



From: Harlem River Working Group (HarlemRiver@bceq.org)
To: Friends of the Harlem River:

We request your help in the form of a letter of support to the National Park Service to enable a group of interested parties to request funding and staff support for a Harlem River Working Group in the Bronx.

This year's Bronx Council for Environmental Quality (BCEQ) water conference focused on helping waterfront stakeholders form a Harlem River Working Group. As in the past eight years, BCEQ partnered with local groups and institutions and used our Annual Meeting to provide a forum for discussion. Program sponsors included: Manhattan College, Partnerships for Parks, Bronx Borough President's Office, Friends of Brook Park (FBP), UDEC Harlem River Ecology Center, Highbridge Community Life Center (HCLC), and Corporate Sponsor: Con Ed. In the eight years of BCEQ's water conferences, six have been devoted to the Harlem River. In addition, BCEQ was awarded a Phase I - New York State Brownfields Opportunity Application for the Harlem River in 2004 which was completed and reimbursed by 2007, and we were granted funding for the next phase. Grants have been awarded to: FPB, UDEC and HCLC have applied for NOAA funding for the Harlem River (FPB are awaiting an answer).

The success of the conference is evidenced by conferee attendance and the follow-up May 6th meeting held at Roberto Clemente State Park, June 16th at the Davidson Community Center, July 15th at the Bronx Lebanon Medical Center, as well as planning committee meetings throughout the spring and summer. More meetings will be scheduled throughout the year. The community is ready and able to protect the water and its waterfront around three areas: Greenway & Access, Education & Ecology, and Outreach, Advocacy & Water Use.

This new group will work toward restoring the Harlem River; reconnecting the waterfront with the people; recreating the water's edge; and reinvigorating in-the-water recreational and commercial activities. The interest extends along the full length of the river's edge in the Bronx to include the following parks and/or access points: Spuyten Duyvil, Marble Hill, University Heights Bridge, Roberto Clemente, Bridge Park, Depot Place, Yankee Stadium Replacement Parks (new Harlem River Parks), and the Park Avenue Point. A list of those who attended the meetings is attached.

What can you do to help? Write a letter of support from your group. We need letters to be completely different so please use your own words. Attached please find an **Information sheet** on how to address your letter and send to us, as well as the general format for the letter of support including **Bullet Points Goals**, and the draft **Three Page Application** of what we are trying to do and how you can participate.

If you can think of other groups that would be interested in supporting our application, let us know. Thank you for your help. Call any one of us if you like.

Karen Argenti, BCEQ
646-529-1990

Chauncy Young, Highbridge CLC
212-203-1171

Enclosures

INFORMTION SHEET - Letter to the NPS

1. On your organizations letterhead, address letter to
National Park Service
River Trails and Conservation Assistance Program
1849 C Street, NW Code 2220
Washington, DC 20240
2. **Send us the letter DO NOT MAIL** as it has to be part of the packet.
3. Send letter to OR call us to pick up the letter
4. Start by describing your organization and mission. State if you are a 501c3, etc. Describe your catchment area in the Bronx, what type of services you provide, and who your target population is.
5. Take two or three items from the 3 pager and state that is the reason for your support.
6. Community partners should identify how they will be *actively* and *substantively* involved in the project. Describe the existing or anticipated role and contribution of each. *Support letters from project partners detailing the nature of their intended involvement are strongly encouraged.*
7. Express your interest in remaining informed of the HRWG activities and describe them.
8. See Format below

National Park Service
River, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program
1849 C Street, NW Code 2220
Washington, DC 20240

Dear xxx,

We are the xxx organization, a 501c3 or 4 or other, located in the Bronx, NY. Our main mission is to xxxx and xxxx for the following areas of the Bronx, located near the Harlem River. We provide the following services to youth, seniors or schools, etc.

We support the application of the HRWG to organize activities for the entire Bronx and to restore the river. If successful we would encourage our members to join and/or walk along the Harlem River.

The need for a person like Jerry Willis, New York Director of River, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, as well as someone dedicated to working on Harlem River issues, especially given the wide range of projects that are ready to go, is essential.

Blah blah blah

We have asked to be placed on the mailing list of the group so we can participate in any and all activities to open up the waterfront to our constituency.

Sincerely

ED

BRIEF LIST OF BULLET POINT GOALS – to use for writing your letter of support

We are hoping that you can write a letter given the goals of the Harlem River Working Group. The Goals of the HRWG are as follows:

1. Advocate for the development of greenway routes to and along the Harlem River, with a goal of developing a continuous multi use path along the entire length of the Harlem River from Randalls Island to Putnam Railroad Line connection south of 225th Street and linking this greenway to existing on and off street routes
 - A. Produce an online interactive Harlem Greenway map will both help educate community members and elicit community input in the first year of the project.
 - B. Hold community meetings with stakeholders to generate support for the development of the greenway during the first and second years,
 - C. Produce a final map for the Harlem River Greenway and a final report on the possibilities of future collaboration.
2. Advocate for the cleaning of the Harlem River to make it safer for recreation and activities in and along the river, including the closure or diversion of all or many of the active Combined Sewage Outputs (CSO).
3. Redeveloping the shoreline to provide natural habitat including the planting of oyster beds.
4. Advocate for the acquisition of additional properties along the Harlem River and the development of additional parkland.
5. Organize activities in and along the Harlem River to involve the communities.
 - A. Organize regularly scheduled boat rides on the river
 - B. Organize regularly scheduled walks along the river banks and its connecting routes
 - C. Organize regular historical and educational trips with the local schools and communities

This new group will work toward restoring the Harlem River; reconnecting the waterfront with the people; recreating the water's edge; and reinvigorating in-the-water recreational and commercial activities.