

simple ways

you can preserve the reserve

- Cleaning up pet wastes is a relatively simple practice that can make a large difference in water quality. This practice can drastically reduce the amount of bacteria and organic matter in storm water runoff. Use a "pooper-scooper".
- Sweep (don't hose) driveways and other paved areas around the home. This can significantly reduce the amount of pollutants that are present in runoff.
- Maintain vehicles to avoid any leaking fluids such as oil, gasoline, anti-freeze, and other liquid chemicals. These chemicals can pollute storm water runoff and find their way into the estuarine waters.
- Store pesticides and fertilizers indoors, where they will not come into contact with rain and pollute storm water.
- Consider "organic" lawn care and use slow-release nitrogen fertilizers.
- If you must use lawn chemicals and fertilizers, use them sparingly. Dispose of unused chemicals and their containers as hazardous waste at a household hazardous waste collection location in your town.
- Collect lawn and garden clippings, pruning waste, and tree trimmings for compost in your own yard.
- Do not place yard waste into curbside drains.
- Wash cars and boats using non-toxic, biodegradable cleaners.

facts about

non point source pollution in the U.S.

- Non point source pollution is the nation's largest water quality problem.*
- 80% of pollution to the marine environment comes from land-based sources.**
- Non point source pollution, commonly occurring as polluted runoff, can make rivers and coastal waters unsafe for humans and wildlife. In some areas, polluted runoff causes beaches to be closed after rainstorms.**
- More than one-third of the shellfish-growing waters of the United States are adversely affected by runoff pollution.**

* www.epa.gov/owow/nps/facts/point10.htm
 ** www.yoto98.noaa.gov/facts/pollut.htm

Additional information on the South Shore Estuary Reserve and its activities may be obtained by calling (516) 470-BAYS or by visiting the website at www.estuary.org.ny.us

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*Photographs by James Barlocher
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*Simple Ways
 Homeowners Can
 Protect the
 South Shore
 Estuary Reserve*

preserve

the reserve!

George E. Pataki, Governor
Randy A. Daniels, Secretary of State

what & where is the south shore estuary reserve?

Estuaries are the transition zones between fresh-water and marine ecosystems where fresh water mixes with salt water. They are among the most biologically productive ecosystems in the world, acting as nurseries for marine life and providing important habitat for a variety of wildlife. Long Island's South Shore Estuary consists of a series of shallow, interconnected bays — and the tidal portions of their tributaries — formed behind the barrier islands that separate the Long Island mainland from the Atlantic Ocean.

The South Shore Estuary Reserve stretches from the western boundary of the Town of Hempstead to the middle of the Town of Southampton. South to north, the Reserve extends from the mean high tide line on the ocean side of the barrier islands to the inland limits of the watersheds that drain into Hempstead Bay, South Oyster Bay, Great South Bay, Moriches Bay, and Shinnecock Bay. The Reserve is home to about 1.5 million people.

The estuary has tremendous ecological, economic, and social importance. It contains the most extensive acreage of tidal wetlands and the greatest diversity of habitat in New York State, and it supports the State's largest concentration of water-dependent businesses. Linked with the estuary's resources are the activities and facilities that epitomize the region's maritime heritage and present day culture: commercial and recreational fishing and shell fishing, boat building and boat yards, ferries and waterborne transportation, sailing, bay houses, bay beaches, estate parks, historic structures and maritime centers.

One of the most immediate threats to the South Shore Estuary is diminished water quality. The leading identified cause of poor water quality in the estuary is *non point source pollution*.

what is non point source pollution?

Non point source pollution, commonly occurring in the form of polluted storm water runoff, is the primary water quality concern in the South Shore Estuary. Polluted storm water runoff is the main cause of water degradation in 48 of 51 water body segments in the Reserve with use impairments.

There are numerous activities that occur on land which contribute to non point source pollution including pesticide and fertilizer use, on-site wastewater disposal (e.g. failing septic systems), construction activities, chemical and petroleum use and storage, domestic animal waste disposal, vehicle use and maintenance and road construction and maintenance practices. With each rainfall, pollutants generated by these activities are washed into our storm water drains, channels, and small streams that flow into waterways and eventually our coastal waters.



how to combat non point source pollution

The health of the South Shore Estuary depends upon the stewardship of those who live and work in the Reserve. This stewardship can be expressed in many ways, but chief among them are best management practices (BMPs), activities that allow us to reduce on a daily basis the non point source pollution from activities and our communities. These practices can both prevent contaminants from entering storm water and remove some of the pollution that has already entered a body of water.

The need to preserve and protect the aesthetics and natural resources of the South Shore Estuary has become readily apparent. Those who reside in the South Shore Estuary Reserve are not just residents, but members of an ecosystem that depends on their responsible

lifestyle in order to sustain itself. *Best management practices* offer a means to conserve resources, decrease environmental and economic costs, and prevent and reduce pollution to the fragile waterways of our estuary. There are many simple things that can be done by all of us to combat non point source pollution and preserve and enhance water quality in the estuary and its tributary rivers and streams. These range from cleaning up

after your pets to how you care for your lawn and wash your car.

