

Completion of Upper Yaphank Lake Spillway & Fish Passage



Yaphank, NY – On August 7, Supervisor Ed Romaine (front row, fourth from left) and Councilman Michael Loguercio (front row, second from left) held a press conference to announce the completion of the new fish passage and the reconstruction of the spillway at Upper Yaphank Lake (also known as Willow Lake). They were joined at the press conference by Senator Ken LaValle (front row, third from left) who was instrumental in securing the funding for the project from New York State, and Anthony Graves, the Town's Chief Environmental Analyst. Also in attendance were Jeremy Campbell of the NYS South Shore Estuary Reserve Office, Michelle Potter, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Long Island Refuge Complex, Robert and Audrey Kessler of the Coalition to Save the Lakes, Tom Williams of the Post Morrow Foundation and the Carmans River Partnership, George Costa from Trout Unlimited, Kevin McDonald from The Nature Conservancy and others.

The dam at Upper Yaphank Lake was built in the 1700s, so for the better part of 300 years, fish have been prevented from accessing this part of their ancestral spawning and feeding habitat. The new fish passage restores ecological connectivity within the Carmans River and is designed to pass river herring (alewives and blueback herring) and trout including native brook trout. The old spillway was crumbling and in urgent need of replacement. The new spillway has added capacity to pass floodwaters and enhances the resiliency of the Town's infrastructure to prevent future flooding impacts from intensifying patterns of precipitation.