

# Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund

## Project Design & Building Partnerships



RESTORE  
AMERICA'S  
ESTUARIES

- The Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) is a partnership between:
    - Restore America’s Estuaries
    - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
    - Long Island Sound Study (LISS).
  - Purpose: To provide technical and financial assistance to environmental justice communities to address environmental issues and improve the quality and accessibility of the Long Island Sound.
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- Funding is provided by EPA through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and will help meet the Justice40 Initiative goal which states: “40% of the overall benefits of these Federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized, underserved, and overburdened by pollution.”
  - EPA defines environmental justice as, “the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys:
    - (1) The same degree or protection from environmental and health hazards, and
    - (2) Equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.”





# Long Island Sound: The Urban Sea

The Long Island Sound Study formed in 1985, a bi-state partnership of federal and state agencies, user groups, and concerned groups and individuals dedicated to protecting and restoring this vital estuary.

Home to more than 1200 invertebrates, 170 fish species, and dozens of migratory birds; 9 million people on the watershed.



**Long Island Sound Study**  
A Partnership to Restore and Protect the Sound



Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation



Slide Source: Long Island Sound Study



## Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)



### 4 Themes:

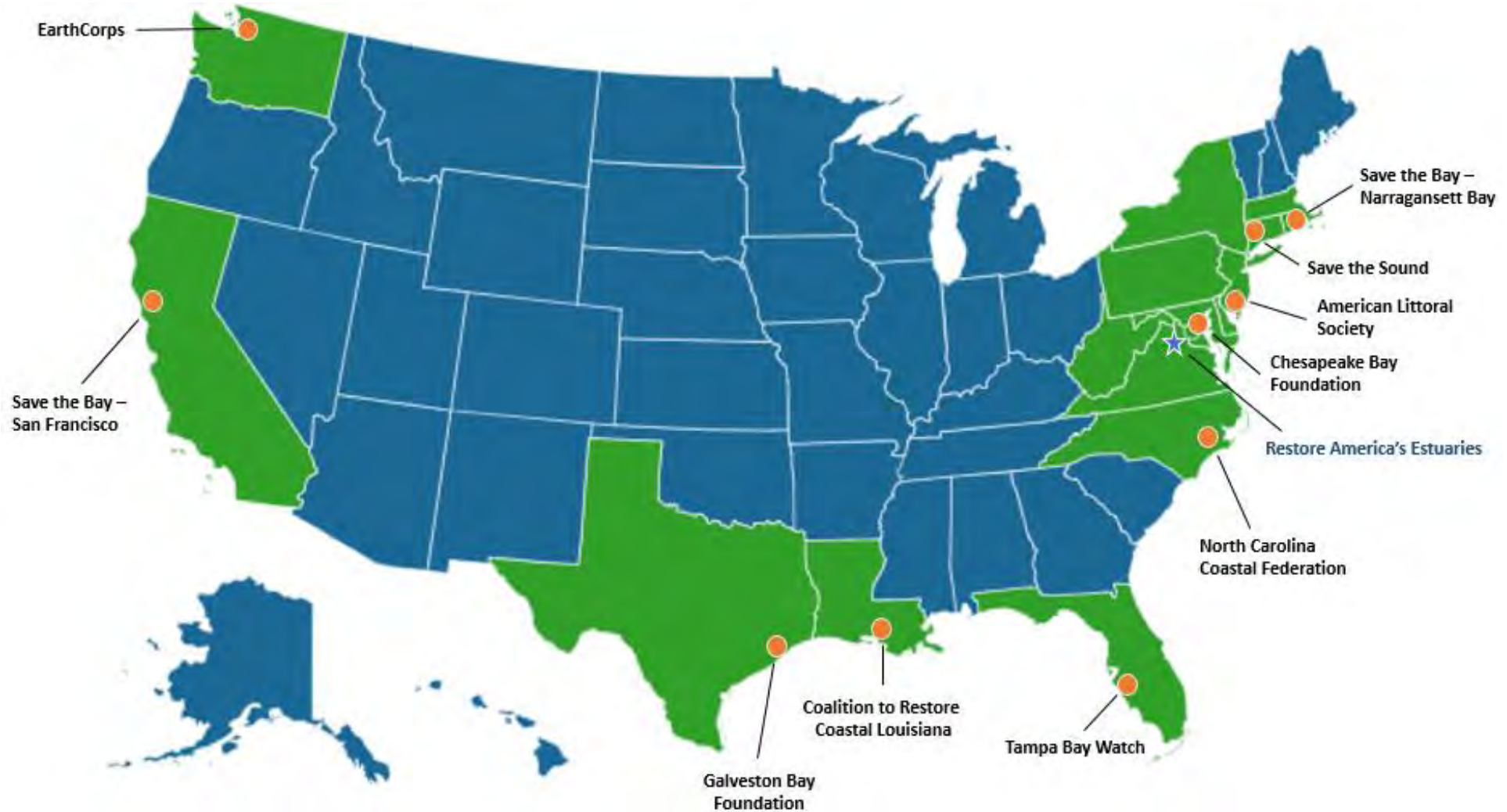
- Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds
- Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife
- Sustainable and Resilient Communities
- Sound Science and Inclusive Management



### Cross-cutting Principles:

- Long-term sustainability
- Climate Resiliency
- Environmental Justice

# Restore America's Estuaries is dedicated to the protection and restoration of bays and estuaries as essential resources for our nation



## Affiliate Members

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay | Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership | Audubon Society | Billion Oyster Project | Black in Marine Science | Bonefish & Tarpon Trust | Buzzards Bay Coalition | Choctawatchee Basin Alliance | Clean Foundation | Coastal & Estuarine Research Federation | Ducks Unlimited | Ecosphere Restoration Institute | Environmental Defense Fund | Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Land Trust Alliance | The Nature Conservancy | National Wildlife Federation | Ocean Conservancy | Pontchartrain Conservancy | Restore the Mississippi River Delta | Women's Aquatic Network

# RAE Team

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- **Shahela Begum, Program Director**  
Day-to-day lead on program including management, design, implementation and adaptation
- **Samaya Rubio, Community Engagement Associate**  
Lead organization DEIJA content, community events and outreach
- **Daniel Hayden, RAE President & CEO**  
Project oversight and integration into other RAE initiatives
- **Dr. Philip McAdoo, Senior Advisor Inclusive Coasts Initiative**  
Advise on program content and training
- **Alex Rodriguez, Environmental Justice Specialist, Save the Sound**  
Support with community outreach and engagement
- **Rob Shane, Senior Communications Manager**  
Communications planning, external communications, leverage partner content
- **Sara Smith, Grants Administrator**  
Manage finance and administrative aspects
- **Elsa Schwartz, Senior Director Restoration and Administration**  
Ensure compliance with all federal rules and regulations, review budgets and workplans



# Long Island Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) - Program Goals

## • Program Overview

- Two rounds of grant funding of roughly \$1.0M to \$1.5M / year to support roughly 15-30 orgs per year
- Maximum grant size about \$5,000 to \$100,000
- Annual learning exchange among regional institutions, including stipends to attend
- Investment in training programs and grants

## • Restore America's Estuaries Role

- Manage two rounds of grants; oversee implementation, support awardees
- Prioritize and design training programs and training grants
- Design and manage annual learning exchange
- Prepare local organizations to apply for grant funding through this program and others
- Strengthen and diversify connections within Long Island Sound region
- Review successes and lessons learned





# Funding Priorities

LISCIF's funding priorities are aligned with the [CCMP](#) themes and [Implementation Actions](#):

For 2024, LISCIF's main funding themes are:

- Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds
- Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife
- Sustainable and Resilient Communities
- Sound Science and Inclusive Management

Eligible projects and activities will be community driven and address challenges/risks faced by communities experiencing environmental justice issues.





# Themes and Goals of the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)

Source: <https://longislandsoundstudy.net/our-vision-and-plan/>



Source: CCMP, Great Gull Island supports the largest nesting populations of common terns in the world. (Photo by Venu Challa)



## Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife

The goal of this theme is to restore and protect the Sound's ecological balance in a healthy, productive, and resilient state of benefit both people and the natural environment.



## Sustainable and Resilient Communities

The goal of this theme is to support vibrant, informed, and engaged communities that use, appreciate, and help protect Long Island Sound.

Source: CCMP, Youth from Rocking the Boat, a Bronx environmental organization, on board a student-built boat on the Bronx River. (Photo by Joaquin Cotten)

Source: CCMP, CTDEEP Scientists conduct trawl surveys of the Sound's marine life, including horseshoe crabs, on board the Research Vessel John Dempsey. (Photo by Richard Howard)



## Sound Science and Inclusive Management

The goal of this theme is to manage Long Island Sound using sound science and cross jurisdictional governance that is inclusive, adaptive, innovative, and accountable.

## Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds

The goal of this theme is to improve water quality by reducing contaminant and nutrient loads from the land and waters impacting the Long Island Sound.

Source: CCMP, The Lower Connecticut River, a Long Island Sound Stewardship Area, Old Lyme, CT. (Photo by Jerry Monkman/Ecophotography)

# Program Priorities - Alignment with the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP)

## Main Funding Themes:

**Clean Waters & Healthy Watersheds**

**Thriving Habitats & Abundant Wildlife**

**Sustainable & Resilient Communities**

**Sound Science & Inclusive Management**

1. Projects that result in quantifiable pollutant prevention or reduction
2. Restoring habitat within the Important Coastal Habitat Types targeted by LISS
3. Projects that foster diverse, balanced and abundant populations of fish, birds and wildlife
4. Public engagement, knowledge and stewardship
5. Projects that enhance community resilience and sustainability
6. Planning and design that set the stage for implementation of water quality projects, eligible habitat restoration projects and resilience projects
7. Community-based science projects
8. Data management and integration projects
9. Other similar activities that the applicant proposes



# Case Studies from the Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) Grants

The LISFF grant supports larger scale implementation and planning projects to restore and protect the Long Island Sound estuary. The following case studies are from the latest round of projects funded in 2022 and are aligned with the Long Island Sound Study CCMP; hitting at least one of the priority themes:

- Clean Water and Healthy Watersheds
- Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife
- Sustainable and Resilient Communities
- Sound Science and Inclusive Management



Source: Futures Fund Living Shoreline Project, Photo by Scott Kruitbosch  
<https://longislandsoundstudy.net/about/grants/lis-futures-fund/>



**Theme:** Clean Water and Healthy Watersheds

## **Example from Futures Fund 2022**

**Project:** Improving Water Quality by Retrofitting Parking Lots and Driveways with Permeable Alternatives

**Grantee:** Science Museum of Long Island

**Project Area:** Leeds Pond Preserve, Science Museum of Long Island, Manhasset

**Description:** Project plans to replace or retrofit impermeable parking lot and driveway surfaces with permeable alternatives at the Science Museum of Long Island. Project will set-the-stage to capture and infiltrate polluted stormwater runoff before it flows into Manhasset Bay and Long Island Sound.

### **Project Activities:**

1. Assess different types of previous, permeable, and porous pavers in terms of water infiltration rate, their capacity to support vehicular and human traffic, aesthetics, and maintenance requirements;
2. Evaluate subsurface conditions, carry out percolation tests, take measurements, develop concept and final designs, and estimate costs;
3. Produce construction-ready designs to be submitted for permit review.





An underwater photograph showing a dense field of eelgrass in a shallow, sunlit body of water. The grass blades are long and thin, with some showing yellowish-green tips. Sunlight filters through the water, creating a shimmering effect and illuminating the scene. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting more vegetation or the water's surface.

**Theme:** Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife

**Example from Futures Fund 2022**

**Project:** Community Engagement and Education for Eelgrass Protection on Fishers Island

**Grantee:** Henry L. Ferguson Museum

**Project Area:** Fisher's Island, New York and Southeastern Coastal Communities

**Description:** Build community awareness and support for voluntary long-term actions to protect eelgrass on Fishers Island, New York and in southeastern Connecticut communities. Project seeks to secure community action to sustain this important coastal habitat of Long Island Sound.

**Project Activities:**

1. Develop a plan and materials for the community awareness campaign;
2. Prioritize a list of well supported voluntary actions the community could take to protect eelgrass;
3. Implement the awareness campaign to 500 people and build support for specific actions.

Source: The Henry L. Ferguson Museum  
Barley Field Cove, Fishers Island, NY. *Photo courtesy of seagrassli.org*

<https://fergusonmuseum.org/2022/08/fishers-island-seagrass-management-coalition-plan-august-2022/#>



**Theme:** Sustainable and Resilient Communities

**Example from Futures Fund 2022**

**Project:** Mentoring Youth to Protect Long Island Sound

**Grantee:** Citizens Campaign Fund the Environment

**Project Area:** Smithtown West, Northport, Brentwood, Rocky Point, Riverhead, Oyster Bay, Commack and Our Lady of Mercy in Oyster Bay, Nassau and Suffolk Counties

**Description:** Deliver an educational program about challenges to restoration and protection of the health and living resources in Long Island Sound at high schools on Long Island, New York. Project will deliver a shared Student Action plan for the Sound.

**Project Activities:**

1. Develop and deliver presentations and materials about new and existing challenges to the health of the Sound such as plastic pollution, nitrogen pollution, and climate change;
2. Mentor 200 students to develop and conduct their own project involving the Sound as an interactive activity, a research paper, poster, or video project;
3. Bring students together in the Sound Solutions Summit for High School Students to share their projects and develop two Long Island Sound Student Action Plans to be disseminated in schools, communities and to Long Island Sound Study partners;
4. Create a video about student projects. This project will increase awareness of environmental challenges facing the Sound and engage students in future efforts to protect and restore it.







**Theme:** Sound Science and Inclusive Management

**Example from Futures Fund 2022**

**Project:** Hempstead Harbor Water Quality Monitoring Program

**Grantee:** The Incorporated Village of Sea Cliff

**Project Area:** Outer and Inner Hempstead Harbor, Nassau County, New York

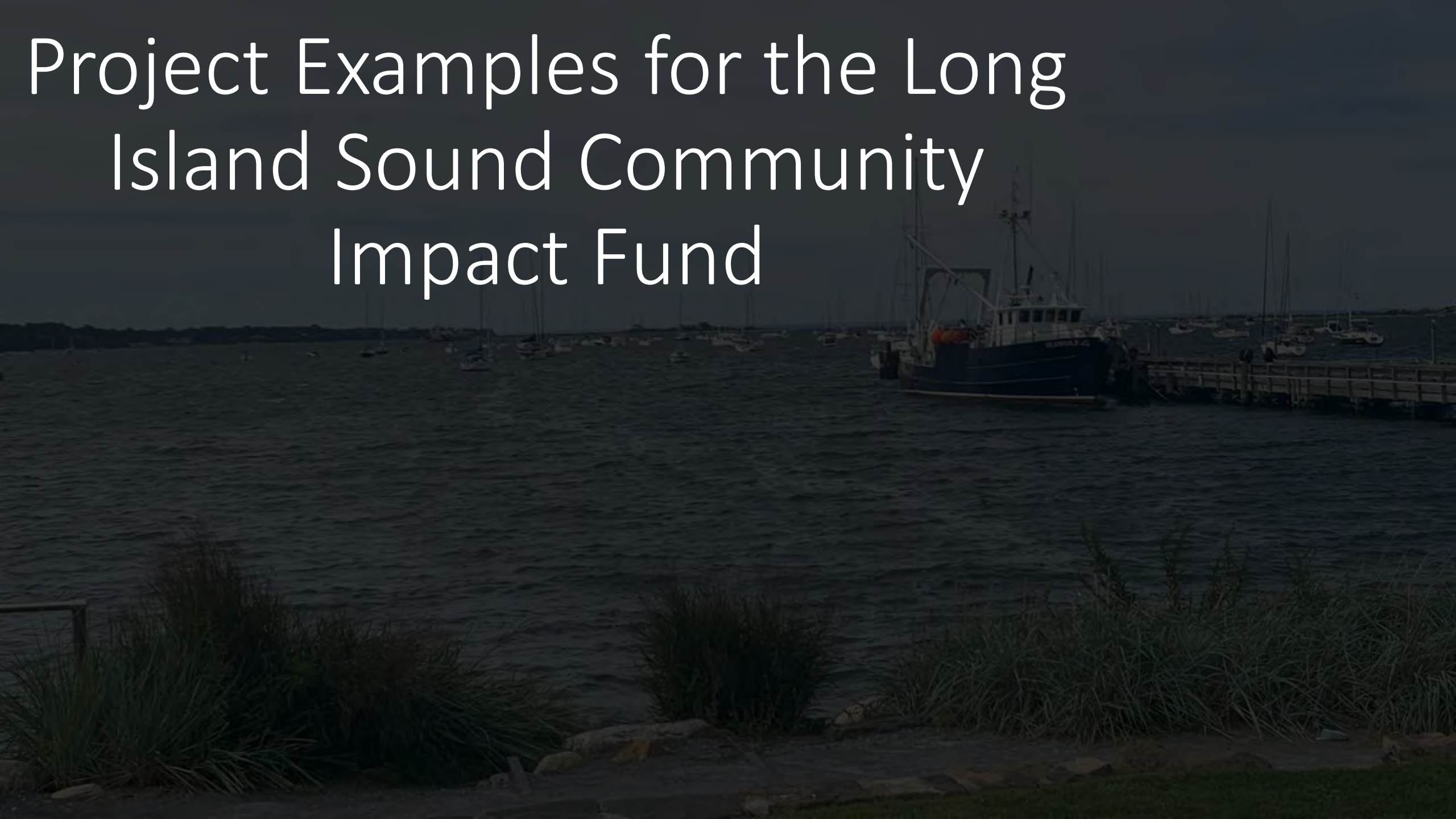
**Description:** Conduct water quality monitoring in Hempstead Harbor, Nassau County, New York. Project will inform management of Hempstead Harbor a waterbody that feeds Long Island Sound.

**Project Activities:**

1. Collect water quality data that informs our understanding of the health of the harbor;
2. Track improvements and declines in water quality;
3. Produce and disseminate two technical reports available to 1,300 individuals, local governments, state and federal agencies, environmental organizations, the Long Island Sound Study, the Long Island Regional Planning Council, and the public about the health of Hempstead Harbor waters.



# Project Examples for the Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund





# Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF24) Project Impact Model Examples



## Example 1: Rainwater Garden Swales





# Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF24)

## Project Impact Model Examples



### Example 2: Shellfish Aquaculture and Restoration

Project: Shellfish  
Aquaculture and  
Restoration



LISCIF Funding  
Priority: Projects  
that foster a  
diverse  
balance and  
abundant  
populations of fish,  
birds, and wildlife.



CCMP Funding  
Theme:  
Thriving and  
Abundant Wildlife



Impact: Increase  
populations of  
oysters, clams, and  
scallops with the  
implementation of  
a shellfish  
management  
plan which also  
supports coastal  
restoration efforts.



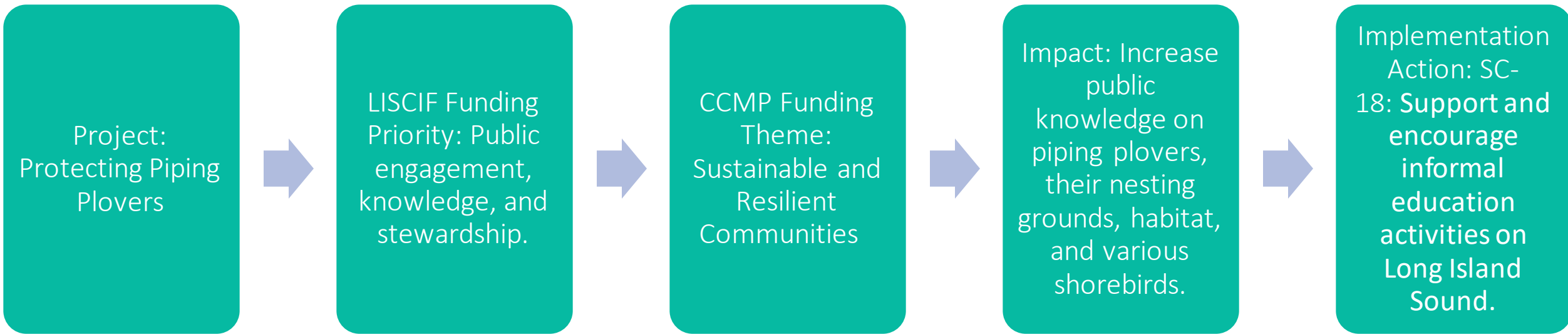
Implementation  
Action: HW-1:  
Complete projects  
that result in  
restoration of  
coastal habitat.



# Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF24) Project Impact Model Examples



## Example 3: Protecting Piping Plovers

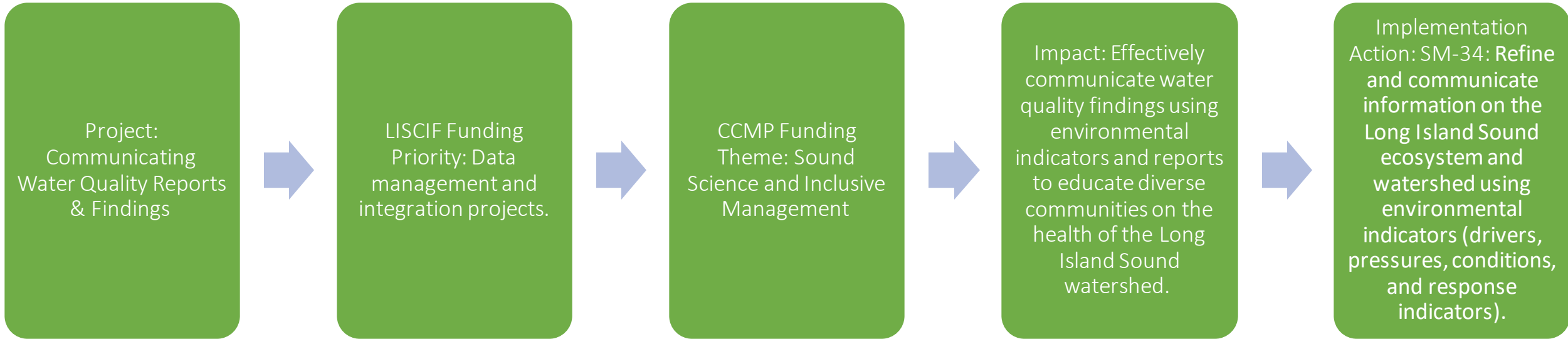


# Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF24)

## Project Impact Model Examples



### Example 4: Communicating Water Quality Reports & Findings





# LISCIF - Timeline



October 2, 2023 –  
LISCIF RFA  
Released

December 1, 2023  
– Letters of Intent  
Due

Week of January  
15, 2024 –  
Notification of  
accepted/rejected  
LOIs

March 15, 2024 –  
Full Proposals Due  
by Invitation

April 2024 –  
Notification of  
Awards

July 1, 2024 –  
Project Start Date

July 31, 2025 –  
Completion of  
Work

September 30,  
2025 – Final  
Reporting Due



# Save the Sound<sup>®</sup>

Action for our region's environment.

The mission of Save the Sound is to protect and improve the land, air, and water of Connecticut and Long Island Sound. We use legal and scientific expertise and bring people together to achieve results that benefit our environment for current and future generations.

Save the Sound works to ensure that:

- Long Island Sound, rivers, and lakes are safe for swimming, fishing, and boating, and our waters and coastal habitats support thriving populations of fish, shellfish, whales, turtles, seals, and birds;
- Your family has clean air to breathe, communities are healthy and vibrant, and Connecticut leads the nation in slowing climate change and building a clean energy economy;
- Our last great open spaces and the lands that filter your drinking water are protected from over-development, and critical natural areas can support wildlife, recreation, and clean water; and
- The laws that protect natural resources, public health, and environmental justice are strong, and the region's residents are empowered to use them.

Source: Save the Sound, [Hyde Pond/Whitford Brook Dam Removal and Planting](#)





# Building Partnerships in the Long Island Sound Region

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- Personal connections
- Honesty
- Showing up
- Regular meet-ups/check-ins
- Take time to grow relationships
- Pause and reflect on state of relationship
- Respectful disengagement when things don't click
- Center and honor people who share their stories
- Prepare to have uncomfortable conversations
- Craft and solidify community agreements





# Equity in Public Participation is Essential to Building Partnerships

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## Public Participation Guidance

1. Transparent and Accountable Decision Making
2. Accessible and Inclusive Decision Making
3. Equal Partnerships, Co-Production, and Self-Determination
4. Respect, Efficiency, and Non-Exploitation



**Save the Sound**<sup>®</sup>  
Action for our region's environment.



# Equal and Meaningful Partnerships

## Example 1:

- Organization 1 has paired up with Organization 2 on holding a climate migration forum.
- Organization 2 has committed resources for media, food, and translation services while Organization 1 has only submitted a press release and one social post to support the event.
- Is this an equal and meaningful partnership?

- Organization 1 wants to get more public participation at the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA). Organization 2 is concerned about rising energy prices for their members.
- Organization 1 offers Organization 2 guidance on how to participate in PURA, helps their members craft comments, and offers them honorariums.
- Is this an equal and meaningful partnership?



Save the Sound®

Action for our region's environment.

# Thank You - Questions?

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[alexrodriguez@savethesound.org](mailto:alexrodriguez@savethesound.org)





# Resources

- Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) Web Page - <https://estuaries.org/liscif/>
- Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) - <https://longislandsoundstudy.net/our-vision-and-plan/>
- CCMP Implementation Actions (IAs) - <https://longislandsoundstudy.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/LISSCCMP-Update-2020-2024.pdf>



## Post-Webinar Survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/LISCIF>

- Please take a moment to answer questions to this post-webinar survey.
- Let us know if this webinar was helpful for you and future trainings you would like to see.
- Help us understand your organizational priorities to build your capacity.
- Inform us of barriers you are facing when applying for federal grants.

Thank You!

