

**From:** Nancy Brous [mailto:nbrous@gmail.com]

**Sent:** Friday, April 10, 2015 3:25 PM

**To:** Watts, Stephen (DEC)

**Cc:** Emily.lloyd@dep.nyc.gov; Lannon, Venetia A (DEC); angelal@dep.nyc.gov; Matthews.joan@epa.gov; Gratz.jeff@epa.gov; nycwta steering committee

**Subject:** Comments on the Revised Draft MS4 Permit for New York City

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the revised Draft MS4 Permit for New York City, which DEC released in March 2015.

The New York City Water Trail Association (NYCWTA) is an umbrella group representing the interests of more than 20 local paddling, rowing and waterfront advocacy organizations. Its mission is to promote the safe use of the New York City Water Trail, established by the Parks Department in 2008; to expand the number and quality of launches, landings and storage facilities available to human-powered boaters all over New York Harbor; and to advance awareness of the public ownership of our urban waterways.

Our community, tens of thousands strong, recreates on NYC's waterways, mostly paddling small human-powered boats and stand-up-paddleboards, but also swimming, and sailing. Many of our affiliate organizations throughout the harbor work with adults and young people, using our public waterways to encourage an active lifestyle and public health, as a classroom for environmental education, and as a means to reconnect people with the waterways in this city of islands as it faces greater challenges of climate change and over-development.

We also run one of the region's most robust citizens' water quality testing programs ([http://nycwatertrail.org/water\\_quality.html](http://nycwatertrail.org/water_quality.html)). Our volunteers collect weekly samples all summer at over 40 public water access sites in and around NYC for testing for enterococcus in an effort to learn about how rainfall, storm water, and other factors affect the health of the estuary.

As we gear up for our 4th full season of water testing, we encourage the city to address issues of stormwater as they affect the health of our beloved waterways which we see as our city's greatest public open space.

We understand that DEC and the NYC Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) have been negotiating for a year over revisions to the initial draft permit released last year.

While we appreciate the effort DEC has put in to this permit, we continue to believe that it does not go far enough to protect New York City waters. Specifically we urge the DEC to consider stronger requirements on:

- minimum size for construction sites, based on available studies and data from other metropolitan areas in the country;
- green infrastructure on redevelopment projects, right-of-way projects, and sewer and other flood management projects;
- water quality improvement with quantifiable pollutant reduction targets and timelines;
- coordination with other water quality improvement programs, including the CSO Long Term Control Plans, Open Industrial Use Study, Brownfields and others
- more meaningful public participation and involvement We believe stronger requirements are

necessary if we are truly committed to making our waters fishable and swimmable, as required by the Clean Water Act.

Thank you very much for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Nancy Brous

Steering Committee

NYC Water Trail Association

cc: Emily Lloyd, Commissioner, NYC DEP, Venetia Lannon, Regional Director, NYS DEC Region 2, Angela Licata, Deputy Commissioner, NYC DEP, Joan Leary Matthews, US EPA Region 2, Jeff Gratz, US EPA Region 2