

Case 10-T-0139

Champlain Hudson Power Express Project

Environmental Trust Governance Committee Meeting Minutes

March 11, 2026

On March 11, 2026, the Governance Committee for the Hudson River and Lake Champlain Habitat Enhancement, Restoration, and Research/Habitat Improvement Project Trust (the "Trust") held a regular meeting.

Pursuant to New York State's Open Meetings Law, as amended, the meeting took place at the Department of Public Services Albany and NYC Offices, DEC's New Paltz Office and APA's Raybrook office (via remote connection)

Attendees and (location)

Certificate Holders (CHPE): Josh Bagnato (remote), Sara Villagomez (remote)

Department of Public Service (DPS): Jessica DiFiore, Matthew Smith, Chase Chaskey (DPS Albany)

Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC): Sita Crounse (DPS Albany), Heather Gierloff (DEC New Paltz)

Department of State (DOS): Jennifer Street (DPS Albany)

Scenic Hudson: Jonathan Clark (DEC New Paltz)

Riverkeeper: David Stormer (DEC New Paltz)

Trout Unlimited (TU): Roger Olson (remote)

Adirondack Park Agency (APA): Ben Amos (APA Raybrook)

New York City (NYC): Rebecca Swadek, Robert Loughney (remote), Jay Goodman (DPS Albany)

Hudson River Foundation (HRF): Jim Lodge, Jon Kramer, Laura Logozzo (remote)

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. and a quorum was confirmed.

- Approval of the December minutes (DEC moved, NYC second, unanimously approved)
- CHPE Update
 - Restoration work is on pause for winter, restoration activities will begin in April
 - Harlem River and Lake Champlain work is complete while Hudson River work is continuing
 - Late march/early April matressing in Hudson will be complete
 - NYC – the ARC is completely installed, restoration of sidewalks, painting, etc is ongoing
 - Interconnection work is progressing
 - Converter station technical work is proceeding on schedule
 - O&M team hired, CHPE personnel working on O&M – on target to meet contractual COD
 - HiPot test (voltage through HVDC line from Hertel to NYC and the test worked as expected)
 - Operational in May
 - Questions:
 - Q: Will COD be early? A (CHPE): No, May 26
 - Q: Restoration methods? Have you noticed invasive species? A: (Matt Smith) DPS watching invasive species – one spot but its being monitored through restoration

- 2025 habitat restoration and enhancement RFP
 - July 2025 – received 18 LOIs
 - Oct 2025 – invited 9 applicants to submit full proposals
 - Nov 28 – received 9 full proposals which were peer reviewed
 - 6 proposals recommended for Award for a total of \$864,422
 - 2 in Harlem River
 - 2 in Lower Hudson
 - 1 in Upper Hudson
 - 1 Lake Champlain Tributary
- Award discussion
 - New York Restoration Project (Analysis at Sherman Creek Inlet)
 - Analysis at Sherman Creek Inlet – Harlem River, Manhattan
 - Close to CHPE cable
 - Sediment testing field survey and project mgmt.
 - Review: close to cable, successful leveraging, and feasible
 - Planning bucket – different fund sources for construction
 - Clarity asked from NYRP on specific use of Chet fun
 - Randalls Island Park Alliance (Randall's Island Shoreline Habitat Restoration Phase II)
 - Planning and design
 - Review: strong nexus to cable, timeline feasible, team able
 - Billion Oyster Project (Fish and Wildlife benefits of restored oyster reefs in the Hudson)
 - Review: goals appropriate – capable team, reviewers and TWG were concerned about survey – trial first would be better
 - Hudon River Park Trust (Monitoring success on in-situ eastern oyster larval setting)
 - Reviews: results would contribute to restoration efforts more broadly - finalize sampling plan
 - Cornell University (Freshwater mussels Shells Track Recovery)
 - Reviewers – outside of route but applicable to restoration, TWG concerns that project too research focused – will ask Cornell to consider reviewer suggestions on methodologies
 - Bouquet River Association (Beaver Brook – Bouquet River Habitat Reconnection)
 - Reviewers – comprehensive and capable, concerned about construction oversight funding
 - Questions: If total not awarded what happens with money? A: Goes back to pool for future RFPs
 - Two proposals recommended to decline:
 - NY Centralized Native Aquatic Plant Restoration and Research Site and Habitat enhancement
 - Itemized breakdown for subcontractor was not provided – no clear sense of how funds would be used, and outside the route of the cable – collections might not be able to be planted elsewhere – lack of detail in methodology, and no coordination with other DEC agencies that are doing similar work despite HRF commenting that in the LOI
 - Flood resilience for the lowest east branch Ausable River
 - Declined: connection to lake Champlain overall weak – natural barriers would prevent migration. Reviewers appreciated team but little detail provided on design. TWG – questioned water quality improvements whether restoration would impact water quality – unclear – lack of habitat benefits
 - Discuss: Stony brook Habitat Restoration Project
 - Could the dam be removed? Rob Redman
 - Laura (HRF) – maybe in a future RFP– different project
 - Ben Amos (APA) – there is a privately owned dam – there are fish like salmon who stop at that dam

- Sita (DEC) – do we know who owns the dam? Is the dam related to hydro electric facility? DEC looks at passage as well – this would require more investigation before recommending to remove the dam
- Heather (DEC) – need to narrow nexus definition – stony brook project could be good for another RFP if barrier was removed and maybe we expand nexus definition – might be too narrow
- Roger Olsen (Trout Unlimited) – we expanded charter to include tribes and then we don't approve them bc they seem to far from the cable – needs more discussion
- Ben Amos (APA) – supports awarding project bc of the nutrient load in the project area – that does feed habitat
- NYC says we shouldn't be too focused on nexus to the peril of good projects
- HRF asks should we add Stony Brook to approved list?
 - APA made a motion to add stony brook to approved list – Robert Redman seconded – Riverkeeper, DPS, DEC, DOS oppose
- Approval of six recommended projects - TU moves, DEC seconds – all in favor
- Closing Questions:
 - Q: What is the right allocation amount for the next round? A: We can add \$1M to the \$1.5M target given we didn't award as much in the last round or we can add another RFP round
 - Q: Criteria for designing RFP is there a ranking system? A: HRF will work to make criteria more understandable for both applicants and reviewers.
- Adjourn - CHPE moves to adjourn, DPS seconds – all in favor, meeting adjourned at 2:50pm