



New York - New Jersey  
Harbor Estuary  
Program

**New York-New Jersey Harbor Estuary Program  
Management Committee Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2005**

1. The meeting was convened at the EPA Offices at 10:00 and chaired by Bob Nyman.
2. The minutes from the November 18, 2004 Management Committee meeting were reviewed and approved with a clarification for Mr. Larrabee's title and position at the Port Authority.
3. Mark Lulka and Lenny Houston from the Corps gave a Powerpoint presentation on the status of the Hudson Raritan Estuary (HRE) study and the Comprehensive Restoration Improvement Plan (CRIP). Mr. Houston said that the CRIP is still alive and well after a pause for adjustment. He said that the Corps was seeking assistance with CRIP planning and was seeking input on how HEP could help steer the CRIP. It was suggested that the Corps could work with the Habitat Work Group on technical issues and utilize the rest of the HEP structure as appropriate. The CRIP can be an implementation vehicle for a portion of the HEP CCMP. He continued by saying that the Corps would like to have the process on how to develop the CRIP finalized by the end of the year. He anticipates that it would then take two to three years to write the CRIP. Genie Flatow said she wants a dredging chapter for the CCMP. (See attached information related to this that was provided after the meeting).
4. Dennis Suszkowski provided a status of the Harbor Roundtable. He said that the DMMIWG had morphed into a news outlet for consultants and was no longer functioning. More recently, there has been a move to more closely link port and environmental initiatives. The port deepening effort is scheduled to receive \$100 million over ten years. He said that complementary environmental efforts were not being undertaken and that a long plan was needed for financing an environmental agenda. Currently, the Roundtable group is focusing on protection of near shore habitat through acquisition, physical habitat restoration, sediments and air quality improvement. The Port Authority is participating in the effort as a facilitator for the Roundtable effort. Dr. Suszkowski added that HRF was offering to host a small preliminary discussion/workshop to begin mapping out research needs, including the question of how do we approach restoration. Carter Craft said that public access should be an integral part of the environmental agenda because it is important to elected officials.

5. Laura Bartovics provided a handout and gave an overview on the News Journal concept that was being developed. She said that the new publication could replace The Tidal Exchange. As it is now being envisioned, it would involve multiple funding partners, a somewhat autonomous pair of editors, and would possibly be run by a journalism school. Frank Steimle said that newspaper formats were difficult to keep in libraries and that we should consider an electronic format. The MC in general liked the overall idea and recommended that the concept continue to be developed.

6. Bob Nyman reviewed the budget requests that were submitted for the FY05 HEP budget. The MC decided that the program should focus on implementation projects and could not afford to support research projects at this time. After considerable discussion about many of the items, Mr. Nyman agreed to revise the table of budget requests based on that discussion and provide a new balanced draft budget to the MC for comment.

7. Laura Bartovics introduced the concept for the Strategic Planning Summit that she was developing with the CAC for sometime in spring or summer.

8. Bob Nyman handed out copies of the draft 2005 Implementation Review submittal that had been developed with input from MC members and requested comments by the following week. The review is undertaken every three years by EPA-HQ to assess the progress of the program. He noted that a site visit would likely take place in May or June.

9. MC members were reminded that approval was still needed from some PC members for the Camp St. Edwards habitat acquisition site.

10. MC membership was reviewed with focus on membership slots where the members have not been consistently participating. After some discussion about specific slots, the MC agreed to investigate options for additional participants.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:00.

**The following information was provided by the EPA Dredged Material Management Team in response to the request for a revised dredging chapter:**

This is in response to your questions concerning the status of activities outlined in the 1996 Draft Dredging Chapter of the HEP CCMP.

Why didn't EPA update and finalize the Draft Dredging Chapter as agreed to by Carol Browner in 1996?

EPA prepared several revised drafts between 1997 and 2002. These were shared with our Federal, State, and local government HEP partners. We were unable to reach agreement with our Federal, State, local government HEP partners on a revised Dredging Chapter. In 2004, EPA decided not to invest any additional effort in completing the Dredging Chapter, but indicated we would be happy to participate in reviewing another draft if any of our Federal, State, and/or local government HEP partners wanted to take the lead. The main reason that we were unable to reach agreement was that the various Draft Chapters were outdated before they were completed. There was an enormous amount of effort at the Federal, State, and local level on Dredged Material Management in NY/NJ Harbor. In the end, virtually all the commitments in the 1996 Draft HEP Dredging Chapter, were implemented and either completed or ongoing.

How is public participation being coordinated in the "Dredging Program"?

At the time that the NY/NJ Harbor CCMP was finalized, EPA Region 2 initiated a Dredged Material Management Forum to address dredged material management issues in NY/NJ Harbor. This involved numerous working groups that included the public and various NGOs. The groups were slowly dissolved over time after their work was completed. In the end, the Dredged Material Management Integration Workgroup (DMMIWG) was the only remaining group. The DMMIWG held monthly meetings and was attended by various Federal, State, local government agencies, NGOs, citizens, and numerous contractors. In the end, the DMMIWG discussed less and less dredged material management issues, and focused more on broader NY/NJ Harbor issues. The last DMMIWG Meeting was in early 2004. In December 2004, a Regional Dredging Team was created from an existing Dredged Material Management Task Force comprised of various Federal, State, and local government agencies responsible for dredged material management issues in NY/NJ Harbor. Currently there are no NGOs on the RDT, mainly due to FACA issues. However, the RDT plans to hold future meetings with the NGOs on a quarterly basis to re-invigorate the public participation process in NY/NJ Harbor dredged material management.

Can we get the NGOs more involved in the HARS Scientific Peer Review Process?

EPA Region 2 and the USACE New York District will be sending an email to the Remediation Materials Workgroup (RMW) during the week of 2/28/05 concerning the current status of the HARS Scientific Peer Review Process. The email will present our draft approach for evaluating ecological impacts of placing dredged material at the HARS. We expect to re-initiate RMW Meetings in May 2005. The RMW is comprised of Federal, State, and local government agencies, and NGOs.

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Dredged Material Management Team