



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**  
New York District

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# JAMAICA BAY

## Marsh Islands, NY

### Ecosystem Restoration Study

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#### FACT SHEET

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**DESCRIPTION:** Jamaica Bay, situated within the Boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, New York City, is about 8 miles long and 4 miles wide, covers 26 square miles, and opens into the Atlantic Ocean via Rockaway Inlet. Over the past century, the Bay's fragile ecosystem has been degraded through human encroachment and increased urbanization. Combined Sewer Outfall (CSO) discharges have also exacerbated these effects. There is an existing Federally maintained navigation project within Jamaica Bay. The Jamaica Bay Marsh Islands are at the heart of the complex urban ecosystem of Jamaica Bay that is part of the Gateway National Recreation Area (GNRA). Local interests were alarmed about the rate of intertidal salt marsh the islands lose. Analyses conducted by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) confirmed this loss and its potentially deleterious effects on the ecosystem if the trend were to continue. GNRA convened a panel of national experts to examine the problem. This Blue Ribbon Panel concurred with the NYSDEC analysis and urged immediate action on two fronts. First, it was recommended that investigations be conducted to determine the causes of the accelerating marsh losses to formulate an effective long-term solution. Second, it was recommended that a series of pilot projects be developed to stem further losses and re-establish habitat while long term initiatives are being pursued. Under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Continuing Authorities Program (CAP), the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) requested assistance in implementing one or more restoration pilot projects. NYSDEC has committed \$1M dollars toward the local share for pilot project implementation. The first preliminary phase of the CAP study has been completed with the selection of two (2) restoration sites. The second phase of the study will assess alternatives for halting erosion and restoring marsh and habitat at each of the two sites.

**AUTHORIZATION:** Section 1135(b) of WRDA 1986, as amended

**STATUS:** A positive Preliminary Restoration Plan has been completed. The NYSDEC and the NYCDEP support the study. The feasibility study phase of the CAP project was initiated in Fiscal Year 2003, with draft recommendations scheduled for the Fiscal Year 2004.

**STUDY COST:**

Estimated Federal Study Cost: \$1,000,000

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