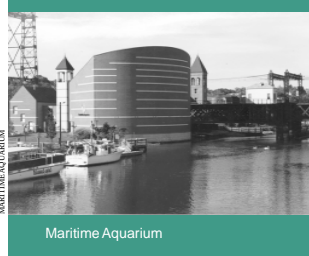


Historic Day for Long Island Sound

By Carole Nemore

THE MARITIME AQUARIUM in Norwalk Connecticut is a great place to visit! Especially on December 4, 2002. That is when the environmental commissioners from New York State and Connecticut, Commissioners Erin Crotty and Arthur Roque Jr. and the New York and New England regional administrators of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Jane Kenny and Robert Varney, gathered to sign an historic agreement to accelerate the cleanup of Long Island Sound. The agreement sets new targets for 30 goals aimed at reducing nitrogen pollution, hypoxia, toxic substances, and pathogens, and to restoring habitats and improving public access. It also includes \$4 million in federal funds to be split between the two states. Commissioner Crotty also announced Governor Pataki's authorization



Maritime Aquarium

of an additional \$26.7 million in funds for 26 new environmental projects on Long Island Sound, including sewage treatment plant improvements and an important habitat restoration project in Rye.

Saving Long Island Sound has long been a priority of Audubon New York's Executive Director, David J. Miller, who had his own announcement at the December 4th event. After 13 years of service, Miller announced that he was stepping down as the

chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) to the Management Conference of the Long Island Sound Study. Under his leadership and that of co-chair, John Atkin (executive director of Save the Sound), the CAC has influenced policy makers at all levels of government to commit more resources to save Long Island Sound. "As Citizens Advisory Committee Co-Chairs, John Atkin and I provide you [the EPA] with priority issues and concerns facing the Sound on an annual basis... This partnership has worked extremely well and each year you have been responsive to our suggestions and utilize them to build on the program's accomplishments,"

Miller said at the meeting. Outstanding previous accomplishments include the formation of the Clean Water Jobs Coalition that brought environmentalists and labor interests together. They lobbied successfully for the Long Island Sound Restoration Act of 2000, which provides for \$200 million in federal funds for the Sound's cleanup over a five-year period. The CAC, under

Miller's leadership, also advocated successfully for \$200 million in state funds as part of Governor Pataki's Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act of 1996. After signing the 2003 Agreement, the EPA New York regional administrator, Jane Kenny, recognized Miller's accomplishments with an environmental achievement award. The CAC's new chair from New York will be Nancy Seligson, a town council member from Mamaroneck and an active supporter of Long Island for many years in her own right.

But despite these accomplishments, more work needs to be done and soon. The lobster fishery is imperiled and bays and harbors that were once productive areas for shellfish continue to degrade due to contamination from pathogens, toxic substances and hypoxia. The new agreement looks to reduce beach closings, clean shellfishing areas, and restore aquatic habitats by upgrading sewage treatment plants, improving storm water management, and reducing nonpoint sources of pollution. The latter will entail better stewardship of land uses along the rim of the Sound. The agreement calls for both public and private landowners to improve their land management practices on lands impacting the Sound. This will be done through the establishment of the Long Island Sound Stewardship System, an initiative that Audubon New York has been actively leading for more than a year. (See past *Advocate* issues for history). The Stewardship System will provide the coordination necessary to: conserve more open spaces, landscapes, and ecosystems; improve access to the Sound; prioritize open spaces for conservation and outdoor recreation; incorporate sites of exemplary scientific, educational, or biological value; and promote federal, state, local, and private funding for open space projects.

In February, a delegation of members representing the Clean Water Jobs Coalition will visit Congress to meet with House and Senate members from both New York and Connecticut. The Coalition is seeking the full authorization of \$40 million for the next budget year from the Long Island Restoration Act. Last year, Congress appropriated approximately \$6.5 million for Long Island Sound to help implement the Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan.



Pictured (Left to Right): Robert W. Varney, Environmental Protection Agency of New England, Erin M. Crotty, Commissioner of New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, David J. Miller, Jane M. Kenny, Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and Arthur J. Roque, Jr. Commissioner of Connecticut Department of Environmental Preservation.

Save Taxes! Save The Environment

By Jan Hesbon

THE BEGINNING of the New Year often leads us to ask, "How can I plan better for the future? Am I planning and saving to share with future generations?"

Your planning can also help support Audubon's vision. You can share a portion of your estate with Audubon to help instill a conservation ethic for future decision-makers of the next generation.

If you are like many Americans who think about future generations, you will probably first think about your will (or living trust). Making a bequest is relatively easy, inexpensive and does not involve any immediate outlay of your assets.

You can also make a bequest from your retirement. For most Americans, our retirement plan is our largest asset, and since many of us will never use up all the assets in our retirement plans during our lifetimes, we — quite

logically think about leaving them to family and friends.

BUT this is an extremely expensive way to pass assets to heirs. Retirement plans only defer taxes. A bequest of retirement plan assets to your heirs will be subject to both income tax and estate tax, whereas other assets that you can leave to your heirs may be subject only to estate tax.

A bequest of your retirement plans, or a percentage, to Audubon is a very smart and tax efficient way to support Audubon. Naming Audubon New York as a beneficiary of your retirement plan assets is a wonderful way to help us train the next generation of environmental leaders at our growing network of Audubon Centers in the state. For further information, contact Jan Hesbon, Planned Giving Officer, Audubon New York, 200 Trillium Lane, Albany, NY 12203; phone: (845) 369-1496; email: jhesbon@audubon.org.