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## NEPA TIMELINE

### Key Milestones and Upcoming Events



## 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.

## Report from October's Citizen Advisory Group Meeting #5

The October Citizen Advisory Group (CAG) meeting for the Rebuild By Design Meadowlands (RBDM) Flood Protection Project was held on Monday, October 24, 2016, at One Bergen County Plaza in Hackensack. The main topics of discussion included an overview of the September CAG workshop results, a summary of the ecological surveys underway in the Project Area, and a presentation of potential storm water drainage improvement opportunities for Alternative 2 (Storm Water Drainage Improvements) of the Proposed Project.

### You Spoke, We Listened

After providing a project status update to the CAG members, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection RBDM Project Team presented a summary of the feedback received during the CAG #4 Meeting on September 20, 2016. During the previous meeting, CAG members were asked to consider, prioritize, and comment on a range of potential concepts for the Proposed Project.



October's CAG Meeting



Fluvial Park Illustrative Example Presented at the October CAG Meeting



For Alternative 1 (Structural Flood Reduction), CAG members expressed that while flood protection needs to remain the primary objective of the Proposed Project, waterfront access and the protection of wetlands and biological resources should also be prioritized.

For Alternative 2 (Storm Water Drainage Improvements), CAG members emphasized improving current storm water drainage systems, including ditches and pipes, and identifying opportunities to incorporate both grey and green infrastructure solutions, such as rain gardens, pump stations, and permeable paving. The CAG also recommended enhancing the performance of existing open spaces and returning developed areas to more natural conditions.

Finally, for Alternative 3 (Hybrid Alternative), CAG Members supported the use of both grey and green infrastructure to maximize the effectiveness of the Proposed Project. They emphasized the need to fully understand the existing pollution challenges of Berry's Creek, protect existing natural habitats, and avoid implementing improvements that could generate or promote new development.

## Spotlight on Ecology

Next, the RBDM Project Team presented preliminary results from the ecological surveys that began during the summer. To date, the following ecological surveys have been conducted: habitat mapping and evaluation,



Scientists Evaluating Soil Conditions in Little Ferry



Wading Birds and Marshes Along the Hackensack River

botanical inventories, and wildlife studies for birds, benthic invertebrates, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and mammals. Preliminary assessments



Recently Collected Mummichog

indicate that many existing habitats are stressed. However, the Proposed Project presents a unique opportunity to not only reduce flooding, but to simultaneously improve habitat values and functions.

## Drainage Improvement Opportunities

Lastly, the RBDM Project Team provided an overview of how the screening criteria, originally presented during CAG Meeting #3 on August 11, 2016, will be used to consolidate potential opportunity areas for Alternative 2 (Storm water Drainage Improvements). Potential opportunities were introduced for each of the drainage sub-basins within the Project Area; they included upgrades to storm water sewer capacity, conveyance, and interior pump stations. The RBDM Team presented several illustrative examples of potential storm water drainage opportunities to the CAG.

## Meadowlands Did You Know?

In 2007, researchers documented Mattox's clam shrimp (*Caenestheriella gynecia*) in rain puddles along unimproved dirt roads adjoining the Richard P. Kane Natural Area. This species is known to inhabit only 10 other localities in the eastern United States.



Mattox's clam shrimp (photo by J. Orridge<sup>1</sup>)

<sup>1</sup>Orridge, J., J. Waldman and R.E. Schmidt. 2009. Genetic, morphological and ecological relationships among Hudson Valley populations of the clam shrimp, *Caenestheriella gynecia*. Section VI: 31 pp. In S.H. Fernald, D.J. Yozzo, and H. Andreyko (Eds). Final Reports of the Tibor T. Polgar Fellowship Program, 2008. Hudson River Foundation, New York, NY.



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