Open Space & the Urban Jungle: Ecosystem Restoration & Resiliency Post-Sandy

NY-NJ Harbor Coalition: NCER 2013
An island city...at risk...
Once Upon A Time…..

- 400,000+/- acre estuary
- wildlife galore; “Staten Island Oysters”
- Industrialization, pollution & development: 85% filled
Changes in the wind….

- Environmental awakening 1960s & 70s
- Gateway National Recreation Area – 1972
- National Estuary Program - 1987
- Changing real estate interest – pro & con
- Waterfront rediscovery & wildlife recovery
Serious needs remain...

- Impaired waterways
- Investment is unequal
- Wetland loss continues
- Storms & sea-level rise
Advocacy efforts launched…

- Government & NGO partnership: NEP
- Civic engagement & urban planning: Plan NYC
- NGO collaboration: Harbor Coalition
- America’s Great Waters Coalition
Hello Sandy!!!
Ecosystem damage…

- Beaches, habitat destroyed
- Saltwater intrusion
- Small prey wiped out
- Serious, ongoing pollution
National Parks damage...

- $180 m repairs
- Beaches, bluffs, park facilities, power & sewer lines destroyed
- Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island & historic sites closed for months
Harbor Coalition post-Sandy focus:

• Secure full, fair federal recovery funding
• Ensure funds are well-spent on resiliency projects w/ enviro & community benefits
• 28 site-specific priority project requests
Coalition priorities include:

- DOI funding for Harlem River Park, Bronx River Greenway, Staten Island & others
- USACE projects in Jamaica Bay (w/ marsh islands); Newark waterfront
- EPA investment in NJ water treatment plans
MUCH work remains…

- Projects in underserved communities
- Construction funds:
  - USACE work in Jamaica Bay
  - Bloomberg resiliency plan
  - Gateway NRA master plan
- USACE Resiliency Study
  - Natural shoreline solutions
  - Underserved, industrial areas
- Long-term governance, oversight & monitoring
Questions?
Comments? Suggestions?

Learn more at:
www.harborcoalition.org

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Thank you!!!