



news releases

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CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCES \$60 MILLION IN COMPETITIVE GRANTS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS & WETLANDS RESTORATION ALONG PASSAIC RIVER

TRENTON – The Christie Administration is making \$60 million in competitive grants available for projects along the Lower Passaic River and associated tributaries and the Newark Bay Complex that will improve public access to these waterways and result in restoration of wetlands, Department of Environmental Protection Commissioner Bob Martin announced today.

The DEP is earmarking \$50 million for projects that create or improve public access in the Newark Bay Complex. The money may be used for land acquisition and/or construction of public access improvements, such as public parks and walkways.

The DEP is making another \$10 million available for projects that create or enhance freshwater wetlands and improve public access on the Lower Passaic River or its tributaries below Dundee Dam at Garfield.

Eligible entities for the \$50 million public access projects in Newark Bay Complex include county and local governments, municipal utilities authorities, economic development agencies and redevelopment authorities. Applications must be submitted within 45 days. The minimum award for any project is \$500,000. The maximum award is \$25 million. The applicant must be able to provide a 50 percent match. Projects must improve public enjoyment of the waterfront.

The maximum grant to be awarded for the \$10 million wetlands restoration grant program for the Lower Passaic and its tributaries is \$3 million. The minimum award is \$500,000. Applications must be submitted within 60 days. Applicants may be government agencies or nonprofit groups, and projects must be located either directly adjacent to the Passaic River downstream of the Dundee Dam, or directly adjacent to a tributary of the river that is downstream of the dam.

In determining grant awards, the DEP will carefully review a number of factors, including the likelihood that the project can be launched and completed within a defined timeframe, ability of the applicant to comply with financial reporting requirements, and ability of the applicant to utilize their own procurement procedures that reflect state and local laws and regulations, among other factors.

An informational workshop for interested parties has been scheduled for June 29, from 10 a.m. to noon, on the Rutgers University-Newark campus at 180 University Avenue, Ackerson Hall, Room 106.

The Newark Bay Complex includes the Lower Passaic River, Newark Bay, the Arthur Kill, the Kill Van Kull, and portions of the Hackensack River.

The state, as part of a \$190 settlement agreement reached in 2014 with Occidental Chemical Corporation, the successor to companies responsible for the most contaminated sediments, set aside more than \$67 million for projects implemented through the DEP's Office of Natural Resource Restoration.

The DEP's Office of Natural Resource Restoration uses funds secured from polluters to develop projects that improve the environment and compensate the public for the lost enjoyment and benefits of natural resources that were caused by pollution.