

Tributary Connection Subcommittee of the Restoration Work Group

Chairs: Megan Lung and Laura Wildman



Meeting Minutes

www.Hudsonriver.org

Meeting, December 7, 2021

11:00 - 12:30

Virtual

I. Welcome and Attendance

The group was welcomed by Isabelle Stinnette, Megan Lung, and Laura Wildman. Attendance listed below.

II. Minutes Approval and Membership

The group approved the minutes from the August meeting. Julie Lockwood, Professor and Chair Ecology, Evolution and Natural Resources at Rutgers University will join the group in the future.

III. Infrastructure Bill Discussion

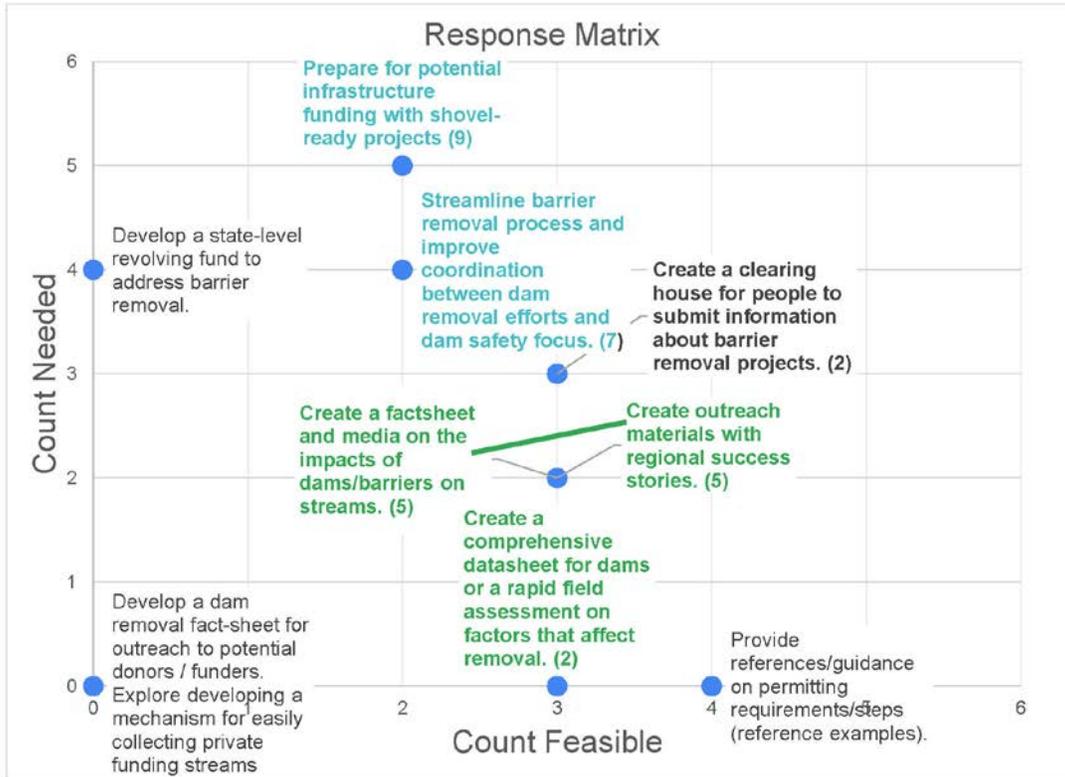
Carl Alderson, walked the group through some of the major funding opportunities that will be available for grants through NOAA. This includes money for habitat restoration including funding for coastal protection as well as tributary connections in particular. Many other federal agencies will receive funding that should support restoration grants. Details from Carl's presentation will be distributed with the minutes.

- Rob Pirani notes that HEP will also be receiving funding through the infrastructure grant and expects to prioritize projects that can lead to leveraged funds from some of these larger streams.
- Environmental Justice may be a factor that makes our watershed more competitive in these national grants
- NOAA may subdivide the federal funding into smaller regional grants.

IV. Actionable Item Exercise

The chairs set a goal for this workgroup to choose one or two "actionable items" to pursue over the next two years. The idea behind this is to be focused, understanding that all members are volunteering our time in the pursuit to creating more and better tributary habitat. These items will be in addition to the other primary goal of sharing information and best practices. The group responded to a survey on what actions were most needed and feasible (with this group within 2 years). Chart for discussion below. The group voted and chose to work on the following actions: 1. Prepare for

infrastructure funding with shovel-ready projects, 2. Streamline barrier removal process and improve coordination between dam removal efforts and dam safety focus.



V. Group Updates

TNC/NJ Dam Removal Partnership

- Working on 3 dam removals in the Delaware watershed
- Hosting a new workshop on Preparing a Budget for Dam Removals: NJdams.org

NYC Parks

Completed their alternatives analysis for the double dam on the Bronx River. Working with owner Wildlife Conservation Society and USACE to move ahead on these dam removals.

Riverkeeper

- They just received permission to remove a high value dam – first barrier to the Hudson. Will be submitting an RFP for design and engineering soon.
- Working to map some of the unmapped dams in Westchester and finding a lot of them.

NY-NJ HEP

They have finished the first year of the culvert assessment project on the Lower Raritan and South Rivers in partnership with the Rutgers Raritan River consortium, assessing over 150 culverts and bridges. They hope to have results to share to stakeholders soon.

NYSDEC/ HR Estuary Program

Funding consultants to do municipal culvert management plans for Red Hook and Milan in Dutchess County.

Save the Sound

- Identified a small dam for removal on Blind Brook in Westchester and connected with a student to do some monitoring.
- Met with Westchester planning and parks about potential funds coming from the state for dam removal.
- Contracted with Stantec for a dam removal design on Long Island.
- Identified dam inventory and culvert assessment data gaps in Westchester.
- Starting to work in Groton CT on culvert assessment using NAACC.

USACE

Received the authority from headquarters to modify the recommendation on the Bronx River dams from the original fish ladder concept to dam removal.

VI. Attendance

Laura Wildman, Biohabitats (chair)
Megan Lung, NYSDEC (chair)
Carl Alderson, NOAA
Eric Bohm, NJ Fish and Wildlife
Melissa Cohen, NYSDEC
Katie Friedman, Save the Sound
George Jackman, Riverkeeper
Lingard Knutson, EPA
Diana Kohtio Bazzini, USACE
Gwen Macdonald, Save the Sound
Jamie Ong, NYC Parks
Rob Pirani, NY-NJ HEP
Isabelle Stinnette, NY-NJ HEP
Beth Styler Barry, TNC NJ