



The Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan NYC Department of Environmental Protection

Current and Potential
Protection Efforts

Presented at York College, February 9, 2006



LOCAL LAW 71

- Objective: Establishes the pathway towards restoring and maintaining water quality and the ecological integrity of Jamaica Bay
- Requires DEP to develop a watershed protection plan for the watershed/sewershed in consultation with an advisory committee



JAMAICA BAY: AN ECOLOGICAL ASSET





JAMAICA BAY: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT

- Important ecological, cultural and recreational asset in highly urbanized area
- Diverse habitats (salt marsh, coastal grasslands, woodlands, maritime shrubland, brackish and freshwater wetlands)
- Fish nursery (81 species recorded)
- Prime migratory route along Atlantic Coastal Flyway
- National and international renowned birding location (325 species reported and 62 confirmed breeding)
- Provide habitat for reptiles and amphibians, small mammals and butterflies (54 species)



JAMAICA BAY: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT (CONT.)

- Provides local marine research and acts as an outdoor classroom
- Provides flood control, protection against storm surges and infrastructure protection
- Provides natural pollutant attenuation
- Supports seasonal or year round populations of 214 species of special concern, state and federally listed species (flora and fauna)



LOCAL LAW 71: SPECIFIC TENETS

- “Restore and maintain the water quality and ecological integrity of Jamaica Bay.”
- “Assess the technical, legal, environmental, and economical feasibility” of:
 - BMPs for soil erosion, stormwater runoff, non-point and point-source pollution
 - Addressing threats to aquatic habitat
 - Land acquisition and land use planning practices and opportunities
 - A protocol for coordination with appropriate federal, state, and city entities
 - A protocol for coordination with NYC Office of Environmental Coordination
 - A public education and environmental awareness program
 - A program to target coordinate existing enforcement efforts



PRIORITY PROBLEMS

- Seasonal low Dissolved Oxygen levels at select locations
- Degraded and disturbed upland habitat
- Loss of wetlands
- Agency / jurisdictional coordination
- Limited public access
- Limited promotion of public education



POTENTIAL SOLUTIONS

- Wetlands restoration
- Shoreline, upland habitat restoration
- Land acquisition
- Invasive species control
- Stormwater management
- Capital improvements to existing water treatment facilities
- CSO remediation / sewer separation
- Increasing circulation in the Bay
- Greater regulatory intervention
- Inter-agency coordination
- Public education



CURRENT DEP PROTECTION EFFORTS

- Comprehensive Water Quality Plan
- Water pollution plant (WPCP) upgrades
 - 26th Ward
 - Jamaica
- Combined sewer overflow (CSO) program
 - Paerdegat Basin Long-Term Control Plan
- Floatables program
- Jamaica Bay Ecosystem Restoration Project with ACOE



OTHER PROTECTION EFFORTS

- US Army Corps of Engineers
- National Park Service
- NYC Department of City Planning
- NYC Department of Parks & Rec
- Jamaica Bay Task Force
- Local Elected Officials
- Others...



AGENCIES INVOLVED WITH ACTIVITIES IN THE BAY

LOCAL

- Department of Environmental Protection
- Department of City Planning
- Department of Health and Mental Hygiene
- New York City Department of Parks and Recreation

STATE

- Department of State
- Department of Environmental Conservation

FEDERAL

- Army Corps of Engineers
- National Park Service
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Marine Fisheries Service



The Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan Advisory Committee

Our role & responsibilities

Presented at York College, February 9, 2006



- Who is on the Jamaica Bay Advisory Committee?
- What will the Jamaica Bay Advisory Committee do?
- What's the Advisory Committee's work plan?
- How can I get involved?



Who is on the Jamaica Bay Advisory Committee?

- Doug Adamo, National Park Service
- Manny Caughman, Community Activist
- Len Houston, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Dan Mundy, Jamaica Bay Ecowatchers
- Brad Sewell, NRDC
- Larry Swanson, Stony Brook University
- Chris Zeppie, Port Authority of NY/NJ



What will the Jamaica Bay Advisory Committee do?

- Local Law 71 created the Advisory Committee
- Pursuant to Local Law 71, the Advisory Committee's purpose is to:
 - Provide advice to the DEP regarding the Watershed Protection Plan
 - Provide Plan recommendations to the DEP and the Council
- Plan must include the DEP's response to the Advisory Committee's recommendations
- Term ends three months after Plan completion



What will the Jamaica Bay Advisory Committee do? (cont'd)

Areas for Committee Recommendations (Per Local Law 71)



- Specific goals for restoring and maintaining the Bay's water quality and ecological integrity
- Boundaries of the Bay's watershed/sewershed for purposes of the Plan



What will the Jamaica Bay Advisory Committee do? (cont'd)

Areas for Committee Recommendations (Per Local Law 71)

- Measures to include in the Plan:
 - Best management practices to minimize/control soil erosion, reduce point and nonpoint source pollution, e.g., development practices that control and minimize stormwater
 - Measures to address threats to aquatic habitat, e.g., restoring natural features and water flows
 - Land acquisition, planning/development practices that encourage or discourage certain land uses
 - Protocol for agency coordination
 - Public education program
 - Enhanced enforcement against polluters
 - Additional measures developed by the Committee



What will the Jamaica Bay Advisory Committee do? (cont'd)

Areas for Committee Recommendations (Per Local Law 71)

- Legal, technical, environmental and economic feasibility of possible Plan measures
- A schedule, with interim and final milestones, to implement the Plan's measures and achieve the specific goals, and methods for monitoring progress



What will the Jamaica Bay Advisory Committee do? (cont'd)

How the Advisory Committee Views Its Role

- Be cooperative, but independent from the DEP
- Promote new approaches, including source reduction and development controls
- Represent the views of multiple agencies and members of the public
- Serve as a resource for the public concerning the Plan



What will the Jamaica Bay Advisory Committee do? (cont'd)

Important Dates

Spring 2006:

Additional public meetings

July 1, 2006:

Advisory Committee required to submit their recommendations to the DEP and the Council

September 1, 2006:

DEP required to complete the Watershed Protection Plan; submits it to the Mayor and the Speaker of the Council no more than 5 business days later

October 1, 2007 (and every 2 years afterwards):

DEP required to submit a report to the Mayor and the Speaker of the Council on the Plan's progress, and, if any Plan changes are needed, the reasons why



What's the Advisory Committee's work plan?

December – February

- With DEP, hold public outreach meetings, encourage input
- Develop preliminary draft of goals, recommendations
- Define the watershed/sewershed boundaries for purposes of Plan
- Identify outstanding information needs

March- April

- Conduct workshops to fill outstanding information needs



What's the Advisory Committee's work plan? (cont'd)

May

- Complete draft recommendations
- Receive public comment on draft recommendations

June

- Finalize recommendations

July 1

- Advisory Committee submits their recommendations to the DEP and the Council



How can I get involved?

- Fill out a comment sheet and/or talk to the Advisory Committee members
- Check on the JBRMIN Website for updates and meeting announcements
(<http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/jamaicabay/index.html>)
- Attend the public outreach meetings and let us know what you think
- Encourage others to get involved in the process
- Send Plan suggestions to Brad Sewell, NRDC, 40 West 20 St., New York, NY 10011 or email mlew@nrdc.org



The Jamaica Bay
Watershed Protection Plan
Advisory Committee