NYSG offices

New York Sea Grant regional offices provide innovative research, technical assistance, and outreach on such issues as water quality, coastal resilience, marine & freshwater fisheries, invasive species, algal blooms, aquaculture & seafood, coastal literacy, and shoreline community development.

**NYSG Focus Area
for this project summary:
Resilient NY Communities
and Economies**

MyCoast NY: Engaging Communities to Document Floods and Storm Damage

New York Sea Grant is coordinating a statewide community science program for the public to document and share their experiences with floods, storm damage, and coastal change through photos

As increases in precipitation, storm frequency and intensity, and sea level are accelerating, New York communities are faced with the challenge of documenting and communicating increasing flood risk with limited resources.

New York Sea Grant (NYSG), in partnership with the New York State Water Resources Institute (WRI), has completed the second year of MyCoast NY, a portal used to collect and analyze photos of flooding, changing shorelines, and hazardous weather impacts. Photos are linked to real-time environmental conditions to create reports that can help emergency managers, local planners, state agencies, and residents understand the changing environment and make informed decisions.

The Hudson River floods the Poughkeepsie waterfront from storm surge on December 23, 2022. Photo: Europa McGovern via MyCoast NY

"MyCoast NY impact information is used by NWS NY forecasters in near real time for issuing life- and property-saving warnings and communicating to public safety partners and the public... the numerous MyCoast flood photos documented along the Hudson River from the December 23rd storm surge event allowed forecasters to issue short fuse flood advisories for the Lower Hudson Valley during the event."
- National Weather Service NY Meteorologist Nelson Vaz

NYSG, WRI, and coastal and inland community partners have promoted MyCoast NY via email, listservs, a series of outreach documents, event tabling, social media, news outlets, and in-app messaging for registered users during storm events. Targeted trainings have been held for local government and state officials, watershed groups, K-12 teachers, and at libraries. A MyCoast NY newsletter recaps storm events, and provides case studies of organizations using MyCoast to raise awareness and improve decision-making.

Since July 2022, 537 New Yorkers have registered for MyCoast NY, 231 photos have been received from Flood Watch and Storm Reporter portals from 21 counties, with another 398 photo reports submitted via Coast Snap portals in Stuyvesant, Watch Hill, and Rockaway Beach. Efforts are underway to upload 700 photos from the Community Flood Watch Program in New York City and to merge MyCoast NY into the NYC FloodNet system. A survey of registered users in September 2023 shows strong interest in MyCoast NY and will inform additional training and outreach. Learn more at https://mycoast.org/ny.

This statewide community science tool for photo-reporting of localized flooding, storm impacts, and coastal changes is helping to inform community and public safety management decisions.

Project Partners: New York State Water Resources Institute • National Sea Grant Office • U.S. Department of Commerce