



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 4, 2023

CCOM AWARDED GRANT TO HELP SAVE FORT POND

CCOM announced this week that the Long Island Community Foundation (LICF) has awarded their organization with a \$25,000 grant from the Henry Phillip Kraft Fund to install floating wetlands in Fort Pond to reduce nutrient concentrations and control harmful algal blooms which have plagued the Pond for years.

2023 will mark the third consecutive year CCOM will be installing vegetated mats. The plants are designed to uptake nutrients in the water column which would have otherwise been used by algae to reproduce exponentially, eventually causing an algal bloom. Interestingly, since the start of CCOMs efforts, the length of the annual algal blooms in the pond have decreased by over 80%. Besides nutrient removal capabilities, the wetland installations provide incredible habitat for fish, birds, and other animals. Several freshwater bryozoans were found attached to the back of the mats in 2022. Bryozoans can filter large amounts of algae from the water, making their existence on the floating wetlands even more conducive to decreasing harmful algal blooms.

The floating vegetated mats are similar to other bio extraction efforts which are being tested across LI water bodies as a way to remove excess nutrients.

The floating wetlands are just one aspect of CCOMs comprehensive watershed-based approach to helping to restore Fort Pond, including a robust land acquisition program, wastewater and septic upgrades, and stormwater management.

“We are thrilled that the Long Island Community Foundation has joined the fight to help restore Fort Pond,” said Laura Tooman, CCOM President. *“This grassroots effort is the epitome of what a community led environmental organization should achieve- creating educated, involved and passionate environmental stewards while making measurable environmental improvements.”*

“Stormwater runoff, discharge from septic systems, and nitrogen from lawn fertilizers cause nutrients to enter Long Island’s waters, causing harmful algal blooms, which can be toxic to humans and animals,” says Melissa Greenberger, program officer at the Long Island Community Foundation. *“By using the innovative technology of floating beemats, Concerned Citizens of Montauk will reduce the duration of harmful algal blooms and levels of nutrients in Fort Pond and restore habitats for fish and birds in Montauk.”*

“The Foundation looks forward to seeing the results of this pilot project and learning how floating wetlands can be used in other locations to improve water quality.” Says David Okorn, executive director of the Foundation.

Hundreds of volunteers have contributed to the success of this effort, and once again are asked to come out on May 20th to help plant and install over 3000 square feet of floating mats filled with 7200 native plants. For more information or to sign up please contact CCOM at info@preservemontauk.org. For more information on the Long Island Community Foundation, please visit <https://licf.org/>

LCF LONG ISLAND COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

A Division of The New York Community Trust



CONCERNED CITIZENS OF
MONTAUK

SAVE FORT POND

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
Plant & Install Floating Wetlands
Improve Water Quality

MAY 20, 2023 @ 9:00AM
FORT POND BOAT RAMP
S. ERIE AVE, MONTAUK



Bring gloves & waders. Lunch will be provided.
REGISTER: INFO@PRESERVEMONTAUK.ORG



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Keeping Montauk Montauk since 1970