

# GOWANUS CANAL

## What Is Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration?

Gowanus Canal in Brooklyn, New York supports industrial, municipal, and public activities. It plays a vital role in the economy and culture of the surrounding communities. However, decades of contamination have negatively impacted the Gowanus Canal natural environment. To compensate the public for these impacts, the Gowanus Canal Natural Resource Trustees are conducting natural resource damage assessment and restoration (NRDAR) activities for the site.



### WHAT IS NRDAR?

NRDAR is a regulatory process to determine the amount and type of restoration needed to compensate the public for injuries to natural resources resulting from hazardous substances, oil, and/or other contaminants.

The NRDAR process is distinct from cleanup activities directed by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and New York State, but the two processes are related. Cleanup protects people and the environment from current and future harm. NRDAR restores or replaces injured natural resources to improve ecological function and public use of those resources.

### THE TRUSTEES

Trustees are government officials who act on behalf of the public when natural resources are injured or destroyed as a result of a release of a hazardous substance, oil, or other contaminant. Trustees for this site:

- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
- U.S. Department of the Interior, through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

### GOWANUS CANAL NATURAL RESOURCES

Examples of resources that could be affected by hazardous substances, oil, and/or other contaminants include:

#### Natural Resources

- Water and sediment
- Invertebrates (shellfish)
- Fish (mummichog, white perch, striped bass)
- Birds (cormorant, black duck)

#### Natural Resource Services

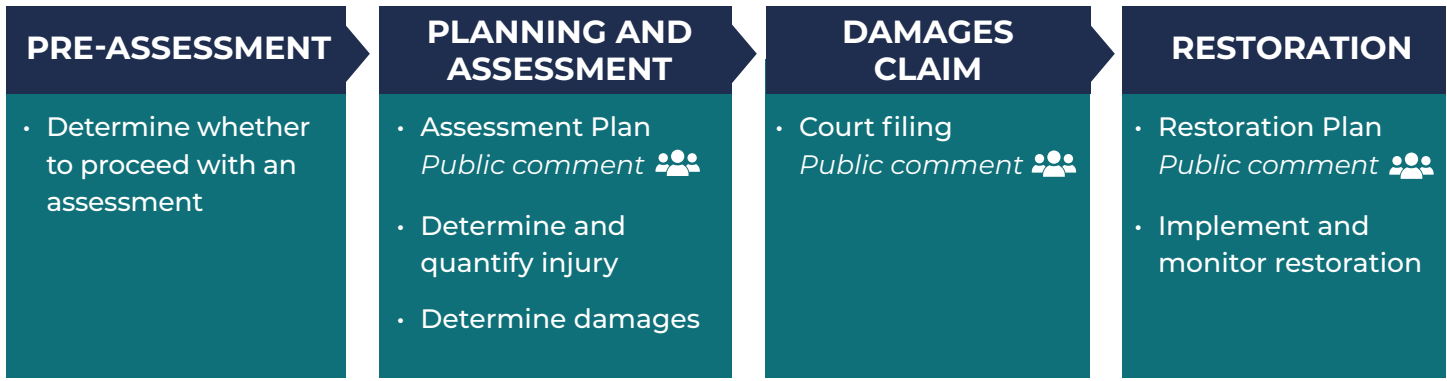
- Recreation (fishing, boating)
- Habitat for fish and wildlife
- Community uses and connections



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### THE NRDAR PROCESS



### NRDAR AT GOWANUS CANAL

NYSDEC, NOAA, and FWS formed a Natural Resource Trustee Council to efficiently plan and implement the NRDAR. To-date, the Trustees:

- Determined through a [Preassessment Screen](#) (PAS) that hazardous substances released into Gowanus Canal could injure natural resources, and an assessment could be conducted at reasonable cost.
- Intend to collaborate with potentially responsible parties to carry out assessment activities and expedite restoration.
- Coordinate NRDAR activities with the EPA and New York State cleanup (remedial) process.
- Released a [Draft Assessment Plan](#) available for public review and comment through June 14, 2024.
- Communicate with the public.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Contact the Trustees to ask questions and find out more:

NYSDEC Natural Resource  
Damages Section  
625 Broadway, 14th Floor  
Albany, NY 12233-1500

Email:  
[nrd@dec.ny.gov](mailto:nrd@dec.ny.gov)

