



PROTECTING
THE NATURE
OF THE PLACE
YOU LOVE



Osprey Numbers Soar

| THE GROUP'S RECOVERY PROGRAM A SUCCESS

FALL/WINTER 2019

CONTAMINATED MINE in Bridgehampton
'HILLS' Battle Goes to Court
SOUTHOLD TOWN Comprehensive Plan
STUDENTS & Endangered Shorebirds
BEACH CLEANUPS & Nature Outings
CLIMATE CHANGE & Project Drawdown

Osprey Population Soars!

THE GROUP'S DECADES-LONG CONSERVATION EFFORTS PAY OFF

Thanks to supporters like you, the Group has played a major role in the Osprey's remarkable comeback.

Once on the brink of extinction on the East End in the 1970s, today we see these iconic birds flying across the South Fork, North Fork and Shelter Island—building nests, diving for fish and feeding their chicks.

The local population was almost wiped out by the pesticide DDT, which led to the Osprey's designation as a New York State-endangered species, and the banning of the pesticide in 1972.

The survival of the species was also threatened by the overdevelopment of the East End. The lack of natural breeding locations drove Ospreys to build their massive nests on the tops of utility poles—not the safest place to raise a family! For more than 30 years, the Group has been constructing wooden poles with sturdy platforms, strategically placing them in suitable habitats, and maintaining them regularly.

The Group's platforms have given the birds safer places to reproduce, but many still opt for utility poles as the population increases. As a result, we recently joined forces with the utility company PSEG Long Island to place more than a dozen specially-designed platforms on the tops of utility poles.

“Group for the East End has made an extraordinary impact on the East End Osprey population over the last 40 years.”

*— Alan Poole, Ph.D
Internationally Renowned Osprey Expert*





2019 EAST END OSPREYS

368 Active Nests
548 New Chicks

SHELTER ISLAND TOWN
Highest Occupancy Rate

90% of 67 nests were in use.

EAST HAMPTON TOWN
Highest Productivity Rate

Each pair produced an average of two chicks.

SOUTHAMPTON TOWN
Highest Increase in Tree Nests

14 nests were built in trees, versus none in 2014.

SOUTHOLD TOWN
Highest Number of Chicks Fledged

230 chicks fledged. That's 42% of the East End total!

Nearly a decade ago, Ospreys faced yet another challenge—the sharp decline of Atlantic Menhaden (locally known as bunker), a staple of their diet and the prey of larger fish eaten by Ospreys. After stricter fishing regulations were implemented, Osprey numbers increased.

In fact, from 2014 to 2019, there was a 56% increase in the East End population. How do we know? In 2014, the Group learned that Ospreys were no longer being monitored by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, so we

formed a network of citizen-science volunteers and began collecting important breeding information. Since then, we have been working closely with local government agencies and our partners at The Nature Conservancy, Eastern Long Island Audubon and North Fork Audubon to obtain the most accurate data. **With your support, the Osprey population has a good chance of making a full recovery and surviving on its own.**

To get involved, contact Aaron at acvirgin@eastendenvironment.org.

Shelter Island Green Expo

THE GROUP JOINS FOR
6TH STRAIGHT YEAR

Stewardship Coordinator Christine Tylee represents the Group at the popular Green Expo on the grounds of the American Legion.



Water-Polluting Mine Granted Permit to Expand

| THE GROUP FILES LAWSUIT

In the spring of 2018, the Suffolk County Department of Health Services issued a detailed report concluding that contaminants—primarily nitrates and heavy metals—from Bridgehampton’s Sand Land mining operation had been leaching into the area’s groundwater. Later in the year, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) rightly decided to prohibit the mine’s owner from expanding and that the facility should close and begin site reclamation.

For years, the Group, adjacent neighbors, elected officials and advocates have been calling attention to Sand Land’s dubious activities, and while the decision was long overdue, it was still welcome news for the environment and the future of our drinking water.

Then, with no notice to adjacent neighbors or to Southampton Town, the DEC shocked the community and did a complete about-face. Not only did it allow a massive new expansion, it failed to impose any fines and ignored the need to clean up the existing contamination. In fact, the new

permit allows Sand Land to dig down another 40 feet closer to the groundwater over the next eight years.

The DEC’s inexplicable decision left community members in a state of disbelief. Sadly, we are well aware of the disastrous impact the decision will likely have on the state’s handling of other outdated mines nearing the end of their permit periods and located in sensitive water protection areas.

“The DEC has become nothing but a rubber stamp for the mining industry and is completely failing at its mission to protect the environment.”

– Fred Thiele,
New York State Assemblyman

As a result, the Group joined with neighbors, the Noyac Civic Council, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, the Southampton Town Civic Coalition, Southampton Town and NYS Assemblyman Fred Thiele in a legal challenge to the DEC’s settlement with Sand Land and its new mining permit. **The DEC must be required to uphold its original decision to close the mine and protect our drinking water.**

As we go to press, legal papers have been filed and we await a judge’s decision, which could happen in late September. In the meantime, there is now a rush on applications to expand mining operations in Southampton and East Hampton. Some mines want to dig 60 feet down into the groundwater, apparently with the DEC’s blessing and no environmental review.

This is the exact situation we hoped to avoid, but when the DEC has lost its way, **we must fight for the protection of our critical water resources in court.**

Photo: The Independent





Adults, Children Flock to the Group's Nature Outings

THANKS TO YOUR SUPPORT, THE GROUP HOSTED 75 FREE NATURE PROGRAMS IN THE LAST YEAR

The Group and New Suffolk Waterfront Fund lead a full moon paddle for 30 people to Wickham Creek on a beautiful July evening. *(top)*

On a children's walk at Downs Farm Preserve, Juliette Cox gets a closeup view of a monarch caterpillar. *(right)*

They're for the birds! Director of Environmental Education Steve Biasseti explores Hallock State Park with friends of a feather. *(below left)*

Steve Biasseti examines the tiniest creatures with a budding marine biologist in Quogue. *(below right)*



Massive Golf Resort vs. Clean Water

THE GROUP FILES SUIT AGAINST SOUTHAMPTON TOWN AND DEVELOPER

At the heart of the case is whether the Southampton Town Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) had the authority to allow the Southampton Town Planning Board to review an extensive development project with separate primary uses. As nothing more than a residential subdivision, this interpretation goes against the longstanding zoning laws that were specifically established to conserve the town's water resources, protect open space, and preserve the unique, natural environment of the Central Suffolk Pine Barrens.

In its split decision, the ZBA majority argued that all of the components (see list) proposed with the luxury estates and condominiums are nothing more than "customary accessories." The lawsuit asks the court to recognize that the expansive residential development and the 18-hole golf course and country club are two distinct primary uses of the site. **This is strictly prohibited in Southampton Town's Aquifer Protection Overlay District and under the town's low-density residential zoning and open space laws.**

As we go to press, the developer and Southampton Town are fighting our lawsuit on arcane technical issues. These delay tactics are wasting taxpayer dollars and preventing us from bringing the case's merits before the court. As that plays out, the developer is pressing ahead with its proposal before the planning board.

In its unprecedented nod to let this proposal proceed, the Town of Southampton, through its current ZBA, has turned its back on decades of hard-fought community-driven land-use and zoning achievements that aimed to strike a critical balance between environmental protection and responsible development.

Lewis Road Development Proposal for 590-Acre Luxury Golf Resort in East Quogue

- ✓ 130 Estates and Condominiums
- ✓ Private 18-hole Golf Course
- ✓ Clubhouse
- ✓ Pool
- ✓ Fitness Center
- ✓ Outdoor Pursuits Building
- ✓ Bowling Alley
- ✓ Theater
- ✓ Sports Courts
- ✓ Ball Fields
- ✓ Golf Practice Course



Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning and Policy Commission

“With water contamination on the rise and traffic at a standstill across the South Fork, the contrast between Southampton Town's past land-use leadership and its current posture on this proposal is as surprising as it is destructive.”

--Bob DeLuca, President, Group for the East End

CRITICAL DECISIONS



2017

The Town Board votes down “The Hills at Southampton” development proposal for a 590-acre luxury golf resort in East Quogue **to protect the town’s drinking water.** This fragile piece of property in the Pine Barrens serves as a critical watershed for the area.



2018

In a split decision, the **Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) votes to authorize the Planning Board’s review** of the “new” Lewis Road Planned Residential Development (PRD) proposal, **which is almost identical to the original** one put forth by the Arizona-based developer.



2019

The Group challenges the decision in State Supreme Court and files a lawsuit against Southampton Town and the developer. Joining the Group are the Long Island Pine Barrens Society, the East Quogue Civic Association, New York State Assemblyman Fred Thiele and local residents.

Photo: DanaShaw, 27East.com



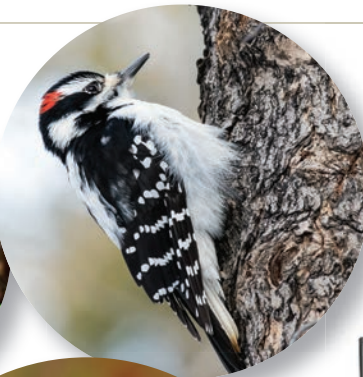
ELECTED OFFICIALS PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE IN LAND-USE DECISIONS.

Southampton Town ZBA members are appointed by the town board.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

1. Register to vote locally
2. Tell candidates from all parties they must protect our environment. *It is the heart of the East End’s economy.*

This is the largest development proposal on the East End in a generation. It will destroy hundreds of acres of pine forest that New York State has designated as a *Special Groundwater Protection Area and Critical Environmental Area.*



Pictured right: The gray frog, box turtle and hairy woodpecker are just three of the thousands of species that rely on pine barrens habitat.

The pine barrens geology is essential to clean water on the East End.

The Group Expands 'Be A Good Egg' Project

| 200+ STUDENTS HELP ENDANGERED SHOREBIRDS

Thanks to a partnership with the Town of Southold, the Group monitors and protects the beaches where endangered and threatened shorebirds lay their eggs. In addition to putting up symbolic string fencing around nesting areas, the first line of defense in helping the birds is to put up eye-catching signs. A person or a dog walking unintentionally through a nesting area can easily scare away adult birds, expose eggs and chicks to extreme weather conditions, and increase the chances of predation.

This year, through the Be A Good Egg project, Stewardship Coordinator Christine Tylee visited five elementary

schools, explained the plight of the birds to students and asked them to create their own signs, which were entered into a contest. The 15 winning hand-drawn signs were mounted and placed on town beaches, attracting the attention of beachgoers of all ages.

In addition, more than 200 students took the Be A Good Egg pledge, a promise to give the birds ample space to rest, nest and raise their young.

The Be A Good Egg project is made possible by a grant from Audubon New York and the Long Island Sound Futures Fund.

“This program is perfect for getting children to be good stewards where they live.”

– Shannon Timoney, Teacher
Peconic Community School





Be careful where you step! From a distance we found this pair of Least Tern chicks nuzzled into a footprint in the sand.



TAKE THE PLEDGE: Be A Good Egg*

1. Respect fenced-off areas where birds are nesting
2. Properly dispose of or carry out your trash
3. Keep your dog off nesting beaches

*Through school visits and outreach events on Southold Town beaches, the Group secured 330 signed pledges!

Rapidly-Changing Southold Town Sparks Concern and Hope

| GROUP INTERN SPEAKS OUT

In August, intern Marina DeLuca voiced her concerns at the first public hearing on Southold Town's Comprehensive Plan.

Ms. DeLuca, a 2016 graduate of Greenport High School and currently a senior at Union College, spoke about the endless parade of cars and trucks, the constant noise from construction work and gas leaf blowers, the need to conserve water, and no longer being able to see stars at night.

The large crowd was eager to hear about the town's first update to the plan in 30 years, which town officials have been working on for almost a decade.

The comprehensive plan serves as the basis for critical planning, zoning and land-use decisions that will shape the future of Southold Town, at a time when development pressure is on the rise from Laurel to Orient. The Group supports the completion of the plan and the town's focus on protecting its natural resources, improving water quality and maintaining its unique historic character.



Photo: Beth Young, East End Beacon

“The younger generation has seen these changes, and they are shocking to us. I have to stress the urgency for Southold to implement the comprehensive plan’s goals.”

– Marina DeLuca, Intern, Group for the East End

The entire Southold Comprehensive Plan can be found at southoldtownny.gov/123/comprehensive-plan



In Memoriam

| KURT WOLFGRUBER

Kurt Wolfgruber was a dedicated and highly regarded member of Group for the East End's board of directors when he passed away in June. Kurt's leadership and generosity were exemplary, and his measured, strategic approach to achieving the Group's goals made him extremely effective and well-liked by the other directors, supporters and staff. He will be sorely missed. Our deepest sympathies go out to Kurt's wife, Kim White (pictured with him), his children and extended family.

County Ban on Cesspool Installation Becomes Law

MAJOR VICTORY FOR THE GROUP'S ADVOCACY EFFORTS ON PROTECTING WATER QUALITY

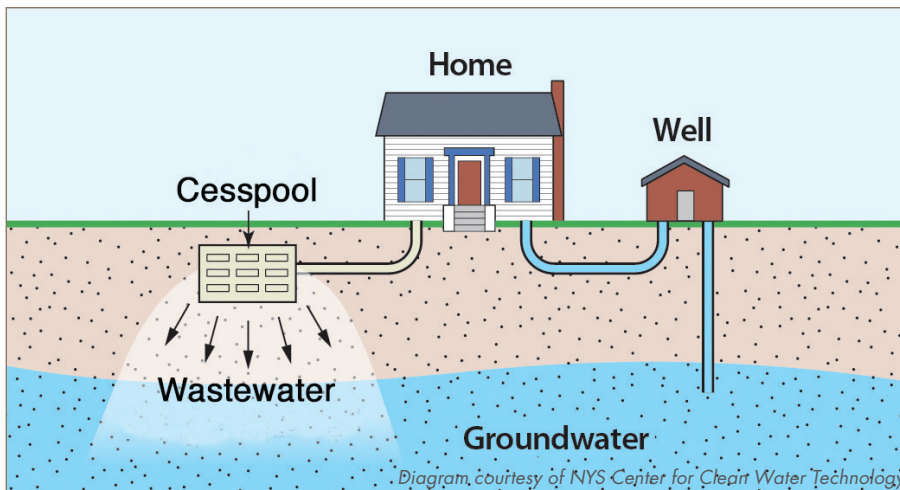
As a founding member of the Long Island Clean Water Partnership—and with your support—the Group has worked tirelessly with Suffolk County officials, conservation organizations and civic groups to implement the steps needed to solve the water quality crisis.

The county's ban on installing cesspools is critically important

in preventing harmful pollution from entering our bays, ponds and drinking water. Passed by the Suffolk County Legislature in 2017, the law went into effect this July and requires all property owners replacing a cesspool to use—at the bare minimum—a septic tank.



Photo: Joel Milton



If your property has a cesspool only, as depicted above, and you replace it, the law now requires, at the very minimum, to include a septic tank to filter out nitrogen.

Alternatives now exist to better treat our sewage and protect our waters! To learn more and see if you qualify for a grant to replace your old septic system visit: reclaimourwater.info

Newsday

– Editorial, August 3, 2019

“The water is a place to swim and boat, to fish and surf, to paddle and sail. We walk and bike along its shore, stretch out before it to read a good book, and eat dinner while gazing at its moonlit beauty. For some of us, it’s a place of work. For most of us, it’s a place to play. It’s a magnet for tourists and a sanctuary for our overworked and overstressed selves.

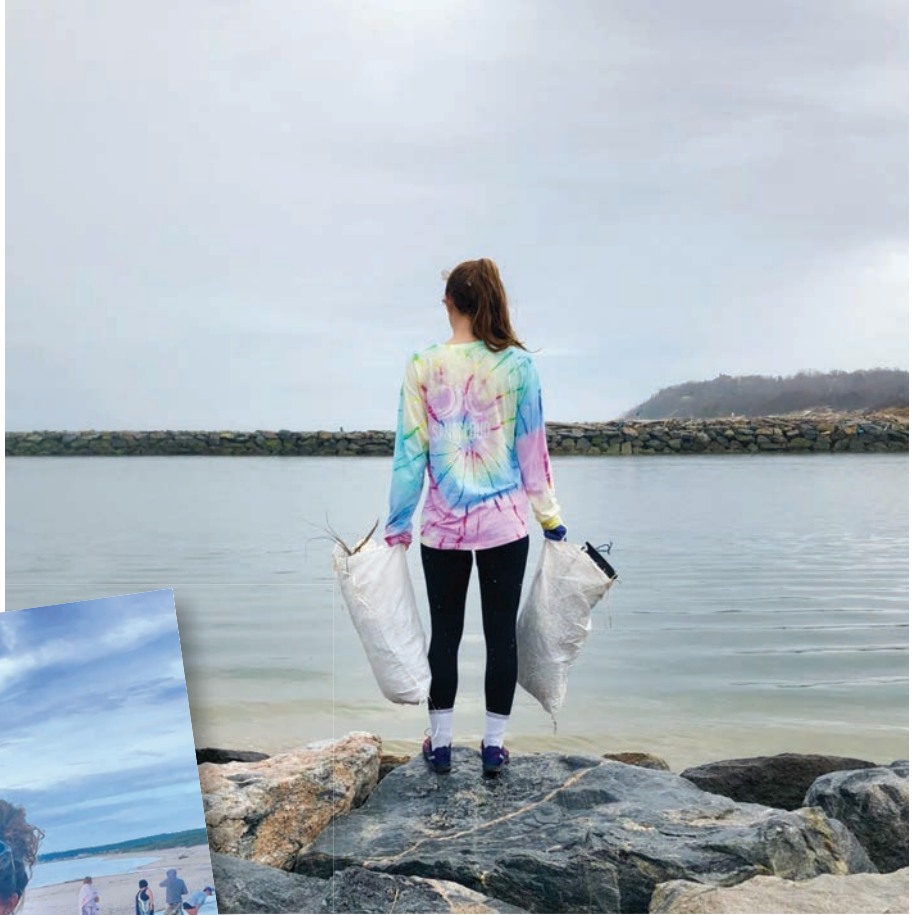
But over the years, we’ve treated it badly — mostly, by dumping nitrogen in it. Some of that comes from the fertilizers we use on our lawns and crops. A little comes from the air. But most of it comes from the cesspools and septic tanks that inadequately filter the wastewater we produce at home and at work.”



Group for the East End and the Long Island Clean Water Partnership are extremely grateful to the Rauch Foundation for their steadfast support on water quality.

Trash Talk

THANK YOU TO
EVERYONE WHO
HELPED CLEAN UP
EAST END BEACHES
THIS PAST YEAR!



Together, we picked up
776 pounds of garbage
during five beach cleanups in
Mattituck, Peconic and Sag Harbor.



Walk ‘N Rosé

THE GROUP PARTNERED WITH NICOLE MILLER ROSÉ AND GABRIELLA WINES TO CLEAN UP SAG HARBOR BEACH

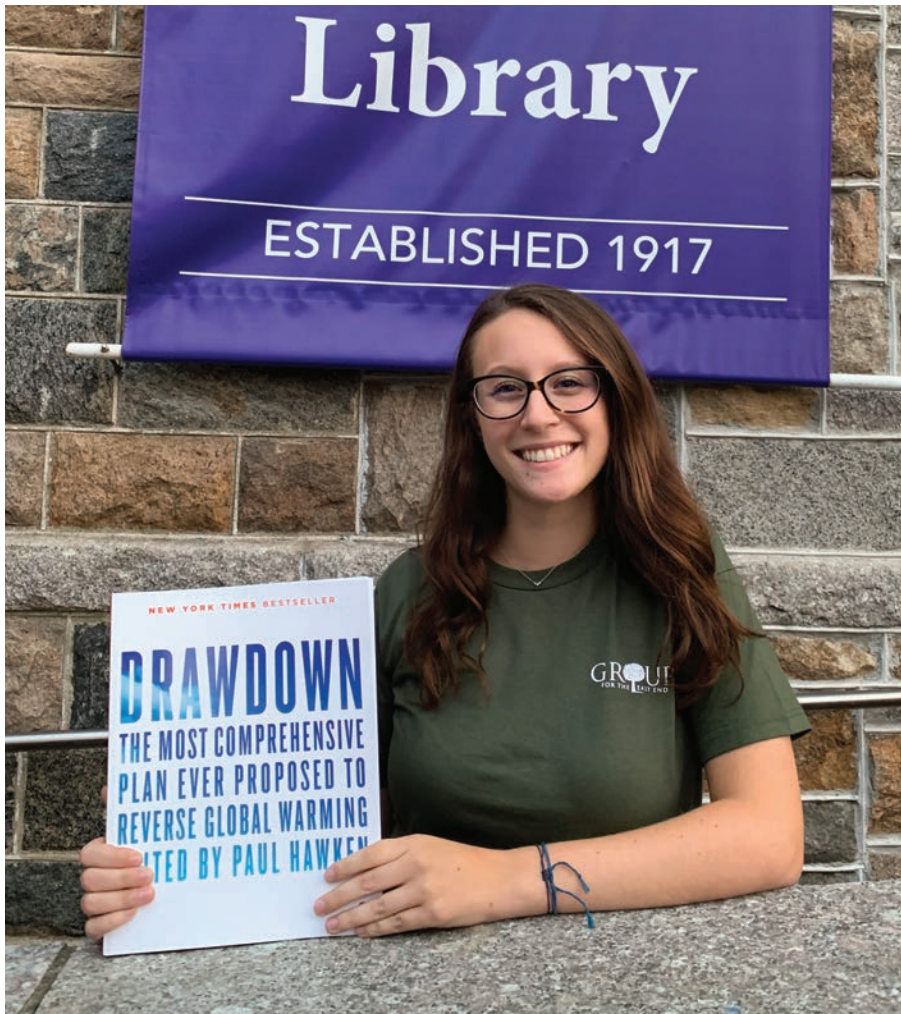
More than 60 people gathered on Long Beach to pick up 200 pounds of trash on a hot, humid day in August. After a quick cool-off in the bay, Kelli Shaughnessy, Nicole Miller, Hillary Suchman and Jacques Azoulay (pictured right) and the rest of the crowd met at a Sag Harbor restaurant where chilled rosé was a welcome sight!



Photos: Patrick McMullan Photography

Drawdown East End

THE GROUP JOINS GRASSROOTS EFFORT
ON CLIMATE CHANGE



Intern Stephanie Licciardi, an East Marion resident and 2019 graduate of George Washington University, attended the first North Fork meeting of the Pachamama Alliance's Reversing Global Warming: Introduction to Drawdown.

Project Drawdown is the result of an international coalition of more than 200 scientists and other experts who identified and modeled the 100 most substantive solutions to reverse global warming, 80 of which are already in practice worldwide and just have to be scaled up.

It shifts the conversation on climate change from 'doom and gloom' to a sense of opportunity, possibility and hope for the future.

Led by author, environmentalist, and entrepreneur Paul Hawken, the Project Drawdown researchers revealed their extraordinary findings:

That it is possible not just to slow global warming, but to actually begin reversing it by 2050.

We can (must) do this!

The Group is delighted to partner with Drawdown East End, a grassroots, non-partisan organization building local solutions to achieve Drawdown and its many economic, environmental, health and safety benefits.

For more information, please contact Kristina Lange at klange@eastendenvironment.org

draw·down *n.* /drôdown/

The point in time when concentrations of atmospheric greenhouse gases peak and then decline, reversing global warming.



SWING INTO SUMMER

A Night in Provence



Swing into Summer Benefit at The Bridge, June 15, 2019

A heartfelt thank you to our hosts Stéphane Samuel & Robert M. Rubin and co-chairs Katherine & Marco Birch, Graciela & Munir Dauhajre, Amelie & Simon Lonergan, and Genevieve & Rob Lynch. Many thanks to Jacques Azoulay for donating all the wine and to Taylor Barton and G.E. Smith for donating their extraordinary musical talent. You and everyone else who supported the event helped raise nearly 50% of the Group's annual budget, which allows us to offer free environmental education programs to the public and to press forward with our critical advocacy and conservation work.

PLEASE JOIN US NEXT JUNE!

Contact **Kristina Lange** at klange@eastendenvironment.org for details about supporting the Group and next year's benefit.

PHOTOS BY JENNY GORMAN

1. Kimberly & Jason Spacek
2. Ray Congdon, Katherine & Marco Birch
3. Jacques Azoulay & Paige Boller
4. Bob & Lisa DeLuca, Hilaria Baldwin, Daniel Romanoff, Alec Baldwin
5. Christie's Auctioneer Lydia Fenet
6. Gigi Stone, Marie-Noëlle Pierce, Amelie Lonergan, Graciela Dauhajre, Katherine Birch, Lara Meiland Shaw, Alexia Leuschen, Krista Carl, Paige Boller, Fernanda Niven, Carey Mangriotis
7. Susan Abdalla & Peter Stern
8. Kathleen Tait, Terrance Weber
9. Graciela Dauhajre, Amelie Lonergan
10. G.E. Smith & Taylor Barton
11. Tom Colicchio, Genevieve Lynch, Lori Silverbush
12. Little Creek Oysters
13. Joe & Yusi Gurrera
14. Maria & Alex Scarsini, Carola Siegel
15. Amelie Lonergan, Stéphane Samuel & Robert Rubin
16. Paula Mahoney, Jenny Green

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Protect the East End for Future Generations

REMEMBER THE GROUP IN YOUR FINANCIAL PLANNING

• GIFT OF SECURITIES

You can reduce or even eliminate capital gains tax. Any publicly traded stock that has increased in value that you have owned for more than a year can provide greater tax benefits than giving cash.

• CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTION FROM AN IRA

If you're at least 70½, you can take a distribution from your Individual Retirement Account (IRA), make a donation to Group for the East End and exclude it from your income of up to \$100,000 per person.

• BEQUEST

Please consider naming the Group as a beneficiary in your estate plans. Whether through your will, a trust or insurance policy, you can plan for the future, pass on your values, and make a lasting impact on the East End's environment.

For more information:

Aaron Virgin, Vice President • 631-765-6450 x218 or acvirgin@eastendenvironment.org.
All calls and emails are confidential. Group for the East End does not offer financial or tax advice.



OUR MISSION:

Group for the East End protects and restores the environment of eastern Long Island through professional advocacy and education, and by inspiring people to embrace a conservation ethic and take action. The Group is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization.

Group for the East End

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Learn more about our work at
GroupfortheEastEnd.org

