



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Parks of New York Harbor
26 Wall Street
New York, NY 10005

212-668-2208 phone

National Parks of New York Harbor News Release

For Immediate Release

Contact: Maria Burks, National Parks of New York Harbor, 718-668-5180
Date: July 19, 2012

Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEI) sought to create new Jamaica Bay science center

As announced Tuesday by Interior Secretary Ken Salazar and New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, the National Park Service (NPS) and the City of New York plan to establish a top-tier science research center focused on urban ecosystem restoration and resiliency within Jamaica Bay. Today the two government partners took the first step by releasing the invitation for organizations interested in partnering with the City and the NPS to submit Expressions of Interest in a competition which will close October 31, 2012.

This science and research center, most likely to be located on public parklands adjacent to the Bay, would play a major role in promoting scientific investigations of urban marine ecosystems, using Jamaica Bay as a functioning "laboratory." Research topics will include improvements to water quality, restoration of fish and wildlife habitat, and coastal resilience to climate change. The center would also help coordinate the many existing research and restoration efforts already underway in the bay on the part of multiple agencies and organizations, and more widely sharing the results of their research. NPS and the City envision that a private or non-profit partner institution or organization, or consortium, will operate the center on a day-to-day basis. Partners may be drawn from academia, foundations, and other non-governmental organizations.

The center will operate on a self-sustaining basis as a public-private partnership, run by an organization or institution with the stated support and commitment of the public sector and in cooperation with NPS, NYC and other public agencies.

"Jamaica Bay represents a one-of-a-kind urban aquatic setting unique within the National Park system," said Maria Burks, Commissioner of the National Parks of New York Harbor, "and this opportunity to partner with the City of New York, the scientific community, academic institutions and civic organizations is an innovative way to carry out the President's 'America's Great Outdoors' initiative of valuing our natural resources near our nation's population centers. Today's invitation for proposals opens the door for a partnership with local and national science entities to fulfill that vision, and we are eager to see proposals."

--MORE--

“Jamaica Bay has the potential to become the city’s hub of shared ideas and research between scientists from around the country,” said NYC Parks Commissioner Adrian Benepe. “We are so pleased to partner with the National Park Service to explore ways to manage and develop one of our city’s most ecologically rich open spaces. Just as our partnership has inspired bold thinking in government, so will the Research Station encourage collaboration and innovation.”

“Local and state agencies ranging from our City’s Departments of Environmental Protection and Department of Parks and Recreation to the Port Authority to the State Department of Environmental Conservation are all already vitally involved in Jamaica Bay,” said David Bragdon, Director of the Mayor’s Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability, “and the center will give them a place to come together with scientists from around the world to coordinate and share best practices. We look forward to reviewing the submissions.”

Submission materials must be provided to NPS and the City by 5 P.M., October 31, 2012. Interested parties can attend an optional site visit on Tuesday, August 14 and Thursday, September 13. The entire RFEI, including instructions for submissions, see http://www.nps.gov/gate/parkmgmt/upload/Jamaica_Bay_Science_and_Resilience_Center_RFEI_Final_07-17-12.pdf or http://www.nyc.gov/html/planyc2030/downloads/pdf/Jamaica_bay_science_and_resilience_center_rfei.pdf. For more information contact Maria Burks, commissioner of the National Parks of New York Harbor, at 212-668-5180 or David Bragdon, Mayor’s Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability, New York City, at 212-788-3069.

--NPS--