

Buckhorn Shoreline & Grass Island Habitat Enhancement Projects

Buckhorn Island State Park

This project will enhance habitats for fish, birds, and other wildlife along the 8,900-ft long north shore of Buckhorn Island and 13.5 acres of the offshore marsh known as Grass Island. Rock reefs and large single-rock sills installed around Grass Island and off the Buckhorn Shoreline will dissipate wave energy eroding the existing aquatic habitats. Log bundles anchored to the river bottom will serve as wave protection and new habitat. Many features are designed to be just below the water surface, preserving views across the River. Enhancements include tree root-wads at both sites and leaner trees on the shore. Small rock sills & anchored logs will be installed at targeted locations against the Shoreline to form protected areas for new vegetation and small fish.

Forty thousand submerged aquatic and emergent wetland plants will be installed around the new features at both sites to enlarge and enhance these aquatic habitats. These measures will ensure the future of these important habitats, support the expansion and diversity of species, and help improve the health of the Niagara River ecosystem at large. Most of the work will take place in the waterway, and boating access around Grass Island may be restricted. Brief trail closures in the Park may be necessary during certain land operations. These will be posted during construction as needed, both in the Park and on the NYSOPRHP website: <https://parks.ny.gov/parks/174/>

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The NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation received financial support of over \$11,000,000 from the US Environmental Protection Agency's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative for this and other habitat projects on the Niagara River around Grand Island.



An aquatic and wetland habitat enhancement project will be constructed in the shallow waters of the Niagara River at Buckhorn Island and Grass Island beginning in Winter 2021. Erosion protection and habitat features will be constructed in Spring at Grass Island and Summer on the Shoreline, followed by the hand-planting of 1000s of native wetland plants at both sites.