



S.W.I.M. Coalition

Stormwater Infrastructure Matters: utilizing stormwater as a resource, not a waste!

Alley Creek Raw Sewage Overflows

ACTION ALERT!

Alley Creek's restored wildlife habitat is at risk.

Alley Creek in Eastern Queens is a freshwater tributary to Little Neck Bay and home to a diverse wetland ecosystem. Ecological restoration and a sewage tank have allowed wildlife in Alley Creek to swiftly re-emerge, after decades of neglect and dumping.

However Alley Creek is still plagued by ongoing pollution. Nearly every time it rains, raw sewage and polluted stormwater overflow from New York City's antiquated sewers. In a typical year, 132 million gallons of "combined sewer overflow" (CSO) are dumped into Alley Creek. This is even after a sewage tank was installed in Alley Creek to hold CSO!



After years of planning, the City has been revealing long term plans for waterbodies throughout the City to reduce CSOs (called Long Term Control Plans, or LTCPs). However, there is a major issue with the plans: they don't go far enough to reduce CSO!

After being held up in litigation by the City and State, the Alley Creek LTCP was approved by the State in March 2017 and will allow massive amounts of raw sewage overflows to continue for decades. The table below shows what was proposed and approved, the volume of CSO reduced (zero!), how many times a year there will be a CSO event, how much it will cost and when it will be complete.

LTCP Waterbody	Proposal	Annual CSO Volume (in millions of gallons per year)			Number of overflows/year (after LTCP)	Cost	Anticipated Construction Completion
		Baseline*	Reduced in the LTCP	Volume w/ LTCP Implemented			
Alley Creek	Seasonal chlorination at existing CSO tank	132	0	132	16	\$7.6 M	2024

*The baseline does not necessarily reflect present-day conditions. It assumes implementation of grey infrastructure from previous plans as well as green infrastructure that will manage stormwater from 10% of the impervious surfaces of the combined sewer area.

To see official documents about the LTCPs, visit the State Department of Environmental Conservation's website: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/77733.html>.



Here are some of the reasons you should be concerned about the approval of these plans:

- **Public health not protected:** The plans fail to meet federal health standards for safe contact with the water.
- **Chlorination instead of CSO reduction:** The LTCP proposed **zero** CSO reduction and relies on chlorine disinfection to kill bacteria. The plan allows millions of gallons of CSO to enter the Creek.
 - o DEP has not tested the technology to chlorinate at a CSO outfall – we don't know how much chlorine will end up in the waterways.
 - o Chlorine disinfection removes some, but not all, pathogens and creates chemical byproducts that could be harmful to human and ecological health.
- **Zero reduction in CSO events:** CSO events will continue to occur for rainstorms as small as a half-inch, and will occur about 16 times a year.
- **Short-changing green infrastructure:** The plan ignores cost-effective opportunities to reduce CSOs with green infrastructure on public and private property. The Alley Creek LTCP proposed **zero** city investment in green infrastructure.
- **Flawed public process:** The public process is not reaching much of the community or allowing for meaningful input.
 - o Both the City and the State have failed to communicate ongoing pollution to the community. (How did you hear about CSOs and the development of LTCPs?)
 - o The State neglected comment letters written by environmental advocates and scientists questioning the public process and the proposed technology (chlorination).
 - o The approval of these plans was not publicly announced, but rather quietly posted on the City and State's websites.

Help Protect this Habitat!



GET INVOLVED!

- **Contact your local elected officials,** starting with your City Council Member:

Councilman Paul Vallone

(Auburndale, Bay Terrace, Bayside, Beechhurst, College Point, Douglaston, Flushing, Little Neck, Malba, Whitestone)

718-619-8611

district19@council.nyc.gov

42-40 Bell Boulevard, Suite 507

Bayside, NY 11361

Councilman Barry Grodenchik

(Bayside, Bellrose, Douglaston, Floral Park, Fresh Meadows, Glen Oaks, Hollis, Hollis Hills, Holliswood, Little Neck, Queens Village)

718-468-0137

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73-03 Bell Boulevard

Oakland Gardens, NY 11364

Visit www.mygovnyc.org for a list of all your elected officials and their contact information.

- **Keep up to date!** Join the [SWIM email list](#) for citywide updates, and check with these organizations for local activities and actions:

Alley Pond Environmental Center:

www.alleypond.com

Save the Sound:

www.ctenvironment.com

Stay updated on this issue! SWIM will send alerts and updates on actions you can take. Join our [email list](#), follow us on Twitter [@SWIMcoalition](#) and on the web at www.swimmablenyc.info regularly. For more information contact us at swimmablenyc@gmail.com.



Stormwater Infrastructure Matters (SWIM) is a coalition of 70 member organizations dedicated to ensuring swimmable and fishable waters around New York City through natural, sustainable stormwater management practices.

