

NAME: Old Place Creek Berm Removal Project

LOCATION: Staten Island, Richmond County, New York

ACRES: ~25 acres

NON-FEDERAL SPONSOR:

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation will restore approximately 25 acres of tidal wetland habitat along Old Place Creek, a tidal estuary system located in Staten Island, New York. Restoration will be accomplished through removal of an earthen berm, restoring the tidal connection to the site. Following fill removal, the approximately 2 acre footprint of the berm will be planted with native salt marsh grasses. The back area, currently a monoculture of *Phragmites*, will be treated with herbicide and mechanically cleared to allow for natural recruitment of salt marsh vegetation.

EXPECTED BENEFITS:

The project will restore tidal wetland habitat area and function via regular inundation of the site with tidal waters from the creek. The berm material contains moderate levels of contaminants, particularly pesticides, and their removal from the system is an additional benefit of the project. In addition to the initial habitat benefits, another immediate benefit will be the increased storage capacity provided to reduce potential flooding of adjacent infrastructure and upstream communities. A greater degree of ecological benefits will accrue over time as the reconnected area has time to “season” and habitat function expands. These benefits will include expanded areas for foraging, refuge and spawning for marine and estuarine species, and benefits to resident and migratory shorebirds, wading birds, and waterfowl.

STATUS: Planning and Design