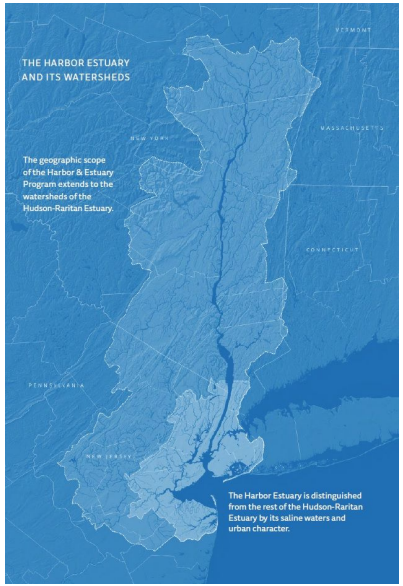
Opening Streams *to the* Harlem River

From **Tibbetts Brook 056, Highbridge/CBE 060, Cromwell/YS 062,** to **Bronx Kill 068**

Bronx Council for Environmental Quality (BCEQ)*
Water Committee Karen Argenti & Dart Westphal
November 12, 2026



"Shared Work, Lasting Impact: Cultivating Effective Partnerships".
New York / New Jersey Harbor and Estuary Program (HEP)
2025–2035 Action Agenda through collaborative cross-sector work

***BCEQ participates in the HEP Citizens Advisory Committee, and Urban Waters Federal Partnership for the Bronx and Harlem Rivers**

Introduction: Beyond Tibbetts

The **Daylighting of Tibbetts Brook accomplished,** in part, multiple goals: reducing the combined sewer overflow (CSO), creation and expansion of greenways (including the Putnam and East Coast Greenways, and the Empire State Trail), improving access and the wetland ecology in Van Cortlandt Park, addressing the risk of flooding, mitigating sea level rise and greenhouse gases (GHG) like carbon, and providing cleaner air and water.

What other Harlem River CSO's should we investigate that also checks off multiple goals? Leaders of BCEQ have long been working on CSO abatement and we are buoyed by the success of the Tibbetts Brook daylighting. The next three largest CSO's on the Bronx side of the Harlem River from the Cross Bronx Expressway (CBE) to Highbridge to the Bronx Kill are examined here.

The projects we propose all have at least one additional reason for being, in addition to CSO abatement: green infrastructure, daylighting, the redesign of the Cross Bronx Expressway, the further development of resilience, greenways and other open space along the Harlem River, can all be combined to improve water quality, mitigate GHG, and provide greater community access and open space.

For more info

Green Infrastructure

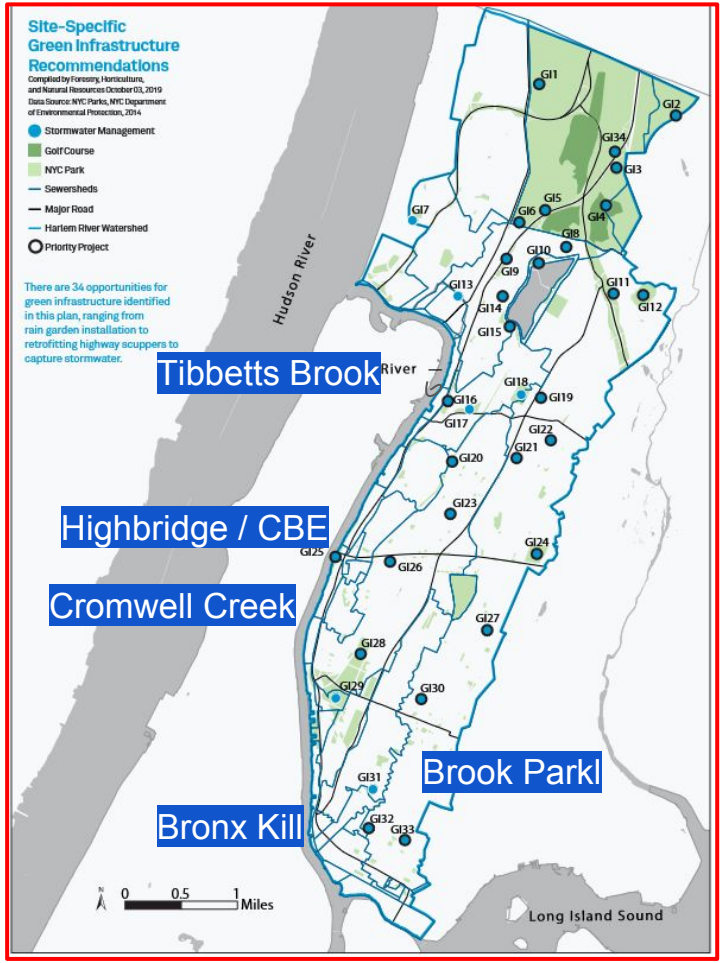
Many Benefits. Many Stakeholders. Lower Costs.

A Smarter Investment in the Harlem River

Traditional CSO abatement often relies on expensive, single-purpose engineering solutions, such as underground storage tunnels and tanks.

BCEQ proposes a different approach: combines CSO reduction with green infrastructure, ecological restoration, flood protection, transportation improvements, greenways, and public open space. Each benefit brings its own stakeholders, public responsibilities, funding opportunities, and reasons to act. By coordinating investments that might otherwise be undertaken separately, communities and agencies may be able to achieve more at a lower total cost.

CSO Outfall – Bx	MGY
WIB 056 Tibbetts CB8	793-1543
WIB 060 Highbridge / CBE CB4	269-225
WIB 062 YS / Cromwell Cr. CB4	128-175
WIB 068 Bronx Kill /Brook Pk CB1	127-222



Source for the Map: Harlem River Watershed Management Plan

Highbridge Interchange CBE

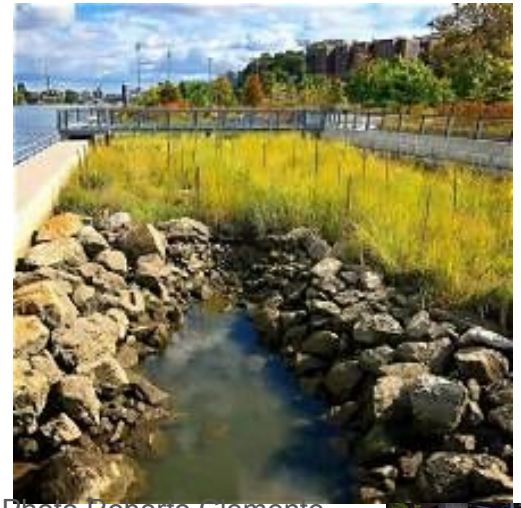
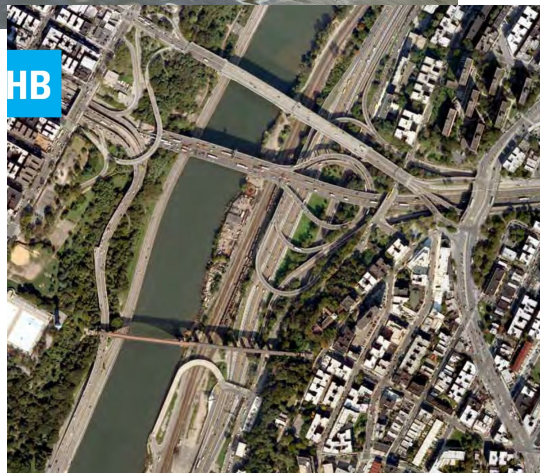


Photo Roberto Clemente State Park





Photo MIT



Cross Bronx Expressway (WI 060)

From

“Reimagine”

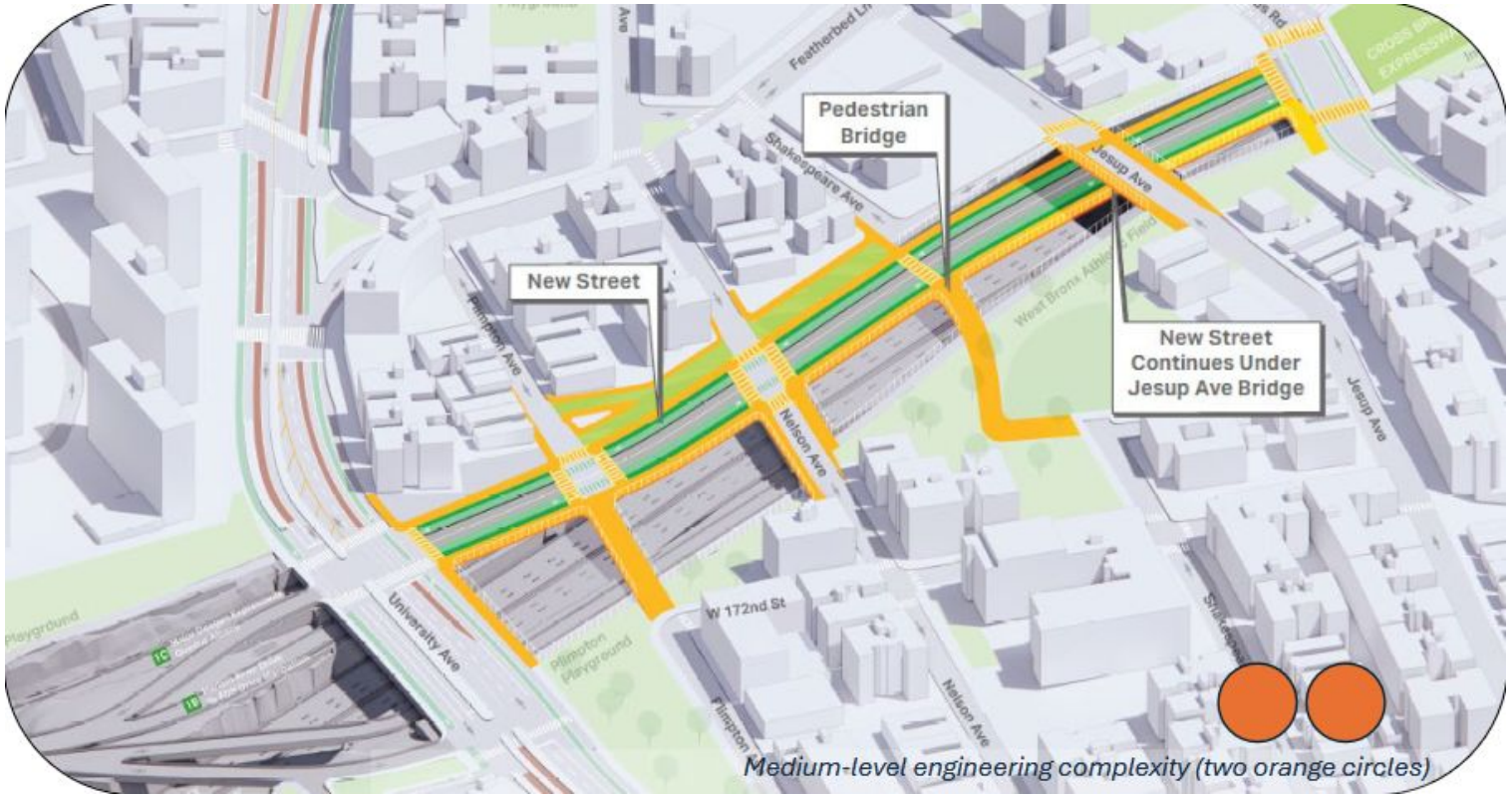
Interim

Report

Green the

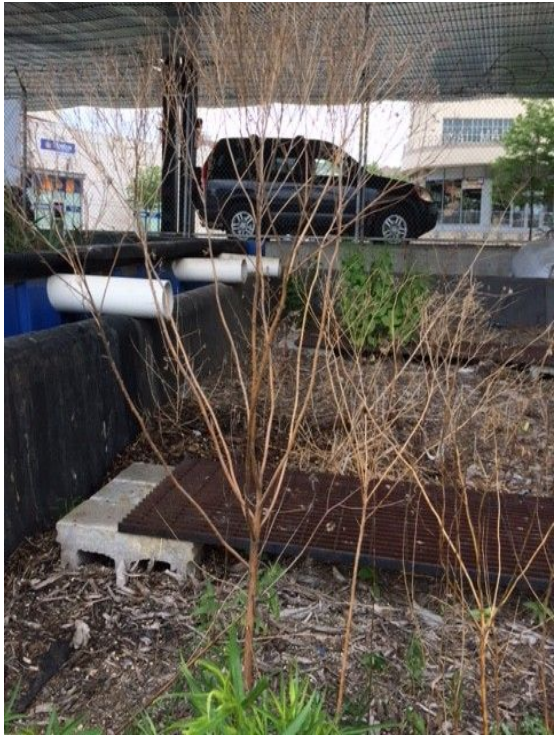
New

Streets



Constructed Wetland Under the Highway

Photos BCEQ





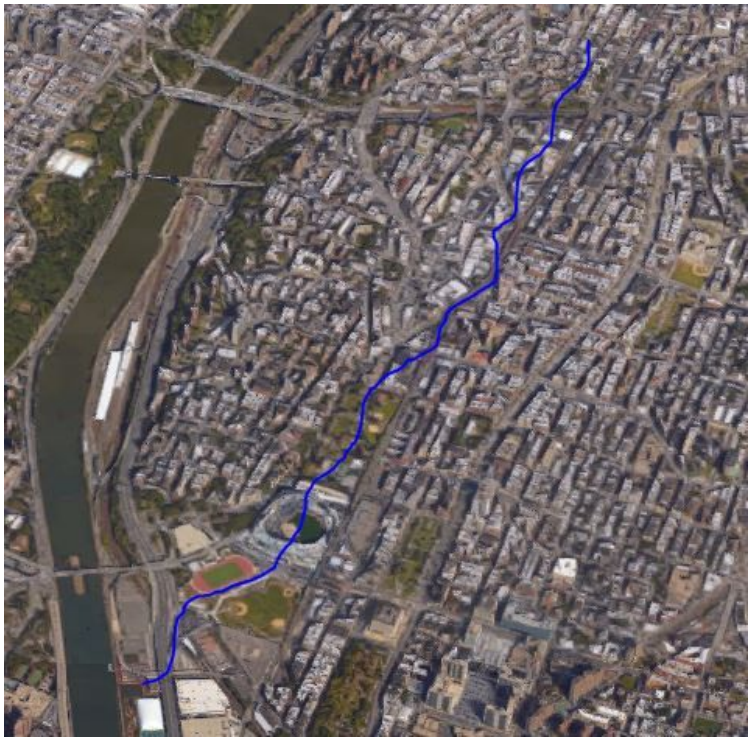




https://bceq.org/2015/07/24/pier-5-pop-up-wetland-monitoring-and-photos-072215/

Where Cromwell's Creek Used to Be





From Streetsblog and NYC Parks

Cromwell Creek, Things it could be: Activation, Green the Parking Lot, Constructed Wetland





From MIT

Study

Bronx Meet Your Waterfront

2011





Add a Greenway Under Macombs Dam Bridge

MIT Study

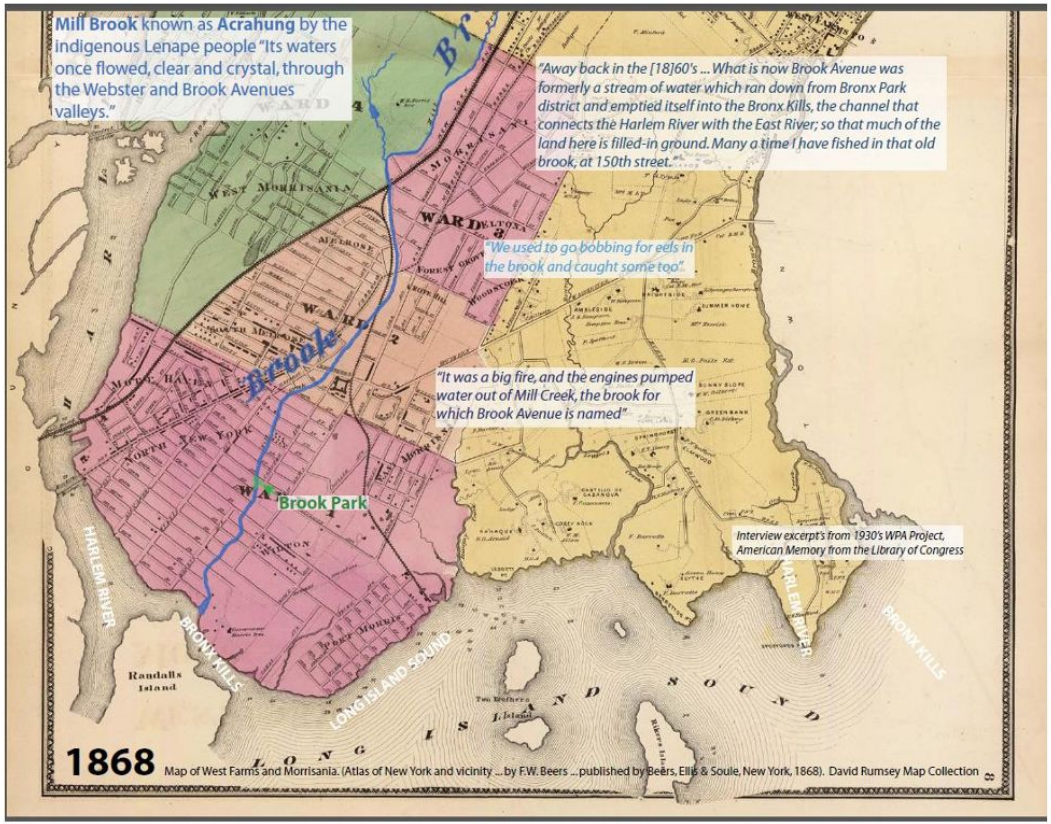


The Brook 1865

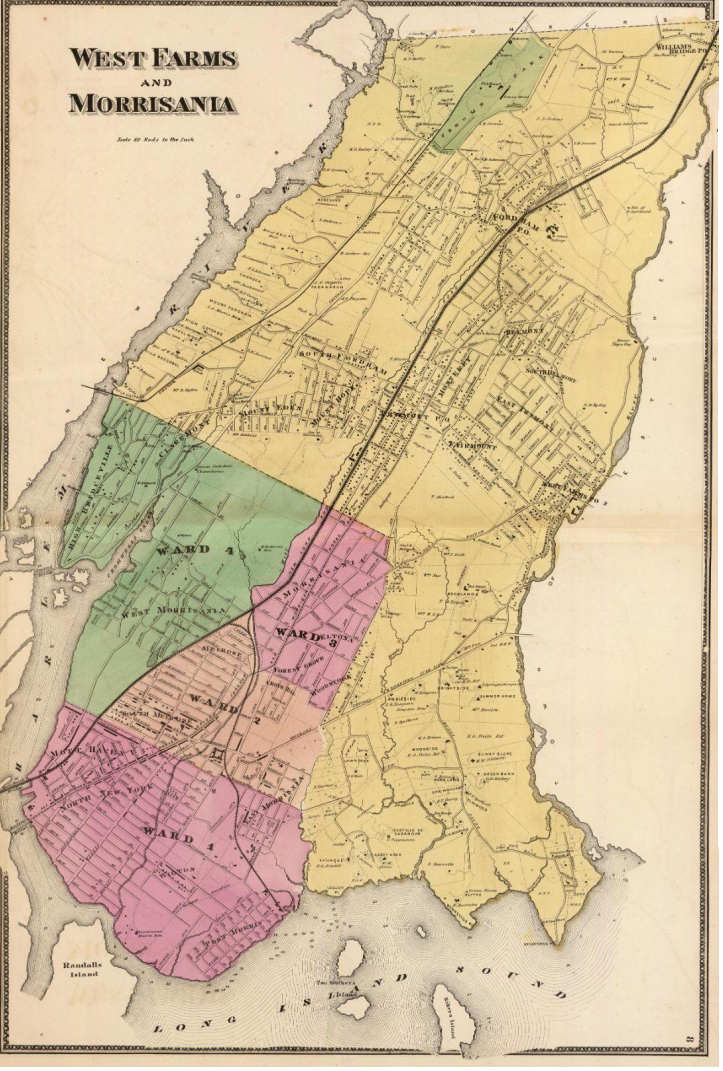
"*The native meadow and wetland restoration will bridge educational activities in the urban ecosystem, providing a significant savings to the City, capturing about* ***17,000 gallons of water per inch of runoff before it enters the combined sewer infrastructure****, potentially 1.6 million gallons of rainwater per year saved.*"

Numbered photos from 1 to 8 from left to right





Source: NYC Parks Department to the NYC PDC "Brook Park Wetland Restoration Project Brook Avenue at 141st Street, Bronx Preliminary Submission to the Public Design Commission July 2013"; page 5.





NYC Parks

BROOK PARK WETLAND | Proposed Plan

Bronx Kill

The Bronx Kill is a narrow and shallow tidal strait in New York City delineating the southernmost extent of The Bronx. It separates the Bronx from Randalls Island, running from the Harlem River to the East River. It is impacted by two tides from both rivers. It has the potential to become a “real” park in the water, or water park!





Show Alternative Analysis

NYC DEP Citywide Open Waters CSO LTCP, Hudson and Harlem River
January 31, 2018

Tibbetts Brook Daylighting Project

CSO Mitigation Toolbox

INCREASING COMPLEXITY

INCREASING COST

Source Control	Green Infrastructure		Storm Sewers		
System Optimization	Fixed Weir	Parallel Interceptor / Sewer	Bending Weirs Control Gates	Pump Station Optimization	Pump Station Expansion
CSO Relocation	Gravity Flow Tipping to Other Watersheds	Pumping Station Modification	Flow Tipping with Conduit/Tunnel and Pumping		
Water Quality / Ecological Enhancement	Floatables Control	Environmental Dredging	Wetland Restoration	Daylighting	
Treatment *Satellite:*	Outfall Disinfection	Retention Treatment Basin (RTB)		High Rate Clarification (HRC)	
Centralized:	WWTP Expansion				
Storage	In-System	Shaft	Tank	Tunnel	