



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

Spectrum News 1: 'Nature-based' solutions could be coming for New York's shorelines

NICK REISMAN June 22, 2023



This aerial photo shows a reopened beach in Huntington Beach, Calif., Monday, Oct. 11, 2021. Huntington Beach reopened its shoreline this morning after water testing results came back with non-detectable amounts of oil associated toxins in ocean water, city officials and California State Parks announced. (AP Photo/Ringo H.W. Chiu)

New York's shorelines, susceptible to the impact of climate change through flash flooding and erosion, could soon have a new way of being protected.

State lawmakers gave final approval this month to a measure that is meant to encourage the Department of Environmental Conservation to use "nature-based solutions" to stabilize tidal shorelines.

"After Hurricane Ida, many constituents reached out to me for assistance with flood damage," said state Sen. Shelley Mayer, who sponsored the measure with Assemblymember Steve Otis. "I was happy my office could help individuals but the systemic impact of climate change requires much more. This bill will encourage DEC to adopt a more proactive approach to regulatory oversight of shoreline management that will assist our shore communities in reducing the likelihood of flooding and water damage."

The legislation comes after the remnants of Hurricane Ida in 2021 swept through parts of New York state, creating widespread flash floods and killing 17 New Yorkers. The storm caused \$7.5 billion in damage, including 11,000 homes.

Using nature-based solutions to stabilize shorelines is part of a management strategy meant to mimic the natural process and bolster shorelines in communities. Lawmakers hope the process can reduce flooding and erosion and improve water quality.

"Living shoreline principles are vital to improving coastal resilience, reducing flood impacts, preventing shoreline erosion and protecting natural habitats," Mayer said. "This legislation will help advance these nature-based policies at a time when sound practices are needed."

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