



# TOWN OF EAST HAMPTON

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## **EAST HAMPTON TOWN AWARDED \$350,000 FEDERAL GRANT FOR EXPLORATION OF ‘LIVING SHORELINE’ PROJECT IN MONTAUK**

*National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Awarding Total of \$136 Million in Coastal Resilience Grants*

**Living Shoreline natural solution could help to prevent shoreline erosion, reduce inland flooding, improve and create habitat for local species**

**Project grows from Town’s long-range “Coastal Assessment and Resiliency Planning (CARP)” effort to assess impacts of climate change such as sea level rise, shoreline erosion, and flooding, and adapt to a changing environment in a sustainable way**

NOAA and NFWF today announced that the Town of East Hampton has been awarded a \$350,000 grant to conduct a site assessment and preliminary design for two living shorelines along Fort Pond and Lake Montauk. The grant is being provided through the National Coastal Resilience Fund, a partnership between NOAA, NFWF, the U.S. Department of Defense, and several private sector partners.

A living shoreline is a protected and stabilized coastline edge utilizing natural materials such as plants, sand, and shellfish reefs. In the face of climate change, as storms and flooding become more frequent and severe, they can protect community infrastructure and natural resources from damage from rising coastal waters and floods while improving and providing habitat for shellfish and other species.

Ongoing coastal erosion has impacted the Town of East Hampton’s 131 miles of coastline, changing the shape and size of beaches, bluffs, and coastal wetlands. According to measurements by the Army Corps of Engineers, the oceanfront shoreline of downtown Montauk eroded more than 44 feet inland between 2000 and 2012.

The shorelines of both Lake Montauk and Fort Pond are in areas of high risk, evidencing the effects of climate change and subject to flooding and a breach that could flood the downtown

Montauk business district as well as residential neighborhoods in proximity to the Atlantic Ocean.

The Town's recently adopted CARP plan included an inventory of coastal structures, an analysis of shoreline change, and recommendations for sustainability, with three broad strategies outlined to plan for and achieve coastal resiliency and adaption: Protect, Accommodate, and Retreat.

Living shorelines can help us accommodate by allowing flood inundation to occur in the natural shoreline area, where vegetation and shellfish reefs can absorb wave energy. Unlike seawalls or other hard structures, which impede the growth of plants and animals, living shorelines adapt and grow over time.

"I look forward to the planning and implementation of these living shorelines in low-lying Montauk areas," said East Hampton Town Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc. "This significant grant award is a well-deserved acknowledgment of East Hampton Town's progress in recognizing the tangible impacts of climate change in our coastal community and acting to protect our residents and infrastructure while insuring continued sustainability."

The proposed Montauk shoreline project, outlined in the grant application prepared by Samantha Klein, an environmental analyst with the town's Natural Resources Department, calls for the development of plans for the two living shorelines along Town of East Hampton property. Plant species to be used will be identified, the use of mussels or oysters for a reef component will be explored, and other natural features that could be incorporated into the living shoreline designs for the two targeted areas will be examined.

The project will prepare the Town to implement the first living shorelines in the Town of East Hampton, and, if proven successful after installation and monitoring, facilitate the design of additional living shorelines across the Town.

In addition to Town staff and officials, the project team will include members of the Town's CARP committee, Concerned Citizens of Montauk, and the Montauk Chamber of Commerce.