

December 10, 2021

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Meeting Recording (+ chat):

https://zoom.us/rec/play/IB3Div2srDCT7nW3JJrOMgZ_AufSL6YJ56Wip6A_k7Zr0WLTb3IS9OQhPvqAQ1HUvGjkVjHKrclyFZ2J.lszbbXNX-x4kUU1b?autoplay=true&startTime=1639148622000

Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Rob Pirani, HEP; Isabelle Stinnette, HEP; Elizabeth Balladares, HEP; Rosana Da Silva, HEP; Meredith Comi, NY/NJ Baykeeper; Allison Fitzgerald, NJCU; Carrie Roble, Hudson River Park Trust; Shino Tanikawa, NYCSWCD; Lisa Bloodgood, NCA; Elisa Caref, Center for the Urban River; Jin Shin, CUNY; Arturo Moreno, NCA; Katie Mosher, BOP; Michele Langa, NY/NJ Baykeeper; Greg Remaud, NY/NJ Baykeeper; Eric Pasay, NYC Parks; Devin Borg; Louis Kleinman; Siddhartha Hayes, HRPK; Tracy Parham, FCI; Tyler Taba, Waterfront Alliance; Bart Chezar; Chris Bowser, NYSDEC; Christopher Girgenti, RIPA; Edwina Portocarrero, Situated Learning and Play - MIT Media Lab; Jeremy Cherson, Riverkeeper; Makalè Faber Cullen, Urban Soils Institute; Margie Turrin, NYSDEC; Amanda Levy, NYC Department of Health; Natalie Kim, HRPK; Aria Cochran, Waterfront Alliance; Carter Craft, NL Consulate in NYC; Katie Schneider Paolantonio, NYU; Karen Holmberg, NYU; Peter Brandt, EPA; Troy Gibbs-Brown, NYU; Jesse McLaughlin, NYU; Nancy Nowacek, Works on Water

10:00 AM – 10:05 AM – Welcome, Introductions & Approval of Minutes

- CAC NY co-Chairs, Meredith Comi and Allison Fitzgerald welcomed everyone in attendance. The NJ co-chairs asked members to introduce themselves by name and affiliation on the chat. Minutes were approved.

10:05 AM – 10:25 AM – *Stewardship Highlight: A Day in the Life of the Hudson and Harbor*

- CAC NJ Co-chair Allison Fitzgerald introduced Margie Turrin, Director of Educational Field Programs at Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory.
- A day in the life is on its 19th year. It falls around the same time every year but always during the fall. The event involves pre and post educational components.

- The event focuses heavily on building partnerships with schools, teachers, students and environmental educators.
- Students directly engage with the data and are able to analyze it and build their understanding.
- So far, the event has netted 39,450 fish from 80 species. ~60,000 students/teachers/educators have been engaged throughout the history of the program.
- Two sites in NJ participated this past year. Only 2-3% percent of their students are from NJ. NJ school participation is usually supported through grants.
- Margie would like feedback from the group on the potential barriers that prevent more groups and schools from participating in a day in the life.
- Allison added that a lot of the time people see the 'nysdec' and 'Columbia university' and think it's just a NY initiative although there are a lot of schools that should participating on the NJ side
- Rob added that the program should engage the NJDEP Americorps Watershed Ambassadors Program since their job is to engage and do outreach. Rob suggested Margie should reach out to Kim Cenno at NJDEP about underdoing some sort of a day in the life training for the ambassadors.
- Rosana added that every year during the start of Fall, the ambassadors are taking some of their required trainings and it's something worth noting. Liz added that even if not all ambassadors can participate, the ambassadors from the northeast area can likely get together to do a group event that will count towards their service hours.
- Michele mentioned that although the program sounds awesome, there are already a lot of education programs in the state competing with one another for funding so the best way to start is to first introduce the program to the organizations currently working on educational programs as well.
- Chris thanked Michele for her feedback and clarified that a lot of the times a day in the life is held as a component of other ongoing outreach activities and/or events. Margie added that the goal of the program is to build partnerships and work with different groups at their pace and capacity.
- **Next steps:** the CAC will provide Margie and Chris with the contact information of the contacts suggested during their presentation. The CAC will continue to support a day in the life and their efforts to increase NJ participation.

10:25 AM – 10:40 AM – New York-New Jersey Watershed Protection Act (H.R. 4677)

- Jeremy, Senior Manager of Government Affairs at Riverkeeper, shared an overview and the current status of the proposed New York-New Jersey Watershed Protection Act.
- The bill proposes a \$50 million authorization grant program to protect and restore the Hudson-Raritan watersheds. The bill will authorize long overdue federal funding needed to identify, prioritize and implement restoration, climate resiliency, waterfront access and environmental justice projects within two watersheds.
- The grant program would be facilitated by the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation to existing science-based plans such as the Hudson River Action Agenda, Mohawk River Action Agenda, Army Corps restoration plans, etc.

- The bill is further along than it has ever been. Primary Sponsor of the bill: Cory Booker. Original Cosponsor: Kirsten Gillibrand
- Interested members can get involved by participating in monthly stakeholder meetings, next one will be held on December 13th at 1pm.
- Next steps for the bill include preparing for hearing in the House Natural Resources Committee in January/February, introduction to Sen Carper and EPW staff, and continue efforts to broaden local support for the legislation.
- Greg added that it's important to engage people that are currently not at the table. Those interested in staying up to date about the bill can contact Jeremy at jcherson@riverkeeper.org
- **Next steps:** The CAC will continue to keep members updated about the bill, the ways individual organizations can sign up as supporters and help support the work to engage those who are not yet part of the conversation.

10:40 AM – 11:00 AM – Program Updates: CRP Map Photo Contest, HEP 2021 Conference & DEIJ Subcommittee Update

- Isabelle Stinette, HEP restoration manager, shared what the new CRP restoration map looks like. The interactive site map can be found here: <https://www.hudsonriver.org/article/restoration-activity-map>.
- CAC members are encouraged to share any pictures of restoration sites that are completed or not via [this form](#) for the chance to win a kayaking excursion for 1 or 2 people provided by Resilience Paddle Sports. Form deadline is **December 31, 2021**.
- Isabelle also provided an overview of HEP's annual conference. The theme was Waterway Stories, and featured 4 days of sessions. All recordings can be found here: <https://www.hudsonriver.org/article/waterway-stories-2021>
- Carrie added that for the second year, the conference appears to be very intentional in trying to bring in and engage more groups into our network and in uplifting the voices that aren't always heard. Allison and Meredith added that future conferences should consider still incorporating some type of virtual option so that participants have the flexibility to join from their screens.
- Shino provided a recap on the [safe space commitment](#) launch, which took place on the second day of the conference.
- **Next steps:** Members of the CAC will continue to elevate conference session topics and engage with next year's annual conference.

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM – Recap of Citizen Science Subcommittee's Virtual Series, Pathogens in the Water: A Series on Making the Most of Community Science Water Quality Testing

- Liz Balladares, HEP Outreach Coordinator, provided a recap on the virtual discussions that the citizen science subcommittee of the CAC has been hosting over the span of two summers.
- After the recap, Allison facilitated a short poll and discussion that asked CAC members about their citizen/community science plans for 2022 as well as the areas that the citizen science subcommittee could play a supportive role. She also asked the group about things that worked this season and some of the ways we can continue to coordinate successful programs in the future. Input received from members were as follows:

- Help build network capacity by identifying grants that will help groups with technical assistance
- Help groups communicate the importance of their monitoring efforts with their communities
- Carrie added that there are a lot of models we can look into that have accomplished a lot of ambitious research goals. One idea is to continue hosting these conversations but have them be on a smaller scale and build up to a higher frequency and bigger audience. In addition, it would be great to explore how we can tie in imagery to all the data that's being collected and shared. How can we pair imagery with these exciting projects? Another thought is considering environmental DNA or biological data, how can a network of partners help us answer some interesting science questions and help refine methods?
- Allison mentioned that eDNA is such an important point, the more sites you can sample, the more you can get an overall picture.
- CAC members that want to be a part of future discussions hosted by the citizen science subcommittee can email Liz at eballadares@hudsonriver.org
- **Next steps:** the citizen science subcommittee of the CAC will work on the next installment of the pathogens in the water virtual series and explore additional ways the CAC can continue to support citizen/community science efforts in the region as monitoring season 2022 approaches.

11:30 – 11:50 – Raising Climate Change Awareness through Climate Art: City of Water Day 2022

- Meredith welcomed Aria Cochran, communications manager at the Waterfront Alliance, who provided an overview of City of Water Day and the theme of city of water day 2022.
- Now in its 15th year, City of Water Day is a free day-long celebration of the waters that surround us. The festival attracts annually more than 25,000 participants to enjoy our waterways, raise awareness about the risk we all face from sea level rise and climate change and champion a resilient New York and New Jersey Harbor.
- For the past two years, Art at the BlueLine has focused on bringing attention to sea level rise and flood risk.
- Aria kicked off the discussion on incorporating climate art as part of next year's theme by asking the group these major questions:
 - What are some good examples of climate art exhibits/events/initiatives in our region?
 - What are some of the ways climate art can help us communicate with our communities about climate change and its impacts? Are there challenges to be mindful of?
 - Knowing what we know about city of water day, how can we incorporate climate art into our city of water day 2022 theme?
- Tara DePorte, with the Human Impacts Institute, added when it comes to effective engagement it is important to bring artists in before the event being planned happens. It is important to have these individuals be trained as citizen scientists for example (to pull from the previous discussion) or to have them learn from each group and what they're doing so that they learn about the work our organizations are doing. This will then inform their art form.
 - Another engagement suggestion is to encourage creatives to talk about solutions and not just the problems. There's a real opportunity to connect creatives with the people that working hard at coming up with ways to address the impacts of climate change.

- Having a clear goal in mind on what it is that we want to do with climate art is also important. Is the goal to inspire, educate or encourage action?
- Nancy Nowacek, with Works on Water, thanked Tara for the point she raised and added that it's important to try to have a long-term educational lens when working with the artistic community so that the partnerships are not one-off efforts.
 - Works on Water was able to work with NYCDCP on their waterfront plan because of shared common goals. The partnership took a year to build but it's important discussions like this take place so that they can build a foundation for future collaboration opportunities.
- Emily with the NYU City Coastline Lab/Class shared that they've been working with artist Tessa Grundon out of their Wetlab in Governor's Island. Who created some great exhibits depicting plastic waste entering our shared waters. Lots of great artists based out of the Island and students that will be working on their own exhibits throughout the year.
- On the chat, Allison suggested that we should create a list of artists that should be engaged and part of the conversation
- Edwina Portocarrero asked how long the Art at the BlueLine exhibit will remain up? Aria mentioned that the plan is to have them up for two weeks.
- Jesse McLaughlin, with NYU, jumped in and added that the open call and any outgoing communications material should include language that engages people that wouldn't necessarily put down 'artist' as their first identifier.
 - One component to consider is to ask people to expand on their relationship with their local waterways through artform. Have people express themselves on the relationship they have or don't have with these waters.
- Troy Gibbs Brown, with NYU, added that having a discussion-based foundation event/training is integral to any climate change/art initiative. A quick symposium like conversation could inspire those that are not part of the traditional artistic scene and could inspire folks to see themselves as creatives as well.
- Earth celebration will be hosting a fashion show, could be a great place to engage additional artists as part of this conversation.
- **Next steps:** Feedback from today's meeting including suggested contacts, events and future discussion topics will be shared with the City of Water Day planning team as they prep for City of Water Day 2022.

11:50 AM – 12:00 PM – Participant Updates & Announcements

- Michele shared that Baykeeper has recently been awarded a nfwf grant that will allow for continued support of the Naval Station Earle oyster project. She also mentioned that CSO long-term control plans are moving forward with potential first permits going out.
- Rosana mentioned that the Environmental Monitoring Plan will be updated soon and mentioned she'll be coming back soon to speak with members of the CAC about ways to improve the current plan.