



## New York - New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program

### **HEP Habitat Workgroup Meeting Minutes**

**August 31, 2005**

Port Authority of NY & NJ, Newark, NJ

10am

### **Habitat Work Plan**

Alex Brash (NPCA) led the discussion on the Habitat Work Plan. The Habitat Work Plan that was put together for the Policy Committee was passed out to the HWG. Comments on the work plan are due to Cathy Yuhas by 9/9/05. HEP Priority Acquisition and Restoration Sites are a focus of the work plan. Types of sites that should be considered are waterfront access (passive/active) and sub-tidal areas (bay bottoms, shellfish beds, the Bight). Alex had listed a few areas that the HWG should focus on and agencies/partners that could be linked to these areas. They are listed below:

Master Plan: HEP, USACE

Site Identification: HEP, USACE

Site Designs: USACE

Funds: USACE, PA, NY, NJ, Private

Restoration Construction: USACE, PA

Maintenance/Protection: NPS, NJ, NY, NYC Parks DPR, TNC, TPL, etc.

There was a discussion on the CRIP and the Roundtable. Chris Zeppie (PA) mentioned that the Harbor Roundtable is looking at the Highlands Commission as an example to model the Roundtable after. The Highlands Commission's structure works. There is a broad set of organizations involved and it has a paid membership.

Chris Zeppie and Steve Jandoli thought that the HEP is missing a non-profit organization that can advocate for the Harbor Estuary. HEP is limited by its boundaries.

There was a question of how much acreage in the Harbor has been restored in regards to Target 12 of HEP's Targets and Goals. Cathy will bring information to next meeting. It was also suggested that all information on sites that have been restored or acquired should be sent into Cathy ([cathy@harboestuary.org](mailto:cathy@harborestuary.org)) so that it can be compiled and filed by the HEP Office.

Ludger Balan (Urban Divers Conservancy) wanted to know how HEP gets involved in existing habitat projects, such as the Keyspan Project in Brooklyn. Alex responded by telling Ludger that HEP cannot comment on projects nor reviews them. HEP also cannot advocate for any project.

HEP should bring these projects to the table for discussion and dissemination of information through the HWG. HWG can also provide technical advice.

Len Houston (USACE) wants to put out a status report of the HRE some time this year. It will lay out where the CRIP is going. It will be a Master Plan. The CRIP will layout what the USACE can and cannot do. It will include a whole suite of opportunities for restoration. An implementation plan needs to be developed. Bob Alpern commented that the Bight and the LIS should be included in the CRIP. He is also looking for context not just a list of sites. Paul Mankiewicz (Gaia Institute) commented that uplands, wetlands, and sub-aquatic areas should all be considered in the master plan.

### **Carteret Landfill/Tremley Point Connector Road**

Wendy Walsh (USFWS) led the discussion on the Carteret Landfill and the Tremley Point Connector Road in Linden, NJ. Wendy wants all applicants to come together and develop a unified mitigation plan for this area instead of approaching these projects separately in this area. There should also be one EIS for this site. There are too many small projects. Wendy would like to see the preservation of the remaining wetlands and cleanup of a smaller portion. The Tremley Point Connector Road is proposed to be an 8-mile road through the wetlands. There are 4 endangered species documented at this site. The road will fragment the marshes. Others that contributed to this conversation were Ed Kaup from NJDEP and Kristi MacDonald Beyer from NY-NJ Baykeeper who are both working on these projects.

### **Site Nomination- Acquisition- Butler Woods, Staten Island, NY**

Clark Wallace from the Trust for Public Land presented the Butler Woods site in Staten Island, NY to the HWG. Butler Woods is connected to Long Pond Park and the Paw Paw sites, which are both on the HEP Priority Acquisition and Restoration Site List. The vegetation found there are forests and wetlands. The site was approved by the HWG. Port Authority of NY & NJ abstained.

**Next Meeting:** October 26, 2005