



A Partnership to Restore and Protect the Sound

Habitat Restoration Workgroup

of the Long Island Sound Study
 website: <http://www.longislandsoundstudy.net>

**LONG ISLAND SOUND STUDY
 HABITAT RESTORATION
 WORKGROUP**

COORDINATOR

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MEETING SUMMARY

June 8, 2012

10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

NYC Urban Field Station

431 Walter Reed Road I Fort Totten Cluster #2, Box #12 I Bayside, NY 11359-1137

Attendees:

Georgia	Basso	USFWS	basso.georgia@epa.gov
Katerli	Bounds	DPR, NRG	katerli.bounds@parks.nyc.gov
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Steve	Zahn	NYSDEC - Region 2	smzahn@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Our new approach to “Meeting”

In addition to accomplishing the needs and priorities listed in our workplan, CCMP, and Action Agenda, the Habitat Restoration Workgroup is taking a new approach to meeting. Our aim is to balance our work with learning opportunities. In addition to meeting the Workgroup’s administrative needs, each meeting will highlight innovative techniques, challenges, successes, and lessons learned in a variety of priority habitats; it will offer the opportunity for members to exchange habitat restoration knowledge and experience, tour projects on the ground, and generate discussion about leading-edge techniques with colleagues throughout the region.

NEXT MEETING: September 5, 2012

The next habitat restoration workgroup meeting will be held on September 5th, agenda and location to be circulated at a later date. In addition to some cutting edge field visits we will: finalize our workplan; review changes to Habitat Restoration Site Plan; identify areas for pilot marsh migration modeling; and get updates on habitat mapping, Tidal Wetlands loss workshop, and GIS Needs Assessment.

The Habitat Restoration Workgroup meets four times annually. In 2012, meetings will be held on April 25, June 8, September 5, and December 4.

The Long Island Sound Study is a cooperative Federal/state Management Conference researching and addressing the priority environmental problems of the Sound identified in the Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. The Habitat Restoration Work Group is responsible for planning, coordinating and implementing restoration of the twelve priority habitat types in the Long Island Sound watershed.

ACTION ITEMS

PLEASE PARTICIPATE by providing feedback on each of the links below.

- An updated workplan for the Habitat Restoration Workgroup, covering Fiscal Years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, will be circulated to the workgroup members for feedback and input, and will be finalized at our September 5th meeting. **Please submit any workplan related feedback to Kelly Hines kxhines@gw.dec.state.ny.us or Harry Yamalis harry.yamalis@ct.gov by July 11th.**
- Let's Update our 2002 Habitat Restoration Site Plan. **Please tell us what sites you've recently completed restoration on, which sites you're still working on, and nominate priority sites for future restoration projects by July 20th:**
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/viewform?formkey=dFdQRjBQRUhoakVHVIZSVTd1TF9aNHc6MQ>

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

Determining the spatial extent of our priority habitat types

At the previous HRWG meeting in April 2012, the workgroup decided to gather existing spatial data that map the current extent of its 12 priority habitat types. Georgia Basso presented what the workgroup has compiled to-date in terms of its knowledge of this existing spatial data, identifying the following needs:

- I. Need GIS files for:
 - Coastal forests
 - Coastal grasslands
- II. Have some files that need work for:
 - Freshwater wetlands (CT files need to be reality checked)
 - Riverine migratory corridors (need to groundtruth barriers to fish passage)
 - Rocky intertidal zones (need to extract from other GIS layers)
 - Estuarine Embayments (need to extract from other GIS layers)
- III. Need completed files for:
 - Shellfish reefs
 - Intertidal flats (need to determine whether we can extract from existing GIS layers)
 - Cliffs/Bluffs (need to determine whether we can extract from existing GIS layers)
 - Beaches/dunes (need to determine whether we can extract from existing GIS layers)
- IV. Need to establish metadata requirements
- V. Need to collect information on quality not just quantity
- VI. Should think about incorporating as much data as possible so that once we have extent mapped we can take the next steps and begin prioritizing restoration work

GIS Needs Assessment

LISS via NEIWPCC has put out an RFP to hire a consultant to conduct a GIS Needs Assessment in order to evaluate the current status of LISS GIS data availability and capacity, and to identify GIS data, resources and strategies required to fulfill geospatial goals. The workgroup brainstormed potential GIS data needs. Once hired, the consultant will reach out to the workgroups for more information.

Workplan Updates

An updated workplan for the Habitat Restoration Workgroup, covering Fiscal Years 2012-2013 and 2013-2014, will be circulated to the workgroup members for feedback and input, and will be finalized at our September 5th meeting. Please submit any workplan related feedback to Kelly Hines kxhines@gw.dec.state.ny.us or Harry Yamalis harry.yamalis@ct.gov.

Workplan highlights include:

- Increased emphasis on projects that incorporate community education/outreach components
- Proving support to stand-out projects (i.e. ones that use innovative restoration techniques, focus on underrepresented habitat types, are especially large, etc)

- GIS needs assessment
- Mapping of current/historical extent of habitat types
- Pilot marsh migration modeling (Habitat workgroup will help identify pilot areas at the September meeting)
- CEHA re-mapping in Brookhaven and Riverhead
- Create Habitat Restoration Plan (revisit/update 2002 site plan)
- Continue drafting technical chapters
- Improving online tracking system database
- Create habitat restoration listserv to share grant opportunities
- Eelgrass mapping
- SET monitoring

Tidal Wetland Loss Workshop Planning Update

Meeting will likely be held in late January 2013 – meeting dates TBA

Focal areas may include:

- Reasons for loss
 - EPA Soil Strength Testing
 - SVD
- Trends
 - LI Tidal Wetlands Trends Analysis
 - CT Salt Marsh Assessments
- Monitoring / Modeling
 - SET networks
 - Migration pathways / SLR responses

The focus will be on discussing the most up-to-date information on marsh loss and developing an action agenda for moving forward to tackle this issue.

PRESENTATIONS

Introduction to NYC Field Station

Jacqueline Lu

Jacqueline Lu, Director of Research at the US Forest Service Urban Field Station, gave a brief overview of the wide variety of exciting research projects underway at the Field Station.

Eelgrass Restoration in Long Island Sound

Chris Pickerell

Chris Pickerell, Habitat Restoration Specialist at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, gave an overview of his experience with eelgrass restoration projects in Long Island Sound, including challenges, successes, and lessons learned, particularly the evolution of restoration techniques.

Restoration Projects within the Bronx River watershed

Marit Larson

Marit Larson, Deputy Director of Wetlands and Riparian Restoration with New York City Parks, discussed techniques used and lessons learned in various restoration projects along the Bronx River. The presentation highlighted project successes, ongoing constraints, and the new invasive plant management plan.

Alley Creek watershed – Fieldtrip

**Katerli Bounds, Michael Feller,
Marit Larson, Tim Wenskus**

NYC Parks Natural Resources Group staff led the workgroup on a fieldtrip to view and discuss: 1) an innovative tidal wetland restoration project and; 2) several stages of a coastal forest restoration project. The group highlighted the challenges of working in an urban setting with high risk from invasives and human disturbance, as well as the benefit of owning the majority of the watershed, and the great communications and volunteer opportunities that an urban location can offer.