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1ST DISTRICT, NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

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COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3201
April 2, 2009

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Patricia Montanio
Director, Office of Habitat Conservation
NOAA Fisheries
DOC/NOAA/NMFS/F/HC3
1315 East West Highway (Fl. 14)
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Montanio:

I write in support of the proposal by Coastal Steward for funding under the NOAA Coastal and Marine Habitat Restoration Project Grant Program (FFO# NOAA-NMFS-HCPO-2009-2001709). This proposal would expand Coastal Steward's Sponsor-A-Beach Program (SABP) throughout the State of New York, leveraging public-private partnerships to yield important environmental and economic benefits.

In its nearly 20-year history, Coastal Steward has removed over 180 tons of debris from Long Island beaches with the help of more than a thousand volunteers. Under their proposed expansion of the SABP program, a professional staff would administer the removal of an estimated 200 tons of debris annually from an estimated 100 miles of New York's coastlines. Improving the condition of New York's beaches will help ensure the health of crucial habitats and recreational areas enjoyed by millions of New York residents and visitors each year.

Coastal Steward has extensive experience in directing efficient and safe beach cleanup efforts. With federal support, their expertise will help conserve precious natural resources throughout New York State. I appreciate the opportunity to express my support for Coastal Steward's grant application. Please contact Oliver Longwell in my office at (202) 225-3826 if you require more information.

Sincerely,



Tim Bishop
Member of Congress

TB/ol