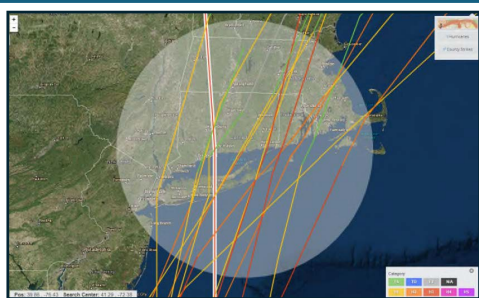


Old Saybrook Coastal Resilience Coalition (OSCRC)

Quarterly Newsletter – April 2026



In this edition:



Old Saybrook Updates Its Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan

Every five years, the Town of Old Saybrook and the Borough of Fenwick update their Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. Approval of the plan by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) allows Old Saybrook and Fenwick to be eligible for certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance including funding for mitigation projects.



Old Saybrook Participates in Coastal Pilot Project

The Town of Old Saybrook has opted to participate in MyCoast Connecticut, a pilot project to collect site-specific data on coastal events such as storms, flooding and extreme high tides.



Old Saybrook Coastal Resilience Coalition (OSCRC) Prioritizes Its Resiliency Activities

The Old Saybrook Coastal Resilience Coalition is prioritizing mitigation actions specific to Old Saybrook to focus its efforts.

Also in this edition:

[Getting the Word Out](#) – OSCRC Educational Mission

[Community Highlight](#) – The Knollwood Sand Plume

[A Historical Perspective](#) – The Mouth of the Connecticut River 1853



Old Saybrook Updates Its Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan

The Town of Old Saybrook and Borough of Fenwick have prepared an update to their Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan. The plan provides a risk-based framework to planning decisions in consideration of their climate change resiliency implementation priorities. Approval of the plan by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) allows Old Saybrook and Fenwick to be eligible for certain types of non-emergency disaster assistance including funding for mitigation projects such as:

- Utilize sand from future dredging projects for beach nourishment.
- Implement living shoreline solutions along tidal marsh borders and river mouths.
- Implement dune restoration and marshland protection techniques for flood storage and surge protection.
- Develop an operations plan for stormwater structures including tide gates, swales and culverts to promote post-flooding drainage.
- Develop plans for improving emergency access and evacuation, identify options for potential dredging to improve flood storage, and evaluate the potential for creating a harbor of refuge at South Cove.

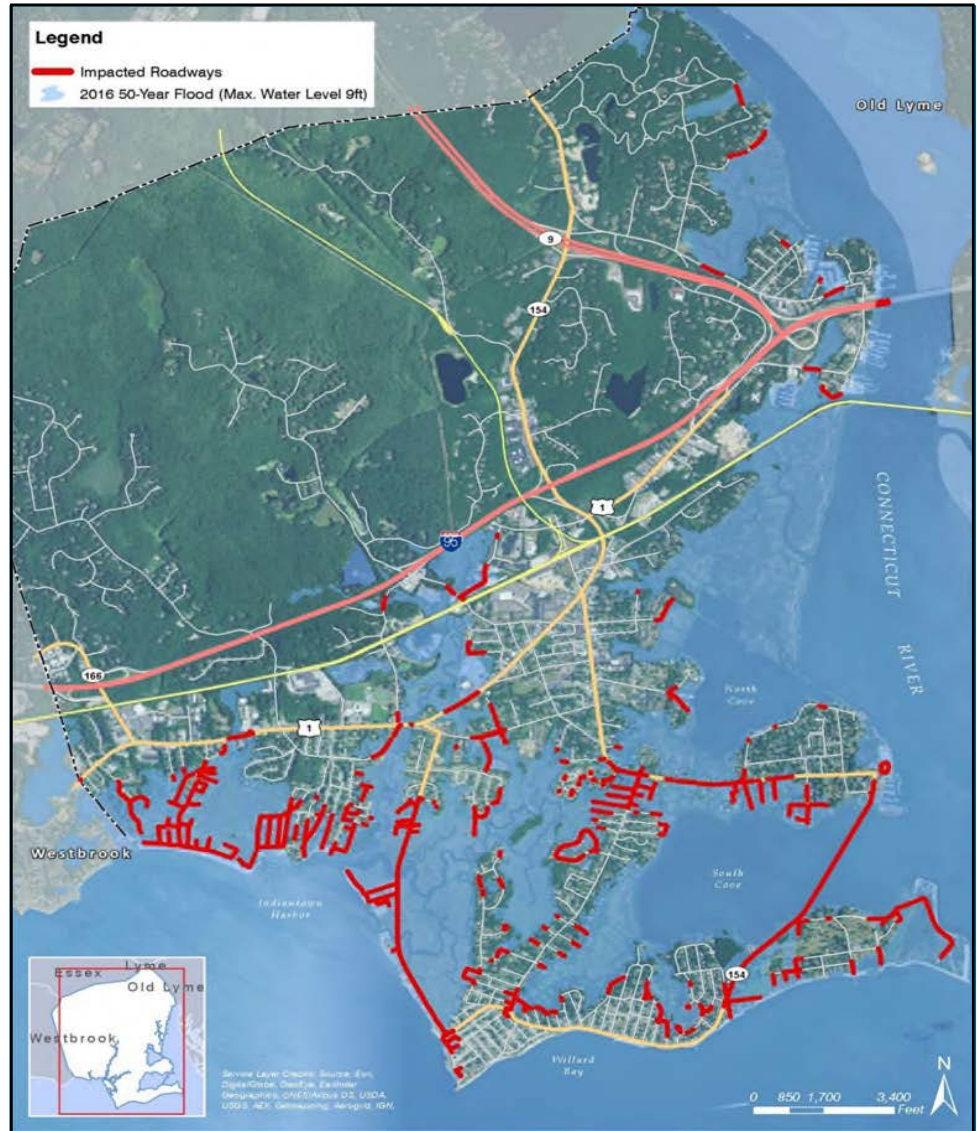


Figure 3-9 from the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan
Inundated Roads During the 500-Year Recurrence Interval Flood

83 hazard mitigation actions are identified and prioritized in the Plan. You can obtain a copy of the Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan at the Old Saybrook Land Use Department's document repository here:

https://www.oldsaybrookct.gov/DocumentCenter/View/2145/Town-of-Old-Saybrook-and-Fenwick-Natural-Hazard-Mitigation-Plan-Update_1262026_adopted

The Town of Old Saybrook Participates in the MyCoast Connecticut Pilot Project

The Town of Old Saybrook has opted to participate in MyCoast Connecticut, a pilot project to collect site-specific data on coastal events such as storms, flooding and extreme high tides. MyCoast is an app and website-based citizen science tool where users submit pictures of local flooding issues like blocked storm drains, impassable roads or storm damage. The photos are tagged with the date, time and location, plus weather and tide data, and are uploaded into a database that is available for all users to view. The goal is for the data to be used to support local resilience planning and storm preparedness.

The MyCoast pilot program came to Southeastern Connecticut through a partnership between Connecticut Sea Grant (CTSG), the Connecticut National Estuarine Research Reserve (CT NERR) and the Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation (CIRCA). The pilot launched in New London, Groton and Stonington, with the Borough of Fenwick and Westbrook also recently opting in.

To participate in the pilot program, download the [MyCoast app for Apple iOS devices](#), or for [Android devices](#), then make an account and upload images of these events to the Connecticut database. To learn more about the program visit mycoast.org/ct.



DO YOU SEE FLOODING? SNAP & SHARE

Help make Connecticut's shoreline stronger and more resilient.

HOW IT WORKS



Download the MyCoast app.



Take a photo of flooding or storm damage.



Upload your image by adding a report in the MyCoast app.

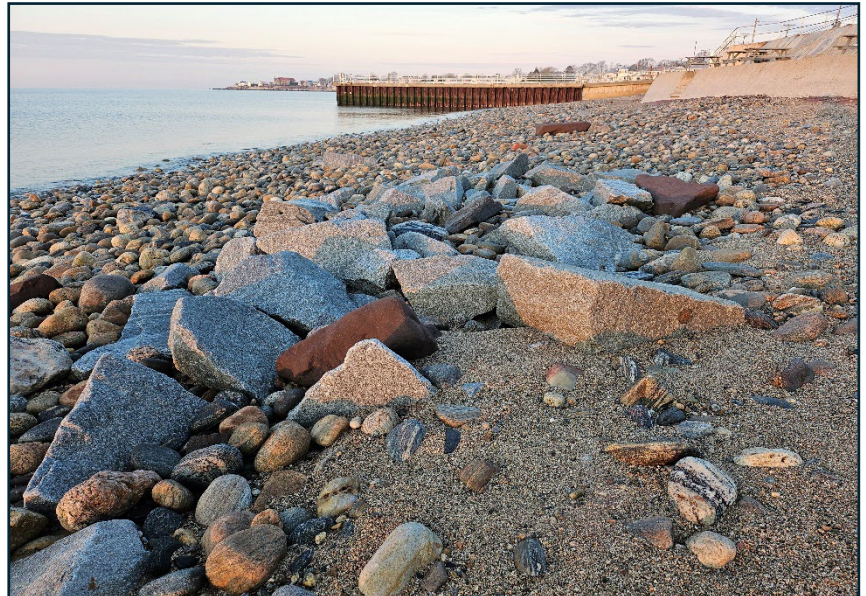


Send your favorite photographs of Old Saybrook's coast and river shorelines during storm events or good weather to our Newsletter editor at oscrinc@gmail.com. We will publish them in future newsletters.

Old Saybrook Coastal Resilience Coalition (OSCRC) Prioritizes Its Resiliency Activities

There are many things that can be done to improve our community's resilience to climate change and sea level rise. The funding and level of community coordination required to implement mitigation strategies presents a challenge and limits what the Old Saybrook Coastal Resilience Coalition (OSCRC) can accomplish. Recently, the OSCRC compiled a list of implementable mitigation actions specific to Old Saybrook. The list of mitigation actions was guided by Old Saybrook and Fenwick's 2026 Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, the March 2025 Four Shore Coastal Resiliency Plan prepared for the towns of Clinton, Westbrook, Old Saybrook, and the Borough of Fenwick, and OSCRC member's own recommendations. Prioritizing these mitigation actions will help OSCRC focus its efforts on actions with the greatest positive impact. These mitigation actions include:

- OSCRC Educational Mandate - educate the public about the effects of climate change and sea level rise and encourage involvement in efforts to support mitigation projects in Old Saybrook.
- Storm Drainage Systems - conduct an engineering study to identify infrastructure to mitigate the effect of flooding including drainage, outfalls, backflow prevention, and natural fortification structures.
- Flooding and Storm Surge - conduct a study to identify the causes of and solutions for flooding due to extreme tides, storm surge, and sea level rise.
- Chalker Beach Drainage Swale – plan for future maintenance.
- Seawall and Groin Evaluation – evaluate the condition and effectiveness of existing seawalls and groins and the potential for repairs, modifications, and removals.
- Ingress and Egress – support the town to identify specific projects, costs, and funding mechanisms for improving resilience of roads that are subject to chronic and high probability flooding.
- Beach Nourishment – evaluate the feasibility of a town-wide or regional plan for beach nourishment including associated dunes and berms.
- Sand Erosion/Deposition Study – Identify excess-sand areas that could be used to replenish areas losing sand.
- Back River Living Shoreline - limit marsh erosion along the Back River south of the Route 154 bridge using natural and nature-based features.
- Saybrook Manor Dock and Hartford Avenue Stairs – develop and implement a permanent solution to address the deterioration of these structures.
- Fenwood seawall refurbishment – Monitor State of Connecticut efforts to rebuild the seawall to prevent undermining, wall cracking and maintaining the integrity of Route 154.



Knollwood Beach – January 9, 2026 (photo by J. Greacen)

The OSCRC would like to hear from newsletter readers about your concerns regarding the effects of climate change and sea level rise. How are you affected? What would you like to see done in your neighborhood to prepare Old Saybrook for increasing frequency and intensity of coastal storms and flooding?

Getting the Word Out

Included in our mission is educating communities on the vulnerability of our shorefront and riverfront and efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change and sea level rise. Here are some of our recent efforts:

OSCRC Issues Press Release

In February 2026, OSCRC issued a press release announcing the construction of a drainage swale as a temporary solution to improve management of floodwaters that inundate the coastal marshes behind Chalker Beach. The swale, constructed by Old Saybrook's Public Works Department, allows floodwater to drain more quickly during periods of excessively high water. Studies to develop more comprehensive longer-term solutions to flooding are currently underway. The press release can be viewed on the OSCRC website.



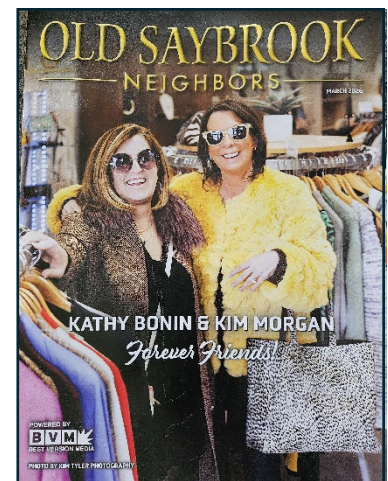
Chalker Beach swale
(photo by T. McGrath)

OSCRC Presents at the Old Saybrook Environmental Fair

OSCRC participated in an Environmental Fair hosted by the Town of Old Saybrook Conservation Commission on March 28th. The theme for the free event was "Education for Action." Fitting with the theme, a OSCRC member handed out literature about goals of the Coalition and answered questions about the future impact of climate change and sea level rise on Old Saybrook. Fair attendees were able to sign up for the OSCRC newsletter and learned how they could support the Coalition's mitigation actions.

OSCRC Featured in Old Saybrook Neighbors Magazine

The February 2026 edition of Old Saybrook Neighbors Magazine included an article about the OSCRC and its mission. We thank the magazine for the opportunity to reach its many readers and raise awareness of the impacts of climate change and sea level rise on our community.



You can reach Old Saybrook Neighbors Magazine at
<https://www.bestversionmedia.com/ct/oldsaybrook/>
or on Facebook at
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1610977269061724/about>

Community Highlight – The Knollwood Sand Plume



Strong southerly winds this winter have pushed beach sand up and over the Route 154 (Maple Avenue) sea wall at Knollwood Beach. Similar inland migration of wind-blown sand also occurs at Cornfield Point and elsewhere along the Old Saybrook shoreline. At Knollwood, the movement of sand is exacerbated by the access road that enters the eastern end of Knollwood Beach from Maple Avenue. Despite the straw bales at the top of the access, wind-blown sand drifts around and over the top of the bales onto Maple Ave. The fact that wind-blown sand can climb the 10-foot sea wall is a clear indication that without the sea wall the shoreline would be migrating landward of its current position. The Knollwood Beach Association plans to take additional measures to contain the beach sand that is placed each spring to enhance the recreational use of Knollwood Beach.



Wind-blown sand across Maple Avenue from the beach (photo by J. Greacen)



Sand overtopping straw bales and reaching Maple Avenue (photo by J. Greacen)

No. 360

Electrotype Copy No. 3 by G. Mathice U.S.C.S.



Eng'd by S. Siebert, O. A. Lawson & W. Smith

From the Image Archives of the Historical Map & Chart Collection
Office of Coast Survey/National Ocean Service/NOAA

www.oscsrcct.org





The Old Saybrook Coastal Resilience Coalition (OSCRC) coordinates responses to sea level rise and climate change by documenting vulnerabilities of local beachfront and riverfront communities, educating the public on these vulnerabilities and, through governmental and commercial partnerships, identifying and implementing intermediate and long-term, science-based, mitigation solutions.

Our response to sea level rise is going to be costly, time-consuming, and socially challenging. We are looking for partners, funding sources, skilled professionals, and individuals who can assist us to sustainably fortify the infrastructure along the Connecticut coastline.

Please email us at oscrcinc@gmail.com or go to <https://oscrcct.org> or <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61563259214783> to support our efforts.

Links we like:

Connecticut Institute of Resilience & Climate:
<https://circa.uconn.edu/>

The Long Island Sound Resilience Resource Hub
<https://www.lisresilience.org/>

The Nature Conservancy's Coastal Resilience:
<https://coastalresilience.org/>

Old Saybrook Land Use Department Coastal Resilience:
[Coastal Resilience | Old Saybrook, CT](#)

NOAA Office for Coastal Management:
[Natural and Structural Measures for Shoreline Stabilization](#)

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The OSCRC Newsletter is published quarterly. Please email the OSCRC Newsletter editor at oscrcinc@gmail.com to receive the newsletter. We would like to hear from readers of this newsletter about your concerns regarding the effects of climate change and sea level rise. How are you affected? What would you like to see done to prepare Old Saybrook for increasing frequency and intensity of coastal storms and flooding? Contact us at oscrcinc@gmail.com or go to <https://oscrcct.org>

A special shout out to Chef Rick for providing space for our monthly meetings. You can enjoy a variety of Chef Rick's tasty offerings at Mindy K's on Boston Post Road in Old Saybrook.