

OUTCOME 8: WATER-DEPENDENT BUSINESSES SUSTAINED



The Reserve is home to the largest concentration of commercial and recreational vessels, marinas, and other water-dependent businesses in the State. These businesses depend on access to the estuary, safe navigation, infrastructure, and clean water to support their daily operations. Loss of the economic contribution from individual water-dependent businesses can weaken the viability of the estuary-related economy. Further, as traditional water-dependent businesses are displaced, the estuary's maritime heritage is diminished. To sustain these businesses, Reserve partners must provide adequate infrastructure to support existing and new water-dependent uses, maintain navigable channels, and prepare local harbor management plans.

Provision of Adequate Infrastructure to Support Water-dependent Uses

To insure the continuation of traditional water-dependent uses, adequate infrastructure must be available to meet business's needs. Reserve partners have completed the following projects to provide such infrastructure:

- The Town of Hempstead erected ten new marine navigational aides and maintains a total of 500 navigational aids such as buoys, pole markers, and regulatory signs. The Town also created a GIS data layer of private navigational aides and signs for public and private use.
- Fire Island National Seashore (FINS) partnered with the Patchogue Village Fire Department to provide them with permanent dockage for their new fire boat at FINS marine facilities on Laurel Street. This partnership will improve Patchogue Village emergency response capabilities for the Watch Hill marina area.

Maintenance of Navigability

Safe navigation is a priority for water-dependent public facilities and businesses. Reserve partners have completed the following projects to maintain navigability:

- The Town of Hempstead removed approximately 4000 cubic yards of material per year to promote safe navigation. In addition, the Town rebuilt one tug and built two split barges to support its dredging activities.
- Suffolk County removed approximately 45,100 cubic yards of material from eleven navigation channels in the Reserve.

Preparation of Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs

Local Waterfront Revitalization Programs (LWRP) give communities the opportunity to create a vision for their waterfront, highlighting the importance of generating a sense of community ownership of the waterfront and defining its future. This vision is developed into a strategy that is translated into a revitalization program showing how to put it all together to fulfill the vision. As a planning document, a LWRP is a locally-prepared land and water use plan and strategy for a community's natural, public, working, and developed waterfront through which critical issues are addressed. LWRPs identify opportunities for siting new water-dependent businesses, retaining those in existence, and redeveloping deteriorated or underutilized waterfront properties and brownfields. As a program, an LWRP is the organizational structure, local laws, projects, and on-going partnerships that provide detailed guidelines for implementing the vision and planning document.

- The City of Long Beach, the Town of Hempstead, the Village of Patchogue, and the Village of Lindenhurst initiated new LWRPs with support from NYS Environmental Protection Fund Local Waterfront Revitalization Program grants.
- The NYS Department of State (DOS) organized two state-wide and one regional Quality Communities/Quality Coasts conferences for local governments, not-for-profit organizations, and stakeholders to advance development of revitalizing waterfronts, greenway and blueway trails, maritime centers and heritage corridors.
- NYS DOS also produced a multimedia outreach kit entitled *Making the Most of Your Waterfront* that includes a guidebook and DVD.

IMPROVING NAVIGABILITY ON BROWN'S RIVER

Safe navigability of Brown's River is necessary to support ferry service between the Sayville Maritime Center, Fire Island communities and Fire Island National Seashore. This ferry route provides residents and visitors with access to the estuary and the barrier island and promotes local tourism.

Brown's River had become nearly impassable due to sediment build up, navigation for larger vessels became hazardous, and the ferry business and user access were threatened. Congressman Steve Israel secured federal funds to deepen the navigation channel into Brown's River to allow continued passage of ferries and boats between Sayville and Fire Island.

Between December 2004 and April 2005, the US Army Corps of Engineers removed approximately 20,000 cubic yards of sediment from the federal navigation channel and the Town of Islip marina and docking facility. The dredged material was placed at the Brown's River disposal site, provided by the Town of Islip. Increased navigability of the river through the actions of these Reserve partners has restored access for boats and ferries.



Westin's Boat Shop on Brown's River



Sayville Ferry Service

Preparation of Local Harbor Management Plans

Today harbors are subject to an ever-increasing array of use conflicts, and communities are faced with a greater pressure to balance those uses. Communities must effectively decide how to best manage their harbors for multi-use including recreational, commercial and industrial activities. Harbor management plans are an effective tool for communities to analyze conflicts and plan to achieve the appropriate mix of harbor uses. Harbor management planning enables local government to address a wide range of uses in harbor and waterfront areas. Reserve municipalities are encouraged to prepare harbor management plans that consider the protection of natural resource values, shoreline management, navigational safety, infrastructure needs, and viability of water-dependent businesses.

- Reserve partners have initiated harbor management plans for the following: Hempstead Harbor (Town of Hempstead), South Oyster Bay (Town of Oyster Bay), Shinnecock, Moriches and Quantuck Bays (Town of Southampton), and Bellport Bay (Village of Bellport).

NEXT STEPS FOR SUSTAINING A WATER-DEPENDENT BUSINESSES

The Reserve Council and partners will conduct a Reserve-wide dredging needs survey, and develop a dredged materials management plan for the Reserve that will include examining the beneficial use of dredged materials.

The Reserve Council and partners will re-examine land use and zoning codes to determine if water-dependent businesses are adequately protected from displacement by non-water dependent uses.

The Reserve Council and partners will determine and quantify regional economic benefits derived from federal, local, and state assistance programs targeted to maritime businesses within the Reserve.

