



LONG ISLAND SOUND
PARTNERSHIP

Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife

Successes & Challenges across Long Island Sound



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LONG ISLAND SOUND
PARTNERSHIP

Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife

Restore and protect the health and resilience of habitats and wildlife in Long Island Sound and its ecosystems.



WATERS & WATERSHEDS

HABITATS & WILDLIFE

COMMUNITIES

ENGAGED PUBLIC

Habitats of Long Island Sound



Image from <https://lispartnership.org/about-the-sound/what-makes-it-special/>

Image from <https://portal.ct.gov/deep/fishing/commercial/commercial-fishing>

Image from <https://lispartnership.org/living-resources-monitoring/living-resources-monitoring/>



THRIVING HABITATS AND ABUNDANT WILDLIFE



Restore and protect the health and
resilience of habitats and wildlife in
Long Island Sound and its ecosystems.

THRIVING HABITATS AND ABUNDANT WILDLIFE

OBJECTIVES

ACTIONS

Coastal Habitat: Protect and enhance the extent, health, and wildlife benefits of coastal habitats through restorative measures to combat deterioration and loss.

- Restore coastal habitat through established restoration techniques or help validate and communicate innovative approaches.
- Install living shorelines for coastal habitat restoration and protection, including the conversion of existing hard-armored shorelines to a more natural condition.
- Survey, research, and monitor changes in extent and abundance of coastal habitat types, focusing on tidal wetlands and seagrass.

Offshore Habitat: Protect and enhance the health of offshore habitat and their associated species.

- Promote marine spatial planning that balances human uses and protects ecosystem functions of offshore habitat and species.
- Map the seafloor to characterize underwater habitats and use that data to enhance coastal and marine spatial planning and designation of protected areas and buffer zones.
- Steward and restore offshore habitat, supporting the development and implementation of action plans and programs that incorporate community science, engagement, and participation.

Habitat Connectivity: Increase connectivity of coastal habitat to enhance biodiversity and support migratory pathways.

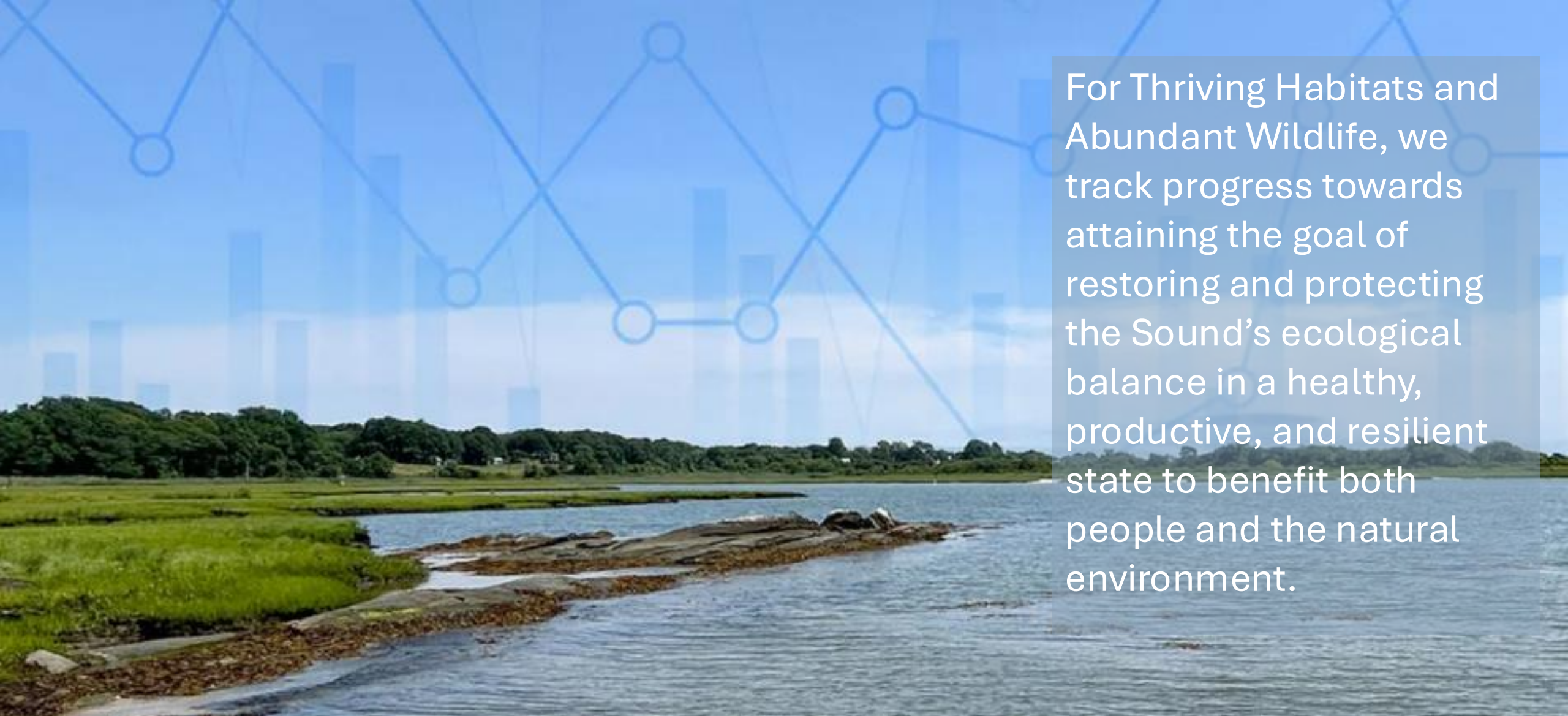
- Use remote sensing, mapping tools, modeling, and field verification to restore and protect habitat patches and river miles to enhance connectivity.
- Remove stream barriers to restore fish and wildlife migration, sediment transport, and other stream functions.
- Collaborate regionally to streamline permitting pathways to strengthen regional capacity for habitat restoration.

Conserved Open Space: Conserve open space through land acquisition while maintaining and enhancing the total area of protected land.

- Protect coastal habitat from development through the implementation of land conservation plans that identify priorities for conservation, management, and investment.
- Increase access and enhance sustainable stewardship of conserved lands particularly for distressed communities.



Our Progress



For Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife, we track progress towards attaining the goal of restoring and protecting the Sound's ecological balance in a healthy, productive, and resilient state to benefit both people and the natural environment.

Our Progress



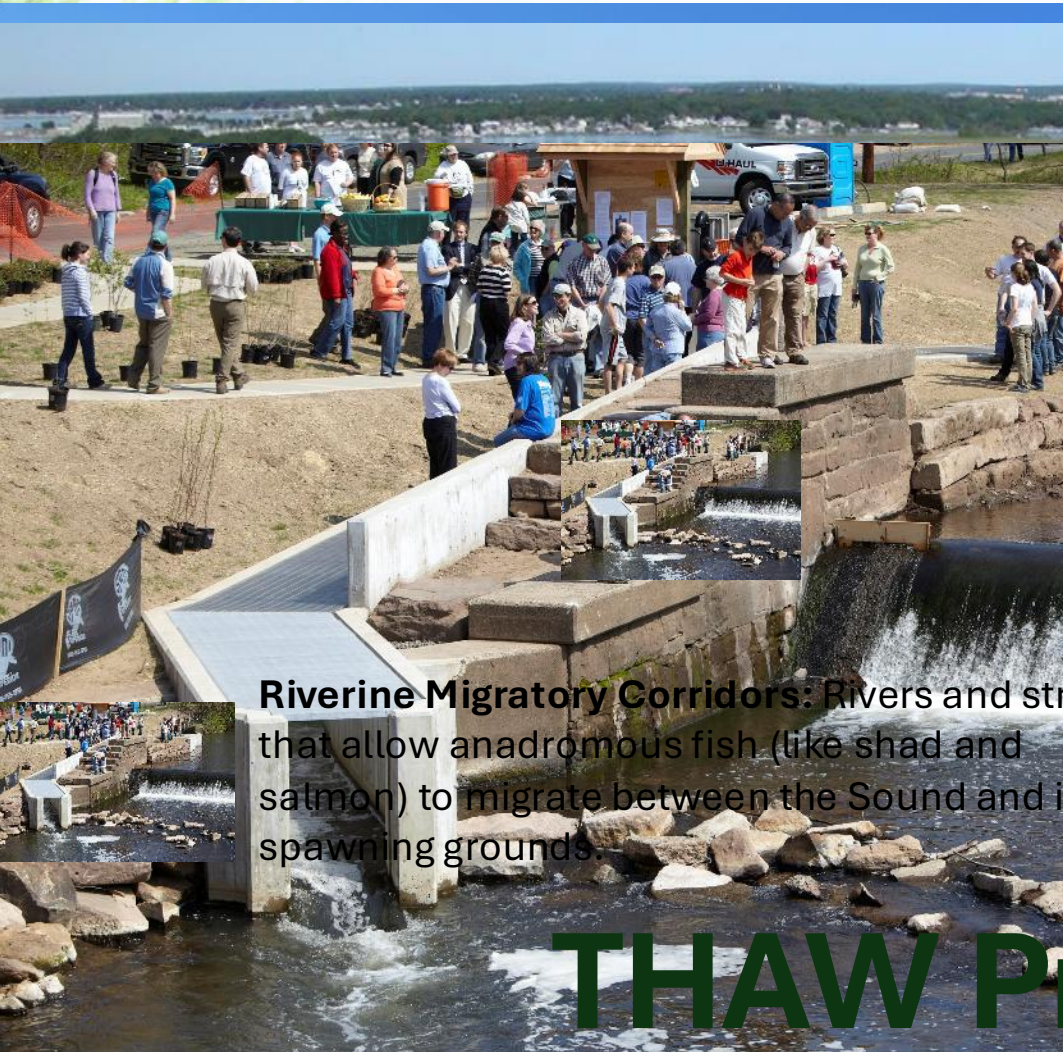
Tidal Wetlands: Vital transitional zones that filter water, store floodwaters, and act as nurseries for young fish and birds.



Freshwater Wetlands: Inland marshy and



Intertidal Flats: Mud and sand flats exposed at low tide that serve as feeding grounds for shorebirds and waterfowl.



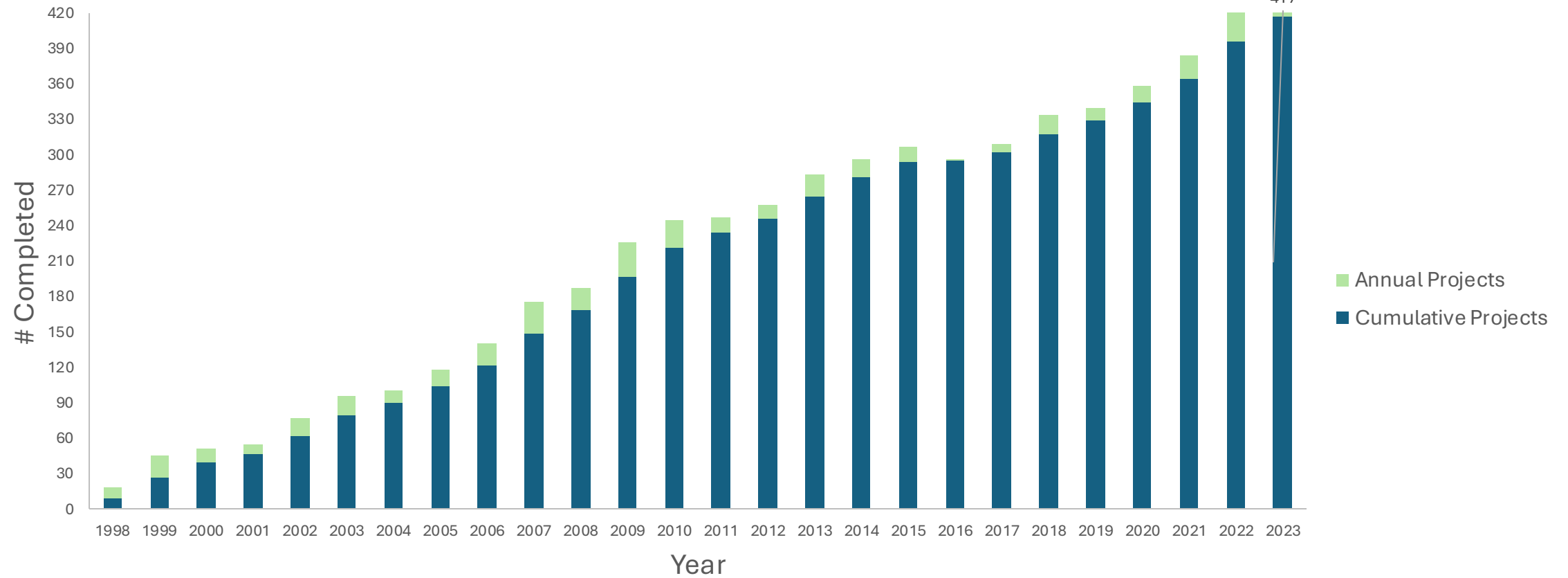
Riverine Migratory Corridors: Rivers and streams that allow anadromous fish (like shad and salmon) to migrate between the Sound and inland spawning grounds.



Rocky Intertidal Zones: Hard, rocky shores that are home to barnacles, mussels, and macroalgae.

THAW Priority Habitats

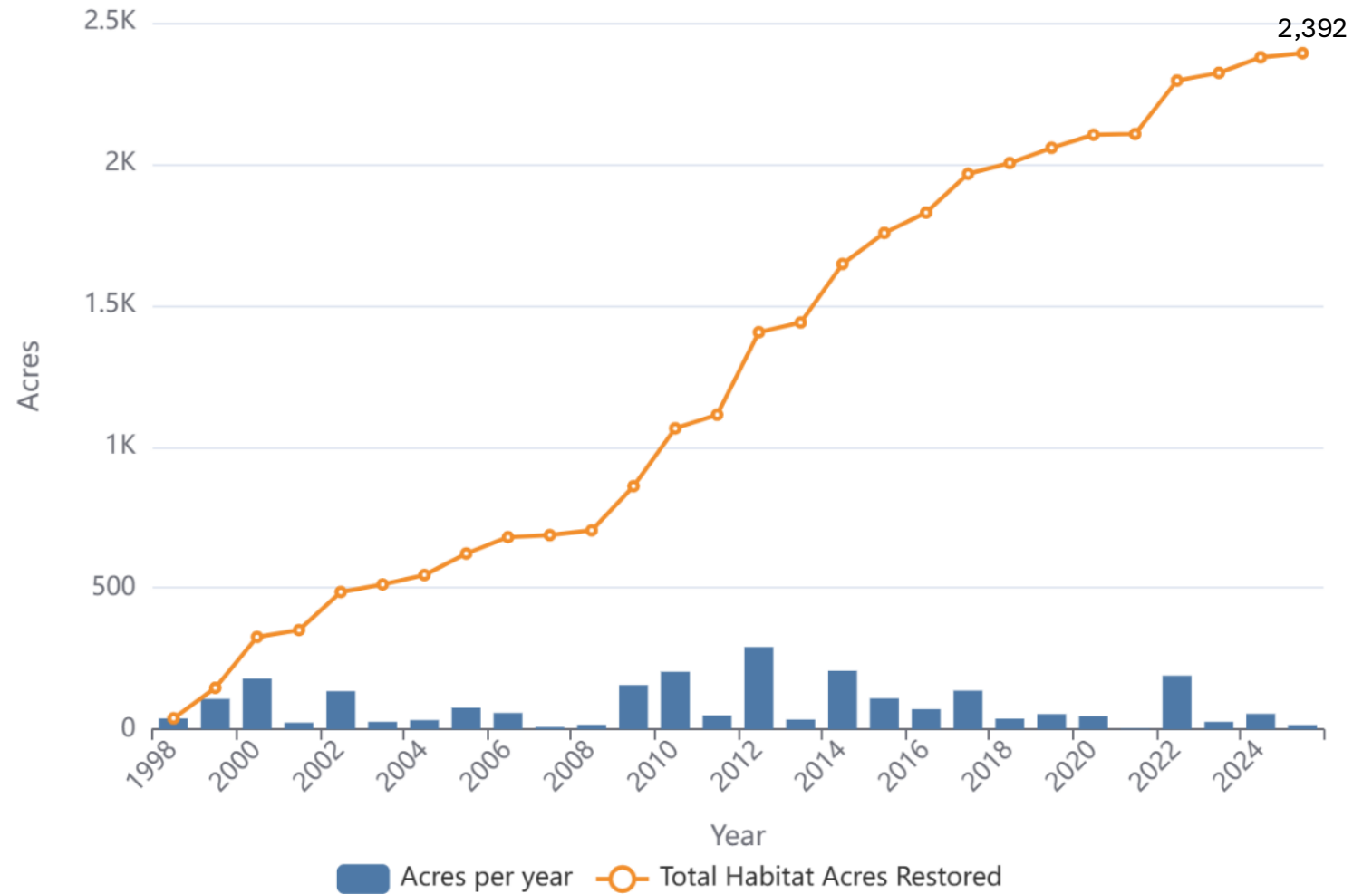
Completed Restoration & Protection Projects



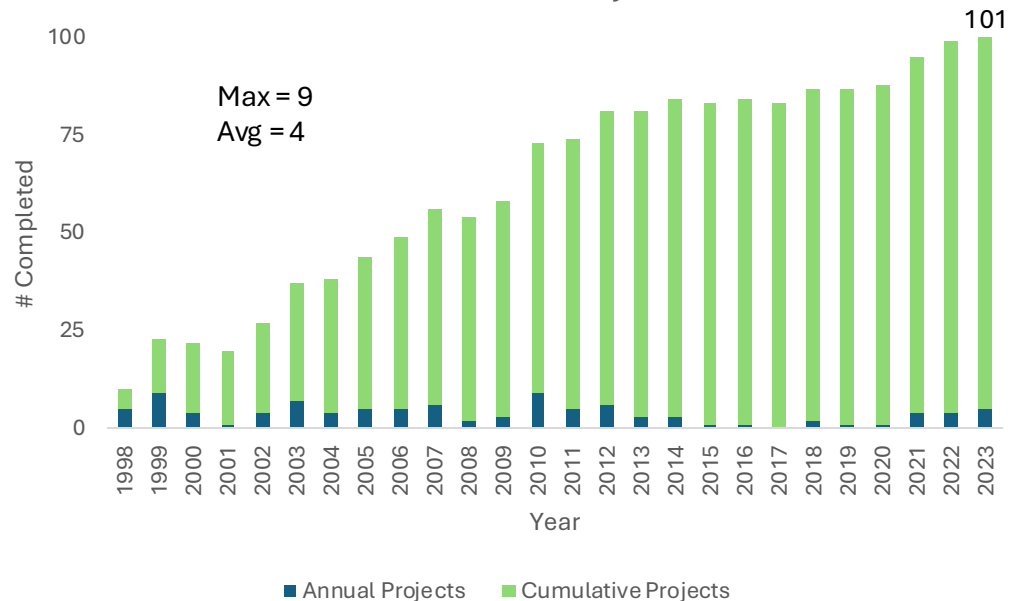
THAW Successes

THAW Successes

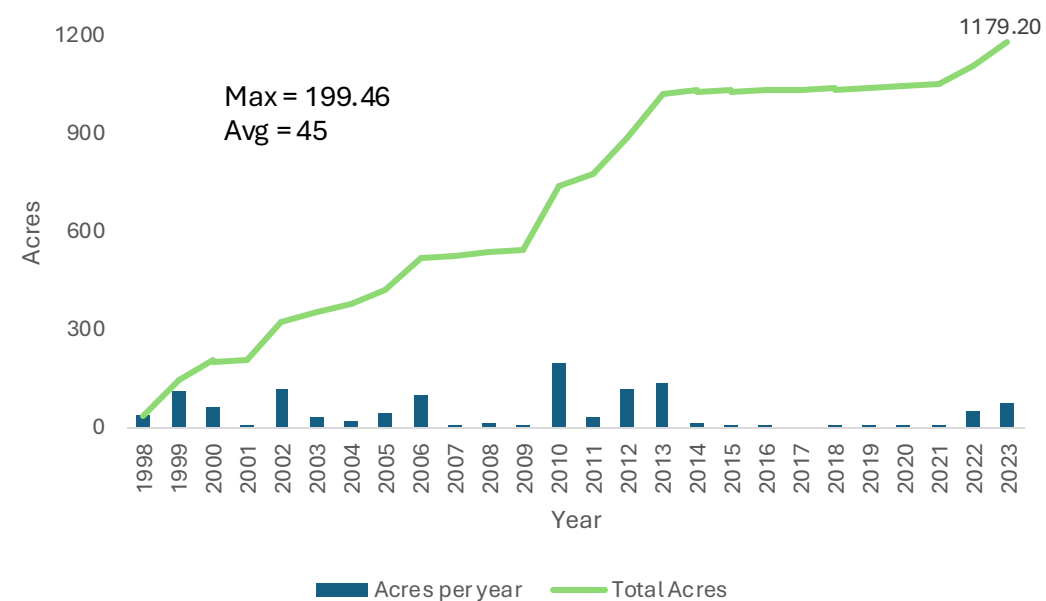
Acres of Coastal Habitat Restored (Land and Shoreline-Based), 1998-2025



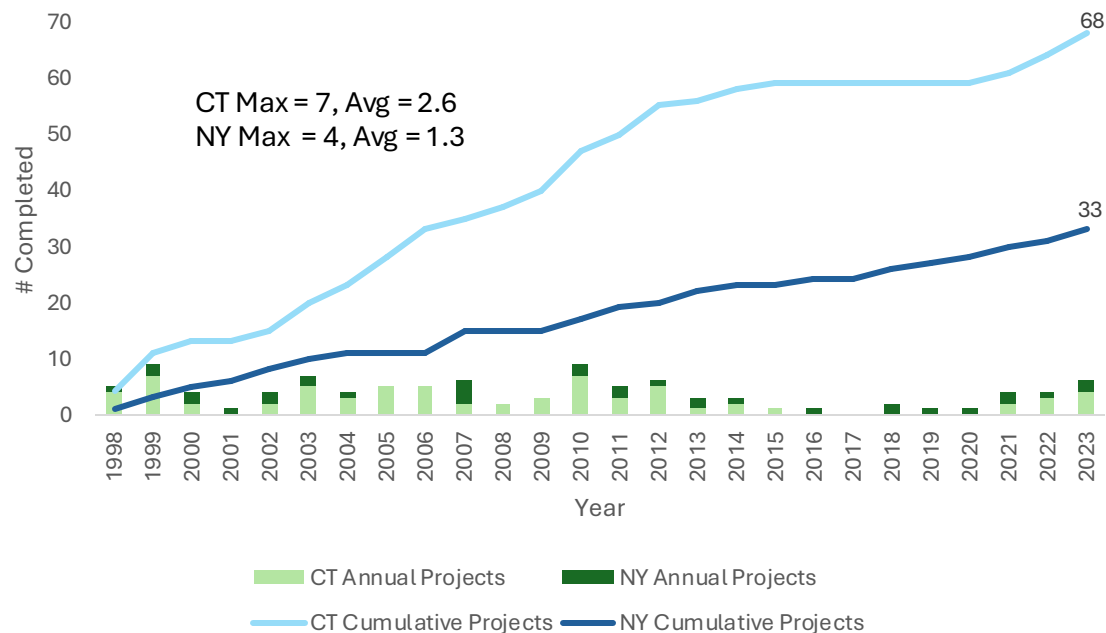
Tidal Wetlands Projects



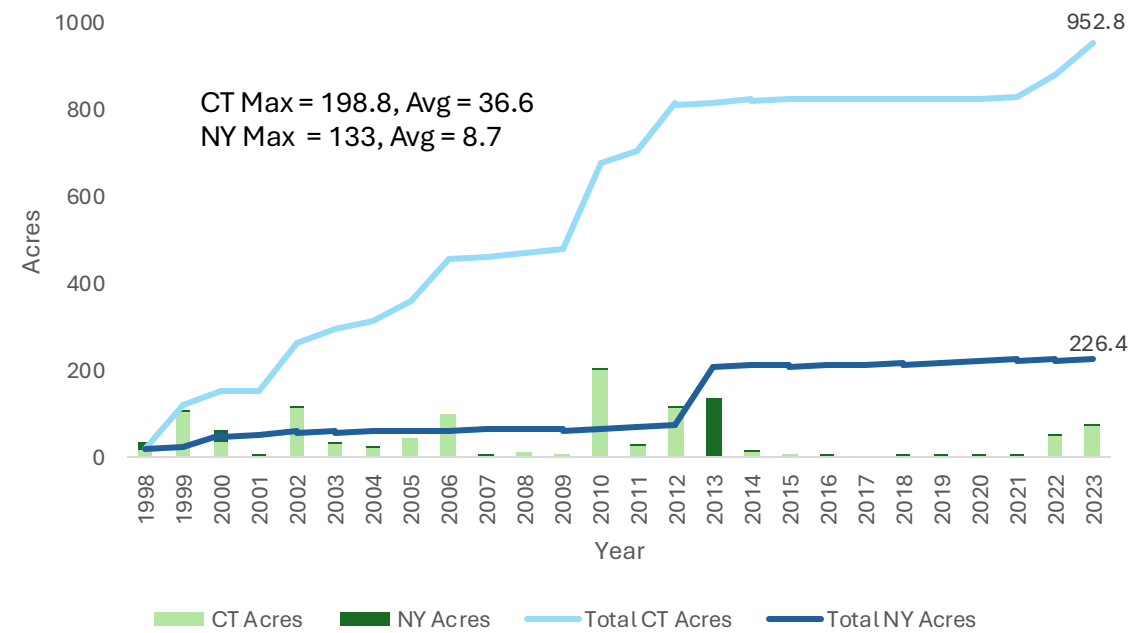
Tidal Wetland Acres Restored and Protected



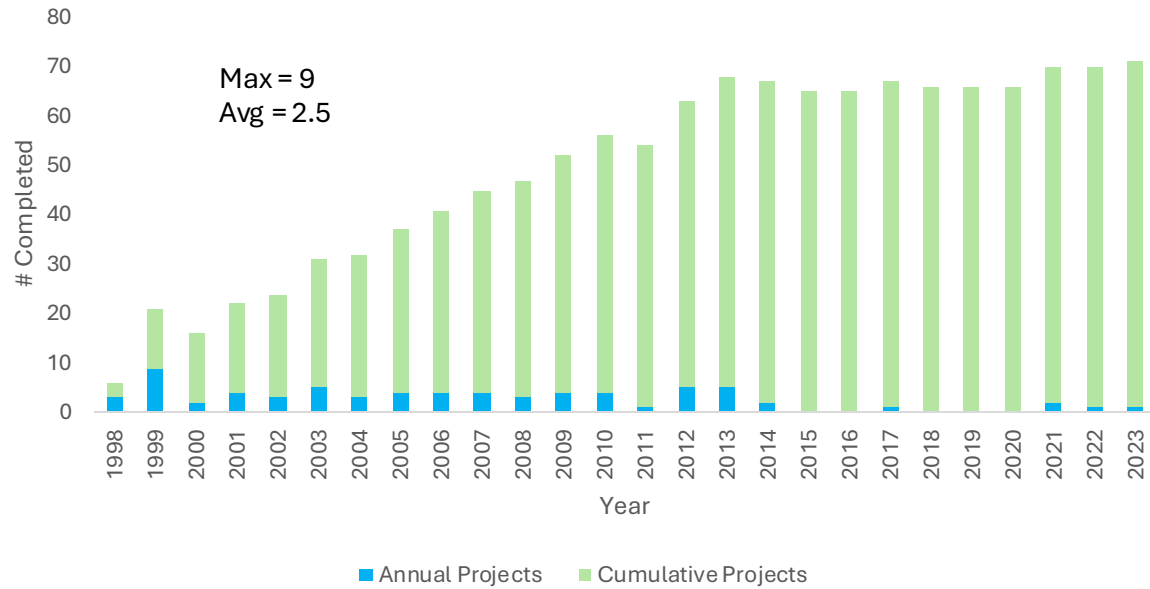
Tidal Wetlands Projects by State



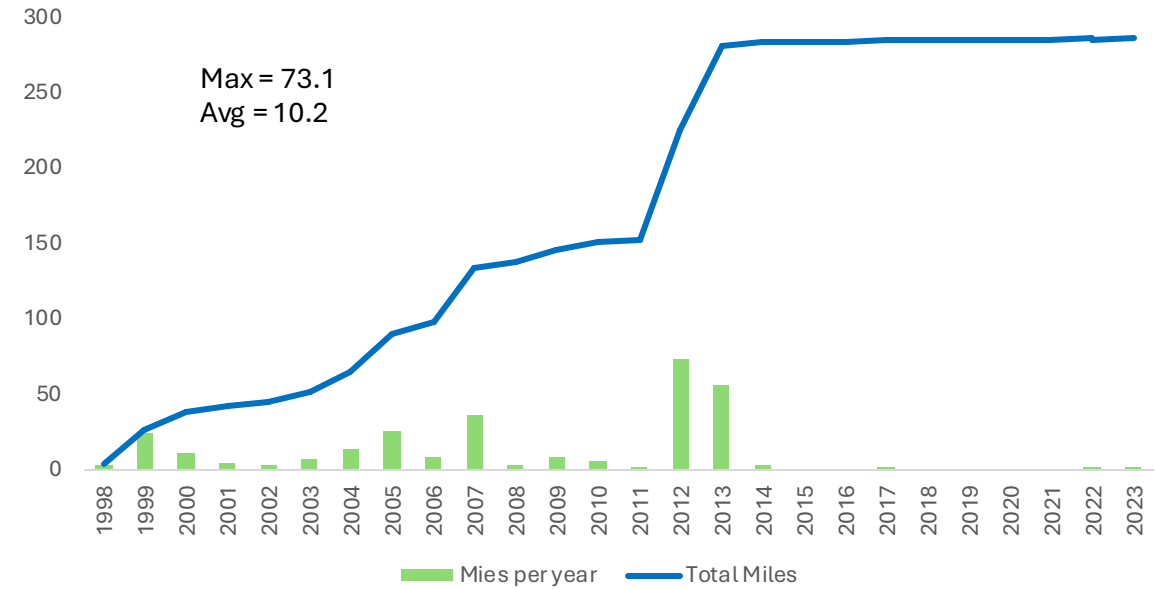
TW Acres Restored & Protected by State



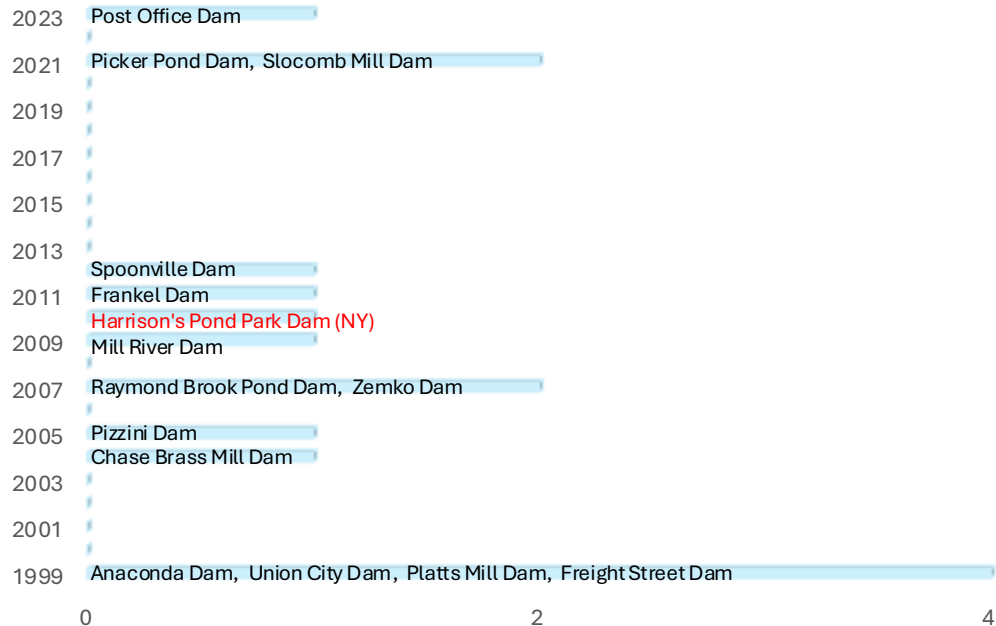
RMC Restoration Projects



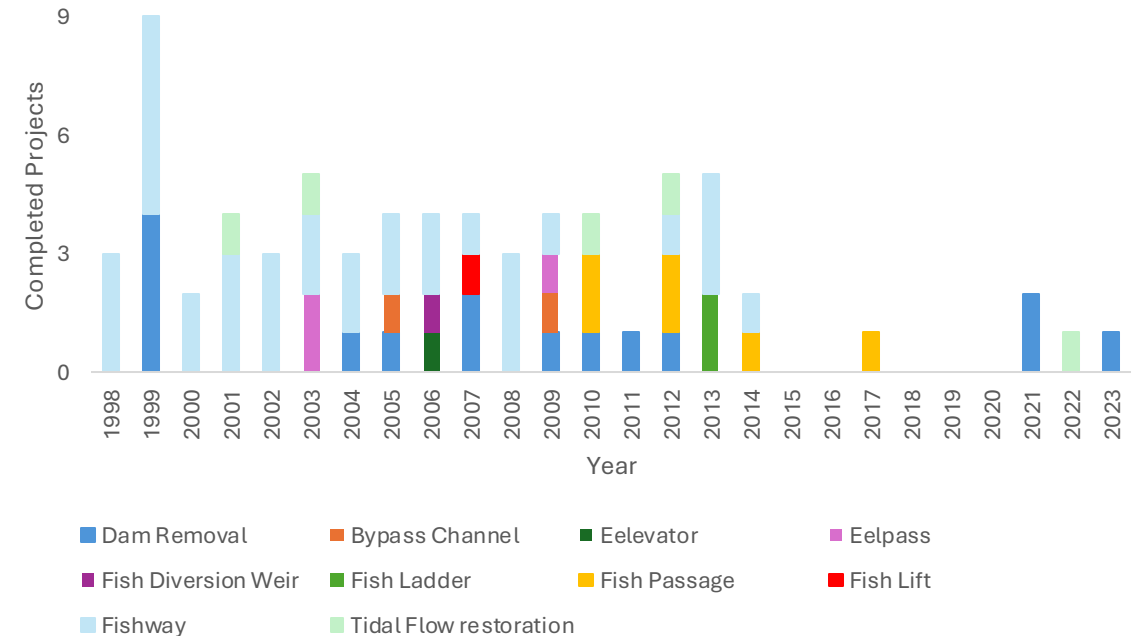
Riverine Migratory Corridors Restored



Dam Removal Projects

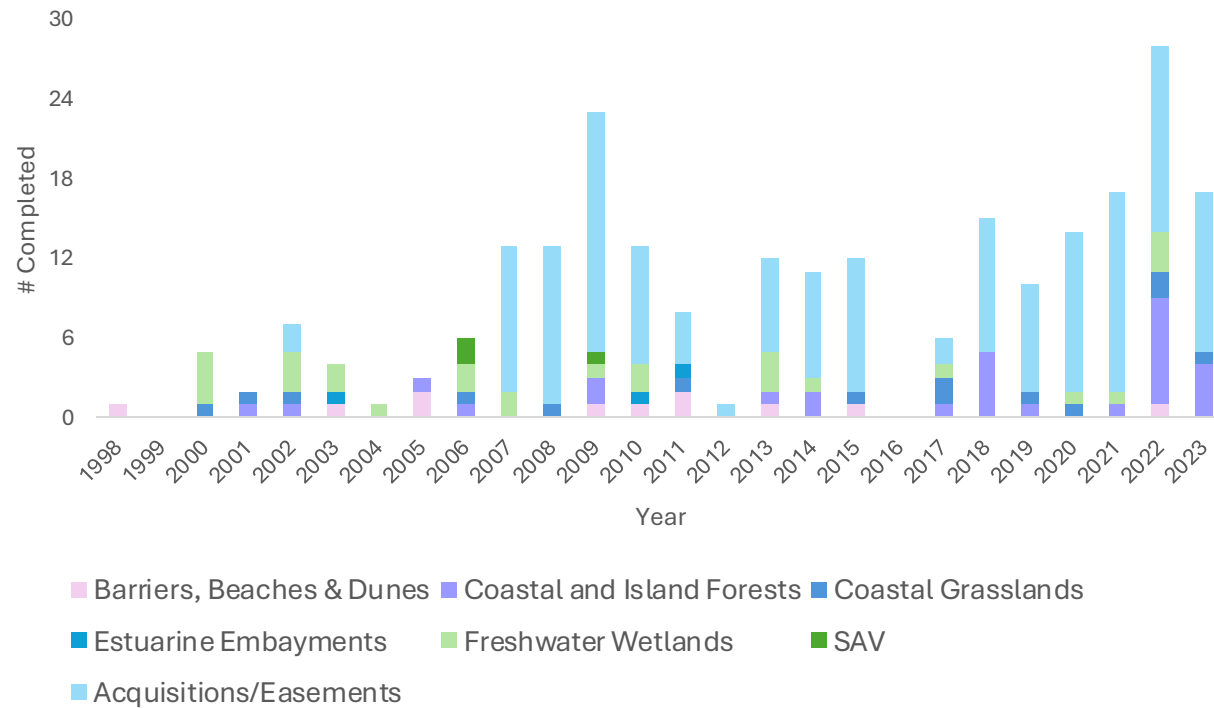


RMC Restoration By Type

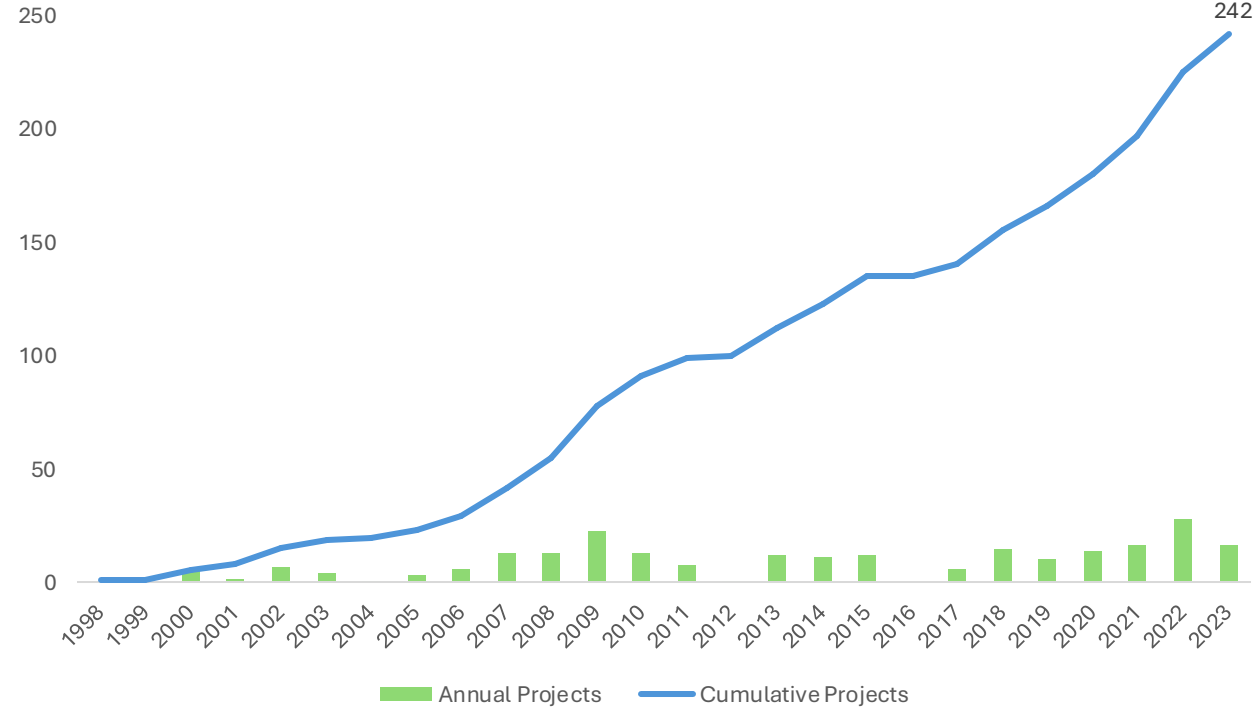


Other Priority Habitats & Land Acquisition

Projects by Habitat



Projects by Year



Search the Database for Completed Projects

Any State

Any Town

Search by keyword...

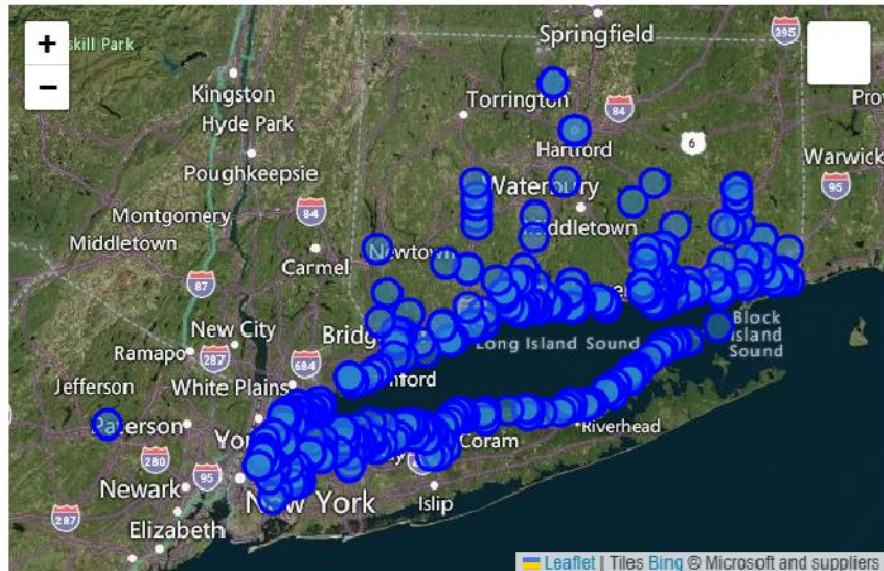
Any Habitat Type*

Min mm/dd/yyyy

Max mm/dd/yyyy

Apply

Map View | List View



Database Background

In 1996, the Long Island Sound Partnership established a Habitat Restoration Initiative to promote the restoration of degraded coastal habitats. The first targets were established in 1998, and since then over 1,750 acres of degraded coastal habitat have been restored and more than 350 stream miles have been reconnected to Long Island Sound through Initiative partnerships. The Initiative established a new target in 2006 aimed at the protection of valuable coastal habitat through land acquisition and conservation easements, and since then over 5,000 acres have been protected from development.

Search the database for project details or click on the interactive map to search for projects by location. The database is only partially complete and new project data are being added all the time. If you are seeking information for projects that you cannot find in the database, please do not hesitate to contact Habitat Restoration Coordinator harry.yamalis@ct.gov.

Coastal Habitat

Measure of Success

Restore 1,000 acres of coastal habitat in the coastal boundary of Long Island Sound.*

**The Objective's Measure of Success defines reasonable outcomes and ensures that progress towards the Objective can be clearly and precisely tracked over time.*

Objective's Status

Based on the Measure of Success and Indicators, the overall status of this Objective is:



BEHIND SCHEDULE

Since 1998, 2,392 acres of coastal habitat around Long Island Sound have been restored. In 2025, 15 acres were restored in Connecticut (New York's total is still being tabulated). The Partnership's goal is to restore an additional 1,000 acres of coastal habitat by 2035. To achieve this, the Partnership must restore 100 acres of coastal habitats a year (on average).

Indicators' Status

These indicators provide supporting data and insight into the progress made towards the Objective.

Indicator	What is Measured	Status	Recent Progress
Coastal Habitat Extent	Acres by habitat type	Fair	Increase
Embayment Water Clarity	Secchi disk depth and light attenuation coefficient	Fair	Uncertain
Coastal Birds: Least Terns	Counts	Fair	No Change
Shorebirds: Piping Plovers	Counts	Very Good	Increase
Shorebirds: Saltmarsh Sparrows	Counts	Poor	Uncertain
Wildlife: Horseshoe Crab	Counts	Poor	Increase

Offshore Habitat

Measure of Success

Support and implement 25 restoration and management projects focused on seafloor habitat mapping, data collection, and species assessments.*

**The Objective's Measure of Success define reasonable outcomes and ensure that progress towards the Objective can be clearly and precisely tracked over time.*

Objective's Status

Based on the Measure of Success and Indicators, the overall status of this Objective is:



ON-TRACK

Five offshore habitat management and restoration projects supported by the Partnership in 2025.

Indicators' Status

These indicators provide supporting data and insight into the progress made towards the Objective.

Indicator	What is Measured	Status	Recent Progress
Fragile Habitats	Acres by Habitat type	 Under Construction	 Under Construction
Fish: Finfish	Counts	 Very Good	 Increase
Fish: Forage Fish	Counts	 Under Construction	 Uncertain
Fish: Game Fish	Counts	 Under Construction	 Uncertain
Invertebrates Abundance and Biomass	Counts	 Poor	 Decrease

Habitat Connectivity

Measures of Success

Restore or protect 100 habitat patches and reconnect 175 miles of riverine migratory corridors in the Connecticut and New York portions of the watershed. Of the 175 additional miles of riverine migratory corridors, 50 percent of the miles will occur in locations where communities have not typically benefited from habitat connectivity projects.*

**The Objective's Measures of Success define reasonable outcomes and ensure that progress towards the Objective can be clearly and precisely tracked over time.*

Objective's Status

Based on the Measures of Success and Indicators, the overall status of this Objective is:



ON-TRACK

In 2025, 27 river miles were reconnected – making the cumulative total 167 rivers miles reconnected since 2015. The Long Island Sound Partnership can only make an objective status assessment based on the miles of riverine migratory corridors as the habitat patches data is still under construction.

Indicators' Status

These indicators provide supporting data and insight into the progress made towards the Objective.

Indicator	What is Measured	Status	Recent Progress
Barrier Removals	Numbers removed	Fair	Increase
Anadromous Fish	Number returning fish	Poor	Increase

Conserved Open Space

Measures of Success

Conserve 5,000 acres of open space in the coastal boundary of Long Island Sound. Of the 5,000 acres to be conserved, at least 40 percent will be in areas where communities have not typically benefited from conservation projects.*

**The Objective's Measures of Success define reasonable outcomes and ensure that progress towards the Objective can be clearly and precisely tracked over time.*

Objective's Status

Based on the Measures of Success and Indicators, the overall status of this Objective is:



Since 2006, more than 9,219 acres have been protected mainly in the form of land acquisition. In 2025, the Partnership conserved 34 acres of open space.

Indicators' Status

These indicators provide supporting data and insight into the progress made towards the Objective.

Indicator	What is Measured	Status	Recent Progress
Forest Cover	Square miles of forested area	Poor	 Decrease
Impervious Cover	Square miles of impervious cover	Poor	 Increase

Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife



THAW Challenges

Understanding challenges to successful THAW projects can help us plan for and strategize ways to overcome barriers

- Project Planning
- Permitting
- Project Implementation



THAW Challenges: Project Planning

- Identifying a problem and solution
 - Knowledge gaps
 - Designing adequate solutions
 - Include future climate considerations
- Funding is limited and competitive
 - Project phasing

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Long Island Sound Resilience Resource Hub. The header is a dark blue bar with the LIS logo and name on the left, and navigation links for 'Resilience Steps', 'Resources & Tools', 'Trainings', and 'Connect' on the right. Below the header is a large banner image of a sunset over a body of water. Overlaid on the banner is a dark rounded rectangle with the text 'Assistance Programs' and 'Get help with your sustainability and resilience-focused projects'. Below the banner, the text 'Need Help with Your Project?' is followed by a paragraph explaining the LIS Partnership Sustainable and Resilient Communities Extension Professionals (SRC EPs) and their two programs: the Long Island Sound Writing Assistance Program and the Long Island Sound Resilience Planning Support Program. A dark button with the text 'Learn which program may be right for you!' is positioned below the paragraph. Further down, the 'Planning Support Program' section is visible, starting with the text 'A third round of the Long Island Sound (LIS) Resilience Planning Support Program opened December 1, 2025 and closed January 30, 2026. Up to \$1.5 million is available.' and followed by a link to a recorded LIS Resilience Planning Support Program session.

LONG ISLAND SOUND
Resilience Resource Hub

Resilience Steps ▾ Resources & Tools ▾ Trainings ▾ Connect ▾

Assistance Programs
Get help with your sustainability and resilience-focused projects

Need Help with Your Project?
The LIS Partnership Sustainable and Resilient Communities Extension Professionals (SRC EPs) have established two Programs – the **Long Island Sound Writing Assistance Program** and the **Long Island Sound Resilience Planning Support Program** to assist communities within the Long Island Sound (LI across New York (NY) and Connecticut (CT)). These Programs address the main barriers we have heard to planning, designing, and implementing sustainability-focused projects – a lack of capacity, expertise, and resources to prepare and apply for funding and a lack of capacity and resources to identify and develop projects. Learn more about [what program might be right for you!](#)

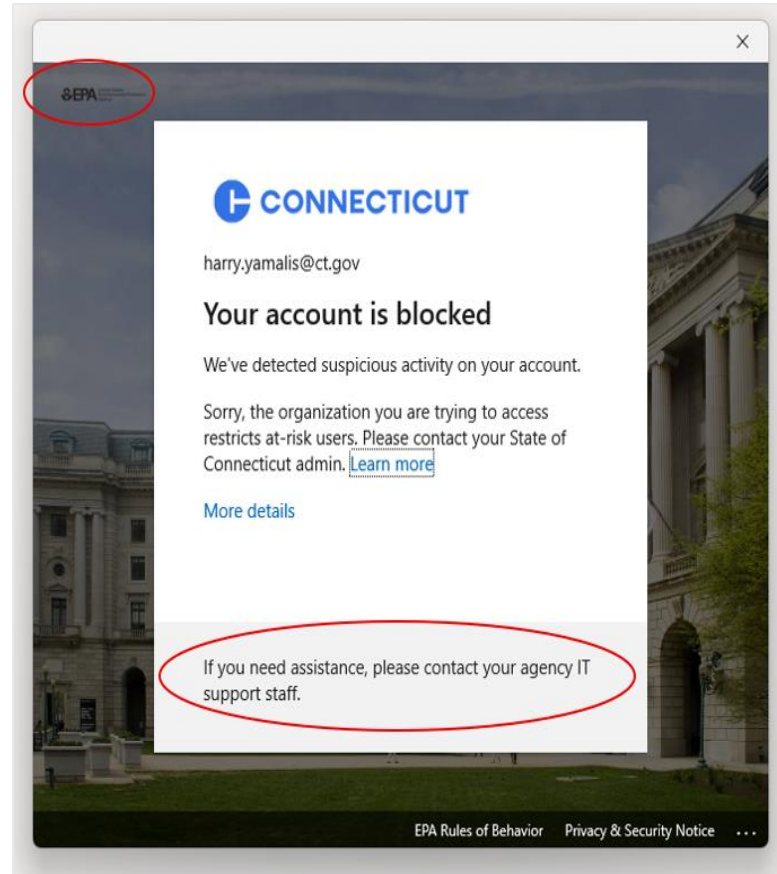
Learn which program may be right for you!

Planning Support Program
A third round of the Long Island Sound (LIS) Resilience Planning Support Program opened December 1, 2025 and closed January 30, 2026. Up to \$1.5 million is available. Proposals from qualified contractors are being solicited to provide services to selected Candidates.
Want to learn more? Interested communities can learn more during the recorded [LIS Resilience Planning Support Program session](#) of the [4th Annual Sustainable & Resilient Communities Workshop](#).

Planning Support Program

THAW Challenges: Project Planning

- Ownership & stakeholders
 - Connecting environmental and societal benefits; engaging public and gaining support
- Collaborating across agencies/organizations
 - Capacity, input, differing opinions



Sometimes NY and CT's networks just don't play well together.



Pick an account

Selected user account does not exist in tenant 'New York State Office of Information Technology Services' and cannot access the application '5e3ce6c0-2b1f-4285-8d4b-75ee78787346' in that tenant. The account needs to be added as an external user in the tenant first. Please use a different account.



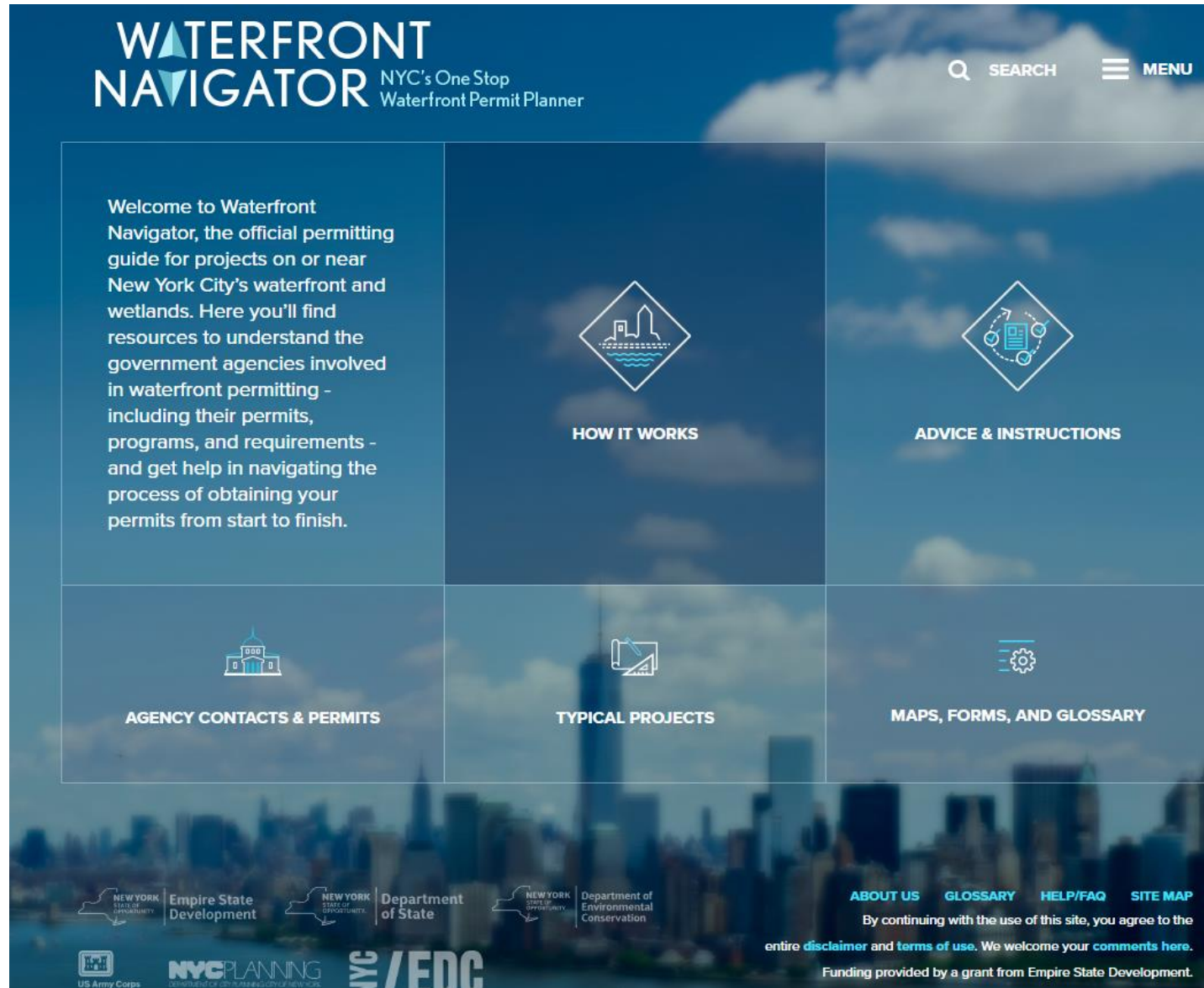
Yamalis, Harry
Harry.Yamalis@ct.gov
Connected to Windows



Use another account

THAW Challenges: Permitting

- NY/CT have different regulations
 - Ex: shellfish restoration
- The permitting process can be complex and lengthy
 - Permitting guides, pre-app meetings
- May include several levels of government:
 - Federal (ACE/USFWS)
 - State (NYSDEC NYSDOS)
 - City/County/Town/Village



THAW Challenges: Project Implementation

- Contracting/Boots on the ground
- Monitoring/evaluating success
- Long-term maintenance

NEW YORK STATE SALT MARSH RESTORATION AND MONITORING GUIDELINES



George E. Pataki, Governor

Alexander P. Treadwell, Secretary of State

*John P. Cahill, Commissioner,
Department of Environmental Conservation*



Thank You!



Thriving Habitats & Abundant Wildlife Work Group
of the Long Island Sound Partnership • www.lispartnership.org



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