

Salem Sound Coastwatch (SSCW) is a non-profit coastal protection organization on the North Shore and the Salem Sound Regional Coordinator for the Massachusetts Bays National Estuary Program (MBP). With the mission to protect and improve the environmental resources of Salem Sound and its watershed, SSCW's programs focus on the following challenges:

1. **Increasing efforts to reduce contaminated discharge**
2. **Increasing coastal habitat protection**
3. **Detecting and quantifying marine bio-invasers**
4. **Promoting environmental literacy and watershed awareness**
5. **Assisting the region's municipalities to implement effective solutions**

Our Successes Include:

1. Increasing efforts to reduce contaminated discharges —

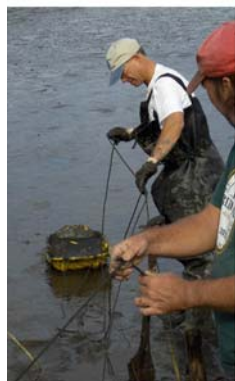
Stormwater runoff is the number one nonpoint source pollution threat to coastal water quality. As part of SSCW's **Clean Beaches & Streams Program**, 15 volunteers took biweekly water samples from 27 stormwater outfall pipes. The samples were evaluated for bacteria, and the information was shared with municipal officials and other regional partners. "Hot spots" were found at several locations, and SSCW is working with the municipalities to develop solutions.

In June, the EPA declared Salem Sound a **No Discharge Area (NDA)** for dumping of marine sewage. SSCW spearheaded this effort, wrote the application, and will continue educational outreach to boaters.



SSCW continues to educate homeowners on how to use environmentally-friendly lawn and gardening practices that will protect our waters through the **Greenscapes North Shore Program**. Working in coalition with two other local organizations and 15 local communities, over 60,000 Greenscapes Guides were mailed to homeowners.

2. Increasing coastal habitat protection —



Salem Sound's salt marshes are threatened. Salt marshes provide one of the most valuable and productive ecosystems, yet 2/3 of Salem Sound's salt marshes have disappeared since 1965. SSCW's efforts to restore salt marshes include **Thissell Marsh** in Beverly, where SSCW is partnering with Endicott College and MA CZM to obtain funding and permitting to restore the marsh; **Mill Pond** in Gloucester, where SSCW initiated a survey of clams and worms in the mud flats of this recently restored marsh; and **Pickman Park** where SSCW is working with Salem State College to determine the most effective way to remove *Phragmites*, an invasive reed that destroys wetland habitats. SSCW also trained and mobilized volunteers to monitor the health of pre and post restoration wetlands in Beverly, Gloucester and Newbury.

Our coastal region is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, and SSCW is working with the MBP to implement the EPA **Climate Ready Estuaries Program**. Professor John Hayes of Salem State College spoke on “Global Warming and New England” at the SSCW Annual Meeting, and SSCW mentored a team of Tufts University students whose project focused on the City of Beverly’s vulnerability to climate change.

3. Detecting and quantifying Invasive Species —



SSCW is recognized as a leader in identifying and monitoring **marine invasive species (MIS)**. SSCW trained college interns and citizen volunteers to identify native and introduced marine species and to monitor docks, tidepools, and rocky shorelines. **Channel Five’s award winning show “Chronicle” featured SSCW’s MIS monitoring program** which aired in December. SSCW is collaborating with MA CZM to study the growth of *Didemnum vexillum*, an invasive sea squirt, in Beverly Harbor.

SSCW began eradication efforts for recently expanding invasive plant—the **perennial pepperweed**. If left unchecked, pepperweed can infest beaches and riparian areas with catastrophic results. SSCW organized several pepperweed pulls with over 50 volunteers from the Timberland Co. and Upward Bound students.

4. Promoting environmental literacy and watershed awareness —

SSCW’s success depends upon public understanding of the threats to Salem Sound and community participation in the solutions. Bringing attention to ways to improve the North River, a contaminated urban river, is the goal of **North River Awareness Week** which included a clean up of Salem’s waterfront Furlong Park, a presentation on the Great Rivers of Salem, informational “walks and talks” along the North River canal, and an annual smelt count and fish demonstration to educate residents and school children about the progress in bringing spawning rainbow smelt back into the North River.

As our future citizens, SSCW wants school-aged students to understand how their watershed becomes polluted. In the **Stenciling for a Cleaner Sound** program students received classroom training and then applied their knowledge by stenciling the message “*Dump no waste – Drains to Ocean*” on local stormdrains.



SSCW also sponsored the “**Swim & Fin OceanFest**” a celebration of Salem Sound with open water swim and kayak races, music and watershed-related activities for kids of all ages.

5. Assisting the region’s municipalities to implement effective solutions —

SSCW continues to provide technical assistance to local communities and to work with communities to bring additional funding to the region through environmental improvements grants. SSCW’s efforts helped the City of Salem **obtain funding for renovation of Furlong Park** on Franklin Street and for the City of Peabody to get **funding to purchase a vacant brownfield site at 15 Walnut St.** for a community park. SSCW started working with Marblehead officials to identify solutions to contamination problems at two beaches, provided technical assistance to the committee addressing mitigation for dredging at the new Salem Wharf, and assisted the City of Peabody’s Community Development and Planning in their efforts to obtain funding for wetland restoration at the Welch School.

Salem Sound Coastwatch is grateful to the following for supporting our programs during 2008: Beverly Cooperative Bank, Corporate Wetlands Restoration Program, Cell Signaling Technology, Eastern Bank, Essex County Community Foundation, Hawthorne Cove Marina, Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment, Massachusetts Bays National Estuary Program, Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management, NEANS, National Grid, North Shore Medical Center Foundation, and the many individuals who contribute to Salem Sound Coastwatch.