustainable recreational and commercial uses of the Peconic Estuary that are compatible with protection of biodiversity.

Oyster Aquaculture Microgrant Program

Ongoing - This program is in alignment with CWA section 320 (j).

- a. **Estimated Budget: \$200,000 (\$130,000 FY26; \$50,000 FY24; \$20,000 FY25)**
- b. **Partners and their roles:** Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning (SCDEDP), LIOGA (supporting Partner), PEP (Supporting Partner).
- c. **Description and Objectives:** This program furthers CCMP actions 11, 25, and 26 by establishing a microgrant program to support aquaculture gear and product lost during the extreme weather events of Winter 2026. This will include tagging and training of growers for preparing for more extreme winter weather events. The Peconic aquaculture program provides bioextraction and remediation in Little Peconic and Great Peconic Bays and contributes to water quality improvement as well as provide other ecological services.

- 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. All gear will be tagged and monitored, and educational materials will be provided to educate the growers on adapting to more extreme weather events.
- e. **Estimated Milestones:** an established record of gear traceability and annual reporting from SC EDP on progress.
- f. **Long Term Outcomes:** aquaculture groups more prepared for extreme weather events, Cleaner water, reduced coastal acidification, and improved spatial planning
- g. **Clean Water Act Core Programs:** Water Quality; Habitat Protection
- h. **External Constraints:** none

CCMP GOAL: CLEAN WATERS

Objective F: Reduce Current and Future Inputs of Toxics

Objective G: Expand scientific understanding of the Peconic Estuary ecosystem and deliver information that supports management Decision making.

I/A System Maintenance Grant Program

Ongoing - This program is in alignment with CWA section 320 (j).

- i. **Estimated Budget:** \$45,000 §320 funds (FY23); \$50,000 IIJA (Year 2 funds)
- j. **Partners and their roles:** Suffolk County Department of Health Services (SCDHS), Office of Ecology (Lead Partner), PEP (Supporting Partner).
- k. **Description and Objectives:** SCDHS has a long-standing grant program to replace cesspools and septic systems with I/A Systems. Communities have stressed the need to continual funding to cover the cost of increased maintenance in installed systems. PEP is supporting a pilot grant program to support households for three years of continued maintenance on installed systems.
- l. **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.
- m. **Estimated Milestones:** Annual reporting.
- n. **Long Term Outcomes:** Water quality will improve in the watershed from cesspool and septic pollution.
- o. **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.
- p. **External Constraints:** Suffolk County faced delays in the 'roll-out' of this project due to legal review. A No Cost Time Extension will be required for this work to be carried out.

Water Quality Monitoring

Ongoing

- a. **Estimated Budget:** \$157,000 §320 funds Requested in FY25 budget.
- 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 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. FY25 funds will be used to support the personnel time allocated to this task.
- d. **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 as is required under the Clean Water Act. All Suffolk County Department of Health Services Water Quality Data and Information is available upon request. And presented in the annual report.
- e. **Estimated Milestones:** Annual water quality summary report.
- f. **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.
- 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. Comprehensive Water Quality sampling and data review as prescribed under CWA section 320(j).
- h. **External Constraints:** none

National Atmospheric Deposition Program

New/Ongoing

- a. **Estimated Budget:** \$10,000 (FY26 funds); \$9,000 (FY25)
- 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.
- 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; 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; Comprehensive Water Quality sampling and data review as prescribed under CWA section 320(j).
- h. **External Constraints:** none

IV. BUDGET DETAILS

Resources Requested

The total CWA section 320 funds requested in this PEP grant to Suffolk County Department of Health Services is **\$140,000**. This grant will be complemented by a CWA section 320 request for PEP support to SUNY Stony Brook Research Foundation for \$710,000. Together these two components make up the full Peconic Estuary Partnership FY2026 workplan for a **total CWA §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.

TRAVEL: No trips are anticipated under this grant award, and no travel funds are requested here.

Table 3: Detailed budget and spending FY26 Suffolk County request

BUDGET DETAIL FY25 Workplan		Requested Fund	Match Funds	Totals
Personnel:				
Salary				
	Personnel total:	\$0	\$0	\$0
Fringe				
	Fringe total:	\$0	\$0	\$0
Projects:				

Peconic Estuary Partnership FY26
Suffolk County Workplan
CE-99200222-2

	<i>Oyster Aquaculture Microgrant</i>	\$130,000	\$0	\$130,000
	<i>NADP</i>	<i>\$10,000</i>	\$0	\$10,000
	SC Water Quality project Match	\$0	140,000	\$140,000
TOTAL		\$140,000	\$140,000	\$280,000

Non-Federal Contribution

Suffolk County Match

Suffolk County Department of Health Services will provide the required 1:1 for this grant application. Suffolk County Health Department will provide \$140,000 of match through the County's Capital Budget for Suffolk County's USEPA National Estuary Program Peconic Estuary Partnership Support grant.