



February 27, 2015

Thank you for inviting comment from the public on the Long Term Control Plan for the Bronx River.

The Bronx River, once a neglected, shunned eyesore, is now a source of community pride, where people come to canoe, bike, picnic and learn. The greenway trail system is coming together like an 27-mile-long jigsaw puzzle along the full river with 20 miles currently open for use. The river is getting cleaner and more beautiful year by year. Above all, the communities along the river are making it more and more their own – as was clearly apparent at your meeting on February 12.

Over 15,000 people have paddled with the Alliance—plus thousands more also join partner organizations on river expeditions. Our work has opened up seven boat launches along the river, where none previously existed. **In 2012, the National Park Service officially designated the Bronx River a National Water Trail.**

Over 9,500 students have touched—and been touched by—the river. Our work with over 2,300 educators has made the river an outdoor classroom that brings a slice of nature to urban students.

Over 12,000 volunteers have devoted more than 100,000 hours to restoring and enjoying their river, and dozens of local organizations have incorporated river restoration into their work.

A river that was once choked with debris has been cleared of over 635 tons of garbage, 89 cars and nearly 30,000 tires, appliances, bicycles, and furniture since the late 1990s.

We have switched from counting the number of cars pulled from the river to counting the new wildlife returning to the river—including the beaver, a New York City icon that has settled in the Bronx after a two-hundred year absence. The construction of the first fish ladder on the river will allow alewife herring to travel upstream to spawn.

What we need now is for water quality improvements to match the tremendous achievements we and our partners, members and volunteers have achieved over the past 15 years.