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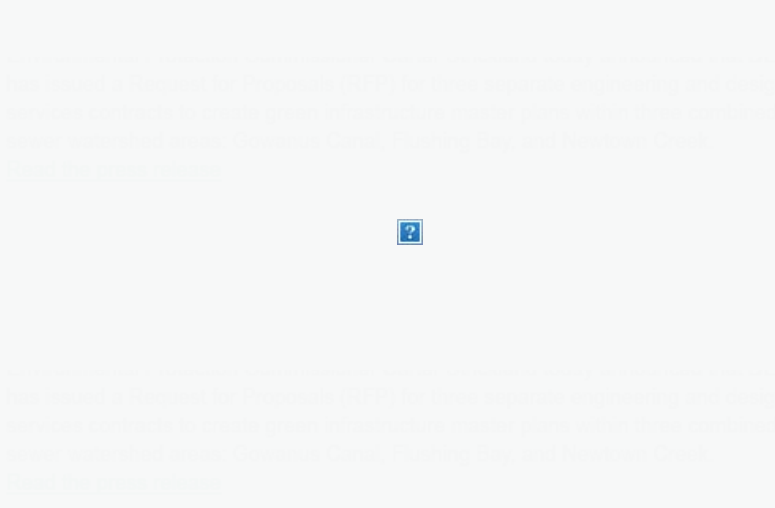
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## Wetland Protection Measures Launched in the Rockaways

**Floating Wetlands will Help Determine Efficacy of Deflecting and Reducing the Energy of Waves; Will Inform the Installation of Future Oyster Beds to Protect Critical Shoreline and Wetlands**

**Photos of the Wave Attenuators are Available [here](#) and a Short Video has been Posted [here](#)**

New York City Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Emily Lloyd today announced that a pilot program has been launched in Jamaica Bay to study the efficacy of deflecting and reducing the energy of waves in order to better protect critical wetland shorelines and habitat. Late last month, DEP completed the installation of five floating wave attenuators off of Brant Point in the Arverne neighborhood on the Rockaways. Each attenuator is approximately 40 feet in length and is anchored to the seabed approximately 100 feet off-shore. The attenuators are angled to deflect waves produced from prevailing northeast winds that would otherwise land on a roughly quarter mile of salt marsh wetlands along Brant Point, on the southern shore of Jamaica Bay. DEP will use remote acoustic monitoring devices to measure how the attenuators perform in deflecting and reducing the energy of waves, as well as measure the anticipated decline in erosion along the wetland edge. If the attenuators succeed in diminishing the strength of the waves and slowing the rate of erosion, that information will be used to determine whether oyster beds could be planted in other areas to similarly protect other critical wetland shoreline areas. The two-year pilot program will cost approximately \$500,000.

"Jamaica Bay's wetlands serve many critical functions within the larger

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ecosystem and we are hopeful that this pilot project will help us learn how to better protect them,” said **DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd**. “As one of New York City’s most unique natural environments, we are committed to continuing to work with our partners, both in the community and in government, to enhance the overall health of Jamaica Bay.”

“Jamaica Bay continues to serve as a laboratory for actions that will build a more resilient future,” said **Daniel Zarrilli, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Recovery and Resiliency**. “From important resiliency investments with the US Army Corps of Engineers to nature-based shoreline measures at Spring Creek and Sunset Cove, Jamaica Bay and its tributaries are a vital part of the City’s comprehensive, citywide resiliency program laid out in *One New York: The Plan for a Strong and Just City*.”

“I appreciate whenever our governmental agencies turn their attention to protecting Jamaica Bay, so therefore I commend DEP for initiating its pilot program to study the effect waves have within the bay and to improve the protection of the shoreline wetlands,” said **Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. (D-Howard Beach)**. “I know of many residents who live near the bay that have spent much time and effort protecting its natural habitat and are also grateful for the efforts of DEP. The environmental benefits of Jamaica bay cannot be understated and I truly believe government on every level must seek the ways and means to ensure its protection for future generations.”

“This new wetlands pilot program has the potential to shore up our fragile coastal ecosystem and contribute to lasting natural storm protections for our families. I look forward to working with the Department of Environmental Protection and Commissioner Lloyd as we assess the project’s success in the coming years,” said **Assemblyman Phil Goldfeder**.

“As we continue to find ways to limit the effects of climate change by reducing carbon emissions across the city, it is equally important to find creative ways to preserve our wetlands and counter the impact of erosion and sea level rise,” said **Council Member Donovan Richards**. “The Jamaica Bay wetlands are a vital part of the city’s natural ecosystem, so I’d like to thank Commissioner Lloyd for her continued efforts to preserve the wetlands and shoreline with this project and many others.”

**Council Member Costa Constantinides, Chair of the Council Environmental Protection Committee**, said, “The Jamaica Bay wave attenuator pilot program will help protect wetlands throughout the Bay. The program will preserve marshland, the bay’s ecosystem, and the marine life habitats in the area. Protecting nature and improving our city’s eco-health will help us become more sustainable and improve public health. I thank DEP Commissioner Emily Lloyd for her leadership on this important program.”

“DEP is demonstrating real leadership in experimenting with measures that can simultaneously reduce erosion and enhance habitat in Jamaica Bay,” said **Adam Parris, Executive Director of the Jamaica Bay Science and Resiliency Institute**. “We look forward to helping DEP find out what we learn from this project and how it can be factored into future plans for the Bay, a critical resource for New York City.”

“Once again, DEP has shown leadership in coming up with projects and solutions to helping protect and preserve Jamaica Bay’s natural areas,” said **Don Riepe, Director of the American Littoral Society’s Northeast Chapter**.

“The Jamaica Bay Ecowatchers commend DEP for their continued commitment to Jamaica Bay,” said **Dan Mundy, Jamaica Bay Ecowatchers**. “Their new wetland protection project is another innovative method for helping to protect the habitat of Jamaica Bay. It will build on their wetland island and oyster restoration projects which have had tremendous positive impacts on the Bay’s ecology and will help to ensure this treasured natural resource is here to enjoy for future generations.”

It is well documented that wetlands can help reduce wave energy and velocity,

and, over the last 150 years, Jamaica Bay has lost a significant amount of marsh and wetland area due to a variety of factors, including sea level rise, dredging and filling throughout the Bay, a loss of sediment, and increased tidal heights. Many of these changes have permanently altered sections of the Bay. As such, DEP has partnered with several non-profit organizations to restore habitat along the periphery of Jamaica Bay to meet the goal of creating highly productive ecological areas and improved habitat.

In addition to restoring those areas that have been lost, the wave attenuator pilot program will help inform how to better protect the surviving marsh and wetland areas. Prior to the installation of the attenuators, the remote acoustic monitoring devices measured the energy of the waves off Brant Point for 30 days to provide a base-line reading. Now that the wave attenuators have been installed, they will continue to monitor the energy of the waves for the next two years. It is anticipated that the attenuators will diminish the energy of the waves and slow the erosion of wetland. Over time, beneficial wetland building sediments could accrue to fortify the strength of those wetlands.

Jamaica Bay is a 31-square-mile water body with a broader watershed of approximately 142 square miles, which includes portions of Brooklyn, Queens, and Nassau County. The Bay is a diverse ecological resource that supports multiple habitats, including open water, salt marshes, grasslands, coastal woodlands, maritime shrublands, and brackish and freshwater wetlands. These habitats support 91 fish species, 325 species of birds, and many reptile, amphibian, and small mammal species. To learn more, visit DEP's 2014 update to the [Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan](#) which outlines the numerous initiatives DEP has undertaken, along with state and federal partner agencies, environmental advocates, leading educational institutions and community groups, to protect one of the most bountiful wildlife habitats in the Northeastern United States. Ongoing initiatives include wastewater treatment plant upgrades, oyster and ribbed mussel pilot restoration projects, wetlands restoration, green infrastructure projects and Geographic Information System mapping.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of high quality water each day to more than 9 million New Yorkers. This includes more than 70 upstate communities and institutions in Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties who consume an average of 110 million total gallons of drinking water daily from New York City's water supply system. This water comes from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and the system comprises 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, and numerous tunnels and aqueducts. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 scientists, engineers, surveyors, watershed maintainers and other professionals in the upstate watershed. In addition to its \$70 million payroll and \$157 million in annual taxes paid in upstate counties, DEP has invested more than \$1.7 billion in watershed protection programs—including partnership organizations such as the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the Watershed Agricultural Council—that support sustainable farming practices, environmentally sensitive economic development, and local economic opportunity. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program with nearly \$14 billion in investments planned over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/dep](http://nyc.gov/dep), like us on [Facebook](#), or follow us on [Twitter](#).

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