

Long Island Divers Association



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

For the past several months, Governor Cuomo and his staff have been working alongside Long Island Divers Association (LIDA) to procure a significant amount of materials for a 12-mile offshore artificial reef. As of yesterday, at 12:05 pm Eastern Standard Time, after many years of planning, a 100-foot tugboat named the *Dauntless* was submerged to the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean in 125 feet of water off Shinnecock, Long Island, creating the first landmark in the 12-mile structure. It was followed by the 102-foot tugboat *Relentless* several hours later.

The 12-mile distance and 125 feet of water is the desired distance of advanced and technical divers while remaining within the limits of recreational dive depths. More marine life will be attracted to this location; the water visibility is greater, and larger vessels can be sunk that will not interfere with navigation.

“After years of waiting, divers and fishermen now have significant wreckage on the 12-mile reef. Perfectly positioned between Moriches and Shinnecock inlets, these wrecks will become significant marine life habitats. This is huge for the diving and fishing community,” explained Randy Randazzo of the Hampton Dive Center.

Captain Ralph Towlen of the dive boat *Halftime* added, “the addition of the 12-mile reef to the State’s artificial reef system will create a deeper water habitat that will thrive and provide diving and fishing opportunities for residents as well as tourists visiting Long Island. Many thanks to the Governor and his team for making this a reality.”

LIDA has strived to accomplish the goals set by their founders over 35 years ago. This past year alone not only have they made moves on creating this reef, but they also procured the inshore Old Ponquogue Bridge, both of which will improve the diving and fishing communities on Long Island and the overall wellbeing of the marine life environment.

A special ‘thanks’ must be made to Chris LaPorta of the DEC on behalf of LIDA for deploying these vessels. Chris has worked continuously with LIDA in obtaining the vessels used and scheduling their deployment all around Long Island. Chris stayed and watched to see the last of the *Relentless* leave the surface of the water.

To everyone involved with this process – thank you. Please help LIDA in continuing their goals by attending their Film Festival on January 25, 2020 at Hofstra University.

Barry Lipsky
President
Long Island Diver’s Association

