

NY NJ Harbor & Estuary Program

2017-2022 ACTION AGENDA

Significant Public Comments and Responses

October 25, 2017 Draft

GENERAL COMMENTS			
Comment	Key Partners	Notes	Suggested Changes
Reference other plans with compatible goals and actions in order to coordinate efforts and enable additional possibilities for implementation and support	NYS DEC, NJ DEP	Official adoption of other plans as part of a CCMP may enable federal funding and ability to leverage SRF support.	Identify important plans within the Estuary in the document (e.g. Hudson River Estuary Plan, Raritan River Initiative, NYS Ocean Action Plan, NYS Regional Conservation Action Plan and address possible formal adoption at April PC meeting.
Current focus on core waters should be expanded to include upriver watersheds per 2011 expansion as well as to New York Bight per 1996 CCMP	NYS DEC, EPA	Adopted Operating Procedures (2016) and PC discussion noted that upstream and NY Bight would be addressed only in terms of relationship to goals for core waters	Clarify map and language to convey watershed-wide scope, keep focused approach, and highlighting places where work in watershed and bight is critical.
Clarify the timeline and prioritization of agenda, especially given funding, and adaptive “living document” aspect of plan	EPA		Clarification of timeline including GANTT Chart in final plan.
HEP Agenda should define “where attainable” as used in relation to the fishable/swimmable waters goal.	EPA. Two States		HEP’s role is to help inform this decision, provide a forum for coordination in bi-state waters, and communicate issue to the public.

WATER QUALITY Reduce the sources of pollution so that the waters of Harbor Estuary will meet the fishable/swimmable goal of the Clean Water Act, where attainable.				
<i>Water Quality Objective A: Improve coordination and begin to establish consensus amongst regulatory agencies on science, standards and design conditions in shared waters.</i>				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
WQ-A-1. Maintain an ongoing dialogue across agency and state boundaries	Water Quality Work Group	Staff and Leveraging;	2017-2022	
WQ-A-2. Support the states and EPA in their development of consistent (where possible) water quality standards that are both scientifically defensible and protective of appropriate highest attainable uses in shared waters.	<u>EPA, NYS DEC, NJ DEP,</u> Water Quality Work Group	Staff and Leveraging;	2017-2018	Text clarifications to reflect discussions with HEP’s water quality work group and the agencies on the roadmap forward.
WQ-A-3 Help establish a No Discharge Zone for vessel waste in Raritan Bay.	EPA, NYS DEC, NJ DEP	Staff and Leveraging	2017-2018	Action was added
<i>Water Quality Objective B: Accelerate creation, adoption and implementation of Long Term Control Plans and MS4 Permits</i>				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
WQ-B-1. Communicate the benefits and outcomes of LTCP, MS4 work and associated infrastructure improvements to the public	EPA, NYSDEC, NYCDEP, NJDEP, NJCSO Group, SWIM Coalition, Jersey Water Works	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Funded Project <\$200 K; Major Capital	2017-2019	Text clarifications to take into account communicating the intricacies of projected outcomes and importance of stormwater management given climate change scenarios.
WQ-B-2. Support implementation of green infrastructure opportunities in CSO and MS4 communities	EPA, NYSDEC, NYCDEP, NJDEP, NJCSO Group, SWIM Coalition, Jersey Water Works	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Funded Project >\$200 K; Major Capital; On Going Operating	2017-2020	Specific focus on addressing increased risk of flooding and streambank erosion associated with climate change. Reflect importance of work in New York State as well as New Jersey.
WQ-B-3. Synthesize information on LTCP/CSO controls and MS4 permit implementation to determine the effects on shared waters	EPA, NYCDEP, NJDEP, NJHDG	Grant Funded Project <\$200 K	2018-2020	

WQ-B-4. Advance Means and Methods for Public Notification of CSO Events	EPA, NYCDEP, NJDEP, NJCSO Group, NGO	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Funded Project <\$200 K	2018-2020	
WQ-B-5. Reduce sources and develop solutions for trash and floatables in both CSO and MS4 areas	EPA TFW Partnership, NYCDEP, NJHDG	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Funded Project >\$200 K	2017-2020	
Water Quality Objective C: Address monitoring gaps and lack of information for key locations, parameters and state and local track-down programs				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
WQ-C-1. Design an intensive pathogen monitoring and notification plan in select near-shore areas	EPA, IEC, NYCDEP, NJDEP, NJHDG, NJCSO, NYSDEC, State and local health departments, NGOs	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Funded Project >\$200 K; On-going Operating	2017-2022	
WQ-C-2. Address monitoring gaps, including the need for real-time monitoring , and lack of information especially related to DO requirements for different life stages of benthic and pelagic fauna	NYCDEP, NJHDG, NJDEP, NYSDEC, NGOs, Academia	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Funded Project >\$200 K	2017-2020	
WQ-C-3. Support and share research to help assess the fate, transport and ecosystem impact of known contaminants and those of emerging contaminants concern , in particular microplastics, in the Harbor Estuary.	EPA, NYCDEP, NJHDG, NJDEP, NYSDEC, NGOs, Academia	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Funded Project >\$200 K	2018-2021	
Water Quality Objective D: Share water quality information in a clear and easy to understand way with the public, focusing on uses and potential public health risks				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
WQ-D-1. Prepare an updated Joint Harbor-Wide Water Quality Report	NYCDEP and NJHDG	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Funded Project <\$200 K	2017-2018	Maps and graphics will reflect ongoing challenges in addressing recreational water quality and help address desire for consistent messaging across agencies on criteria, standards, and monitoring.

WQ-D-2. Develop briefs and stories about water quality conditions of individual waterways and watersheds	NYSDEC, NJDEP, NGOs	Staff and Leveraging;	2018-2022	
Water Quality Objective E: Assess the potential impacts of climate change on water quality				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
WQ-E-1. Support and share research to assess climate change impacts on <u>water quality and hydrology. pathogens, nutrient input, eutrophication, availability of dissolved oxygen, and harmful algal blooms (HABs).</u>	HRF, WQWG	Grant Funded Project >\$200 K	2019 2017-2022	Text clarifications to reference <u>pathogens</u> , nutrient input, eutrophication, availability of dissolved oxygen, <u>exposure to toxic contamination, changes in watershed dynamics and streamflow</u> , ocean acidification, and harmful algal blooms (HABs) as well as understanding the implications of future climate scenarios.
WQ-E-2. Identify parameters and potential for establishing a long-term monitoring to assess climate change impacts on temperatures and other water quality variables	IEC, EPA, NYSDEC, NJDEP, Academia	Grant Funded Project >\$200 K; On-going Operating	2019-2022	
WQ-E-3. Advance understanding and consideration of water quality in the analysis of hazard mitigation and coastal resilience projects.	USACE; EPA	Staff and Leveraging	2017-2022	Text clarifications to reference USACE Harbor and Tributaries Study and other scenarios for mitigating hazards associated with storm surge/sea level rise/flooding.

HABITAT				
Protect and restore vital habitat, ecological function, and biodiversity that provide society with renewed and increased benefits.				
Habitat Objective A: Make progress towards restoring the Estuary's target ecosystem characteristics				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
H-A-1. Increase investment in conservation and restoration projects.	Restoration Work Group, CAC, USACE, NYSDEC, NYS DOS, NJDEP, NYC DPR	Staff and Leveraging; Major Capital Projects	2017-2022	Text change to reflect improving linkages to existing programs such as the NYS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program and support for in-lieu fee mitigation.
H-A-2. Evaluate ways to reduce costs of restoration.	RWG	Staff and Leveraging;	2018-2022	Text change to remove permitting standards for living shorelines and mention conducting research to assess restoration costs and adding consideration of bioremediation of sediments.

H-A-3. Document value of ecosystem services delivered through restoration for decision makers.	HRF, USACE, RWG, Academia	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Projects<\$200 K	2017-2019	Adding outreach and education to communities, local government, and other decision makers.
H-A-4. Create a decision making tool for prioritization of restoration opportunities.	RWG, USACE, NYS DEC, NJ DEP, NYC DPR, Academia	Staff and Leveraging; grant Projects<\$200k	2018-2019	Text change about utilizing shoreline typologies and consideration of the shoreline materials being replaced and their relative toxicity.
Habitat Objective B: Improve the quality and likely success of habitat restoration				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
H-B-1. Share research and best practices among partners.	RWG, Harbor Herons and Oyster Restoration Committees.	Staff and Leveraging;	2017-2022	
H-B-2. Assess and interpret shoreline and shallow-water habitat condition and value.	HRF, Academia, NYC DPR, USACE	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Projects>\$200k	2017-2021	Adding specifics on an assessment of shoreline typology and suitability, the benefits of replacing shoreline materials containing PAHs and heavy metals, upstream/downstream connections, and reference to Hudson River Estuary Program targets.
H-B-3. Understand the risks of recontamination of restored sites.	Restoration Work Group, USACE, NOAA, EPA, USFWS	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Projects><\$200k	2018-2019	
Habitat Objective C: Support <i>habitat and</i> restoration monitoring and the utility of monitoring data				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
H-C-1. Increase support for monitoring and consistency among metrics.	USACE, NYSDEC, NYSDOS, NYCDPR, NYCDEP, NJDEP, SRIJB, Academia, Consultants	Staff and Leveraging, Grant Projects<\$200k; On-going operating needs	2017-2020	Action will be broadened to include not only restoration monitoring but habitat quality monitoring to express HEPs commitment to wildlife and biodiversity and have greater consistency with Hudson River Estuary Program and New York State RECAP. Text will address importance of citizen science, long-term monitoring of natural shorelines, development of monitoring protocols for natural and nature-based resiliency measures, and role of monitoring for addressing climate change risks posed by increased number of invasive species/species range shifts.
H-C-2. Synthesize existing monitoring data to better understand and communicate trends.	RWG	Staff and Leveraging,	2018-2020	Adding reference to State of the Estuary report and environmental monitoring plan.

Habitat Objective D: Advance understanding and incorporation of climate change impacts in habitat management and restoration				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
H-D-1. <u>Ensure incorporation of e</u> -sea level rise into restoration and management practices.	RWG, USACE, NJDEP, NYSDEC, SRIJB, NYCDPR, NOAA, NGOs	Staff and Leveraging, Grant Projects ><\$200k;	2017-2022	Add references to current state standards and addressing barriers to upland migration
H-D-2. Advance conservation and restoration planning for properties eligible or already acquired through flood plain/buyout programs.	USACE, NJDEP, NYSGOSR, NYSDEC, NYCDPR, NOAA, NGOs	Grant Projects <\$200k;	2017-2019	

PUBLIC ACCESS				
Improve public access to the waters of the Estuary and the quality of experience at public spaces along the waterfront.				
Public Access Objective A: Increase public access and new possibilities for contact recreation, particularly in areas of higher need.				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
PA-A-1. Advance opportunities for increasing public access, <u>particularly in areas of higher need.</u>	Lower Passaic and Bronx & Harlem River Urban Water Partnerships, NJDEP, NYS DOS, NYS DEC, Hudson River Estuary Program, NYCDCP, NYCDPR, NGOs, local municipalities	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Projects > <\$200,000; Capital Funding	2017-2022	Text will clarify goals and standards, reference coordination with Hudson River Estuary Program and coastal adaptation projects.
PA-A-2. Assess prospects and refine goals for increasing direct access for boating, swimming, and wading, incorporating associated water quality considerations.	Public Access Work Group;	Staff and Leveraging	2018-2019	Text will reference access to and from water.

Public Access Objective B: Improve stewardship and programming at existing public access sites, particularly in areas of highest need				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
PA-B-1. Identify and support strategies for increasing public engagement in higher need areas.	NGOs, NYCDPR, Funders	Staff and Leveraging	2019-2021	
PA-B-2. Support stewardship activities and public programming in higher need areas through small grants.	Hudson River Foundation; Public Access Work Group; Hudson River Estuary Program ;	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Projects > <\$200,000	2017-2022	Text will specifically reference coordination with Hudson River Estuary Program
Public Access Objective C: Promote and expand awareness of public access opportunities and issues				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
PA-C-1. Increase public understanding of the safety and risks associated with direct contact with the water.	EPA, NYS DEC, NJ DEP, Health Departments, PAWG, CAC	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Projects <\$200,000	2019-2021	Text will reference communication about contaminated floodwaters from storm events.
PA-C-2. Encourage and support public participation in water-based activities.	PAWG, NYS DEC, NYCDPR, NJDEP ,NGOs	Staff and Leveraging; Grant Projects <\$200,000	2020-2021	

MARITIME				
Support port and associated maritime operations so that they are both economically and ecologically viable				
Maritime Objective A. Improve understanding and management implications of changing sediment contamination in the Estuary, including the timeline for achieving HARS suitable sediments in the navigation channels				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
M-A-1 Map current sediment quality conditions in the estuary and identify changes over the last 15 years.	NJDOT, HRF, Monmouth University, USACE, EPA, NJDEP, NYDEC, PANY/NJ, NYCEDC, Rutgers University	Staff and Leveraging. HRF is managing the CARP 2 technical team with \$ 4.1 million of funding provided by NJ DOT.	2017-2020	

M-A-2. Evaluate, Update and Refine the CARP I Sub-models to predict levels of contamination in the future.	NJDOT, HRF, Monmouth University, USACE, EPA, NJDEP, NYDEC, PANY/NJ, Rutgers University	Staff and Leveraging	2017-2020	
Maritime Objective B: Help design and implement navigation related projects that are more environmentally friendly.				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
M-B-1. Convene Technical Workshop on the development of seasonal windows for dredging projects.	USACE, EPA, PANY/NJ, NOAA, NYDEC, NJ DEP, NJ DOT, NYC EDC	Grant Projects <\$200,000	2019-2020	

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT				
Foster community stewardship and involvement in decisions about the Harbor.				
Community Engagement Objective A. Increase and improve the quality of citizen science efforts				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
CE-A-1 Identify current activities and assess the common needs of and gaps in citizen science monitoring.	CAC, IEC, EPA, NGOs	Staff and leveraging	2017-2018	Action was added
CE-A-2 Identify, create and/or publicize shared protocols for habitat and water quality monitoring by civic organizations.	CAC, RWG, WQWG, IEC, EPA, NGOs	Staff and leveraging, grant projects <\$200,000	2018-2020	Action was added
CE-A-3 Publicize and otherwise support means of connecting volunteers with opportunities to participate in citizen science efforts.	CAC, RWG, WQWG, IEC, EPA, NGOs	Staff and leveraging, grant projects <\$200,000	2018-2020	Action was added

Community Engagement Objective B. Support Federal Urban Waters Partnerships in Target Waterways				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
CE-B-1 Underwrite Ambassador positions and advance Partnership priorities.	EPA, USACE, USGS, NYCDPR, NGOs	Staff and leveraging, grant projects >\$200,000	2017-2022	Action was added
Community Engagement Objective C. Enhance Public Understanding of the Harbor Estuary				
Action	Key Partners	Project type and amount	Timeline	Other Suggested Changes
CE-C-1 Sustain website, monthly newsletter, social media, contact database, and other communication tools.	CAC, HRF	Staff and leveraging	2017-2022	Action was added
CE-C-2 Support educational programs, including the sharing of best practices among providers.	CAC, HRPT, HRECOS, NGOs	Staff and leveraging; grant projects >\$200,000	2017-2022	Action was added