Comment Writing 101

February 9, 2023
Road Map

01 Project Overview
Introduction to the Army Corps of Engineers’ NYNJHATS

02 Crafting a Message
Discussion about advocacy messaging

02 Comment Writing
How to write substantive comments
New York New Jersey Harbor and Tributaries Study

- Authorized by Congress in 2016
- Project purpose
- There are 5 alternatives
- The proposed alternative, 3B, costs $52 billion
Overview

New York New Jersey Harbor & Tributaries Feasibility Study

Risk Reduction Features BEHIND the Storm Surge Barriers

Induced Flooding-Mitigation Features (as applicable) OUTSIDE the Storm Surge Barriers

Concept for the Jamaica Bay Storm Surge Barrier - Art of Photo Visualization
Overview

New York New Jersey Harbor & Tributaries Feasibility Study

NYNJHAT Study

Story Map Homepage

For a better viewing experience, please use Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox browser. Also, please use a PC to access with the story map.

GET STARTED with the Introduction to Study Map which provides an overview of features and other items used in the map and the study. Then watch the Video which briefly explores the features of the NY/NJ and the study area associated with them. From here you can explore anywhere you want using the Gallery of Resources and Tools.

GIS Story Map technology visualizes the concepts presented in the draft integrated feasibility report and Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement by allowing you to:

- See how the proposed project could reduce flooding
- Learn how the demolition plans were developed and executed and why the structures were removed
- Learn about potential environmental impacts and benefits

Draft Integrated Feasibility Report and Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement

NEW YORK-NEW JERSEY HARBOR AND TRIBUTARIES COASTAL STORM RISK MANAGEMENT FEASIBILITY STUDY

September 2022

https://hats-cenan.hub.arcgis.com/
Rise2Resilience Timeline

- **2022**
  - Draft TSP/feasibility Report, Tier 1 EIS
  - Public meetings held to provide input on draft report

- **2023**
  - Refined TSP based on public input
  - Public meetings held to provide input on draft report

- **2024**
  - Agency decision milestone
  - Final report & EIS
  - Authorization likely fall/winter '24
COMMENT WRITING AND SUBMISSION TO THE NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY HARBOR AND TRIBUTARIES STUDY
HOW TO SUBMIT COMMENTS

• In-Person or Virtually at our Public Meetings
  • Listed on our website: NY & NJ Harbor & Tributaries Focus Area Feasibility Study (HATS) (army.mil)

• Via e-mail to: NYNJHarbor.TribStudy@usace.army.mil
• Or via Mail to:
  • NYNJHAT Study Team, Planning Division
    U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
    26 Federal Plaza, 17th Floor
    New York, NY 10279-0090

• By March 7, 2023
  • Anything post marked by the 7th will be included in the public record
TIPS FOR WRITING EFFECTIVE COMMENTS

• We want to hear all comments, questions, concerns, and suggestions!

• The more specific the comment, the better.
  • Include hyperlocal information

• Tell us what alternative plan you think would be best suited for the future (alternatives 2, 3A, 3B, 4, or 5).

• State your points for concern.
  • Why does this concern you?

• If the study does not have any measures currently proposed in your area and you think that there is an opportunity to manage coastal storm risk there, please let us know!
THE STUDY TEAM WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED PARTICIPATION, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO READING YOUR COMMENTS!
Crafting a Message
Your Voice Matters

Collective Impact
Your Voice Matters

Understanding your influence
1. Pick a Vehicle
2. Include the Key Ingredients
   • What drives your support?
   • What drives your concern?
   • What would you like to see different?
3. Engage the Head and the Heart
4. Create Your Advocacy Message, include
   • The “Ask”
   • Your Audience
Substantive Comments

• I spent my childhood playing in the stream in the park.
• I am concerned that a new road would decrease the water quality of this stream or impact fishing in the downstream pond.
• I do not want the road to be built in this park because of the environmental impacts.
Non-substantive Comments

• I used to spend a lot of my time at this park as a kid and have fond memories of playing in the stream that runs through the area where the road is proposed.
• I want my children to be able to play in the pond.
• I love wildlife and the natural world.
• Open the road!
Sample Comment

• I do not like the proposed road because I am worried about what it may do to the birds in the park. I am concerned that traffic may disrupt birds and bird watching.
• I think the Parks Department should consider an option to move the road into the northern part of the park rather than through the middle. It seems like there are fewer trees to clear in this area and that it would be as good at reducing the traffic in the neighborhood.
Sample Comment

• I support the development of a new road because it would help reduce traffic congestion in front of my home and in front of the school.
• I see children walking to and from school every day dodging traffic.
• This new road would help keep children safer when they are walking to and from school.
Your Story

Your Ask

• Introduction
• Problem
• Solution (and its benefits)
• Your experience (keep if focused)
• Closing (make a direct ask)
YOUR STORY, YOUR ASK

Key Ingredients

01 Introduction
- "I am" attributes
- Describe your connection to the study

02 Problem
- Describe the issue/threat
- Name impacts that threat will have on you
- State what parts of the project you like

03 Solution
- What other ideas do you have to control flooding?
- Reference projects you like
- Site relevant studies to Corps should consider

04 Your Experience
- Where and when does it flood in your neighborhood?
- Share real-life examples

05 The “Ask”
- Name the action you want the Corps to take

Introduction
- "I am" attributes
- Describe your connection to the place

Problem
- Clear description of the issue/threat
- Why is that threat a problem? Specify what impacts that threat might have on you and your community
- Specify what parts/locations of the study you like

Solution (and its benefits)
- Simple, concise solutions
- What other ideas do you have to control flooding in your neighborhood?
- Reference other projects and studies the Corps should look at

Your Experience (keep it focused)
- Describe your experience with flooding:
  - Where does it flood and how does that impact your community?
- Real-life human examples and stories; an appealing, emotional connection

Closing (make a direct ask)
- An "ask" What action do you want the recipient to take?
- Thank agency for considering your comments
Comment Writing Template
STAY ENGAGED!

Submit comments to the Corps by March 7th

• Sign up for study updates by emailing NYNJHarbor.TribStudy@usace.army.mil
• Request a presentation from the Corps for your Community Board, Civic Association, local organization
• Share with your networks – tell your neighbors about the open comment period
• Learn more about this study with Rebuild by Design’s resources - Building Regional Expertise USACE HATS – Rebuild by Design
• Join the Rise2Resilience Coalition - Rise 2 Resilience - Waterfront Alliance

THANK YOU!