



Photo by JM Johnson

Our Environment



GOAL 10: NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

WE PROMOTE THE CONSERVATION AND EFFICIENT USE OF THE REGION'S NATURAL RESOURCES.

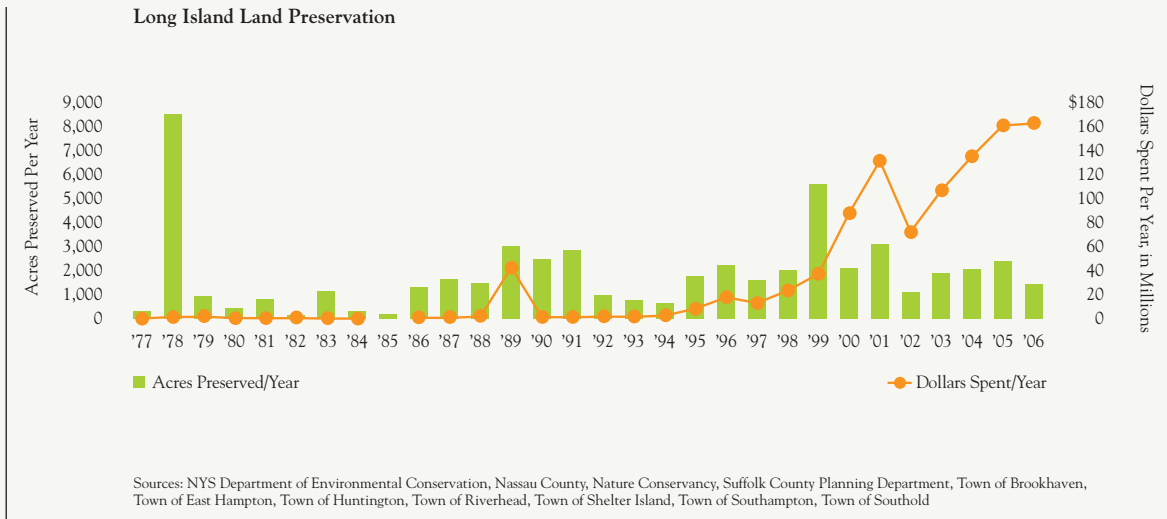
INDICATOR:

LAND PRESERVATION

Despite record spending, number of acres preserved falls to the lowest level since 2002.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Land preservation is important on Long Island for reasons both environmental and economic. Preserved lands protect the Island's drinking water, provide critical habitat for wildlife, ensure the viability of the Island's farming industry and maintain the strength of its tourism sector.

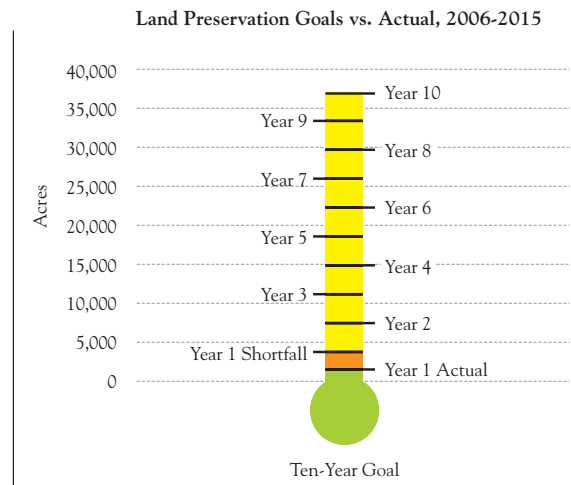


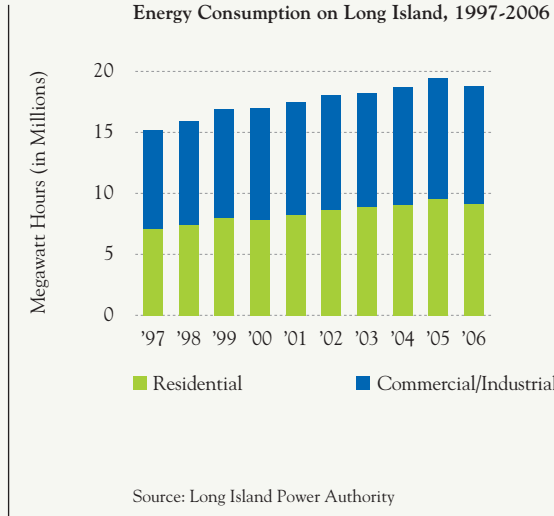
HOW ARE WE DOING?

Over the past thirty years, New York State, both counties and numerous towns across the Island cumulatively expended just over \$1 billion for the preservation of nearly 56,000 of Long Island's approximately one million acres. With experts forecasting the Island's final build-out to take place within the next decade, the Department of Environmental Conservation's (DEC) 2006 plan calls for the additional preservation of 25,000 acres of environmentally sensitive open space and 12,000 acres of working farmland before that time. These goals would leave the Island with 92,147 acres of preserved land, roughly 1/10th of its total land mass, at the time of final build-out.

Though Long Island cumulatively spent a record \$163 million on preservation efforts in 2006, the 1,458 acres preserved was actually the lowest total since 2002. Representing less than 5% of the Island's preservation goal, it would take over 20 years to preserve 37,000 acres at 2006 rates. If final build-out does occur within the next decade, Long Island is on course to fall far short of its goals.

In November 2007, the voters of Suffolk County, Southold and Oyster Bay approved a cumulative total of \$356 million for open space preservation and farmland protection. At the same time, voters in the Town of Brookhaven voted down a Community Preservation Fund that was to raise a projected \$500 million for preservation efforts. With funding streams on Long Island potentially reaching their limit, many are turning to New York State to significantly increase its efforts if the Island is to meet its preservation goals.





INDICATOR:

ENERGY CONSUMPTION

Long Island’s electricity consumption and CO₂ emissions outpace that of the country.

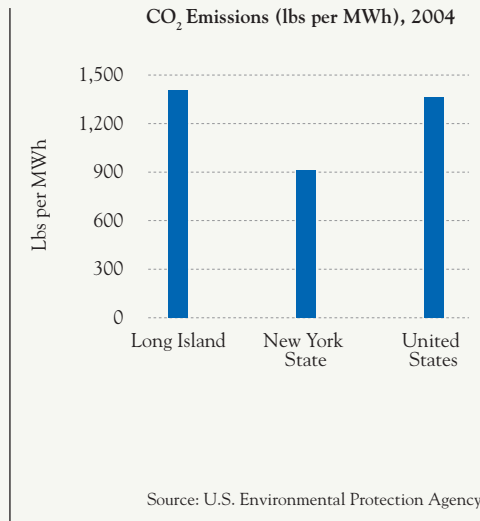
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Data from the U.S. Energy Information Administration shows that buildings, commercial and residential, are responsible for almost half (48%) of all energy consumption and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the United States. Greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide (CO₂), are widely accepted as the main contributing factors in global climate change. With 1,180 miles of shoreline, Long Island is uniquely disposed to sea level rise and other impacts of climate

change. Recent modeling released by Architecture 2030, a leading organization studying the potential impacts of climate change, shows that a sea level rise of even one meter would have serious consequences for the U.S., leaving it vulnerable to catastrophic property and infrastructure loss with large population disruptions and economic hardships.

To help mitigate the potential impacts of climate change, Governor Spitzer has set New York State mandates to:

- Reduce energy consumption 15% by 2015
- Reduce CO₂ emissions 25% by 2025
- Generate 25% of the State’s energy from renewable sources by 2013



HOW ARE WE DOING?

Long Island has a long way to go if it is to do its part in meeting the Governor’s mandates. Despite a slight downturn in energy consumption in 2006, Long Island’s overall residential and commercial electricity consumption for the preceding ten-year period increased by 24%, significantly outpacing the national consumption rate which increased 16% over the same period of time. With regard to CO₂ emissions, Long Island released an average of 1,412 pounds of CO₂ into the atmosphere with every megawatt hour (MWh) of usage in 2004. That same year, New York State averaged 907 pounds of CO₂ emissions per MWh while the country averaged 1,363 pounds per MWh. As of 2004, less than 1% of Long Island’s on-Island energy generation came from renewable sources.

In an attempt to reverse these trends, the Long Island Power Authority recently announced its Efficiency Long Island program, a ten-year \$924 million program aimed at reducing the Island’s energy consumption through increased efficiencies.