

August 3, 2026 Water Quality Agenda

1: Survey

2: Go over emails and responses so far

- a. **basement flood water testing.** DEC & DEP, DOH – see Scarlett's answer below.
- b. **Real-time canal monitoring/public reporting** DEP – Alicia West *this may deserve a resolution and a presentation* – We will have a presentation from Riverkeeper at the General CAG meeting in September when they have more info from DEP as to what they are planning to do. Joan followed with Alicia 7/29.
- c. **Bond-Lorraine Sewer** – DEP Alicia West – Joan followed 7/29
- d. **CSO's** – DEP Alicia West, EPA Victoria Sacks – Joan followed 7/29. Victoria is referring to Tom Mongelli.
- f. **NAPL leaks and remediation at the head of the Canal** – Joan followed up to obtain Victoria's answers to our questions (below) that Tom Mongelli read out at the CAG meeting 7/27 (see below).

3: Housekeeping:

- a) **PowerHouse** walkway at TB1.
- b) **Mounding:** We will follow on the mounding studies once EPA presents on them again. Issue is forward looking – climate change.
- c) **DO Levels:** Any acknowledgement from Fagel, Waldron or Smith to our resolution re: DO levels, Erica? NOT YET
- d) **OMP:** What is EPA's demand for responsible parties to maintain an operation and maintenance plan (OMP) for the Gowanus Canal Clean-up strategy? Who will ensure that the OMP is done going forward? Will EPA continue to check that the water quality remains good and that the cap is intact? Does EPA have an OMP Plan? Where is it? Will follow with Katia at next meeting. *any answer Katia?*
- e) **Hydrology** - Aaron responded (see below) that DEC hopes to have the survey complete by 1st Q 2027. Current hydraulic conditions, including groundwater elevations and flow direction. DEC study. *See addenda – we know they are not including toxins in the study.*

Suggestion – overlay the map. – Now that Jason has created a tool, can DEC use it once its survey is done? Can we use it? If DEC does not want to use our tool, can we layer their survey results into our map?

Though we want answers to the questions above, for now, we asked only ETA for the study and what the purpose of it was for DEC.

4: Future or today?

- Has DEP started to measure how much of **first flush** the new buildings are capturing? We did not cover this yet.
- Did the scientific projections in the **LTCP** account for the results of climate change? We eventually will ask questions about this.
- Outreach – can the artists stop **dumping their paint** in the canal by washing brushes, etc... Eymund said at the June meeting that this is an issue in the canal.

E-Mails sent at July 6, 2026 meeting Addenda

From: Joan Rodriguez <jblue406@aol.com>
To: Alicia H. West <awest@dep.nyc.gov>; Victoria Sacks <sacks.victoria@epa.gov>
CC: WQ?
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 at 07:47:17 PM EDT
Subject: What is the plan once the CSO tanks go live?

We know CSO's will impact the delicate ecosystem the community is trying to rebuild in and around the Gowanus Canal. Even when the CSO tanks go live, CSO's will continue to be released into the Gowanus Canal.

What will the City do if the tanks are insufficient to maintain the current SC status of the Canal?
How much sedimentation will the City allow?
At what locations?
What is the trigger for the City to re-dredge?
Does the City have a re-dredging plan?
If re-dredging is required, how will the City prevent damage to the current remedy/cap?
What methods, monitoring/verification, approvals, enforcement and repair/notification steps would apply if cap disturbance occurs?

Is there a long-term control plan for the CSO tanks? Has it been updated to address the current SC classification of the waters of the Gowanus Canal? Does the LTCP address any of the questions above?

If the LTCP does address the questions above, at some future date could you give a presentation on these issues at a General CAG meeting?

Victoria's response:

Forwarding to Tom, as he handles the CSO portion of the project.

From: Joan Rodriguez <jblue406@aol.com>
To: Heidi M. Dudek <heidi.dudek@dec.ny.gov>; Gorton Lisa A (DEC) <lisa.gorton@dec.ny.gov>; Scarlett E. McLaughlin <scarlett.mclaughlin@health.ny.gov>; Alicia H. West <awest@dep.nyc.gov>
cc: WQ?
Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 at 07:48:31 PM EDT
Subject: Flood water testing kits for Gowanus residents' basements

Gowanus residents have been subjected to consistent basement flooding. In light of the migration of toxins from the various upland sites in the Gowanus area, the CAG's Water Quality Committee has asked whether residents/businesses can be provided with a practical way to check basement floodwater for contamination (kits or an agency-supported sampling option)? If kits aren't recommended, what alternative is feasible?

Joan Salome-Rodriguez, Esq.
Moderator, CAG Water Quality Committee

DEC says not its bailiwick – email from Lisa Gorton 7/7/2026

DOH response:

Hi Joan,

Apologies for not responding earlier. Flood water in basements could be comprised of surface water, groundwater, or a combination. Flood waters in general could include bacteria and many other contaminants particularly during severe weather. I've included links to NYSDOH informational pages regarding flooding, however some of this may not be applicable, for instance the Gowanus area is served by a public drinking water system and has a prohibition on private drinking water wells.

I don't have recommendations for kits for residents to test any flood waters that may be in their basement, but the pages below should direct people affected by floods on some steps they may take following a flood and who to contact.

[Weather Emergencies](#)
[Flooding Quick Reference Guide](#)

Scarlett Messier-McLaughlin, P.G.

Chief, Region 2 (excluding Bronx) - Bureau of Environmental Exposure Investigation

New York State Department of Health

Empire State Plaza – Corning Tower Room #1739, Albany, NY 12237

Phone: 518.402.7874 Email: Scarlett.McLaughlin@health.ny.gov

From: Joan Rodriguez <jblue406@aol.com>

To: Alicia H. West <awest@dep.nyc.gov>

cc: WQ?

Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 at 07:56:09 PM EDT

Subject: Bond-Lorraine Sewer Plan

At two recent Gowanus community meetings the issue of the Bond-Lorraine Sewer came up. I was told at the Gowanus Oversight Task Force Meeting that there is currently NO funding for replacement of the Bond-Lorraine Sewer in the City's budget. The CAG Water Quality Committee seeks information regarding the City's plan to replace the Bond-Lorraine Sewer including, but not limited to:

From where will the funding for sealing & replacement of the Bond-Lorraine sewer be found?

The Gowanus Community Advisory Group was informed at a CAG General Meeting that EPA believed developers were funding the work on Bond-Lorraine.

If that is so, are developers sealing the old sewer AND building the new one? To what extent is this envisioned to be DEP contracted work as opposed to developer work?

Has DEP has provided specs to the Department of Design and Construction to put this work out to bid?

What is the anticipated time line for completion of:
sealing of the current Bond-Lorraine sewer and
construction of a new sewer assuming the old Bond-Lorraine sewer will be replaced (in the same place or elsewhere)?

If it will be replaced elsewhere, where exactly?

From: Joan Rodriguez <jblue406@aol.com>

To: Alicia H. West <awest@dep.nyc.gov>

Cc: WQ?

Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 at 08:04:01 PM EDT

Subject: Real time monitoring of Gowanus Canal Waters

In light of the recent court decision requiring DEP to report out CSO events (Matter of Riverkeeper v. New York City Dept. of Env'tl. Protection, 2026 NY Slip Op 03444, 2d Dept), the Gowanus Water Quality Committee would like an assurance that these reports will be made available to the public in the very near future. Please share information as to where we can access this data specifically for the Gowanus Canal. (See requirements set forth below.)

We would like DEP to deploy monitors along the canal/outfalls (storm-event focused) and publish results (e.g., open data/dashboard) with public health context, including, but not limited to, at the Bond Street and 22nd Street Outflows.

In addition, the waters of the Gowanus should be monitored daily for enterococcus bacteria levels and O2 levels as the current SC designation for the waters of the canal demand at least a level 3 rating.

REQUIREMENTS PER THE COURT'S DECISION

The same notification shall also be provided within the same timeframe to the general public . . . through appropriate electronic media, including, but not limited to, electronic mail or voice communication as determined by" the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (hereinafter DEC) (ECL 17-0826-a[2]). The required information to be distributed, "to the extent knowable with existing systems and models," includes "the volume and treated state of the discharge," "the date and time of the discharge," "the expected duration of the discharge," "a brief description of the steps being taken to contain the discharge except for wet weather combined sewer overflow discharges," "the location of the discharge, with the maximum level of specificity possible," and "the reason for the discharge" (*id.* § 17-0826-a[1][a]-[f]). SPRTKA further provides that DEC "shall promulgate rules and regulations that are necessary for the implementation of this section" (*id.* § 17-0826-a[4]).

Pursuant to 6 NYCRR 750-2.7(b)(2)(ii)(b), "[a]s soon as possible, but no later than four hours from discovery of the discharge, owners and operators of [publicly owned treatment works] and [publicly owned sewer systems] must notify the general public of untreated or partially treated sewage discharges, including combined sewer overflows, to waters of the State except underground waters, through appropriate electronic media as determined by [DEC]." The reports shall, "at a minimum, include to the extent knowable with existing systems and models," among other things, "the date and time of discovery of the discharge and a brief description of the reason for the discharge," "the location of the discharge including the receiving water effected by the discharge," "the estimated volume and treated state (untreated or partially treated) of the discharge at the time of the report," and "the expected duration of the discharge and the total expected volume of the discharge" (*id.* § 750-2.7[b][2][i][a]-[c], [e]).

From: Joan Rodriguez <jblue406@aol.com>

To: Aaron Fischer <aaron.fischer@dec.ny.gov>

Cc: WQ?

Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 at 08:09:06 PM EDT

Subject: Gowanus CAG inquiry - ETA on Holistic Ground Water Survey

Good Day, Aaron:

I am following up on the series of emails wherein the CAG was seeking for DEC to perform a holistic ground water survey. You responded that it was in progress and was only evaluating groundwater flow, direction and levels. For what purpose was DEC performing this study and when can we expect it to be completed?

Thanks,

Joan Salome-Rodriguez
CAG Water Quality Committee

Aaron's response:

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Fischer, Aaron G (DEC) <Aaron.Fischer@dec.ny.gov>

To: Joan Rodriguez <jblue406@aol.com>

Cc: Eymund@gmail.com <Eymund@gmail.com>; studio460@msn.com <studio460@msn.com>; joseph.alexiou@gmail.com <joseph.alexiou@gmail.com>; louiskleinman@yahoo.com <louiskleinman@yahoo.com>; hildegaardl@earthlink.net <hildegaardl@earthlink.net>; eric@parkslopeneighbors.org <eric@parkslopeneighbors.org>; andrea <andrea@gowanuscanalconservancy.org>; susanyung2@gmail.com <susanyung2@gmail.com>; eleliason@gmail.com <eleliason@gmail.com>; jjarmer@yahoo.com <jjarmer@yahoo.com>; LALAVIOLETTE@HOTMAIL.COM <LALAVIOLETTE@HOTMAIL.COM>; stevemarcus7@gmail.com <stevemarcus7@gmail.com>; pardonmeinbrooklyn@gmail.com <pardonmeinbrooklyn@gmail.com>; ddbuxbaum@earthlink.net <ddbuxbaum@earthlink.net>; eruby@riverkeeper.org <eruby@riverkeeper.org>; michaelkilian147@gmail.com <michaelkilian147@gmail.com>; jschwartzman@gmail.com <jschwartzman@gmail.com>; ekm08938@gmail.com <ekm08938@gmail.com>; mark.yarish@gmail.com <mark.yarish@gmail.com>; Dudek, Heidi M (DEC) <heidi.dudek@dec.ny.gov>; Gorton, Lisa A (DEC) <Lisa.Gorton@dec.ny.gov>

Sent: Tuesday, July 7, 2026 at 09:59:59 AM EDT

Subject: RE: Gowanus CAG inquiry - ETA on Holistic Ground Water Survey

Hi Joan,

DEC is performing a Gowanus Area groundwater elevation study to assess any changes to the area wide groundwater elevation and flow as a result of the bulkheading and upland remedies in an effort to assess the nature of future groundwater flow to educate our models. DEC's consultants will be wrapping up a multi-year data collection effort in the Fall 2026 and aim to have a model for groundwater elevation and groundwater flow in the first quarter of 2027.

Regards,
Aaron

Aaron Fischer, P.E.

he/him/his

Professional Engineer 1 (Environmental), Remedial Bureau B/Section D

Division of Environmental Remediation

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-5060

Direct: 518-402-9805 | Cell: (518) 598-7799 | aaron.fischer@dec.ny.gov

www.dec.ny.gov | |

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Joan Rodriguez <jblue406@aol.com>

To: Victoria Sacks <sacks.victoria@epa.gov>; Thomas Mongelli <mongelli.thomas@epa.gov>;

Natalie Loney <loney.natalie@epa.gov>

Cc: andrea@gowanuscanalconservancy.org <andrea@gowanuscanalconservancy.org>;

pardonmeinbrooklyn@gmail.com <pardonmeinbrooklyn@gmail.com>; jblue406@aol.com

<jblue406@aol.com>; ekm08938@gmail.com <ekm08938@gmail.com>; swiftfolders@gmail.com

<swiftfolders@gmail.com>; celeste@revolutionarygrammar.com

<celeste@revolutionarygrammar.com>; eleliason@gmail.com <eleliason@gmail.com>;

eruby@riverkeeper.org <eruby@riverkeeper.org>; hildegaardl@earthlink.net

<hildegaardl@earthlink.net>; Corinne.j.brenner@gmail.com <Corinne.j.brenner@gmail.com>;

jischwartzman@gmail.com <jischwartzman@gmail.com>; joseph.alexiou@gmail.com

<joseph.alexiou@gmail.com>; LisaBowstead@gmail.com <LisaBowstead@gmail.com>;

gbrook8344@gmail.com <gbrook8344@gmail.com>; susanyung2@gmail.com

<susanyung2@gmail.com>; thomasgreenepark@gmail.com <thomasgreenepark@gmail.com>;

jjarmer@yahoo.com <jjarmer@yahoo.com>; ddbuxbaum@earthlink.net

<ddbuxbaum@earthlink.net>; lalaviolette@hotmail.com <lalaviolette@hotmail.com>;

louiskleinman@yahoo.com <louiskleinman@yahoo.com>; stevemarcus7@gmail.com

<stevemarcus7@gmail.com>; eric@parksloopenighbors.org <eric@parksloopenighbors.org>;

louiskleinman@yahoo.com <louiskleinman@yahoo.com>; michaelkilian147@gmail.com

<michaelkilian147@gmail.com>; mmaugenest@aol.com <mmaugenest@aol.com>;

katie@principlesbk.nyc <katie@principlesbk.nyc>; eric@parksloopenighbors.org

<eric@parksloopenighbors.org>; eymund@gmail.com <eymund@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, July 29, 2026 at 10:18:39 AM EDT

Subject: **NAPL leaks and remediation at the head of the Canal**

Good Morning Victoria and Tom:

At last night's General CAG meeting Tom reported out answers to the questions below. I'm not sure if the last question was answered. I asked if we could have those answers in writing since he was reading them anyway. Would you please provide the answers in a reply to this email? We would greatly appreciate that.

Thanks,

Joan Salome-Rodriguez
Gowanus CAG Water Quality Committee

- Why did NAPL appear after the supplemental dredging, and do EPA and the Trust know where it is coming from?
- The plan seems focused on sealing pathways near the Douglass Street end, but it would be helpful to understand whether the source has been fully identified.
- Is this work expected to permanently stop contamination from moving into the Canal, or is it more of a containment measure? The plan includes jet grouting, AquaBlok, structural concrete, and sealing cracks, but the community should understand how success will be measured and how long the remedy is expected to last.
- How will the work be monitored while it is happening? Since the work involves contaminated material, divers, barges, grout, and sediment disturbance, it would be helpful to know what water-quality monitoring, visual inspection records, odor controls, and public updates will be provided.
- What happens if more contamination is found than expected? The plan suggests that inspection findings could lead to changes in the scope, so it would be useful to know who makes those decisions, whether EPA approval is required, and whether the public will be informed.
- Will the community receive before-and-after documentation, including photos, videos, maps, inspection results, and a plain-language explanation of whether the action worked?
The main concern is that this not be treated only as a technical repair. The community needs transparency about the source of the contamination, the risks during the work, how success will be measured, and what will happen if NAPL returns.
- If they find lots of NAPL does a collection well make sense at the source? Who would monitor?