

For 76 years, New York has collaborated on clean water issues with other states in the region through its membership with NEIWPCC. Established in 1947, NEIWPCC [NŪ-Ē-PÍK] is a regional commission that helps the states of the Northeast preserve and advance water quality. We engage and convene water quality professionals and other interested parties from New England and New York to collaborate on water, wastewater, and other environmental science challenges across shared regions, ecosystems, and areas of expertise.



PROTECTING WATER RESOURCES

The Hudson River Estuary Program and the Hudson River National Estuarine Research Reserve are staffed in part by NEIWPCC employees. We funded the replacement of two culverts in Stephentown and Copake, which restored habitat connectivity and improved passage for aquatic organisms. Additionally, NEIWPCC completed an oyster mapping project between Piermont and Yonkers, which characterized habitat for future restoration efforts.

NEIWPCC provided staff and funding for programs including "A Day in the Life of the Hudson and Harbor," which introduced more than 5,000 students and educators to field-based sampling; and the Hudson River Eel Project, in which approximately 1,000 volunteers monitored American eels at 12 sampling locations. Additionally, 14 high school students participated in The Institute Discovering Environmental Scientists paid summer research program.

NEIWPCC helped establish the Hudson River Estuary Physical Oceanographic Real-Time System, to deliver oceanographic and meteorological observations that improves maritime safety and inform coastal resource management. We also supported the Hudson River Environmental Conditions Observing System, which collects high-frequency data on water quality and weather conditions.

The Lake Champlain Basin Program restores and protects the water body, which is facing serious environmental threats including nutrient pollution, harmful algal blooms, aquatic invasive species, and extreme weather events. This year, 22 staff executed contracts for 143 projects, amounting to more than \$13.07 million which was distributed to organizations in the Basin.

During the summer, NEIWPCC hired 24 boat launch stewards who delivered aquatic invasive species spread prevention messages to more than 56,000 lake visitors. Stewards conducted more than 22,000 inspections, with 11% of the surveyed watercraft carrying aquatic hitchhikers.

The Long Island Sound Partnership (formerly the Long Island Sound Study) marked its 40-year anniversary with a new name and a new Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. The plan sets a 10-year roadmap to revitalize the Sound as an ecological, economic, and recreational resource.

CLEAN WATER CHALLENGES

- PFAS/emerging contaminants
- Nutrient pollution
- Extreme weather events
- Source water protection
- Harmful algal blooms
- Invasive species
- Leaking underground storage tanks
- Wetlands protection
- Road salt/chloride contamination
- Habitat restoration
- Outdated water infrastructure
- Barriers to fish passage
- Stormwater runoff

NEIWPCC supports the Long Island Watershed Action Agenda (LIWAA), a ten-year estuary management plan designed to protect water resources through a watershed approach. The strategic objectives of LIWAA are centered around clean water; healthy habitats; sustainable ground-water resources; and an inspired and engaged public.

In partnership with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), the Nutrient Bioextraction Initiative was created to determine if the growing and harvesting of shellfish and seaweed can be used to make meaningful reductions in nitrogen levels in the Sound. Research examined the effectiveness of using locally harvested sugar kelp as a fertilizer amendment, identified the most effective species for nutrient removal, and performed a cost analysis of the marketability of a commercial bioextraction industry.

The Long Island Garden Rewards Program offers homeowners up to \$500 to offset the expense of installing rain barrels, native plant gardens, and rain gardens. In 2025, more than 170 homeowners received grants to support their stormwater mitigation projects.

NEIWPCC employs several environmental analysts who assist the state's Drinking Water Source Protection Program (DWSP2). The program offers free technical assistance for municipalities to develop and implement community-specific drinking water plans. Staff help develop potential contaminant inventories and source water maps, identify protection methods, and assist with plan implementation. To date, DWSP2 has 102

municipalities participating in the program, evaluating 134 sources of drinking water for approximately 2.5 million consumers. We also assist NYSDEC in monitoring the water quality of lakes, rivers, and streams, as well as permitting through the State Pollution Discharge Elimination System.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

In partnership with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, NEIWPCC supports the replacement of capital equipment at non-city-owned wastewater treatment plants in the upstate watershed and the ongoing maintenance of wastewater treatment equipment. The program recently finished construction on one existing regulatory upgrade project and made progress on another.

For more than 50 years, NEIWPCC has offered wastewater operator training and certification preparation. Classes, which are available in-person, online, or in a self-paced format, cover all aspects of the job, from wastewater treatment chemistry and microbiology to equipment safety and lab procedures. This year, 34 operators based in New York participated in a total of 23 courses throughout the region.

Our staff provided tailored technical assistance to help the villages of Millbrook and Oriskany Falls identify and prioritize solutions to challenges within their wastewater treatment plants. NEIWPCC also began developing six comprehensive self-paced online training courses that will provide nationwide access to much-needed education and training resources.

ADVANCING STATE INTERESTS

Working closely with our member states, NEIWPCC represents a regional perspective on proposed water policies to federal parties such as the U.S. EPA and Congress. We provided comments on regulatory issues, including the Clean Water Act Section 401 certification process, federal budget requests, water-related state revolving fund programs, PFAS human health water quality criteria, and the definition of Waters of the United States.

.12%

That is how much of NEIWPCC's funding comes from the annual dues paid by our member states: a combined \$151,561 out of the total available funding to NEIWPCC during fiscal year 2025 in the amount of \$128,975,971. Most of our funding comes from Clean Water Act appropriations or through grants and contracts with federal, state, and other entities, but this small contribution makes New York a member of NEIWPCC's commission.

NEW YORK COMMISSIONERS

(as of Sept. 30, 2025):

Carol Lamb-LaFay representing DEC Commissioner
Amanda Lefton

Daniel Lang, representing DOH Commissioner
James McDonald

Patricia Cerro-Reehil

Mark Klotz

Richard Lyons

COLLABORATION ACROSS STATE LINES

NEIWPCC is governed by its **Executive Committee and Commission**, consisting of five water quality professionals from each of its seven member states, who collaborate across state lines to guide our agenda and identify new priorities. They are leaders in the states' environmental and health agencies, complemented by experts from the private sector. NEIWPCC held three multi-day meetings with the full Commission, joined by representatives from EPA's Region I and II. The commissioners identify and discuss water quality-related concerns; offer guidance to NEIWPCC in implementing strategies, projects and programs; and formulate a regional response to environmental policy initiatives.

A committee of staff and commissioners developed a new **Strategic Plan** for fiscal years 2026-2030. It outlines four priorities focused on inspiring action, scientific monitoring and data collection, workforce development, and ensuring financial resources. Supporting goals and tactics provide a roadmap for achieving NEIWPCC's mission to advance clean water in the Northeast.

In October, NEIWPCC hosted the **12th U.S. Symposium on Harmful Algae** in Portland, Maine to discuss harmful algal bloom management and mitigation, emerging toxins, predictive modeling, and public health threats. The annual **Northeast Aquatic Biologists Conference**, which took place in February in New Hampshire, covered topics such as chloride impacts on streams, cyanobacteria, and long-term monitoring networks. NEIWPCC held the **35th Annual Nonpoint Source Conference** in Freeport, Maine with sessions focused on water pollution reduction success stories, watershed restoration, and aquatic ecosystem management.

The **28th National Tanks Conference** brought nearly 700 professionals to Spokane, Washington to collaborate on timely issues facing the underground storage tanks (UST) industry. NEIWPCC also manages **two workgroups** focused on preventing leaking underground storage tanks and **publishes LUSTLine**, a newsletter about the UST community.

The third season of the **Clean Water Pod** podcast highlighted stories from across the country that showcased innovative approaches with the Clean Water Act 303(d) program. NEIWPCC also coordinated a **national webinar series** on total maximum daily loads for professionals who regulate and monitor water quality.

NEIWPCC revised the **Technical Report 16: Guides for the Design of Wastewater Treatment Works** manual. The revisions include updates to align with current industry practices, eliminate out-of-date materials, and add new concepts such as alternative forms of procurement and contaminants of emerging concern.

Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) continue to present critical environmental challenges. NEIWPCC and partners established a Biosolids Technology Hub, an information clearinghouse providing published literature, technology vendors and project summaries for regulators and clean water practitioners to find solutions for PFAS in municipal biosolids or sludge.

NEIWPCC has been working with our partners in the Water and Wastewater Agency Response Networks and Emergency Management Assistance Compact to increase awareness about **state and federal mutual aid response networks** that help utilities respond to severe weather events.