



# Long Island Sound Study

A Partnership to Restore and Protect the Sound

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law  
Project Spotlight

## BIL Funds Used to Establish New Grant and Technical Assistance Program for Underserved Communities



James Ammerman and Kristina Heinemann

In 2014 and 2015, LIS Futures Fund grants supported a project to install bioswales to reduce stormwater pollution in New Haven, including in underserved communities. Turn to page 2 to learn how BIL funds are establishing a new LISS grant program dedicated to underserved and overburdened communities.

### What is BIL?

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (or BIL) was passed by Congress in 2021 to improve infrastructure and climate resiliency in an equitable manner throughout the United States.

Under the legislation, the Long Island Sound Study will receive \$21.2 million per year over five years (2022 - 2026) to fund local BIL initiatives that will target the environmental health, climate resiliency, and economic vitality of the Sound in an equitable manner.

Several of the BIL-funded projects will be supporting the Justice40 Initiative, a federal program to deliver 40 percent of the overall benefits of relevant federal investments to underserved and overburdened communities.

### The Long Island Sound Study (LISS) brings together

local, state, and federal governments with citizens, universities, commissions, industry, and user and environmental groups to improve the health of Long Island Sound.

To learn more about BIL projects, visit:

[LISSStudy.net/BIL](https://LISSStudy.net/BIL)



# LIS Community Impact Fund Creates New Opportunities to Benefit and Engage Underserved Communities in the Watershed

In 2022, the Long Island Sound Study (LISS) launched a multi-million-dollar program to address environmental justice concerns impacting underserved communities in the Long Island Sound (LIS) region. The Long Island Sound Community Impact Fund (LISCIF) will direct funds and technical assistance to communities affected by adverse and disproportionate environmental and human health risks or harms. LISCIF is a significant step to expand the reach of LISS program benefits – and enhance equitable access and participation in the protection and restoration of Long Island Sound.

There are two components of LISCIF: creating and administering a competitive subaward program and providing a technical assistance program. EPA selected Restore America's Estuaries (RAE) to administer the LISCIF and implement these two program elements. RAE is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the protection and restoration of bays and estuaries as essential resources for our nation.

LISCIF's competitive grant program will provide two rounds of roughly \$1 million in funding annually through competitive grants (\$5,000 to \$100,000 per award). LISCIF is unique in its focus on supporting underserved communities as well as its structure to provide smaller grants than other LISS programs. Technical assistance will be available to help establish or strengthen organizations' ability to ease environmental-related burdens facing their communities. Examples of technical assistance topics include proposal preparation, applying for government grants, and project/financial management. RAE has structured the technical assistance program so trainings will be free, and stipends will be available to approximately 50 individuals per year.

Funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the intent of LISCIF exemplifies the vision of BIL

and related Justice40 goals – to direct benefits and investments to the communities and organizations that need them most.

Environmental justice (EJ) is a core principle of the LISS Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan (CCMP). The CCMP has three underlying principles to integrate into all LISS efforts: 1) resiliency to climate change, 2) long-term sustainability, and 3) environmental justice. In 2020 LISS formalized an Environmental Justice Work Group (EJWG), which meets quarterly and includes a subgroup focused on outreach and engagement with underserved communities. The EJWG has a five-year strategic plan; Work Group members identified LISCIF as a key activity for achieving LISS CCMP EJ goals.

LISCIF work will happen over multiple years. Information about LISCIF's competitive grant program and training opportunities will be posted on the LISS website as information is available.



NYC DEP

In 2020, the Futures Fund awarded a grant to the Trust for Public Land to develop a low impact development schoolyard to reduce stormwater pollution in Elmhurst, Queens.



✉ [info@longislandsoundstudy.net](mailto:info@longislandsoundstudy.net)

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