

## NOAA In Your State



# Connecticut



***NOAA is an agency that enriches life through science. Our reach goes from the surface of the sun to the depths of the ocean floor as we work to keep citizens informed of the changing environment around them. From daily weather forecasts, severe storm warnings, and climate monitoring to fisheries management, coastal restoration and supporting marine commerce, NOAA's products and services support economic vitality and affect more than one-third of America's gross domestic product. NOAA's dedicated scientists use cutting-edge research and high-tech instrumentation to provide citizens, planners, emergency managers and other decision makers with reliable information they need when they need it.***

***The following is a summary of NOAA facilities, staff, programs, or activities based in, or focused on, your state or territory: Starting with highlights, then by [congressional districts and cities or towns](#), [coastal programs](#), and then [statewide programs](#).***

### **Highlights of NOAA in Connecticut**

<a href="#">NOAA Corps Officer Training Center</a>	New London	CT-2
<a href="#">Milford Laboratory</a>	Milford	CT-3
<a href="#">Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) / Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Projects</a>	Project Specific	CT

The state of Connecticut also has one Lab and Field Office, one Science on a Sphere® exhibition, and one National Estuarine Research Reserve.

## Science On a Sphere®

Bridgeport CT-4

Science On a Sphere (SOS) is a room-sized global display system that uses computers and video projectors to display planetary data onto a six-foot diameter sphere, analogous to a giant animated globe. Researchers at NOAA developed Science On a Sphere® as an educational tool to help illustrate Earth System science to people of all ages. Animated images of atmospheric storms, climate change, and ocean temperature can be shown on the sphere, which is used to explain in a way that is simultaneously intuitive and captivating what are sometimes complex environmental processes. It is located at the Discovery Museum in Bridgeport.

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### CT-2

#### Mystic

#### **NOAA Office of Education - Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers (CELC) network**

In Connecticut, NOAA's Office of Education provides support to the Mystic Aquarium in New London County as part of the Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers (CELC) network, which is made up of 25 aquariums and marine science education centers located throughout North America. The CELC network collaborates on a variety of initiatives, ranging from youth summits to multi-institution projects, with the goal of better engaging the public in understanding, appreciating, and protecting marine and freshwater ecosystems. Through the CELC network, the Office of Education provides guidance, resources, and scientific expertise to these institutions, which collectively reach an estimated 20 million people annually across North America. By coordinating with the CELC network, NOAA helps to further its mission of engaging the public in protecting and preserving coastal and marine ecosystems.

#### New London

#### **National Ocean Service (NOS) - New London PORTS®**

A Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS®) in New London provides real-time oceanographic data and other navigation products to promote safe and efficient navigation within U.S. waters. This system consists of one water level (tide) and meteorological station and one tidal current meter.

#### **Office of Marine and Aviation Operations (OMAO) - NOAA Corps Officer Training Center**

On December 21, 2012, the NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps graduated the first class of officers to be trained alongside the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) officer candidates at the NOAA Corps Officer Training Center (NCOTC). NCOTC is co-located with the USCG's Officer Candidate School on the grounds of the USCG Academy. NCOTC provides training to new officers during the Basic Officer Training Class (BOTC) as well as training experienced officers returning to sea duty through refresher classes. BOTC is a very demanding and fast-paced program with three principal objectives that include introduction and orientation to the NOAA organization and its missions; introduction to the customs, duties and responsibilities as a commissioned officer in a uniformed service; and development of maritime and nautical skills, with emphasis on shipboard operations, organization and management, small boat handling, marine navigation, ship handling, seamanship, and related subjects.

Approximately 50 percent of the training curriculum is provided during formal classroom instruction and the remainder takes place during field activities, labs, and underway training. Comprehensive exams and practical demonstrations of leadership, management and seagoing skills are important aspects of the program. In order to reinforce an understanding of shipboard organization and operations, the Class is organized and operated similar to a shipboard environment.

Officers are considered to be on call 24 hours per day, seven days a week; the normal workday will begin at 0500 (5:00 am) and will end at 2200 (10:00 pm). Weekends are filled with various training events, both maritime and leadership related. BOTC is in session for approximately twelve weeks and upon completion of the training, officers are either assigned to a NOAA ship for up to three years of sea duty or report to initial flight training to become an aviator.

**NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps (NOAA Corps) - [Nautical Science and Underway Training Officer](#)**

The NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps stations an officer at the United States Coast Guard Academy in support of the academy's four-year Navigation and Nautical Science curriculum. This officer serves as an instructor alongside 11 other USCG and US Navy Lieutenants, teaching cadets the principles behind terrestrial and celestial navigation, maritime communications, nautical rules of the road, relative motion theory, collision avoidance, basic emergency procedures, and the USCG MMC Master 100 Ton course requirements. In addition, they assist with the USCG Academy Summer Training each year for 250 cadets, fulfill USCG Academy watchstanding duties throughout the year, and assist with other collateral and ancillary duties as required by the Academy.

**Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR)- [Ocean Exploration Cooperative Institute \(Ocean Exploration Trust affiliate\)](#)**

NOAA Ocean Exploration's presence in New London, CT is based on the partnership with Ocean Exploration Trust (OET) where the office supports the Ocean Exploration Cooperative Institute, headquartered at URI, which amplifies exploratory science and technology, and expands NOAA's capabilities for its ocean exploration portfolio. The Ocean Exploration Cooperative Institute (OECI) is a unique consortium of top oceanographic institutions—several graduate degree-granting institutions, an ocean exploration non-profit, and task-specific affiliates. The membership includes the University of Rhode Island, the University of New Hampshire, the University of Southern Mississippi, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and Ocean Exploration Trust. They work as one to advance the core priorities of NOAA Ocean Exploration and have a mission to explore, map, and characterize the nation's vast ocean territory, to develop and implement new technologies, and to engage future generations of ocean scientists, engineers, and stakeholders. OET was founded by Dr. Robert Ballard and established as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit in 2007. Ocean Exploration Trust is home to an Exploration Vessel Nautilus, Remotely Operated Vehicle Hercules, Remotely Operated Vehicle Little Hercules, Remotely Operated Vehicle Argus, Remotely Operated Vehicle (Towsled) Atalanta.

**[Groton](#)**

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - [Connecticut National Estuarine Research Reserve](#)**

The National Estuarine Research Reserve System is a network of protected areas focused on long-term research, monitoring, stewardship, education, and training. NOAA's Office for Coastal Management provides funding and national guidance, and each site is managed on a daily basis by a lead state agency or university with input from local partners. The 52,160 acre Connecticut Research Reserve was designated in 2022 and is managed by the University of Connecticut. The Reserve is located in southeastern Connecticut and protects a large area of the Long Island Sound, one of Connecticut's most important natural resources; portions of the lower Thames River; and portions of the lower Connecticut River, which contains the highest fish diversity in the region and includes areas recognized as "wetlands of international importance" by the Ramsar Convention.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) – [Margaret A. Davidson Graduate Fellowship](#)**

The Margaret A. Davidson Graduate Fellowship program funds graduate student research and professional development opportunities within the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. The program supports collaborative research addressing local management challenges that may influence future policy and management strategies. The Davidson Fellow at the Connecticut National Estuarine Research Reserve will focus their research on the ecological and socioeconomic efficacy of nature-based infrastructure in enhancing climate resilience.

## **CT-2**

### **New London**

#### **National Ocean Service (NOS) - [National Water Level Observation Network](#)**

The National Ocean Service (NOS) operates two long-term continuously operating tide stations in the state of Connecticut, which provide data and information on tidal datum and relative sea level trends, and are capable of producing real-time data for storm surge warning. These stations are located at New London and Bridgeport. Each station is associated with a set of tidal benchmarks installed in the ground that is used to reference the height of the water levels and helps connect the water level to land. Station data feeds into many CO-OPS products that are used to support safe navigation, mitigate coastal hazards, and protect communities. Such products include:

- Coastal Inundation Dashboard - view water levels in real-time and during storms
- High Tide Flooding Outlooks
- Sea level trends and maps
- Real-time current measurements
- Hydrodynamic models
- Tidal and water level datums

## **CT-3**

### **Milford**

#### **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - [Milford Laboratory](#)**

The Milford Laboratory, part of the NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center, was established in 1931 with support of the shellfish industry, and is one of two large aquaculture research facilities within NMFS. The Milford Laboratory conducts an integrated aquaculture research program studying culture methods, and developing methods for commercial aquaculture, stock enhancement and restoration. They also evaluate interactions between aquaculture practices and the environment, and what characteristics make a habitat suitable for a particular species of environmental or commercial importance. The lab is internationally known for its foundational work on shellfish culture. In 2024, NMFS and the U.S. Department of Agriculture launched a state-of-the-art oyster breeding center at the lab. Its goal is to develop better-performing lines of Eastern oysters that are resilient in the face of changing environmental conditions in Northeast oyster growing areas.

#### **NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps (NOAA Corps) - [Vessel Operations Coordinator, Milford Lab](#)**

The NOAA Commissioned Officer Corps stations an officer with the Northeast Fisheries Science Center Milford Laboratory in support of its maritime operations. As vessel operations coordinator, the officer performs a variety of administrative and operational duties, including planning and executing the operational budget and acting as regional representative to other government and local agencies and universities. In addition, the officer serves as Officer in Charge (OIC) of the R/V *Victor Loosanoff*, leading operations in routine and emergency situations, providing oversight and direction to the crew, and planning and managing operations and all logistical aspects of the team. When necessary, they also serve as Laboratory Director and Branch Chief.

### **New Haven**

#### **National Ocean Service (NOS) - [New Haven PORTS®](#)**

A Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System (PORTS®) is operated cooperatively with the local maritime community in New Haven Harbor at which real-time data are quality-controlled and disseminated to local users for safe and efficient navigation. Real-time data are available for water level and meteorological data from one location.

## **CT-4**

### **Bridgeport**

NOAA Office of Education - Science On a Sphere® at [Discovery Museum](#). See [Page 2](#) for details.

## Coastal

### **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - [Deep-Sea Coral Research and Technology Program](#)**

NOAA's Deep Sea Coral Research is administered by NOAA Fisheries' [Office of Habitat Conservation](#). Mandated by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, it is the nation's only federal research program dedicated to increasing scientific understanding of deep-sea coral ecosystems. Deep-sea corals occur off of every coastal state in the country, and create important habitats for countless species, including many fish species. The Program collaborates closely with partners, including other NOAA offices, to study the distribution, abundance, and diversity of deep sea corals and sponges. This work then informs critical management decisions in the waters of the United States and its territories. These decisions enhance the sustainability of deep-sea fisheries and other ocean uses, while conserving deep-sea coral and sponge habitats.

The Program works with partners to complete multi-year regional fieldwork initiatives, as well as smaller projects around the country, centered on integrating new and existing information on these vulnerable and biologically diverse habitats. The first research initiative took place from 2009 to 2011 in the U.S. South Atlantic region and provided valuable information to help decision-makers refine protected area boundaries. To date, the Program has completed one or more initiatives in each region of the United States.

### **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - [Cooperation with States Program](#) and [Species Recovery Grants](#)**

Under the authority of section 6 of the Endangered Species Act, the Cooperation with States Program brings states, NMFS, and other partners together to recover threatened and endangered species. A total of 25 U.S. territories and coastal states, including Connecticut, currently participate in this program. Competitive grants are awarded to states through the Species Recovery Grants to States Program to support management, monitoring, research and outreach efforts for species that spend all or a portion of their life cycle in state waters. The funded work is designed to prevent extinctions or reverse the decline of species, and restore ecosystems and their related socioeconomic benefits. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection has received funding through this program to support the recovery of shortnose and Atlantic sturgeon.

### **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - [Sea Turtle Salvage and Stranding Network](#)**

The Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network (STSSN) was formally established in 1980 to collect information on and document strandings of marine turtles along the U.S. Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic coasts. The network, which includes federal, state and private partners, encompasses the coastal areas of the eighteen-state region from Maine to Texas, and includes portions of the U.S. Caribbean. Data gathered by the Network helps inform bycatch reduction efforts, monitor factors affecting turtle health, and provide other information needed for sea turtle management and population recovery.

### **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - [National Marine Mammal Stranding Network](#) and [John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program](#)**

The National Marine Mammal Stranding Network and its trained professionals respond to dead or live marine mammals in distress that are stranded, entangled, out of habitat or otherwise in peril. Our long-standing partnership with the Network provides valuable environmental intelligence, helping NOAA establish links among the health of marine mammals, coastal ecosystems, and coastal communities as well as develop effective conservation programs for marine mammal populations in the wild. There is one stranding network member in the state. NOAA Fisheries funds eligible members of the Stranding Network through the competitive John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant Program. For fiscal year 2020, 43 competitive Prescott Grants were awarded for a total of \$3.7 million, with one award for \$99,996 going to one recipient in Connecticut: Mystic Aquarium.

**National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Ocean Service (NOS), and NOAA General Counsel - [Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program](#)**

NOAA's Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP) assesses and restores habitat, fisheries, protected species and recreational uses that have been harmed by oil spills, chemical releases, and ship groundings. Working with federal, state, and tribal entities, and responsible parties, we have recovered funding from responsible parties for restoration of critical habitats, fisheries, protected species and recreational uses nationwide. These projects promote recovery of the ecosystem and provide economic benefits from tourism, recreation, green jobs, coastal resiliency, property values and quality of life. Connecticut is a co-trustee with NOAA for assessment and restoration after pollution incidents in Connecticut. For more information about our work in Connecticut, visit: [DARRP in Your State](#) (and use the top menu to navigate to "Connecticut") and this [interactive map](#).

**National Ocean Service (NOS) – [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#)**

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law is helping coastal communities build the future they want to see. The legislation provides a historic investment in coastal protection and restoration that will increase community resilience to climate change and extreme weather events, and improve how we manage our ocean resources. Projects funded under this law protect and restore ecologically significant habitats, including conserving lands that play a critical role in helping communities become more resilient to natural hazards. Connecticut received funding in FY22 and FY23 to build the state's capacity to protect its coastal communities and resources.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - [U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System](#) ([Mid-Atlantic Regional Association Coastal Ocean Observing System](#) and [Northeastern Regional Association of Coastal Ocean Observing Systems](#))**

The U.S. Integrated Ocean Observing System, or IOOS®, is a federally and regionally coordinated observing system with 17 interagency and 11 regional partners. The System addresses regional and national needs for coastal, ocean, and Great Lakes data and information. This includes gathering and disseminating regional observations; data management; modeling and analysis; education and outreach; and research and development. The Mid-Atlantic Regional Association Coastal Ocean Observing System (MARACOOS) is one of these Regional Associations and its coverage extends from Cape Hatteras to Cape Cod including the estuaries and the continental shelf waters in this region. MARACOOS provides the necessary ocean observing, data management, and forecasting capacity to systematically address prioritized themes maritime safety, ecosystem based management, water quality, coastal inundation, and offshore energy development.

The Northeastern Regional Association of Coastal Ocean Observing Systems (NERACOOS) was established to network and expand the existing observing and prediction capacities of a multitude of institutions and agencies throughout New England and Maritime Canada. NERACOOS supports infrastructure that provides over-water meteorological and wave observations in Long Island Sound and the Gulf of Maine to the National Weather Service that are critical to safe navigation. These platforms also support current and dissolved oxygen sensors that provide critical information for management of hypoxia and harmful algal bloom. Fisheries managers, water quality specialists, the Coast Guard, and many others benefit from accurate and timely ocean observing infrastructure and related decision support tools. The region includes the coastal waters of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. There is overlap with MARACOOS, which also includes the coastal waters of Connecticut and Rhode Island. In addition, partners from the Canadian provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia are involved.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - [Navigation Manager](#)**

OCS navigation managers are strategically located in U.S. coastal areas to provide regional support to federal and state agencies in order to assist with a variety of navigation related challenges. NOAA's navigation managers work directly with pilots, port authorities, and recreational boating organizations in Connecticut. They help identify the navigational challenges facing marine transportation in Connecticut and provide NOAA's resources and services that promote safe and

efficient navigation. They work with local stakeholders to ensure the NOAA's nautical charts are up to date and accurate. Navigation managers are on call to provide expertise and NOAA navigation response coordination in case of severe coastal weather events or other marine emergencies. The Office of Coast Survey has a navigation manager in Narragansett, RI to support mariners and stakeholders in the Northeast region.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) – [Navigation Response Team](#)**

NOAA's navigation response team (NRT) operates out of New London, supporting navigation in the ports in the northeast. These three-person teams measure depths of a changing seafloor and search for underwater dangers to navigation that can slow down commercial shipping immediately after storm events and other emergencies. The teams provide time-sensitive information to the U.S. Coast Guard, port officials and Pilots and transmit data to NOAA cartographers for updating navigational charting products. NRT-New London is homeported at the USCG Research and Development Center and is able to respond within 24-48 hours.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - [Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program](#)**

The Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program brings conservation partners together to protect coastal and estuarine lands considered important for their ecological, conservation, recreational, historical, or aesthetic values. Subject to availability of funding, the program provides state and local governments with matching funds to purchase coastal and estuarine lands or obtain conservation easements for important lands threatened by development. Since 2002, the program has protected more than 110,000 acres of coastal land nationally, including over 16,000 acres protected as in-kind matching contributions. Five Connecticut sites benefited from this program, and these lands are protected in perpetuity.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) – [National Coastal Zone Management Program](#)**

Through a unique federal-state partnership, NOAA's Office for Coastal Management works with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to implement the National Coastal Zone Management Program in Connecticut. NOAA provides the state coastal management program with financial and technical assistance to further the goals of the Coastal Zone Management Act and ensure coastal waters and lands are used in a balanced way to support jobs, reduce use conflicts, and sustain natural resources.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - [Coastal Management Fellowship](#)**

This program matches postgraduate students with state and territory coastal zone programs to work on two-year projects proposed by the state or territory. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection is hosting a fellow from 2024-2026 who is helping to spearhead a multipronged approach for addressing coastal public access needs in Connecticut through an equity and environmental justice lens.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) – [Digital Coast](#)**

The Digital Coast is a focused information resource developed to meet the unique needs of coastal communities. Developed and maintained by NOAA's Office for Coastal Management, content comes from hundreds of organizations, including federal, state, and local agencies, plus private sector and non-profit contributors. The Digital Coast website provides not only site-specific coastal data, but also related tools, training, and information needed to make these data useful for coastal decision makers. The Digital Coast Act authorizes the Digital Coast as a standing national program and supports NOAA's efforts to increase access to authoritative data, tools, and training that enable coastal communities to plan for long-term resilience, manage water resources, and respond to emergencies.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) – [National Coastal Resilience Fund](#)**

The National Coastal Resilience Fund restores, increases, and strengthens natural infrastructure to protect coastal communities while also enhancing habitats for fish and wildlife. The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) executes this program in partnership with NOAA to invest in conservation projects that restore or expand natural features, such as coastal marshes and wetlands, dune and beach systems, oyster and coral reefs, forests, coastal rivers and floodplains, and barrier islands, which minimize the impacts of storms and other naturally occurring events on nearby communities. In Connecticut, five projects have been funded: three in FY22 and two in FY23.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) – [Emergency Coastal Resilience Fund](#)**

The Emergency Coastal Resilience Fund is a partnership effort between NOAA and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to increase the resilience of coastal communities within federally-declared disaster areas impacted by hurricanes and wildfires in 2018, 2020, and 2021. Connecticut received funding for two projects in 2021.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - Regional Ocean Partnerships: [Northeast Regional Ocean Council](#)**

To maintain quality constituent service, the NOAA Office for Coastal Management staff in this region are active co-leaders and participants in the Northeast Regional Ocean Council, a Regional Ocean Partnership made up of coastal states, federal agencies, tribes and other partners to address regional solutions in three priority areas: ocean planning, coastal hazards resilience and ocean and coastal ecosystem health. With funding provided through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, NOAA is investing approximately \$56 million nationwide over five years to enhance and support the priorities of established regional ocean partnerships like NROC, to advance priority work that requires coordinating interstate and intertribal management of ocean and coastal management issues, and enhancing sharing and integration of data to inform management decisions.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - [OR&R Preparedness, Response, and Restoration Coordinators](#)**

NOAA's Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) is a center of expertise in preparing for, evaluating, and responding to threats to coastal environments, including oil and chemical spills, releases from hazardous waste sites, disasters, and marine debris. To fulfill its mission of protecting and restoring NOAA trust resources, OR&R provides scientific and technical support to prepare for and respond to environmental threats that coastal communities face; determines damage to natural resources from those releases; protects and restores marine and coastal ecosystems; and works with coastal communities to address critical local and regional coastal challenges.

The **Regional Preparedness Coordinator (RPC)** is strategically placed within the region to ensure that NOS and our partners are able to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from all hazards, including coastal disasters. The RPC serves as a liaison between NOS and its federal, state, and local disaster preparedness and emergency response partners. A key role of the RPC is to better understand the needs and opportunities within the region and to ensure partners have the tools and resources necessary to inform decision-making. The RPC has expertise across the spectrum of emergency management and provides preparedness, response, and recovery services including planning, training, exercises, response coordination, continuous improvement, and long-term recovery. The RPC, based in Gloucester, Massachusetts, serves the Northeast region – Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and New York.

Eleven regionally based **Scientific Support Coordinators (SSC)** harness the input of a multi-disciplinary team to address issues such as oil slick trajectory forecasting, environmental tradeoffs, best practices, resources at risk, and chemical hazard assessment to reduce risks to coastal habitats and resources. The SSC for Connecticut is based in Gloucester, Massachusetts.

OR&R identifies and quantifies environmental injury caused by releases of oil and hazardous materials. Our network of **Regional Resource Coordinators** work with multidisciplinary scientific, economic, and legal teams with the goal of securing the appropriate amount and type of restoration required to restore injured NOAA trust resources and compensate the public for their lost use. We collaborate with NMFS Restoration Center and NOAA General Council through the Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP) to ensure the process is efficient, legally defensible and restoration focused. The RRCs serving the Northeast/Great Lakes region are based in Boston, Massachusetts and New York, New York.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - OR&R [Atlantic Environmental Response Management Application](#) and [Response Tools for Oil and Chemical Spills](#)**

Assessing important spatial information and designing successful restoration projects rely upon interpreting and mapping geographic information, including the location, duration, and impacts from oil spills, other hazardous materials, or debris released into the environment. Atlantic Environmental Response Management Application (ERMA®) is an online mapping tool that integrates both static and real-time data, such as ship locations, weather, and ocean currents, providing an easy-to-use common operating picture for environmental responders and decision makers. In addition to ERMA, the Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) offers a suite of [tools](#) to support emergency responders dealing with oil and chemical spills. From Environmental Sensitivity Index (ESI) maps and data which provide concise summaries of coastal resources including biological resources and sensitive shorelines to GNOME, a trajectory and fate model that predicts the route and weathering of pollutants spilled on water, and so much more, these tools provide easy-access to critical data that support a wide range of needs for emergency responders, ultimately supporting our coastal communities.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - [Marine Debris Projects and Partnerships in Connecticut](#)**

The NOAA Marine Debris Program (MDP) in the Office of Response and Restoration leads national and international efforts to reduce the impacts of marine debris. The program supports marine debris removal, education and outreach, and research projects in partnership with state and local agencies, tribes, non-governmental organizations, academia, and industry. The MDP Northeast Regional Coordinator supports coordination efforts with regional stakeholders, provides support to grant-funded projects, tracks progress of projects, and conducts regional marine debris outreach to local audiences. The Long Island Sound Marine Debris Action Plan, covering Connecticut and Long Island, NY, was published in 2022 by the Connecticut and New York Sea Grant programs with support from the MDP and the help of nearly 50 different organizations. The plan establishes a comprehensive framework for strategic action to ensure the Long Island Sound and its coasts, watersheds, people, and wildlife are free from the impacts of marine debris. The MDP is supporting the Connecticut Audubon Society in working with 14 schools in the Long Island Sound watershed to assess the most prevalent types of marine debris in local waterways and implement prevention methods using student-designed solutions.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - [OR&R Support Disaster Preparedness in Coastal Communities](#)**

The Office Response and Restoration (OR&R) and National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant) are partnering to support coastal communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from natural or human-caused disasters. A combined total of \$1,966,331 in federal funds from fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024 have been used to support eleven projects. In fiscal year 2024, four projects were selected in Alaska, Connecticut, the Northern Gulf of Mexico region and South Carolina, focused on strengthening local disaster readiness and recovery in underserved communities.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - [Mussel Watch Program](#)**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Mussel Watch Program (MWP) monitors the status and trends of chemical contaminants and biological stressors in the nation's coastal waters. MWP began in 1986, and is based on the periodic collection and analysis of bivalves (oysters and mussels) and sediment from a network of more than 300 monitoring sites nationwide. Contaminants monitored at each site include the EPA's Priority Pollutant List of toxic

substances and a suite of chemicals of emerging concern such as flame retardants, PFAS, pharmaceuticals, and current use pesticides.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - [Phytoplankton Monitoring Network](#)**

The Phytoplankton Monitoring Network (PMN) is a nationwide community-based volunteer program of citizen scientists monitoring for the presence of organisms that can lead to Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) formation. Volunteers serve as data collectors for marine and freshwater blooms at more than 200 coastal and inland sites in the U.S. and Caribbean. Monitoring is conducted year-round and volunteers are trained to measure salinity, air and water temperatures, and how to collect phytoplankton samples using a plankton net. Samples are then analyzed for any HAB organisms via microscopy. Data collected by PMN volunteers enhances the Nation's ability to respond to and manage the growing threat posed by HABs by collecting important data for species composition and distribution in coastal and freshwater environments and creating working relationships between volunteers and professional marine biotoxin researchers. Event monitoring can assist state and federal agencies to issue timely warnings about shellfish consumption and other public health concerns.

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**Statewide**

**National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - [New England Bay Watershed Education and Training Program](#)**

The NOAA Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) program is a competitive grants program that provides funding for locally relevant environmental education projects for K-12 audiences. The New England B-WET program is administered by the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office on behalf of the NOAA Office of Education. New England B-WET currently serves Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut. The New England B-WET program recognizes that knowledge and commitment built from firsthand experience, especially in the context of one's community and culture, is essential for achieving environmental stewardship. New England B-WET regional grant competitions are responsive to local education and environmental priorities. Please see the funding opportunities for specifics.

**National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - [Northeast Fisheries Science Center](#) and [Greater Atlantic Regional Office](#)**

NMFS is responsible for the management, conservation and protection of living marine resources within the United States' Exclusive Economic Zone (water three to 200 miles offshore). Using the tools provided by the *Magnuson-Stevens Act*, NMFS assesses and predicts the status of fish stocks, develops and ensures compliance with fisheries regulations, restores and protects habitats and works to reduce wasteful fishing practices, and promotes sustainable fisheries. Under the *Marine Mammal Protection Act* and the *Endangered Species Act*, NMFS recovers protected marine species (e.g. whales, turtles).

The Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (located in Gloucester, MA) includes divisions that promote sustainable fisheries, habitat conservation, and recovery of protected species, and conducts statistical analysis and programs supporting these divisions. Key fish species managed in the Greater Atlantic Region include the Northeast "multispecies complex" (cod, haddock, yellowtail flounder etc.), Atlantic sea scallops, sea herring, lobster, and summer flounder. Key marine endangered species in this region are North Atlantic right whales, leatherback, loggerhead, and Kemp's ridley sea turtles, Atlantic salmon, and Atlantic and shortnose sturgeons. NMFS is the lead agency coordinating the Large Whale and Sea Turtle Disentanglement Program activities and the Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program activities. The core functions of these programs include coordinating volunteer networks to: respond to entanglements and strandings, investigate mortality events, and conduct biomonitoring, tissue/serum banking, and analytical quality assurance. The Office also fosters sustainable [aquaculture](#) in the region, with two Regional Aquaculture Coordinators that

act as a liaison between federal and state agencies to assist in permitting and coordination activities, supporting aquaculture outreach and education, and collaborating with industry, academia and other stakeholders on regional marine aquaculture issues.

The Northeast Fisheries Science Center (headquartered in Woods Hole, MA) studies fishery species and fisheries, monitors and models ocean ecosystems, and provides reliable advice for policy makers. The Center's work promotes recovery and long-term sustainability of marine life in the region, supports both wild and cultured seafood harvests, helps sustain coastal communities, and generates economic opportunities and benefits from the use of these resources. In addition to its five laboratories, the Center uses three research vessels to support its work. They are: the NOAA ships *Henry B. Bigelow*, and the small research vessels *Gloria Michelle* and *Victor Loosanoff*. The Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office and the Science Center are responsible for the District of Columbia and the following states: Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina; and the inland states of Vermont, Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and West Virginia.

#### **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - [Restoration Center](#)**

The [NOAA Restoration Center](#), within the [Office of Habitat Conservation](#), works with partners across the nation to restore habitat to sustain fisheries, recover protected species, and maintain resilient coastal ecosystems and communities. We have over 30 years conducting habitat restoration through competitive funding opportunities and technical assistance. We also work to reverse habitat damage from disasters like oil spills, ship groundings, and severe storms. See the interactive [Restoration Atlas](#) to find habitat restoration projects near you. Site visits to see habitat projects may be available in your state, please inquire if interested.

In addition, the Office of Habitat Conservation is responsible for executing an unprecedented \$1.4 billion in funding under [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act for habitat restoration and fish passage](#). We are working with our partners to do this through our expert technical assistance and four funding competitions: Fish Passage, Tribal Fish Passage, Transformational Habitat Restoration, and Habitat Restoration for Tribes and Underserved Communities. We have funded 214 awards totaling \$985M in rounds one and two with more to come in round 3. We are funding work all over the country, [explore them on our interactive map](#).

#### **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - [Office of Law Enforcement Northeast Division](#)**

NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement is the only conservation enforcement program (Federal or State) that is exclusively dedicated to Federal fisheries and marine resource enforcement. Its mission is to protect global marine resources by enforcing domestic laws and international treaties and obligations dedicated to protecting wildlife and their natural habitat. Our special agents and enforcement officers ensure compliance with these laws and take enforcement action if there are violations. Additionally, the Cooperative Enforcement Program allows NOAA the ability to leverage the resources and assistance of 27 coast states and U.S. territorial marine conservation law enforcement agencies in direct support of the Federal enforcement mission. Effective fisheries law enforcement is critical to creating a level playing field for U.S. fishermen and enabling sustainable fisheries to support vibrant coastal communities. The Office of Law Enforcement's Northeast Division, which covers Connecticut, is headquartered in Gloucester, Massachusetts.

#### **National Ocean Service (NOS) - Students for [Zero Waste Week](#)**

Students are inviting their local communities to "Go Green and Think Blue" by joining them in the annual *Students for Zero Waste Week campaign*. During this campaign led by the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, students focus on reducing land-based waste in order to protect the health of local marine environments. These young leaders are raising awareness of how single-use plastic and other types of litter affect the health of local watersheds, national marine

sanctuaries, and the ocean. In addition, some schools are looking at ways to reduce their energy use on campus with hopes of raising awareness of how the burning of fossil fuels also impacts the health of the ocean.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) - [NOAA Ocean Guardian Youth Ambassador Program](#)**

Youth aged 13-18 from across the United States and its territories that are committed to ocean conservation and stewardship of our blue planet can apply to become a NOAA Ocean Guardian Youth Ambassador. This year-long program looks for enthusiastic youth with new ideas and a unique perspective who want to learn more about [America's underwater treasures](#) and share their passion with others. Youth learn how to become a leader at their school or in their local community to make a difference in the conservation of the ocean through marine protected areas.

**National Ocean Service (NOS) – [Regional Geodetic Advisor](#)**

The Regional Geodetic Advisor is a National Ocean Service (NOS) employee that resides in a region and serves as a liaison between the National Geodetic Survey (NGS) and its public, academic and private sector constituents within their assigned region. NGS has a Regional Geodetic Advisor stationed in Barre, Vermont serving the Northeast region including Connecticut. The Geodetic Advisor provides training, guidance and assistance to constituents managing geospatial activities that are tied to the National Spatial Reference System (NSRS), the framework and coordinate system for all positioning activities in the Nation. The Geodetic Advisor serves as a subject matter expert in geodesy and regional geodetic issues, collaborating internally across NOS and NOAA to ensure that all regional geospatial activities are properly referenced to the NSRS.

**National Weather Service (NWS) - [Automated Surface Observing Systems Stations](#)**

The Automated Surface Observing Systems (ASOS) program is a joint effort of the National Weather Service (NWS), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the Department of Defense (DOD). ASOS serves as the Nation's primary surface weather observing network. ASOS is designed to support weather forecast activities and aviation operations and, at the same time, support the needs of the meteorological, hydrological, and climatological research communities. ASOS works non-stop, updating observations every minute, 24 hours a day, every day of the year observing basic weather elements, such as cloud cover, precipitation, wind, sea level pressure, and conditions, such as rain, snow, freezing rain, thunderstorms, and fog. There are eight ASOS stations in Connecticut.

**National Weather Service (NWS) - [Cooperative Observer Program Sites](#)**

The National Weather Service (NWS) Cooperative Observer Program (COOP) is truly the Nation's weather and climate observing network of, by and for the people. More than 10,000 volunteers take observations on farms, in urban and suburban areas, National Parks, seashores, and mountaintops. The data are representative of where people live, work and play. The COOP was formally created in 1890 under the NWS Organic Act to provide observational meteorological data, usually consisting of daily maximum and minimum temperatures, snowfall, and 24-hour precipitation totals, required to define the climate of the United States and to help measure long-term climate changes, and to provide observational meteorological data in near real-time to support forecast, warning and other public service programs of the NWS. The data are also used by other federal (including the Department of Homeland Security), state and local entities, as well as private companies (such as the energy and insurance industries). In some cases, the data are used to make billions of dollars' worth of decisions. For example, the energy sector uses COOP data to calculate the Heating and Cooling Degree Days which are used to determine homeowners' monthly energy bills. There are 21 COOP sites in Connecticut.

**National Weather Service (NWS) - [NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards Transmitters](#)**

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather information directly from the nearest National Weather Service (NWS) forecast office. NWR broadcasts official NWS warnings, watches, forecasts and other hazard information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Working with the Federal

Communication Commission's (FCC) Emergency Alert System, NWR is an "All Hazards" radio network, making it the single source for comprehensive weather and emergency information. In conjunction with federal, state, and local emergency managers and other public officials, NWR also broadcasts warning and post-event information for all types of hazards – including natural (such as earthquakes or avalanches), environmental (such as chemical releases or oil spills), and public safety (such as 911 Telephone outages). NWR includes 1,100 transmitters covering all 50 states, adjacent coastal waters, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the U.S. Pacific Territories. There are four NWR transmitters in Connecticut.

#### **Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) - [Connecticut Sea Grant College Program](#)**

The National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant) is a federal-university partnership administered by NOAA that integrates research, extension outreach, and education. Sea Grant forms a national network of 34 programs in all U.S. coastal and Great Lakes states, Puerto Rico, and Guam. Connecticut Sea Grant supports the wise use and conservation of marine and coastal resources through research, technology transfer, and education in its statewide program. Current research targets estuaries and ecosystem health, with a particular emphasis on projects with relevance to the Long Island Sound and its watershed. Topics include aquaculture, coastal ecosystems and economies, climate adaptation, water quality, seafood and fisheries. Connecticut's Sea Grant Extension staff collaborates with industry and conducts outreach activities in the target research areas. The K-12 education program includes professional development for educators, curriculum consultation, dissemination of resources, program/project evaluation, creating connections between scientists and educators, and facilitating scientists' outreach activities. Administrative offices are located in Groton. Get involved with Sea Grant through state and national opportunities like the John A. Knauss Marine Policy Fellowship program at [seagrant.noaa.gov](https://seagrant.noaa.gov).

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#### **[Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\) / Inflation Reduction Act \(IRA\) Projects](#)**

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) was entrusted with billions of supplemental federal funding dollars with passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law on November 15, 2021 and the Inflation Reduction Act on August 16, 2022. This historic infrastructure funding has been invested in communities across the nation to build resilience in the face of climate change. NOAA distributed funding to communities, tribal, state and local governments, higher education programs, businesses, non-profit organizations, and facilities in need. NOAA funded billions of dollars in grants and cooperative agreements across the country to fund projects that enhance climate resilience, restore coastal and marine habitats, improve safety, and create jobs. For an interactive map of NOAA BIL and IRA investments in your state, visit <https://www.noaa.gov/bil-ira-awards-explorer>.

#### **[BIL](#)**

##### **It's About Dam Time: Removing Kinneytown Dam to Restore Fish Passage and Advance Environmental Justice, \$4,293,430**

This project will remove the Kinneytown Dam Facility on the Naugatuck River. It will open 29 miles for blueback herring, American shad, and alewife on the mainstem river, and an additional 28 miles of tributaries for American eel. It also includes developing public access points to improve opportunities for using the river.

##### **Survey and planning for removal of invasive plants in the Connecticut National Estuarine Research Reserve, \$300,000**

This funding will build the capacity of the Connecticut National Estuarine Research Reserve (Connecticut Reserve) within University of Connecticut to plan for and implement habitat restoration and conservation projects proposed through funding opportunities connected to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Specifically, the Connecticut Reserve will use these

funds to conduct a survey of invasive plants, as well as other habitat impairments (ponding on marshes, erosion, obstructions to flow, damaged infrastructure, etc.), and to initiate planning for an ongoing program of invasive removal and habitat restoration.

**IJA Funded Habitat Protection & Restoration Grant, \$431,460**

This funding will build the capacity of the state's federally-approved coastal management program located within the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to plan for and implement habitat restoration and conservation projects proposed through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and other funding opportunities. Specifically, DEEP will use these funds to establish a new full-time permanent staff position and seasonal hire to improve overall coordination of land acquisition and habitat restoration projects that will support the state's habitat and resilience goals in Connecticut's coastal area, including Long Island Sound and its tributaries.

**IRA**

**Resilience Assessment and Planning Study of Tide Gates in Coastal Connecticut, \$400,000**

This funding will build the ability of the state's federally-approved coastal management program with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to implement projects, initiatives, and programs that increase the climate resilience of coastal communities within coastal counties. Specifically, DEEP will use these funds to conduct a statewide planning study of tide gates in coastal marshes and waterways. The results of this study will help to identify potential capital projects which may include removal, modification or replacement of tide gates to achieve balanced resilience of the human and natural environment.

**2024 - 2029 CT NERR Non-Competitive Funding Award, \$400,000**

This funding will build the ability of the Connecticut National Estuarine Research Reserve (CT Reserve) with the University of Connecticut to implement projects, initiatives, and programs that increase the climate resilience of coastal communities within coastal counties. Specifically, the CT Reserve will use these funds to address the capacity needs of the Monitoring program through the purchase of additional equipment and salary contributions to key staff. Further, funding will support the need for professional development to ensure that CT Reserve staff are at the leading edge of climate resiliency issues. Finally, funding will be used to support the development and implementation of at least one workshop or training event.

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More information for those offices may be found at [NOAA.gov](https://www.noaa.gov).

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