



New York - New Jersey
Harbor & Estuary Program
www.harborestuary.org

RESTORATION WORK GROUP

of the New York – New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program

Chair: Lisa Baron (Army Corps of Engineers)

www.HarborEstuary.org

Meeting October 6, 2014

12:00-2:15

17 Battery Place, Suite 915

- I. **Introduction and minutes from last meeting:** minutes were approved.
- II. **NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program Strategic Plan** - Rob Pirani, NY-NJ HEP Director introduced the draft Strategic Plan for the New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program for the next two years, focusing on projects relevant to the Restoration Work Group (Shorelines and Shallows restoration and assessment, Green Infrastructure, Raritan Bay Conference, and Public Access assessment). Particular projects of interest included:
 - **Green Infrastructure:** This would involve selecting one or more communities in New Jersey to work that have interest but limited capacity to conduct an analysis of green infrastructure opportunities as a way to help meet Long Term Control Plan goals.
 - **Raritan Bay Conference:** HEP is planning to host a Raritan Bay conference in spring (currently scheduled for June 12) of 2015, focusing on the Lower Bay/Raritan Bayshore area. HEP expects to convene a planning committee for that conference in January 2015 or earlier.
 - **Steering the science behind/providing an advisory role to resiliency projects:** Rob highlighted opportunities to serve as an advisory body to resiliency efforts that will be occurring in the harbor in the next few years. Members of the working group expressed interest but were concerned that this focus should not take most of the group's time. Potential opportunities include involvement in and advisory role to next steps of the research plan items proposed in the Arcadis/NYSDEC/NYC/NEIWPC "Research Plan to Advance the Understanding of Potential Coastal Green Infrastructure Strategies in New York City."
 - **Public Access Assessment:** HEP will be conducting an assessment of the locations and quality of public access and stewardship to better match funding and other resources to need (via HEP grants) starting in late 2014/early 2015.

Action items

- **Optional review of Strategic Plan:** if RWG have comments or questions about the HEP strategic plan, please address them to Rob Pirani. An edited version will be finalized on December 10th.
- **HEP GI project progress/opportunities** will be shared with the Group as the HEP office moves further on this work.
- **Input into resiliency projects** - Rob and HEP to share a proposed description for the types of resiliency discussions that might occur at the RWG platform (the RWG would review).

- III. **Restoration Symposium Action Agenda** – the RWG reviewed the Action Agenda/summary of the June 3rd Restoration Symposium and discussed some of the numbers/methods of tracking. The Work Group decided to look more closely at the specific projects (and why they were counted) to ensure all numbers are correct. While the tracking metrics for some TECs is clear (e.g. wetlands and acreage), others are more ambiguous – fish, crabs and lobsters; shorelines and shallows; enclosed and confined waters; and sediment contamination. It was decided that these needed to be further defined, and that HEP would work with the RWG to create definitions for how each of these TECs will be tracked.

Action items

- **RWG: review draft TEC progress numbers** sent by Kate Boicourt. RWG to edit/approve by the end of the month.
- **RWG: edit tracking proposal** sent by Kate Boicourt (how progress will be counted)
- **RWG: approve Waterwire Article** sent by Lisa once numbers are approved. The RWG was asked to review numbers reported.
- **HEP: send final Action Agenda draft** after following up with all RWG members/incorporating edits.
- **RWG/all: conference call to discuss and finalize accounting and report:** after numbers reviewed and a new draft of the action agenda shared, the group will come to agreement on tracking the more challenging TECs/finalize the report.

- IV. **HEP restoration projects:** Kate Boicourt shared a presentation on the results and progress of all HEP-funded restoration projects finished or underway in 2014. **Final reports** of all projects can currently be found (or will be posted) on the NY-NJ HEP grants page:

[http://harboestuary.org/grantsll.htm](http://harborestuary.org/grantsll.htm). In particular:

- The **Lawrence Brook Fish Passage Feasibility Study** was recently completed, and HEP held a follow-up meeting with the Mayor's office to make recommendations based on the results of the project (the project is feasible, but dependent on partnership with the City of New Brunswick Water Utility). HEP is sending answers to further questions and expects to plan a public meeting with the Lawrence Brook Watershed Partnership in late fall.
- **Developing an assessment protocol for ecologically-enhanced urban shorelines:** the literature search, experimental design, and piloting during the field season have been completed. A final presentation will be held in November/December. More information [here](#).
- **Bronx River Fish Passage and Pralls Island Restoration** – final reports [online](#).

Action items

- **Follow-up on Lawrence Brook:** Kate to share the results of discussions with the City of New Brunswick with the RWG as well as a list of next steps for the project including potential assistance from USFWS.
- **Assessment protocol final presentation:** to be shared via webinar or in-person meeting with the RWG and broader community.

- V. **Town of Secaucus – restoration opportunities:** The town of Secaucus approached HEP to provide input into restoration opportunities due to a grant that the town received in partnership with the NJDEP. Kate shared a preliminary list of potential projects in Secaucus with the RWG and the town, based on CRP opportunities.

Action items

- **Follow-up with Secaucus:** Kate Boicourt sent a summary of the town of Secaucus opportunities to the town and NJDEP. HEP will follow up with RWG if further advice is needed.

VI. CRP and Army Corps Partner Projects: Lisa Baron gave an overview of the status of the CRP and key next steps (listed below):

- ***Draft feasibility Report to be completed at the end of 2015 (currently early 2016)***
- ***Planning and Engineering tasks to finish the HRE Study (including the Lower Passaic River, Hackensack River, Flushing Creek, Jamaica Bay and Bronx River Feasibility Studies)*** – draft scopes of work to complete the HRE Feasibility Study were sent out to the RWG for any comments. Activities included tasks for field investigations, engineering designs, cost estimating for specific sites (to be recommended for construction) and report preparation.
- A third Scope of Work includes finalization of the CRP and focus on remaining sites for future study including identification of Natural/Nature Based Features, updating the OASIS database and GIS mapping of opportunities and partner programs.

Action items

- **RWG: review HDR and Engineering Scope of work by October 27**, prioritizing review of projects section. **If there is a project that is a priority that you have not highlighted, please do so ASAP.**
- **Acquisition TEC:** to be developed and edited by ACE, TPL, and HEP and then the RWG for final review. To be included in Final CRP.

VII. Other updates/action items:

Action items

- **Review Tibbetts Brook Nomination from NYC Parks - NYCDPR's site and project nomination to the CRP for review (to be sent by Kate Boicourt)**

Attendees:

Hanem Abouelezz, National Parks Service
Carl Alderson, NOAA
Lisa Baron (Chair), US Army Corps of Engineers
Kate Boicourt, NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program
Jennifer Curran, HDR
Ruth Ehinger, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Marit Larson, NYC Department of Parks and Recreation
Jim Lodge, Hudson River Foundation
Grace Jacob, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Susan Maresca, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
Andy Peck, The Nature Conservancy
Robert Pirani, NY-NJ Harbor & Estuary Program
Clay Sherman, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Rosalie Siegel, The Port Authority of NY & NJ
Ben Weiland, The Trust for Public Land
Steve Zahn, NY State Dept. of Environmental Conservation