

# Public Access Panel

## Two States: One Bay

June 12, 2015



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

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# Public Access in Raritan Bay: Context

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# Public Access in Raritan Bay: Context



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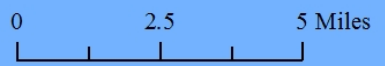


# Raritan Bay Publicly Accessible Waterfront Areas



## Legend\*

-  Public Parkland
-  Public Easement
-  Uncategorized



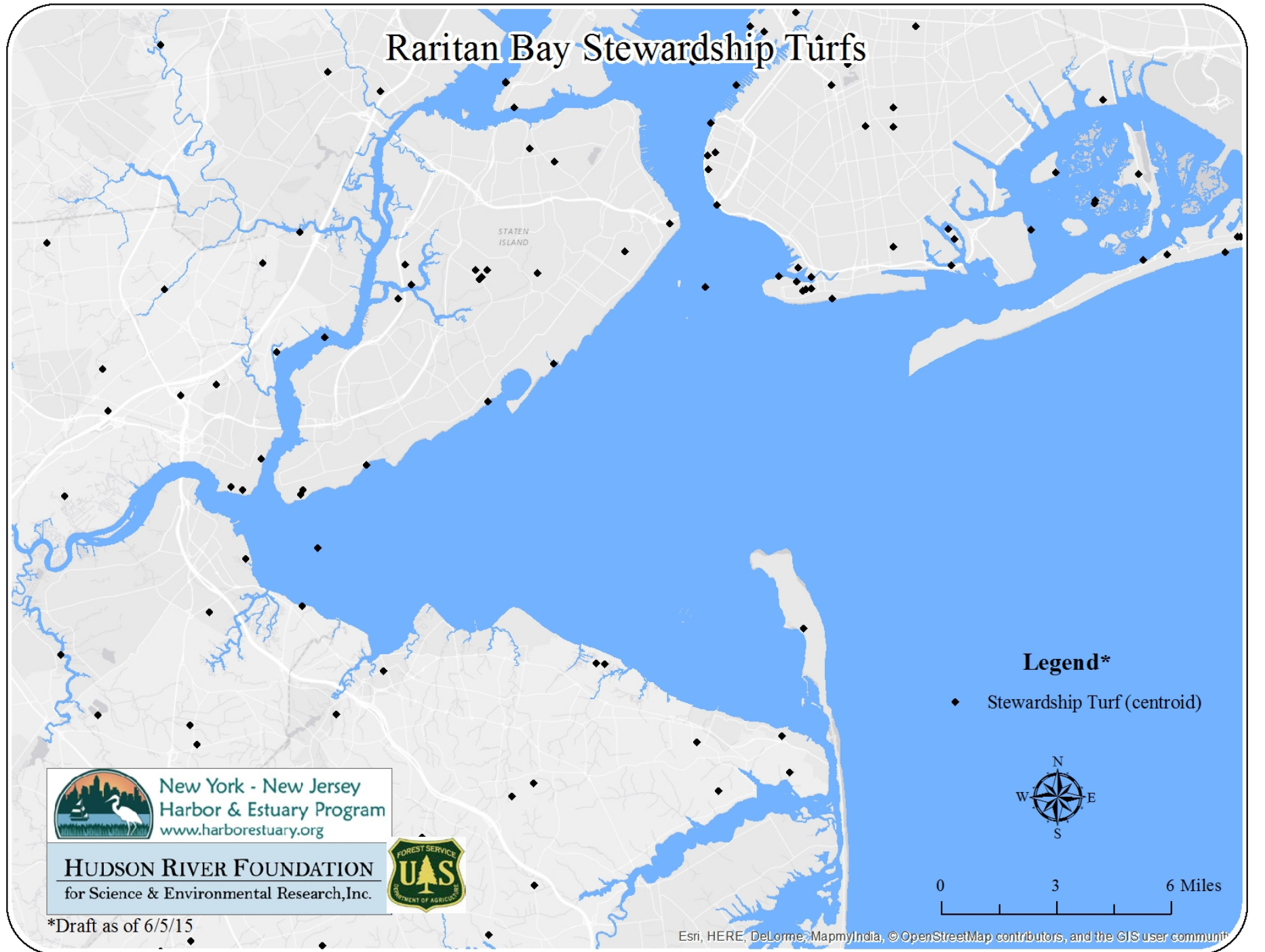
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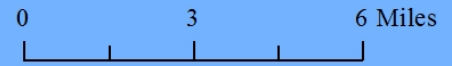
\*Draft as of 6/5/15

# Raritan Bay Stewardship Turfs



## Legend\*

- ◆ Stewardship Turf (centroid)



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# Public Access in Raritan Bay: New Jersey



SARA MALONE  
SUSTAINABLE RARITAN RIVER INITIATIVE

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# Raritan Bay Communities, 'Jersey side

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- North bayshore
  - Densely populated
  - Industrial
  - Opportunities as industry leaves or upgrades
- South bayshore
  - More sites but controlled access
  - Limited parking
  - Response to climate



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# 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Park, Perth Amboy

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- City of Perth Amboy, MCIA, EPA, Rutgers
  - Outreach – community input
  - Fishing pier
  - Concession & restrooms
  - Picnic and grassy lawns
  - Multiple program areas
  - Living shoreline



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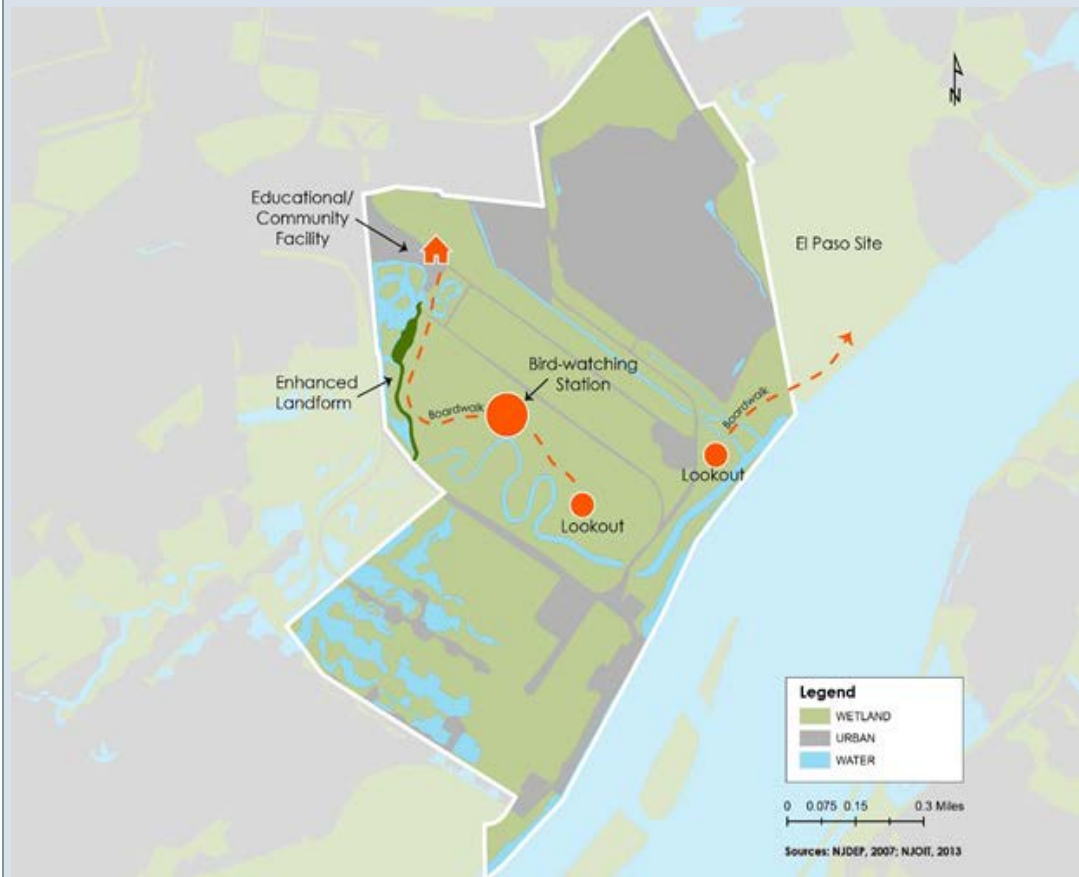
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# Red Root Creek, Raritan Center

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- Federal Business Center
  - Raritan Studio course
  - Restore tidal creek
  - Education center w/parking
  - Boardwalk w/ bird viewing platforms
  - Lower marsh trail connects with EPEC public access



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# Future?

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- Secure National Water Trail designation for Raritan
  - Positive economic impact through increased tourism
  - Promotes stewardship and environmental education
  - Builds regional partnership
  - Increase public access to Bay and tidal Raritan reach
- What if greenways connected to water trail to recreational access points to train lines and to ferry service to Staten Island and between the north and south shores of Bay?



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# Shameless Plug

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- *A.J. Meerwald*, New Jersey's Official Tall Ship returns to Perth Amboy
- June 18 to 21
- Thanks to City of Perth Amboy and Mayor Diaz
- Riverkeeper Bill Schultz and Dr. Beth Ravit are guest speakers



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# Public Access: New York

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# Public Access = Public Perception

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- Despite the cleaner waters of the Raritan Bay, positive public perception remains mixed.
  - With the water quality at its best, some of the public's perception of the Bay is caught in a time warp of 'yesterdays': dirty, not usable and un-swimmable mind set.
  - Even with many miles of public waterfront, there is a 'disconnect' with true 'access' to the water for recreation, highlighting the need for a public education campaign of this shared resource.
  - A coordinated federal/bi-state/municipal waterfront message could help strengthen the individual revitalization efforts happening around the Bay (i.e. thru a 'Bayway' trail' or similar National Water Trail)



# Bathing beaches and water-based recreation

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- The ‘lower’ Raritan Bay south of Gateway Recreational Area at Great Kills has limited bathing beaches.
  - Currently Wolfes Pond Park is the only municipal beach open for swimming on the far southern end of Staten Island.



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# Bathing beaches and water-based recreation

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- The unique natural Staten Island topography and shoreline hinders, in part, efforts to support suitable locations for bathing as well as kayaking and sailing activities. But is ideal for nature and shoreline exploration



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# Recreational Fishing

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- Recreational fishing remains a popular activity along Staten Island's Raritan Bay waterfront, both on-shore and on-water.
  - With many on-shore access points available, the biggest challenge faced by NYC Parks is providing and maintaining adequate cleaning and trash disposal facilities.
  - Additionally, with limited personnel resources, the NYS DEC faces challenges with regulation compliance.
- Finally, the lack of unified bi-state Raritan Bay waterfront signage may contribute to the low 'self regulation' compliance (for cleanup and DEC regs ) among recreational fishermen





# Waterfront hubs: fishing ports and marinas

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- Staten Island has a long and rich maritime history, despite this, ‘waterfront hubs’ (either public or private) are few and far between.
  - Staten Island’s Raritan Bay public and private marinas and fishing ports are not as intergraded into their surrounding communities as they could be to fully facilitate waterfront access and appreciation. Better interconnectivity and neighborhood infrastructure improvements would help close this ‘gap’.



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# Transportation

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- Historically, Staten Island's inter-modal transportation network has always lagged in keeping up with the Island's population growth and needs.
  - As a waterfront community with many miles of public land along the upper and lower reaches of the Bay, public transportation to these sites isn't convenient or accessible to the rest of the Island or City.
  - Funding, suitable locations and inter-modal access constraints, alternative water-based transportation is lacking on Staten Island's Raritan Bay shoreline (and the Island as a whole).
  - While ample parking is available in parks in the northern reach of the Bay, parking is limited in some of the southern locations.



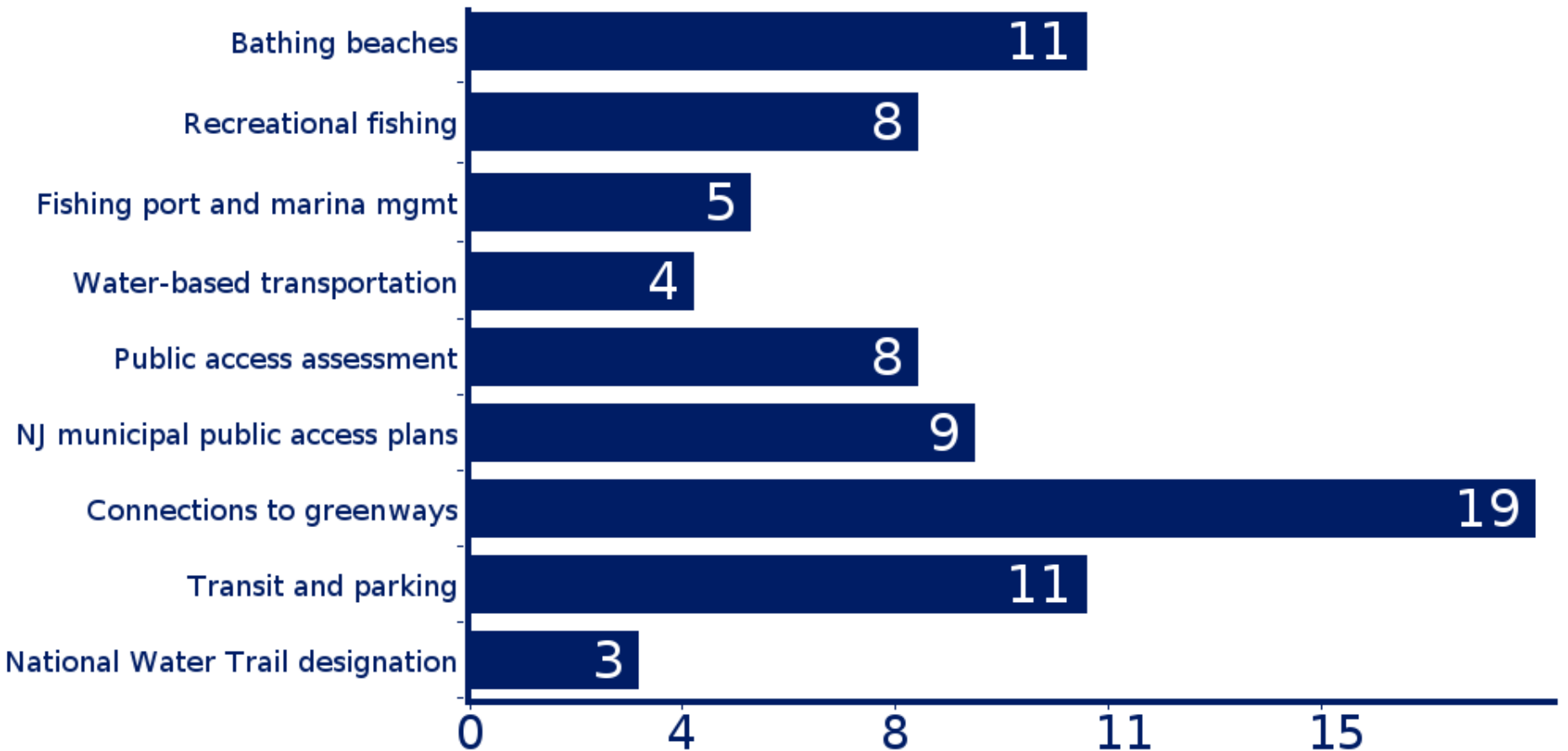
# Which of the following public access issues/tools/tactics should be the highest priority for the conference?



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Text **RARITANBAY** to **22333** once to join



# What other public access issues have we missed?



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