

**Minutes (Final)**

Public Access Work Group  
New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program  
September 28 4:00 – 6:00 PM

Attendees: Hugh Carola, Hackensack Riverkeeper; Maggie Flanagan; Liz Balladares, HEP & UWFP; Sara Eichner, Pratt SAVI; Pamela Pettyjohn, Coney Island Beautification, Rob Pirani, NYNJ HEP; Karen Argenti from the Bronx Council for Environmental Quality; Christopher Girgenti, Randalls Island Park Alliance; Chris Bowser NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program; Rosana Da Silva, HRF/HEP; Graeme Birchall, Downtown Boathouse; Clay Sherman NJ DEP; Chris Boyd; Sara Hodges, Pratt; Robina Taliaferrow, Billion Oyster Project; Dan Shapley, Riverkeeper, Jason Fagel, NYS DEC; Michelle ? , Central Park Conservancy, Alyssa Bemant, Pratt SAVI; Anna Weis, Billion Oyster Project; Michelle Dupass, Future City, Inc; Ray Fusco, Hudson Canyon Consulting; Adriana Burkins, Bronx Childrens Museum; Lisa Schepke, American Littoral Society; Deanne Draeger, Urban SWIM; Michelle, Shirley Chisholm State Park; Isabelle Stinnette, NYNJHEP; Rebecca Pryor, Guardians of Flushing Bay;

**1. Welcome and Agenda Review**

**4:00 - 4:15 PM**

*Maggie Flanagan kicked off the meeting with an ice breaker, asking people to identify where they last accessed the estuary on a zoom mapping tool.*

*Isabelle Stinnette requested everyone's help in identifying recent access sites that were created or substantially improved in the last two years. The information will be used for the Hudson Raritan Estuary Comprehensive Restoration Plan update that will be presented at HEP's annual conference – happening this year Nov 29-Dec 1<sup>st</sup>. Sites should be with the CRP region – up to the Tappan Zee.*

*Several sites were suggested including Sherman Creek and Shirley Chisholm State Park.*

*The link is here:*

*[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10rgs9hW8n8S\\_6Yi6PEs0Z2IVqhQtFBJnoVtI7JJrKok/edit#gid=0](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10rgs9hW8n8S_6Yi6PEs0Z2IVqhQtFBJnoVtI7JJrKok/edit#gid=0)*

**2. Approval of Minutes from June 2022 Meeting**

**4:15 - 4:20 PM**

*Approval was requested by Maggie; Dan Shapley seconded; approved without comments.*

**3. NYSDEC Request for Data for Use of Saline Waters**

**4:20 - 5:00 PM**

**PA-A-2: Contact Recreation; Priority PA-C-1: Safety**

*Jason Fagel from NYS DEC discussed DEC's interest in information about public use of the state's saline waters to help inform possible future rule makings and classification changes. The 90-day data solicitation period, closing date 10/25/22. Public Information Meeting #2 - 9/29/22, 2:00 PM, in-person.*

*An extension has been requested which may take the information gathering period to Nov.*

*Information about DEC's request for information is available here:*

*<https://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/125879.html>*

*Submit questions and data to [WQSRulemakings@dec.ny.gov](mailto:WQSRulemakings@dec.ny.gov)*

*Dan Shapley from Riverkeeper and Sara Eichner showcased their efforts, working in partnership with Save the Sound, HEP, and others, to help engage the public on this question. The link is here. <https://wikimapping.com/water-recreation.html>. Dan and Sara asked for the committee's help in filling out the survey as well as getting the word out about this tool to the public*

*Karen asked about Identifying regulatory segments of individual waterways - the information can be found here: <https://gisservices.dec.ny.gov/gis/erm/>*

*Chris Bowser raised the question and Jason indicated that we could provide information about the number of people for educational efforts taking part in the events even if the data they are collecting is not suitable for use by DEC (ie no QAPP and/or state certified lab)./*

*Graeme noted classification scheme did not reflect that kayaking programs required swimming and rescue practice .*

*Maggie clarified the data needs: how many people/ how many people per event and where is what is key / name of the water body and landmarks.*

*Chris Boyd asked what would a wet weather exemption look like and noted that Massachusetts uses for one for Boston Harbor where standards were elevated to a higher class and any new discharges would have to comply in a way that recognizes the reality that wet weather results in impairments. Could apply to swimming permit but up to DOH.*

*Ray Fusco asked how to get route information / can we assemble programs that people do over again. Sara will send link to program providers identified in the paddling guide.*

#### **4. Update of Access Database**

**5:00- 5:15 PM**

**Priority PA-C-2: Public Participation** Encourage and support public participation in water-based activities.

*Sara and Sara from the Hudson Access Project team from Pratt shared data collected from their first survey outreach effort that was initiated in August, as well as an in-progress interactive map and asked if people to add data or sites. Find the survey at [this link](#). You can contact Sara or Alyssa with any questions. ([eichnersara@gmail.com](mailto:eichnersara@gmail.com), [abement@pratt.edu](mailto:abement@pratt.edu)).*

**5. HEP Bipartisan Infrastructure Law FY22/23 Workplan**

**5:15 - 5:30 PM**

**Priority PA-A-1: Increase Access ; Priority PA-B -1: Stewardship; Priority PA-A-2: Contact Recreation; Priority PA-C-1: Safety**

*Rob Pirani reviewed the public access elements in the proposed FY 22/23 BIL Workplan now under review by the Policy Committee. Several elements will advance our Public Access goals and objectives and meet EPA guidance including support for the Committee's project to clarify the process for permitting new bathing beaches in the Hudson and Harbor; support for small grants to support local stewardship activities; and advancing the Harlem River Greenway in the Bronx in coordination with the Urban Waters Federal Partnership.*

**6. Hope Spot Application**

**5:30 - 5:45 PM**

*Judith Weis, co-chair of the STAC, reviewed her an application for designating the Harbor Estuary a Hope Spot, an honorary designation advanced by the Mission Blue, a non-profit organization led by Sylvia Earle. She asked for letters of support from the committee.*

**7. Partner Updates**

**5:45 – 6:00 PM**

*Pamela - October 15, is now City of Forest Day sponsored by Forest for all NYC*

*Maggie - Public access with the working waterfront coming up at Working Harbor Committee's Tugboat event at BAT Pier 4 Oct 9*

[https://www.workingharbor.org/pdf%20files/2022\\_TUGRACE\\_OCT9\\_FLYER.pdf](https://www.workingharbor.org/pdf%20files/2022_TUGRACE_OCT9_FLYER.pdf)

*Karen – Wilderness Inquiry Canoemobile – Community Day & School's Day is happening at Roberto Clemente State Park Oct 10-12 and BCEQ is looking for volunteers.*

**Next Meetings**

**Thu 12/15/2022 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM / HEP Conference Nov 29 – Dec 1st**