

# Gurney's Montauk Yacht Club and Partners Bring Shellfish Nursery to Lake Montauk

Concerned Citizens of Montauk and Cornell Cooperative Extension also help Cuomo's LI Shellfish Restoration Project.

**Scoop Team** August 9, 2018



Gurney's, CCE and CCOM announced the shellfish project Thursday, Photo: Courtesy Gurney's Montauk Yacht Club

On Thursday, August 9, [Gurney's Montauk Yacht Club](#) and Resort, Concerned Citizens of Montauk (CCOM) and Cornell Cooperative Extension Marine Program (CCE) unveiled a two-year plan to grow four million clams in Lake Montauk. This Montauk partnership is part of Governor [Andrew Cuomo's](#) Long Island Shellfish Restoration Project (LISRP), designed to help restore local shellfish populations and water quality.

The group installed two floating upweller nursery system (FLUPSY) units at Gurney's Montauk Yacht Club on July 24. FLUPSYS are used to grow-out shellfish in open water while protecting them from predators until they are large enough to survive on their own.

These units provide increased water flow to ensure a constant food supply to promote accelerated growth. The clams, which have incredible water filtering capability, will remain in the lake through the summer and early fall growing seasons, when CCE field technicians and CCOM staff will perform weekly maintenance on the units, ensuring the clams continue to thrive.

Once the clams grow to approximately the size of a quarter, they will be transported to one of five Long Island sanctuary sites. In 2019, the process will repeat with more seed clams in the FLUPSYs and planting in the fall. Each FLUPSY unit is expected to accommodate about one million clams per season. The two-year project has potential for continued shellfish grow-out at this site and seeding at alternative locations in East Hampton and Montauk.

"We are honored to be involved in such a worthwhile cause," Gurney's Resorts President George Filopoulos said. "We hope not only to grow an impactful quantity of clams, which will allow Lake Montauk to thrive, but also to raise awareness within our boating community and resort guests on how everyone can help make a difference for years to come," he continued, adding, "I look forward to our first grow-out season, which will include our young guests as they are educated on the effects of shellfish and water quality as part of our new Gurney's Kids Club programming."

Laura Tooman, President of Concerned Citizens of Montauk, said, "CCOM is thrilled to be participating in this regional initiative to improve Long Island's water quality and shellfish populations. This Montauk installation signifies how powerful a public, private and nongovernmental partnership can be in protecting and restoring our environmental integrity." She pointed out CCOM's enthusiasm about working with Cornell Cooperative Extension and Gurney's Montauk Yacht Club and Resort "to deliver millions of water-filtering clams in the next two years, with additional promise for growing and seeding millions more in future years, right here in Montauk!"

In September 2017, Governor Cuomo announced a \$10.4 million effort designed to improve water quality, help shellfish populations, and bolster the resiliency of coastal communities. Since then, CCE's Marine Program has been hard at work initiating efforts to produce more than 150 million shellfish (clams and oysters) with the support of a \$5.25 million award as part of LISRP, funded by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

"We've received an outpouring of support from public and private dock and marina owners volunteering to serve as site hosts for our FLUPSYs. In total, we will be deploying 42 FLUPSY units this year, with at least another 30 slated for 2019," CCE Marine Program Director Chris Pickerell said.

*For more information on the Long Island Shellfish Restoration Project, visit: [lshellfishrestorationproject.org](http://lshellfishrestorationproject.org).*