



PRESS RELEASE

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COMMUNITY GROUPS ORGANIZE THE HARLEM RIVER CELEBRATION, October 20 Roberto Clemente State Park, Bronx NY

On Saturday, October 20, community groups have organized the **2012 Harlem River Festival – a Party on the River and the Land**. Plans include a week of events leading up to the Festival and centering on the Bronx' own New York State Park: *Roberto Clemente State Park*, which has docks providing access onto the water.

The NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Commissioner Rose Harvey stated: "NY State Parks is pleased to host the Harlem River Festival at Roberto Clemente State Park. This was our first State Park in New York City and was built in 1973 as part of a innovative new community along the Harlem River. Five of the six State Parks in NYC are on the waterfront, and our parks were incubators for the redevelopment of industrial sites along the waterways of NYS's largest City. Connecting the community to the Harlem River is important to our mission of serving our patrons and a strategic goal for this park."

On Saturday October 20, the community can join the "Party on the River". ▲ Cheer on your favorite borough during the Battle of the Boroughs Regatta where the borough presidents will race in crew shells with Row New York (from Manhattan) and Harlem River Community Rowing (from the Bronx). ▲ The public will be able to ride canoes with The Wilderness Inquiry (www.wildernessinquiry.org) throughout the day. Harlem River Ecology slide presentation by Eric Sanderson of the Wildlife Conservation Society. ▲ US Forest Service staff from the NYC Urban Field Station will organize an artistic and educational mural painting activity, as well as distributing copies of the Natural Inquirer and other informational materials. ▲ Woodsy Owl, a famous U.S. Forest Service icon, will be visiting the Harlem River event to help spread his familiar message, "Give a Hoot, Don't Pollute!" and to remind people of the many ways we can all help Woodsy care for our earth. ▲ Rich Hallett, a Forest Service scientist at the NYC Urban Field Station, will organize a real life demonstration of getting trees from "stump to ship" by putting on a logrolling show in the Harlem River and then turning it over to the State University of New York - Cobleskill woodsmen team for a demonstration of wood cutting skills, using axes and cross-cut saws. ▲ Rocking the Boat, a Bronx-based boatbuilding community group will demonstrate how the cut timber is used in boat building. ▲ Festivities will include food, music, bouncy castles, exciting tabling activities, and live entertainment. ▲ Many groups will be tabling, including the Interstate Environmental Commission (www.iec-nynjct.org) who will test water quality and share findings about the waterway via the World Water Monitoring Challenge TM -- where thousands of people from countries across the globe test their local waters to learn more about the quality of our waterways around the world <http://www.wvmd.org/>.



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“These events aim to be a celebration of the Harlem River Greenway,” says Chauncy Young, Coordinator for the Harlem River Working Group. “When completed, the Greenway will include parks, bike and pedestrian paths and entirely new waterfront spaces for Bronx residents to enjoy. This will become the last interconnected link to the Putnam Trail, the South Bronx Greenway, the Randall’s Island connector, the soon to be newly opened Highbridge and its connection to Manhattan, and the east-west Greenway through the large strips of parkland in the northern Bronx.”

This is the third annual public event organized by the Harlem River Working Group (HRWG), a group of community organizations, governmental agencies and other commercial stakeholders, focused on improving environmental quality and access to and along the Harlem River -- from the Randall’s Island to the Hudson River in Bronx County, New York City. Formed in 2009, we have met monthly to organize and develop goals to ensure that a green corridor is established along as much of the length of the Harlem as possible, with habitat buffer, bike and walking path greenways and river access points.

“It is important that people experience the wonder of the waterfront. Then they will fight for their right to have clean water and greater access in a linear greenway,” stated Joyce Hogi, BCEQ President. “The sooner we get the Greenway connected, the more people will come to own the waterway, and the cleaner our water will be!”

Participants (in formation): Bike the Bronx, Bronx Children's Museum, Bronx Council for Environmental Quality, Bronx Health Reach, Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, Con Edison, De La Salle Christian Brothers, Empire State Rowing Association, Friends of Brook Park, Friends of Sherman Creek, Friends of the Woods, Gaia Institute, Harlem River Community Rowing, Highbridge Community Life Center, Manhattan College, Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance, National Park Service (Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program), NYC Department of Parks and Recreation, NYC Partnerships for Parks, NYPD 46 Precinct Community Council, NYC Soil and Water Conservation District, NYS Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation (Roberto Clemente State Park), Row NY, The Trust for Public Land, U.S. Forest Service, Wilderness Inquiry, Wildlife Conservation Society check the web for updates