



# New York State Coasts and Waterways

NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES

With 5,000 miles of coast and shoreline, New York State has been endowed with a great legacy. The Atlantic Ocean, Long Island Sound, New York Harbor, the vast lakes of Erie, Ontario, and Champlain, the Finger Lakes, the Adirondack lakes, and the St. Lawrence, Hudson, Niagara, Mohawk and Susquehanna rivers, all contribute to the state's quality of life. Each has played an important role in our history – home to Native American settlements, as gateways for immigration, and as highways for commerce and transportation. They provide food for the body, recreation and inspiration for the soul. In many ways, for many peoples, our coasts and shores have been and continue to be priceless treasures well worth our protection.

Through voluntary partnerships with local governments and community groups the State of New York supports coastal economies and protects ecosystems. By providing technical expertise and financial assistance, it helps to revitalize waterfront communities, safeguard estuaries, provide recreation, sustain historic maritime communities, and continually strives to improve New York's invaluable coastlines.



Close to 45 million gallons of water flows per minute over world famous Niagara Falls.



Completed in 1931, the George Washington Bridge spans the Hudson River.



Seneca Lake Landing - a landmark of the Finger Lakes region.



This sign was prepared for the South Shore Estuary Reserve Council by the NYS Department of State with funds under Title 3 of the Environmental Protection Fund Act



## LONG ISLAND SOUTH SHORE ESTUARY RESERVE

An estuary is a sheltered coastal waterbody where ocean water meets and mixes with fresh water—both surface and ground water—draining from the estuary's watershed. Estuaries are among the most biologically productive ecosystems on earth, and each estuary is unique.

Long Island's South Shore Estuary was formed during the last 10,000 years by the interaction of rising seas with the glacially-deposited material that makes up Long Island. Wind, currents, tides, and coastal storms continue to re-shape Long Island's shoreline, tidal marshes, and the barrier

islands that shelter the five major shallow bays included in this diverse estuary.

The South Shore Estuary Reserve was created in response to Long Islanders concerned with the future health of the estuary and the many small businesses that depend upon its natural and cultural resources. The Reserve's bays and marshes are highly vulnerable habitats that support the largest concentration of water-dependent businesses in the State. Commercial and recreational fishing depend upon the health and abundance of the estuary's wildlife, which, in turn, depend upon clean water and available habitat.

The restoration and stewardship of the Reserve's natural resources and maritime traditions are guided by a comprehensive management plan that was completed in 2001.

The health of the Reserve depends upon the actions and stewardship of the millions of people that live, visit, work, and play in the estuary's bays and watershed. Learn more about the South Shore Estuary Reserve and make a difference!

Visit: [www.estuary.cog.ny.us](http://www.estuary.cog.ny.us) from home or your library or call: 1-516-470 BAYS today!



A bayman checks crab pots on the Great South Bay.



Fire Island National Seashore provides opportunities to view unique barrier island environments.



A Great egret hunting for its next meal.



Clammer using a rake to harvest shellfish.





# Patchogue

## The Patchogue River Maritime Center

Patchogue's history as a Long Island South Shore maritime center is closely linked to the Patchogue River. Attracted by an abundance of waterpower, settlers built gristmills on the River in the early 1750s. Lace and cloth manufacturing followed in the early 1800s and the railroad reached Patchogue in 1869. In 1890 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredged the River, firmly establishing Patchogue as the only deep-water port on the South Shore. Patchogue was now a major center for commerce, transportation, and tourism.

Ship and boat building flourished along the River. One of the most prominent boatyards was operated by the innovative boat designer and builder Gil Smith, whose sailboats were renowned for their speed and performance in shallow bay waters. Hard clams and famous "Blue Point" oysters harvested from Great South Bay were processed on the waterfront and transported to world markets. From the 1880s through the 1920s Patchogue was a summer resort for thousands of visitors arriving by rail from New York City and beyond who came to enjoy the cool bay breezes.

Today, Patchogue's rich nautical heritage as a vibrant seaport village continues to draw people to the waterfront. It is a popular location for those who come to explore the South Shore bays, enjoy a waterside meal, or simply appreciate the scenic views. Patchogue serves as a major gateway to Fire Island National Seashore, a unit of the National Park Service. Headquartered along the River, the Park provides ferry service to Atlantic Ocean barrier beaches and the Otis Pike Fire Island High Dune Wilderness, the only federally designated wilderness area in New York State.



Priscilla, a restored oyster sloop built in Patchogue in 1888.



Waterfront dining on the Patchogue River.



The historic Weeks Yacht Yard continues the boat building tradition.



Hiking the Otis Pike Fire Island High Dune Wilderness at Fire Island National Seashore.

