



# New York - New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program [www.harborestuary.org](http://www.harborestuary.org)

## Management Committee Meeting Minutes

September 13, 2017

NJTPA, Newark, NJ

### Participants

**Management Committee:** Rob Pirani (HEP), Peter Wepler (USACE), Clay Sherman (NJDEP), Evelyn Powers (IEC), Meredith Comi (CAC), Shino Tanikawa (CAC), Dennis Suszkowski (STAC), Phil DeGaetano (WQWG), Rick Balla (USEPA), Jason Fagel (NYSDEC), Judith Weis (STAC), Bernice Malione (PANYNJ),

**Others in attendance:** Rick Winfield (USEPA), Nesmarie Negron, (USEPA), Chris Zeppie (HEP Consultant), Greg Alber (NJHDG), Ursula Howson (NOAA), Carl Alderson (NOAA)

**HRF/HEP Office Staff:** Isabelle Stinnette, Ariane Giudicelli, Laura Kerr

1. **Introductions:** Laura Kerr has been hired part-time as research assistant to help Isabelle and Ariane with State of the Estuary and Environmental Monitoring Plan development.
2. **Tributary reconnections and the Weston Mill Dam removal:** Carl Alderson presented on the work that NOAA has been doing to identify fish passage areas in the Hudson River and Mohawk watersheds in order to pursue opportunities for barrier removal and tributary reconnection. Both man-made and natural barriers were identified and 350 were visually inspected. A total of 118 structures have the greatest opportunities for moving fish in tributaries. NOAA is partnering with the Nature Conservancy and the public has also been involved in project selection.

In the Raritan River, NOAA has partnered with NJDEP to open up 5 dams since 2011 and tagging of alewife, shad and blueback herring is ongoing.

Alewife passage projects at impounded lakes on Long Island are also ongoing.

3. **Action Agenda update:** Staff is currently reviewing and addressing comments and making changes to the draft document. The goal is to publish a final document in May. Proposed substantive revisions will be presented to the Policy Committee November 9<sup>th</sup>; material will be distributed on October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Final plan will be presented to the PC in April and released at our conference in May.

*Action Item: Rob will share public comments with the MC.*

*Action Item: Please send HEP any additional comments by October 1<sup>st</sup>.*

4. **Climate Vulnerability Report:** A reminder that this is about the vulnerability of HEP's goals to climate change. The draft report identified 5 stressors and 17 specific risks. A consequence probability table will be developed based on risk rankings. HEP will host a workshop with the advisory committee once rankings are complete to potentially commission research efforts.

*Action Item: Please review the risks, send in any comments to the draft report, and rank them via SurveyMonkey by Sept. 29th. Please also consider what will be HEP's role be in addressing these risks?*

5. **Draft Indicators for the SOE Report and Environmental Monitoring Plan:**

Ariane and Isabelle reviewed the process and final draft list of environmental indicators. The list will likely still be narrowed down slightly based on final input from the MC and the STAC.

*Action Item: Provide input on the preliminary set of proposed indicators by September 29<sup>th</sup>, especially with regards to data sources and appropriateness of indicators highlighted in gray or orange.*

6. **CCMP Changes and Progress:** Ariane reviewed the CCMP matrix of original HEP goal areas and CCMP objectives with corresponding current CCMP objectives and actions. In cases where no corresponding objective is listed, the reasons why are given. While in some cases the objective has been completed, in most instances the particular action is being covered by other agencies organizations and is no longer a HEP focus area.

*Action Item: Please let Ariane know of any comments and/or edits on status explanations and any suggested language changes by September 29<sup>th</sup>.*

7. **CAC Citizen Science Survey and Workplan:** A citizen science subcommittee has been formed to focus on this topic. A survey was sent out in NY and NJ to collect information on the projects and programs in the Estuary. A total of 42 responses have been received so far. The vast majority of the groups are engaged in water quality and many are testing for pathogens. Most groups are creating their own protocols, leading to duplication of effort. Another need is funding. Next steps include re-distributing the survey and reaching out to universities.

*Action Item: Staff will circulate the survey to MC members with the request to distribute to your networks.*

8. **Workplan and Budget:** Staff and EPA have been working on finalizing the 2017-2018 workplan, which now totals \$ 800 K as EPA found an additional \$170 K for the Urban Waters Partnerships. The House interior appropriations subcommittee has proposed a 2018-2019 budget of about \$ 600 K per NEP.

9. **Appointment of Work Group Chairs:** Marit Larson has agreed to be co-chair of the restoration work group and Maggie Flanagan has agreed to be chair of the public access work group. There could potentially also be a co-chair of the public access work group.  
*Action Item: Both work group chairs were unanimously approved.*
10. **Approval of the June 14<sup>th</sup> Minutes:** The minutes from the June 14<sup>th</sup> meeting were approved
11. **Other Updates:** The next PC meeting is November 9<sup>th</sup> at HRF and the next MC meeting is December 5<sup>th</sup> also at HRF.