
Field Trip/Meeting, May 5, 2022

9:30 – 12:30

Bronx

I. Soundview Wetlands and Oysters Walking Tour

II. Welcome at River House (Starlight Park) from our hosts, the Bronx River Alliance (BxRA).

Dustin Partridge is our new RWG member from NYC Audubon, replacing Kaitlyn Parkins. All other meeting attendance is at the end of this document. The group approved minutes from the last meeting in January 2022.

III. RWG Member Updates

NYC Parks

- They are sorting out local funding and staffing for future shoreline restoration grant and city funded projects (e.g. Idlewild marsh thin layer sediment placement, Harding Park South aka Bolton Point, Ramblersville in Howard Beach, etc.) and dealing with many requests for mitigation projects.
- Waiting to hear about fate of funding (~\$4.5 million), from Play Fair for Parks Campaign. Received in FY22, future uncertain. This would allow them to retain close to 40 staff working on forest and wetlands management, restoration, and stewardship.
- Drafted a paper for peer review journal Cities and the Environment on the history and status of Forever Wild program after 20 years.

USACE

- Received \$1.2 million to initiate Pre-Construction Engineering and Design (PED) phase for the following four HRE feasibility sites: 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). \$25,978,000 was included in the FY22 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) to complete PED phase of the four projects and construction of Stony Creek Marsh Island.
- Spring Creek North is expected to go to start construction in 2023.
- The Senate version of WRDA 2022 included Baisley Pond Park and Richmond Terrace Wetlands (Section 331) to carry out additional spin-off feasibility studies for ecosystem restoration. Note these 2 sites were not included in the CRP as current restoration opportunities.

- Congressman Espaillat has also potentially included funding in the FY23 Community Grants for a new phase feasibility study for the Harlem River with NYCDEP (non-federal sponsor).
- Congressman Jeffries included funding in the FY23 Community Grants to initiate HRE-Fresh Creek Restoration Project in FY23.
- The NY and NJ Harbor and Tributaries draft Feasibility Report is expected out for public review in September 2022.

Billion Oyster Project

- They are preparing to deploy 50 million oysters this summer, the largest season to date.
- Additional upcoming projects include city island, Newtown creek, Powell's Cove and Flushing Bay.
- The Living Breakwaters project is getting to the stage of permitting the oyster installation
- They are also supporting the state shellfish restoration plan organized by Pew.

NYC Audubon

- They are starting their summer field season, with another full Harbor Herons survey and other work on building coalitions.
- Dustin would like to see the long-term Harbor Herons trends evaluated.

HEP

- HEP hosted a NJ Eel Monitoring event to build a community around eels in NJ.
- The Tributary Connections workgroup has made progress on several actions to prepare for BIL funding. Contact Isabelle if you would like to be added to this subcommittee.
- HEP is working to support the New Start on the Harlem River Feasibility Study possibly included in the FY23 Community Grant funding from Congressman Espaillat.

BxRA

- They are working on an intermunicipal watershed plan for the Bronx River including forming and advisory committee.
- They are launching a nutrient study.
- Other ongoing projects include invasives control, project WASTE and floatables control, and aiding in the greenway construction.

IV. USACE Bronx (and others) Project Updates

Lisa Baron presented the status and plans for several USACE projects including those on the Bronx River (Bronx Zoo & Dam and Stone Mill Dam). Contact Isabelle if you would like a copy of the slides.

V. Starlight Park South/Westchester Ave Park/ Concrete Plant Parks Walking Tour

VI. Attendance

Lisa Baron, (chair), USACE
 Marit Larson, (chair) NYC Parks
 Danielle Bissett, BOP
 Maggie Greenfield, BxRA (guest)

Kristen King, NYC Parks
Christian Murphy, BxRA (guest)
Jessie Murray, NOAA
Jamie Ong, NYC Parks (guest)
Dustin Partridge, NYC Audubon
Robert Pirani, NY-NJ HEP
Isabelle Stinnette, NY-NJ HEP
Victoria Toro, BxRA (guest)