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Grant will research ways to improve water quality of Long Island Sound

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The Sea Grant programs of Connecticut and New York and the Environmental Protection Agency's Long Island Sound Study program announced Wednesday that they will fund research grants that will help efforts to improve water quality and adapt to climate change.

The two projects, totaling \$708,308, involve teams of researchers in three states.

In one of the two-year projects, researchers will estimate the risk of eutrophication for 50 embayments in the Long Island Sound region. Jamie Vaudrey, Charles Yarish and Jang Kyun Kim from the University of Connecticut and Christopher Pickerell, and Lorne Brousseau from Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, N.Y. will use computer models to calculate estimates for dissolved nitrogen concentrations and freshwater flushing times for each embayment. They will also sample each embayment at dawn and slack tide during the summer hypoxia season and compare the results with existing field data. An assessment of risk for each embayment, including potential impacts to food webs, will be prepared and distributed to coastal managers.

In another project, researchers will analyze historical trends from the 1970s to project and manage Long Island Sound's future. The research team, led by Nickitas Georgas of Stevens Institute of Technology, will synthesize physical data collected for Long Island Sound and global climate change indices. Results will be compared to historic marine resources data from the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, and a high-resolution global climate model from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association's Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory in Princeton N.J. The computer model will look forward to simulate the effects of climate on Long Island Sound's physical environment and living marine resources up to the year 2100.

"The information derived from these projects will be invaluable for managers dealing with critical issues affecting the health of the Sound," said Mark Tedesco, director of EPA's Long Island Sound Office in Stamford, which manages the Long Island Sound Study.

The Long Island Sound Study Research Grant Program is conducted by the two Sea Grant programs. Connecticut Sea Grant, based at the University of Connecticut at Avery Point, and New York Sea Grant, based at Stony Brook University. They are part of the National Sea Grant College Program network, administered by NOAA.

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