



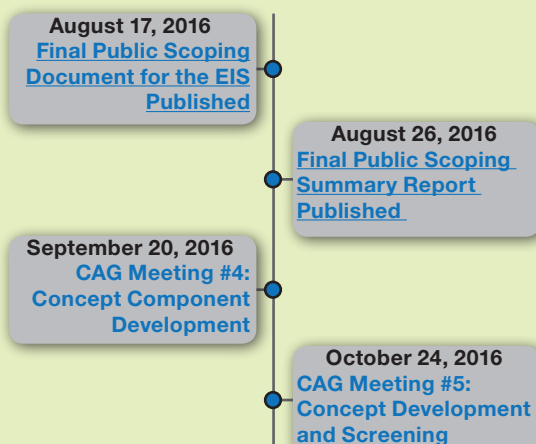
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## Get involved!

- ✓ If you would like to become a member of the CAG, please contact Alexis Taylor at [rbd-meadowlands@dep.nj.gov](mailto:rbd-meadowlands@dep.nj.gov). NJDEP welcomes your participation and input into this process!
- ✓ Share information from this newsletter with friends and neighbors.
- ✓ Educate your friends and colleagues on the Project and NEPA process.
- ✓ Continue to build interest in the Project.
- ✓ Subscribe to receive email updates on the Project at [www.rbd-meadowlands.nj.gov](http://www.rbd-meadowlands.nj.gov).

Please visit [www.rbd-meadowlands.nj.gov](http://www.rbd-meadowlands.nj.gov) to obtain current project information and data, including confirmation of the above meeting dates.

## NJDEP Project Team Embarks on Field Data Collection Efforts

To support the engineering design and environmental review process, engineers and scientists from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) Rebuild By Design Meadowlands (RBDM) Project Team have begun a large and diverse field data collection and validation effort throughout the Boroughs of Little Ferry, Moonachie, Carlstadt, and Teterboro, and the Township of South Hackensack (the Project Area).

In August, field teams began verifying and mapping the position of existing key infrastructure locations, including stormwater structures and ditch locations, and conducting resource-specific field surveys for noise and biological resources. This field effort is expected to expand in the fall with additional resource area surveys continuing through Spring and Summer 2017.

### Surveying the Biological Resources of the Meadowlands

Although some may have the impression that northern New Jersey only includes developed or disturbed natural areas, many diverse habitats used by a variety of flora and fauna can be found within the RBDM Project Area. For example, the Meadowlands District is a key stopover (resting point) for numerous birds along their migratory route, known as the North Atlantic Flyway.

Understanding the need to identify these biological resources, scientists from the RBDM Project Team developed a plan to conduct studies that included providing real time data to the engineering team to allow for the proficient design of project concepts and alternatives.

As part of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluation, a robust suite of biological studies are underway. The studies include habitat mapping, wetland delineations and ecological valuations, flora studies and seasonal faunal studies for birds, benthic invertebrates, fish, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals.



Bird Song Meter Deployment



The approximately 5,300-acre Project Area consists of approximately 4,000 acres of developed land and the remaining 1,300 acres consists of undeveloped or “natural habitats.”

The Project Team recently mapped the natural habitats, which included teams of trained ecologists traversing the sites on foot and by boat and using handheld tablets with aerial imagery of the sites. The project scientists mapped the boundaries of each habitat on the tablets. These boundaries will be converted to Geographic Information System (GIS) layers to assist project planners in avoiding and minimizing the potential impacts to sensitive ecological resources during the development of project concepts and alternatives. The mapping will be used by a trained botanist in completing a list of species potentially present within the Project Area as well as to determine the potential for occurrence of rare and/or protected species.

Later this fall, scientists will delineate wetlands within the Project Area to quantify both acreage and ecological value by conducting surveys in different habitats. These surveys will range from trained observers walking transects or performing fixed point counts to the use of specialized equipment (e.g., game cameras, artificial substrate samplers, and song meters). Song meters are passive listening devices that can record bird songs, amphibian vocalizations and bat echolocations. Studies will occur during the day and at night.

Currently, the Project Team is completing its late summer surveys as well as a review and summation of existing studies completed by others within the Project Area. Given the importance of the Meadowlands District to birds, extended studies of birds will continue through the fall migration, over winter, and culminate with a spring migration/nesting study in the early spring, prior to publication of the EIS.



Infrared Photo of a Red Fox Captured on a Monitoring Camera by the RBDM Project Team Along the Fenceline of Teterboro Airport



RBDM Project Team Preparing for a Recent Wildlife Survey in Teterboro

## Mapping of Key Infrastructure

In August, the RBDM Project Team began mapping the Project Area’s critical infrastructure including interior drainage and utility features. Efforts have included verifying the data gathered from the five towns within the Project Area, and pinpointing additional structures not currently identified during previous data gathering activities.

Ultimately, the survey data will be used to evaluate the suitability of existing stormwater drainage systems in the Project Area to reduce flood risk damages.



Collecting Stormwater Drainage Data in South Hackensack

## Noise Monitoring

In August, the Project Team also began taking baseline noise measurements in the Boroughs of Teterboro, Little Ferry, and Moonachie, and part of the Township of South Hackensack and the Borough of Carlstadt. The purpose of this field survey was to determine existing noise levels in the Project Area. Noise measurements were conducted at 36 representative locations within noise-sensitive land uses, such as residences, schools, and worship facilities. At 8 locations, existing noise levels were measured for a continuous 24-hour period to document variations in the existing noise environment. Short-term measurements (20 minutes each) were performed at the remaining 28 locations to provide a snapshot of background noise levels. In accordance with New Jersey Administrative Code (Title 7, Chapter 29) noise measurements were conducted outdoors under favorable weather conditions (no precipitation or winds higher than 12 miles per hour).

The baseline noise measurements will be used to evaluate the potential impacts from the construction and operation of the Proposed Project. During the construction phase, noise-producing activities could include increased vehicular traffic and the operation of heavy machinery. In the operations phase, noise sources could include generator operation, pump station operation (Stationary Operations), and some minimal vehicular traffic for maintenance.

## Meadowlands Did You Know?

When European settlers first arrived to the Meadowlands area, they encountered a freshwater tidal river system with forested swamps and bogs and extensive stands of Atlantic white cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*). The Atlantic white cedar was extirpated by harvesting and burning from the 1700s through the early 1900s; this species does not occur in the Meadowlands today.



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