



This presentation is part of a larger, multimedia project that was undertaken by the CT NEMO Program with funding from the NOAA Coastal Services Center (via a competitive grant). It is meant to focus the awareness of CT's coastal communities on their important coastal habitat areas. The PPT show is accompanied by a Focus on the Coast website (part of the NEMO website), which has a mapping tutorial and interactive mapping site that pairs CLEAR/NEMO land cover and impervious cover data layers with data layers on the three priority habitats chosen by the project team: submerged aquatic vegetation, tidal marshes, and migratory fish runs. Project partners are: NEMO (UConn Sea Grant and Cooperative Extension), CT DEP Office of Long Island Sound Programs, and The Nature Conservancy, CT Chapter.

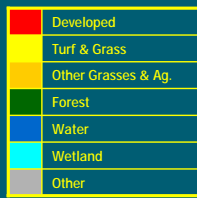
# Agenda

1. The lay of the land
2. A word on the water
3. Harping on habitats
4. Coastal Resource Protection Strategies

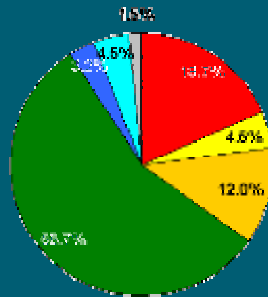


Basic “chapters” of the presentation.

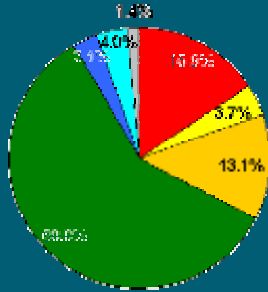
# Coastal Development in CT: 2002



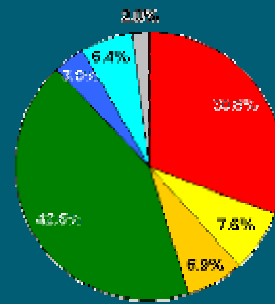
All CT Towns



Non-coastal Towns



Coastal towns



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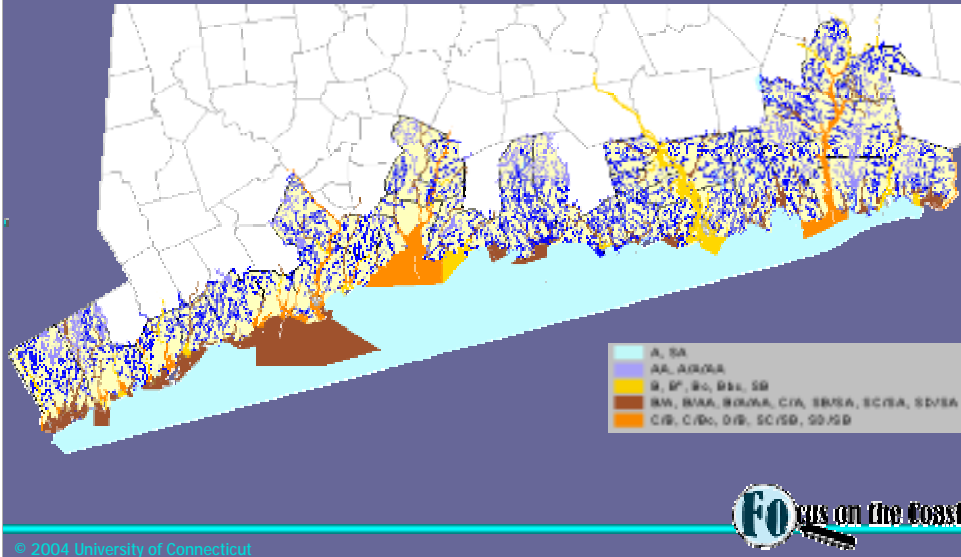
The latest land cover statistics, from CLEAR's "Connecticut's Changing Landscape" project. Coastal towns have more than half again as much developed land than the state average.



So why worry about urbanization? Land use impacts on water resources, and a good indicator of those impacts is impervious surface.

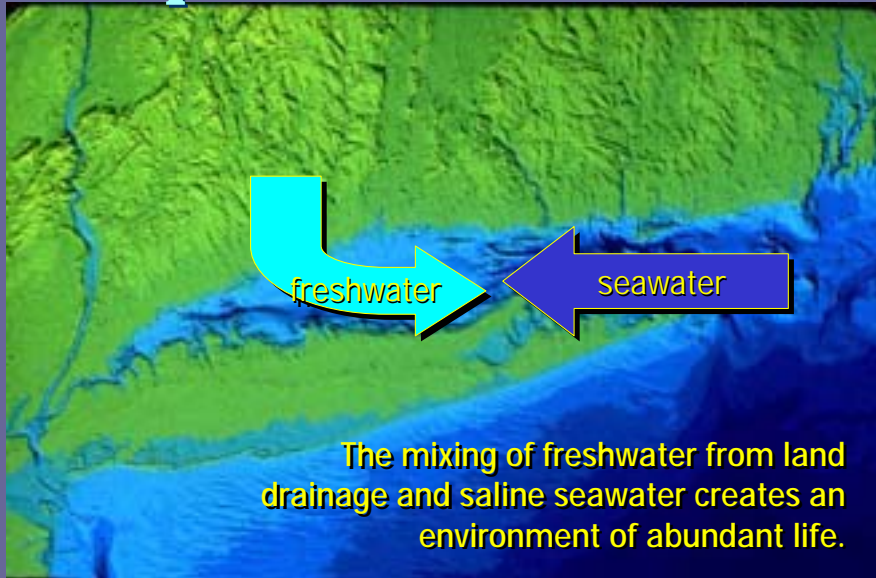
# Coastal Surface Water Quality

DEP EGIC data collection dates: 1986, 1993, 1997



Streams and water bodies classified according to state goals and most currently collected water quality data. Quite a few impairments. Dianna Dannenberg, EGIC reported that hydrography not shown = class A. **Data Collection Dates:** 1986, 1993, 1997

# The Importance of Estuaries



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Moving downstream from streams to the Sound, let's define estuaries and talk about how valuable and unique they are.

# Priority Coastal Living Resources



Submerged  
Aquatic  
Vegetation



Migratory  
Fish



Tidal Marshes

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Three types of habitat we are focusing on.

# Why These Three?



**By protecting these three living resources and the habitats associated with them, you will be protecting many other important coastal species and habitats.**

The FOFC partners debated this for quite a while, and came up with these 3 habitats and the rationale shown on the slide. In true NEMO fashion, we didn't want to bombard the audience with lists upon lists of critters and habitat types. Not the entire story, but a good start.



## What are they?



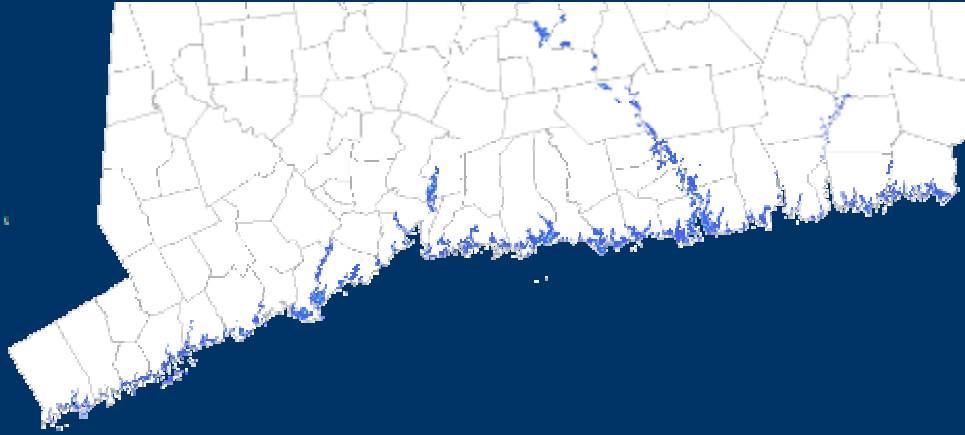
Salt marshes exist along the coast. This salt water habitat favors several varieties of *Spartina* grasses and a host of other specialized plants.

Definition: salt marsh.



Tidal  
Marshes

# Where are they?



DEP OLISP 1995 Tidal Wetlands



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Regional view of tidal wetlands map used by Connecticut Resource Protection Project. Created by CT DEP via same source as next slide.



## Why are they important?

Critical habitat and food source for wildlife, including rare & endangered species

Tremendous pollutant processing capability

Water storage area gives protection against floods, storm surges, and sea level rise

As simple as we can put it!



## What are the threats?

- **Habitat destruction: dredging, filling, ditching, erosion**
- **Hydrodynamic changes: salinity changes from stormwater or flow restrictions**
- **Competition from invasive species**
- **Sea level rise**
- **Restriction from movement. Wetlands can migrate inland!**
- **Water & soil pollution**



Threats to tidal marshes.

# Coastal Resource Protection Strategies



Photo Courtesy of *An Underwater Tour of LIS*



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This begins the last section, where hopefully we quickly get through a kind of check list for local commissions. This section is backed up by the FOTC fact sheet of the same name. Shown here: Ol' Blue Eyes, the bay scallop (a denizen of the eelgrass bed).



## Coastal Resource Protection Strategies

1. Identify your coastal resources!
2. Protect coastal resources through regulation.
3. Preserve critical areas through land protection.
4. Restore degraded habitat areas.
5. Adopt resource-based community planning to avoid problems and be proactive about resource protection.
6. Foster stewardship of coastal habitats through education.



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The six strategies. Each strategy will now be treated with a slide on “who, what and when” and a slide(s) on resources to help do these things.

# Online Resource Center

- Maps
- Publications
- Info on funding programs
- Links to more information



Ad for the website.

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