

109TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 307

To establish the Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 25, 2005

Mr. SIMMONS (for himself, Mr. SHAYS, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. ISRAEL, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mrs. McCARTHY, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. BOEHLERT, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. WEINER, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. BISHOP of New York, Mr. NADLER, Mrs. LOWEY, and Mr. OWENS) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources, and in addition to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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# A BILL

To establish the Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-  
2       tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Long Island Sound  
5       Stewardship Act of 2005”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.**

7       (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

1 (1) Long Island Sound is a national treasure of  
2 great cultural, environmental, and ecological impor-  
3 tance;

4 (2) 8,000,000 people live within the Long Is-  
5 land Sound watershed and 28,000,000 people (ap-  
6 proximately 10 percent of the population of the  
7 United States) live within 50 miles of Long Island  
8 Sound;

17 (5) existing shoreline facilities are in many  
18 cases overburdened and underfunded;

19 (6) large parcels of open space already in public  
20 ownership are strained by the effort to balance the  
21 demand for recreation with the needs of sensitive  
22 natural resources;

1       impounded, reducing the ecological value of the  
2       marshes; and

3                   (8) much of the remaining exemplary natural  
4       landscape is vulnerable to further development.

5       (b) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this Act is to estab-  
6       lish the Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative to iden-  
7       tify, protect, and enhance sites within the Long Island  
8       Sound ecosystem with significant ecological, educational,  
9       open space, public access, or recreational value through  
10      a bi-State network of sites best exemplifying these values.

11      **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

12      In this Act, the following definitions apply:

13                   (1) ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT.—The term  
14       “adaptive management” means a scientific proc-  
15       ess—

16                   (A) for—

17                           (i) developing predictive models;  
18                           (ii) making management policy deci-  
19       sions based upon the model outputs;

20                           (iii) revising the management policies  
21       as data become available with which to  
22       evaluate the policies; and

23                           (iv) acknowledging uncertainty, com-  
24       plexity, and variance in the spatial and  
25       temporal aspects of natural systems; and

1 (B) that requires that management be  
2 viewed as experimental.

12 (5) STATES.—The term “States” means the  
13 States of Connecticut and New York.

14 (6) STEWARDSHIP SITE.—The term “steward-  
15 ship site” means a site that—

16 (A) qualifies for identification by the Com-  
17 mittee under section 8; and

18 (B) is an area of land or water or a com-  
19 bination of land and water.

(i) that is in the Region; and

21 (ii) that is—

22 (I) Federal, State, local, or tribal  
23 land or water;

24 (II) land or water owned by a  
25 nonprofit organization; or

1 (III) privately owned land or  
2 water.

6 (A) has explicit goals, methods, and cri-  
7 teria;

8 (B) produces feasible, repeatable, and de-  
9 fensible results;

10 (C) provides for consideration of natural,  
11 physical, and biological patterns;

12 (D) addresses reserve size, replication,  
13 connectivity, species viability, location, and pub-  
14 lic recreation values;

15 (E) uses geographic information systems  
16 technology and algorithms to integrate selection  
17 criteria; and

18 (F) will result in achieving the goals of  
19 stewardship site selection at the lowest cost.

20 (8) THREAT.—The term “threat” means a  
21 threat that is likely to destroy or seriously degrade  
22 a conservation target or a recreation area.

1 **SEC. 4. LONG ISLAND SOUND STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE**2 **REGION.**

3 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established in the  
4 States the Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative Re-  
5 gion.

6 (b) BOUNDARIES.—The Region shall encompass the  
7 immediate coastal upland and underwater areas along  
8 Long Island Sound, including those portions of the Sound  
9 with coastally influenced vegetation, as described on the  
10 map entitled the “Long Island Sound Stewardship Re-  
11 gion” and dated April 21, 2004, as well as the Peconic  
12 Estuary as described on the map entitled “Peconic Estu-  
13 ary Program Study Area Boundaries” included in the  
14 Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for  
15 the Peconic Estuary Program and dated November 15,  
16 2001.

17 **SEC. 5. LONG ISLAND SOUND STEWARDSHIP ADVISORY**  
18 **COMMITTEE.**

19 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established a com-  
20 mittee to be known as the “Long Island Sound Steward-  
21 ship Advisory Committee”.

22 (b) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Com-  
23 mittee shall be the Director of the Long Island Sound Of-  
24 fice of the Environmental Protection Agency, or a designee  
25 of the Director.

26 (c) MEMBERSHIP.—

## 1 (1) COMPOSITION.—

## 2 (A) APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS.—

3 (i) IN GENERAL.—The Chairperson  
4 shall appoint the members of the Com-  
5 mittee in accordance with this subsection  
6 and section 320(c) of the Federal Water  
7 Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1330(c)).

8 (ii) ADDITIONAL MEMBERS.—In addi-  
9 tion to the requirements described in  
10 clause (i), the Committee shall include—

11 (I) a representative from the Re-  
12 gional Plan Association;

13 (II) a representative of the ma-  
14 rine trade organizations; and

15 (III) a representative of private  
16 landowner interests.

17 (B) REPRESENTATION.—In appointing  
18 members to the Committee, the Chairperson  
19 shall consider—

20 (i) Federal, State, and local govern-  
21 ment interests;

22 (ii) the interests of nongovernmental  
23 organizations;

24 (iii) academic interests; and

25 (iv) private interests.

5 (d) TERM; VACANCIES.—

## 6 (1) TERM.—

12 (2) VACANCIES.—A vacancy on the Committee  
13 shall—

14 (A) be filled not later than 90 days after  
15 the vacancy occurs;

16 (B) not affect the powers of the Com-  
17 mittee; and

18 (C) be filled in the same manner as the  
19 original appointment was made.

20 (3) STAFF.—

21 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Chairperson of the  
22 Committee may appoint and terminate per-  
23 sonnel as necessary to enable the Committee to  
24 perform the duties of the Committee.

1 (B) PERSONNEL AS FEDERAL EMPLOY-  
2 EES.—

9 (ii) MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE.—  
10 Clause (i) does not apply to members of  
11 the Committee.

12 (e) INITIAL MEETING.—Not later than 30 days after  
13 the date on which all members of the Committee have been  
14 appointed, the Committee shall hold the initial meeting of  
15 the Committee.

16 (f) MEETINGS.—The Committee shall meet at the  
17 call of the Chairperson, but no fewer than 4 times each  
18 year.

19 (g) QUORUM.—A majority of the members of the  
20 Committee shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number  
21 of members may hold hearings.

## 22 SEC. 6. DUTIES OF THE COMMITTEE.

23 The Committee shall—

24 (1) consistent with the guidelines described in  
25 section 8—

5 (B) evaluate applications to develop and  
6 implement management plans to address  
7 threats;

11 (D) recommend that the Administrator  
12 award grants to qualified applicants;

13 (2) recommend guidelines, criteria, schedules,  
14 and due dates for evaluating information to identify  
15 stewardship sites;

16 (3) publish a list of sites that further the pur-  
17 poses of this Act if owners of sites are—

18 (A) notified prior to the publication of the  
19 list; and

20 (B) allowed to decline inclusion on the list;

21 (4) raise awareness of the values of and threats  
22 to these sites; and

23 (5) leverage additional resources for improved  
24 stewardship of the Region.

## 1 SEC. 7. POWERS OF THE COMMITTEE.

2 (a) HEARINGS.—The Committee may hold such hearings, meet and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Committee considers advisable to carry out this Act.

6 (b) INFORMATION FROM FEDERAL AGENCIES.—

7 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Committee may secure directly from a Federal agency such information as the Committee considers necessary to carry out this Act.

11 (2) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—

12 (A) IN GENERAL.—Subject to subparagraph (C), on request of the Chairperson of the Committee, the head of a Federal agency shall provide the information requested by the Chairperson to the Committee.

17 (B) ADMINISTRATION.—The furnishing of information by a Federal agency to the Committee shall not be considered a waiver of any exemption available to the agency under section 552 of title 5, United States Code.

22 (C) INFORMATION TO BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.—

24 (i) IN GENERAL.—For purposes of section 1905 of title 18, United States Code—

(I) the Committee shall be considered an agency of the Federal Government; and

(II) any individual employed by an individual, entity, or organization that is a party to a contract with the Committee under this Act shall be considered an employee of the Committee.

(ii) PROHIBITION ON DISCLOSURE.—

Information obtained by the Committee, other than information that is available to the public, shall not be disclosed to any person in any manner except to an employee of the Committee as described in clause (i) for the purpose of receiving, reviewing, or processing the information.

18 (c) POSTAL SERVICES.—The Committee may use the  
19 United States mails in the same manner and under the  
20 same conditions as other agencies of the Federal Govern-  
21 ment.

22 (d) DONATIONS.—The Committee may accept, use,  
23 and dispose of donations of services or property that ad-  
24 vance the goals of the Long Island Sound Stewardship Ini-  
25 tiative.

## 1 SEC. 8. STEWARDSHIP SITES.

## 2 (a) INITIAL SITES.—

## 3 (1) IDENTIFICATION.—

4 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Committee shall  
5 identify 20 initial Long Island Sound steward-  
6 ship sites that the Committee has determined—

7 (i)(I) are natural resource-based  
8 recreation areas; or

9 (II) are exemplary natural areas with  
10 ecological value; and

11 (ii) best promote the purposes of this  
12 Act.

13 (B) EXEMPTION.—Sites described in sub-  
14 paragraph (A) are not subject to the site identi-  
15 fication process described in subsection (d).

16 (2) EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS FOR  
17 INITIAL SITES.—In identifying initial sites under  
18 paragraph (1), the Committee shall exert due dili-  
19 gence to recommend an equitable distribution of  
20 funds between the States for the initial sites.

21 (b) APPLICATION FOR IDENTIFICATION AS A STEW-  
22 ARDSHIP SITE.—Subsequent to the identification of the  
23 initial stewardship sites under subsection (a), owners of  
24 sites may submit applications to the Committee in accord-  
25 ance with subsection (c) to have the sites identified as  
26 stewardship sites.

1       (c) IDENTIFICATION.—The Committee shall review  
2 applications submitted by owners of potential stewardship  
3 sites to determine whether the sites should be identified  
4 as exhibiting values consistent with the purposes of this  
5 Act.

6       (d) SITE IDENTIFICATION PROCESS.—

7           (1) NATURAL RESOURCE-BASED RECREATION  
8 AREAS.—The Committee shall identify additional  
9 recreation areas with potential as stewardship sites  
10 using a selection technique that includes—  
11                   (A) public access;  
12                   (B) community support;  
13                   (C) areas with high population density;  
14                   (D) environmental justice (as defined in  
15 section 385.3 of title 33, Code of Federal Regu-  
16 lations (or successor regulations));  
17                   (E) connectivity to existing protected areas  
18 and open spaces;  
19                   (F) cultural, historic, and scenic areas; and  
20                   (G) other criteria developed by the Com-  
21 mittee.

22           (2) NATURAL AREAS WITH ECOLOGICAL  
23 VALUE.—The Committee shall identify additional  
24 natural areas with ecological value and potential as  
25 stewardship sites—

1 (A) based on measurable conservation tar-  
2 gets for the Region; and

3 (B) following a process for prioritizing new  
4 sites using systematic site selection, which shall  
5 include—

6 (i) ecological uniqueness;

7 (ii) species viability;

8 (iii) habitat heterogeneity;

9 (iv) size;

10 (v) quality;

11 (vi) connectivity to existing protected  
12 areas and open spaces;

13 (vii) land cover;

14 (viii) scientific, research, or edu-  
15 cational value;

16 (ix) threats; and

17 (x) other criteria developed by the  
18 Committee.

22 (A) publish in the Federal Register a list  
23 of sites that further the purposes of this Act;  
24 and

#### 6 (4) DEVIATION FROM PROCESS.—

7 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Committee may  
8 identify as a potential stewardship site, a site  
9 that does not meet the criteria in paragraph (1)  
10 or (2), or reject a site selected under paragraph  
11 (1) or (2), if the Committee—  
12 (i) selects a site that makes significant  
13 ecological or recreational contributions to the Region;  
14 (ii) publishes the reasons that the Committee decided to deviate from the systematic site selection process; and  
15 (iii) before identifying or rejecting the potential stewardship site, provides to the owners of the site the notification of publication, and the opportunity under paragraph (3)(B) to decline inclusion of the site on the list published under paragraph (3)(A).

#### 4 (e) GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR MANAGEMENT.—

8 (A) definition of strategic goals;

9 (B) definition of policy options for methods  
10 to achieve strategic goals;

11 (C) establishment of measures of success;

12 (D) identification of uncertainties;

13 (E) development of informative models of  
14 policy implementation;

15 (F) separation of the landscape into geo-  
16 graphic units;

17 (G) monitoring key responses at different  
18 spatial and temporal scales; and

19 (H) evaluation of outcomes and incorpora-  
20 tion into management strategies.

1 **SEC. 9. REPORTS.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—For each of fiscal years 2006  
3 through 2013, the Committee shall submit to the Adminis-  
4 trator an annual report that contains—

5 (1) a detailed statement of the findings and  
6 conclusions of the Committee since the last report;

7 (2) a description of all sites recommended by  
8 the Committee to be approved as stewardship sites;

9 (3) the recommendations of the Committee for  
10 such legislation and administrative actions as the  
11 Committee considers appropriate; and

12 (4) in accordance with subsection (b), the rec-  
13 commendations of the Committee for the awarding of  
14 grants.

15 (b) GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR RECOMMENDA-  
16 TIONS.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Committee shall rec-  
18 commend that the Administrator award grants to  
19 qualified applicants to help to secure and improve  
20 the open space, public access, or ecological values of  
21 stewardship sites, through—

22 (A) purchase of the property of the site;

23 (B) purchase of relevant property rights of  
24 the site; or

25 (C) entering into any other binding legal  
26 arrangement that ensures that the values of the

1 site are sustained, including entering into an  
2 arrangement with a land manager or owner to  
3 develop or implement an approved management  
4 plan that is necessary for the conservation of  
5 natural resources.

6 (2) EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF FUNDS.—  
7 The Committee shall exert due diligence to rec-  
8 ommend an equitable distribution of funds between  
9 the States.

10 (c) ACTION BY THE ADMINISTRATOR.—

11 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 90 days after  
12 receiving a report under subsection (a), the Adminis-  
13 trator shall—

14 (A) review the recommendations of the  
15 Committee; and

16 (B) take actions consistent with the rec-  
17 ommendations of the Committee, including the  
18 approval of identified stewardship sites and the  
19 award of grants, unless the Administrator  
20 makes a finding that any recommendation is  
21 unwarranted by the facts.

22 (2) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the  
23 date of enactment of this Act, the Administrator  
24 shall develop and publish a report that—

(A) assesses the current resources of and threats to Long Island Sound;

(B) assesses the role of the Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative in protecting Long Island Sound;

(C) establishes guidelines, criteria, schedules, and due dates for evaluating information to identify stewardship sites;

(D) includes information about any grants that are available for the purchase of land or property rights to protect stewardship sites;

(E) accounts for funds received and expended during the previous fiscal year;

(F) shall be made available to the public on the Internet and in hardcopy form; and

(G) shall be updated at least every other year, except that information on funding and any new stewardship sites identified shall be published more frequently.

## 20 SEC. 10. PRIVATE PROPERTY PROTECTION.

21 (a) ACCESS TO PRIVATE PROPERTY.—Nothing in  
22 this Act—

23 (1) requires any private property owner to allow  
24 public access (including Federal, State, or local gov-  
25 ernment access) to the private property; or

5 (b) LIABILITY.—Approval of the Long Island Sound  
6 Stewardship Initiative Region does not create any liability,  
7 or have any effect on any liability under any other law,  
8 of any private property owner with respect to any person  
9 injured on the private property.

10 (c) RECOGNITION OF AUTHORITY TO CONTROL LAND  
11 USE.—Nothing in this Act modifies the authority of Fed-  
12 eral, State, or local governments to regulate land use.

13 (d) PARTICIPATION OF PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS  
14 IN THE LONG ISLAND SOUND STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVE  
15 REGION.—Nothing in this Act requires the owner of any  
16 private property located within the boundaries of the Re-  
17 gion to participate in or be associated with the Initiative.

18 (e) EFFECT OF ESTABLISHMENT.—

1       in existence on the date of enactment of this Act on  
2       land use in the Region by any management entity,  
3       except for such property rights as may be purchased  
4       from or donated by the owner of the property (in-  
5       cluding the Federal Government or a State or local  
6       government, if applicable).

7       **SEC. 11. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

8       (a) **IN GENERAL.**—There is authorized to be appro-  
9       priated to carry out this Act \$25,000,000 for each of fiscal  
10      years 2006 through 2013.

11       (b) **USE OF FUNDS.**—For each fiscal year, funds  
12      made available under subsection (a) shall be used by the  
13      Administrator, after reviewing the recommendations of the  
14      Committee submitted under section 9, for—

15               (1) acquisition of land and interests in land;  
16               (2) development and implementation of site  
17      management plans;  
18               (3) site enhancements to reduce threats or pro-  
19      mote stewardship; and  
20               (4) administrative expenses of the Committee.

21       (c) **FEDERAL SHARE.**—The Federal share of the cost  
22      of an activity carried out using any assistance or grant  
23      under this Act shall not exceed 75 percent of the total  
24      cost of the activity.

1 **SEC. 12. LONG ISLAND SOUND AUTHORIZATION OF APPRO-**

2 **PRIATIONS.**

3       Section 119(f) of the Federal Water Pollution Con-  
4 trol Act (33 U.S.C. 1269(f)) is amended by striking  
5 “2005” each place it appears and inserting “2009”.

6 **SEC. 13. TERMINATION OF COMMITTEE.**

7       The Committee shall terminate on December 31,  
8 2013.

○