



RESTORATION WORK GROUP

Co-Chairs: Lisa Baron (Army Corps of Engineers),
Marit Larson (NYC Parks)

<https://www.hudsonriver.org/article/restoration-work-group>

Meeting, January 18, 2022

10:30 – 12:30

Virtual

I. Welcome/Attendance

Attendance is at the end of this document.

II. Minutes

Approved minutes from the last meeting in September 2021.

III. Action Agenda and 2021 Review and Goal Setting for 2022

Isabelle Stinnette presented to the group the action agenda items that we have focused on over the past year and the group brainstormed on where we could focus for the upcoming year.

Some ideas included:

- Continued attention on our shallow waters target especially with respect to wetland restoration and potential waterward expansion.
- An added benefit to our valuation of shallow waters is our ability to engage with potentially damaging shoreline development projects.
- Continued attention to restoration of buyout properties as they will likely continue into the future.
- Follow up on Natural and Nature Based Features (NNBF) monitoring project – we now have a dataset from monitoring projects that we can use to move towards evaluation.
- Sharing new research that shines light on restoration practices.
- Do more coordination within the group and have an agreed upon list of priorities as money comes in.
- Have future meetings have a regional focus where we utilize/update the CRP map and coordinate ongoing and near-term priority restoration projects within a planning region and determine any partner needs to advance projects. Simplify the data to make it more user friendly.

IV. Environmental Monitoring Plan Update

Rosana Da Silva presented the group on HEP's environmental Monitoring Plan that will be updated over the next year (see: <https://www.hudsonriver.org/article/environmental-monitoring-plan>). The first step is reviewing the indicators that we are monitoring to make sure that they are still relevant in evaluating the health of the Estuary. She asks that you please review the habitat indicators and get back to her by **February 23**. She will also be reaching out at a later date to make sure that the monitoring programs that are in the current version are still accurate.

- Carl Alderson asks if there is anything currently that tracks environmental justice. Rosana answered that one of our public access indicators considers vulnerable communities, but nothing other than that. We may want to start thinking about what we could track in this realm.
- Rosana adds that members may also want to consider indicators of climate change which were not included in the last report.

V. West Pond Restoration

Alex Zablocki of the Jamaica Bay Rockaway Parks Conservancy described a living shoreline restoration at West Pond in Jamaica Bay. West Pond was breached in Hurricane Sandy and then repaired to restore the freshwater pond. This living shoreline project is meant to add extra support to the pond. Project elements included adding donated sand, degradable shell bags, large coir logs, recycled Christmas trees, and planting Spartina. They also reconstructed one of the pond's outfalls. Monitoring continues in partnership with the Science and Resiliency Institute at Jamaica Bay.

VI. Infrastructure Bill Restoration Implications for HEP

Rob Pirani announced that HEP will be receiving an extra \$ 900,000 through infrastructure funding funds from EPA for the next 5 years. This money needs to go to support projects that come from already established HEP workplans or Action Agenda items and HEP aims to hit administrative priorities as well as leverage larger pots of funding through partnerships. Formal EPA guidance is still to come. Many RWG goals could fall within these funding priorities including tributary connections, shorelines and shallows enhancement, NNBF monitoring and buyout restoration. HEP is having further conversations with partners on project ideas and will keep everyone posted along the process.

- Carl notes that expected National NOAA grants would like to see projects bundled, which could potentially be a role for HEP. Bundles would be directed for a particular TEC not a variety pack.
- Katie Mosher notes that we should try to build projects that are replicable, bringing in the core elements no matter the project, for example environmental justice and bringing in the community.

VII. Field Trip Discussion

The group is in favor of trying to get together in person for the next meeting. Some thoughts include:

- Katie is happy to host at a number of oyster restoration spots. Soundview is a great spot. We could do some monitoring if we could wait until late April. April, May, June, fieldwork starts to ramp up so may want to do it before then.
- We could go to West Pond to see the results of that project. Sunset Cove is also near there if we want to see two project locations.
- It would be great to have an indoor space nearby to get some of the more formal meeting agenda items accomplished as well.

The chairs will make a decision and let the group know where we are meeting next.

IX. RWG Member Updates

NY-NJ Baykeeper

NY/NJ Baykeeper has been awarded \$621,576 (total project cost \$1,744,000) through NFWF's National Coastal Resilience Fund to support ongoing coastal resilience work at Naval Weapons Station Earle. This award will advance an innovative nature-based design for 3,200 linear feet of shoreline stabilization, coastal protection, and habitat enhancement along the Raritan Bay coast adjacent to U.S. Naval Weapons Station Earle. Project partners are Biohabitats Inc., the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, Monmouth County Division of Planning, and Naval Weapons Station Earle. Work should begin in late winter.

Billion Oyster Project

- Working to scale our remote setting capacity to deploy 50 million oysters this year, and approximately 20-25 million oysters will be deployed at Gansevoort Peninsula (Hudson River) this summer.
- Reviewing and refining some of our methods related to calculating oyster habitat restored. This ties directly into the work we're doing for the development of a State Shellfish Restoration Plan with Pew, NYSDEC, the [Shellfish Restoration Council](#), and a diverse group of stakeholders throughout New York City and Long Island. Please reach out to Danielle Bissett if you have any questions and/or if you'd like to be more involved in this work.

HEP

- Recently offered three micro-grants to community groups/educators to start Eel monitoring programs for this coming spring in northern New Jersey.
- Developing a plan to utilize the additional ~\$900,000 in infrastructure funding granted to the National Estuary Programs over the next 5 years.

USACE

- The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) included \$1.2M to complete the Spring Creek South/Howard Beach Multi-Purpose Ecosystem Restoration and Coastal Storm Risk Management Study with NYSDEC. The District is waiting for Implementation guidance from HQ to determine how the study will proceed.
- The IIJA included \$7.1 M to complete pre-construction engineering and design (PED) phase and initiate construction of the Spring Creek North Ecosystem Restoration Project with NYC Parks. 30% design package was completed in November 2021, a Value Engineering Study was completed in December 2021 and geotechnical sampling was conducted in January 2022. 60% designs are expected in May 2022 and construction is scheduled for early 2023.
- HRE-Stony Creek Marsh Island (NYCDEP), Flushing Creek (NYCDEP), Bronx Zoo & Dam/Stone Mill Dam (NYC Parks) and Oyster restoration at Naval Station Earle (NJDEP and NY/NJ Baykeeper) will advance with (sponsors) upon FY22 budget enactment.

NYC Parks

- Initiated planning for what to accomplish with the NYC New Normal Post-Ida Funding (\$7.1M for 3 wetland waterfront sites and \$4.6 M for 7 green infrastructure projects). Staffing to support development of these projects is uncertain.
- City committed funding to DEP and NYC Parks for Tibbetts Brook Day-lighting.
- Completed fall forest restoration planting at multiple sites across the City with hundreds of staff and volunteers.
- Completed a tidal creek bank restoration at a small site along Seagrit Wetland in Far Rockaway with the Natural Areas Conservancy and support from Jamaica Bay Rockaway Park Alliance
- Completed our annual late summer / fall post-project salt marsh and SET monitoring was completed.
- Participated in NYC-wide climate adaptation workshop run by the NYC Mayor's Office (Adam Parris) and research partners from several cities aimed at big-picture long term visioning of responses individual and multi-hazard climate change threats (might be interesting for HEP – perhaps ask Adam Parris when / whether such a report out could happen?)
- Joined Mayor's Office in talking with Elected Officials about recommended plans / projects City would like to see in WRDA
- Continued to coordinate with EDC on advancing 2nd and 3rd Phases of the Staten Island Mitigation Bank

X. Attendance (all virtual via webinar)

Lisa Baron, (chair), USACE
Marit Larson, (chair) NYC Parks
Carl Alderson, NOAA
Meredith Comi, Baykeeper
Rosana Da Silva, HEP
Terry Doss, NJSEA
Marco Finocchiaro, EPA
Jim Lodge, HRF
Susan Maresca, NYSDEC
John McLaughlin, NYCDEP

Katie Mosher, BOP
Jessie Murray, NOAA
Lingard Knutson, EPA
Kaitlyn Parkins, NYC Audubon
Robert Pirani, NY-NJ HEP
Clay Sherman, NJDEP
Isabelle Stinnette, NY-NJ HEP
Judith Weis, STAC
Jaclyn Woollard, EPA
Alex Zablocki, JBRP Conservancy (guest)