



Legislation Aims to Improve Water Quality through Shellfish Restoration and Protection

BY [LEGISLATOR ANKER'S OFFICE](#) PUBLISHED: JUNE 01 2016

At a General Meeting on May 10th, the Suffolk County Legislature unanimously approved the transfer of \$82,623 from the Suffolk County Water Quality Protection and Restoration Program to the Town of Brookhaven.



The grant will be used by the Town of Brookhaven to upgrade the shellfish restoration program facilities.

Hauppauge, NY - June 1, 2016 - At a General Meeting on May 10th, the Suffolk County Legislature unanimously approved Introductory Resolution 1380, which authorizes the transfer

of \$82,623 from the Suffolk County Water Quality Protection and Restoration Program to the [Town of Brookhaven](#).

Suffolk County Legislator Sarah Anker (D-Mount Sinai), a co-sponsor of the resolution, secured its passage in an effort to support the ongoing efforts to improve water quality and animal habitat across Long Island. Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone approved the resolution on Wednesday, May 18th.

“Collaboration between municipalities is vital to protect our environment,” said Legislator Anker, a member of Suffolk County’s Environment, Planning and Agriculture committee. “Shellfish are essential to our waters as they help filter nitrogen and other polluting particles. By promoting their livelihood and habitat, we are working toward a sustainable way to improve our water conditions.”

The grant will be used by the Town of Brookhaven to upgrade the shellfish restoration program facilities. The facility has been active for almost 30 years and uses aquaculture techniques to breed and harvest different species of shellfish. The shellfish from this facility are released into local waterways, including Mount Sinai Harbor, to help reduce nitrogen and pollution. Nitrogen rich waters facilitate the proliferation of harmful algal blooms and can cause water discoloration and toxic conditions. In the inter-municipal agreement, the Town of Brookhaven has committed to accept the grant monies and will provide matching project funds of \$88,853.

“Suffolk County has taken an active role in rehabilitating the health of our waterways,” stated Deputy Presiding Officer Rob Calarco (D-Patchogue). “This project will not only help reduce nitrogen, improving the health of the bays, but helps to revitalize the shellfish industry and our local economy.”

“I was happy to support this necessary funding to assist the Town of Brookhaven in upgrading their shellfish restoration program facilities,” stated Legislator Kate Browning (WF-Shirley). “Just last year the shellfish harvested at this facility were seeded in Bellport Bay as part of a collaborative effort with the Friends of Bellport Bay to restore water quality in the Great South Bay. This funding will ensure that these vital programs and partnerships will continue.”

The project is consistent with the South Shore Estuary Reserve Comprehensive Management Plan as it is expected to increase the molluscan shellfish populations for commercial harvest by improving water quality. The plan includes a blueprint for protecting bays and tributaries, and the corresponding wetlands, wildlife, and economy. It is also consistent with the Long Island Sound Study as it will increase the sustainable harvest of clams, scallops and oysters.

“In our fight against the consequences of nitrogen pollution, it is perhaps this least technically advanced method that gives Suffolk County residents the biggest bang for their buck,” said

Legislator Kara Hahn, Chairwomen of the Legislature's Environment, Planning and Agriculture Committee. "The County's small investment will sustain and enhance the highly effective Shellfish Population Enhancement Project that restores local populations of oysters, clams and scallops that filter and clean up to 50 gallons of water per day per organism, and has been proven effective both on and off shore in terms of water quality improvement and economic opportunity."

The project will be initiated within the next three years. For more information, please contact the office of Legislator Anker at 631-854-1600.