

At the Helm

August 2009

This article is long over due. It has been an extremely busy summer for the Coastal Steward. So far we have had 10 beach cleanups that have removed 21 tons of debris with the help of 476 volunteers. The shellfish restoration program is in full gear. We have released approximately 19,200 adult oysters into Port Jefferson Harbor and will be releasing a lot more in the very near future. The town of Brookhaven has been raising our next patch of 75,000 oyster seed and approximately 100,000 bay scallop seed in their upwelling system. We will be getting them very soon.

We have several new alliances. They are the Town of Southold, Group to Save Goldsmith's Inlet, Acabonack Protection Committee, Peconic Land Trust and the Peconic Baykeeper. This year there will be a concerted effort to reach out to all school districts on Long Island to form a stronger volunteer and sponsor base.

The federal grant application for a stimulus grant was not awarded, very disappointing but we will keep trying. The fact that there were no awards made in the entire state of New York for marine habitat restoration is very concerning. There were 813 applications, totaling 3 billion dollars for the 167 million that was awarded, so the competition was very strong. 9 out of 11 awards for the North East were given to finfish habitat restoration which doesn't seem very fair to me. We are still waiting for our NYS DEC permit for the oyster reef project but we should hear soon.

The Board of Directors has two new members Terry Gallogly, who is our website designer and Hallie Morrison. Ana Perez has decided to resign from the board for personal reasons. She will be missed and we wish her well. Drew Pantino has taken on the responsibility of Treasurer.

The new website is up and running. I love it and think Terry did a great job. We still need to set up a few things but overall it's a huge improvement. If anyone has any suggestions, they are always welcome.

This summer we also participated in the East End Greenfest out in Mattituck. We had hundreds of visitors to our booth.

There are currently six more beach cleanups scheduled and the shellfish restoration project will run through October so please check out our schedule and lend a hand.