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## **PVSC Dedicates New North Arlington Skimmer Vessel Facility**

**NORTH ARLINGTON** - The Passaic Valley Sewerage Commissioners (PVSC) were joined by Congressman Bill Pascrell (NJ-8), new Executive Director Wayne Forrest, and other local dignitaries today for the dedication of the agency's North Arlington Skimmer Vessel Operations & Maintenance Facility, located on River Road in North Arlington, along the Passaic River.

"It was the work of mankind that fouled this river at the turn of the century and so it's our responsibility to reverse that damage and clean this pristine waterway so that it can again become the jewel of the Passaic Valley that it once was," said PVSC Chairman Anthony Luna.

"A century ago this river was the centerpiece of the quality of life of the Passaic Valley, said PVSC Executive Director Wayne Forrest. "The recent Passaic River Northern New Jersey Championship Regatta held right here on the Passaic River this past April is a testament that this waterway is returning as a functional, beautiful attribute of this area.

"The April regatta was the first-ever sanctioned race of its type the Passaic River has ever hosted and may have been the largest gathering of athletes and residents ever along its shores," Forrest continued. "More than 1500 students and parents gathered here to watch. A decade ago, an event like that could never have been held here. Our programs, and the dedication of this facility today, mark our dedication to continuing to improve the Passaic River."

Congressman Bill Pascrell (NJ-8) credited PVSC's River Restoration Program as one of the efforts that have helped improve the Passaic, saying, "The River Restoration Program has made a huge difference in the quality of the Passaic, which can be enjoyed by residents and visitors to the region alike.

"PVSC's clean-up efforts and events like the regatta held this spring will help re-focus attention to the river's attributes and its functional uses for the communities along its shores," Pascrell said.

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**North Arlington Operations & Maintenance Facility Ribbon Cutting**

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PVSC's River Restoration Program includes riverbank clean-up crews and two skimmer vessels that patrol the waters of the Passaic River and Newark Bay daily removing floating trash and debris. To date, the Program has conducted more than 670 shoreline clean-ups resulting in the removal of over 8,000 tons of debris since 1998.

The Program currently operates two surface skimmer vessels from its plant located in Newark. However, travel time to and from the northern reaches of the Passaic River drastically reduced the functional time of the skimmers on the river.

To solve this problem, PVSC constructed the new operations and maintenance facility on the formerly contaminated site of an abandoned boatyard. With less travel time, the skimmers will be able to patrol more of the Passaic River each day.

The North Arlington facility includes a boat ramp for launching the skimmer vessels, a floating dock, and areas to offload the debris removed from the river and store the vessels when not in use. The facility was funded by an \$838,000 grant from the NJ Department of Transportation and a low interest loan from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection.

"This Ribbon Cutting event celebrates another step forward in returning the Passaic River to its former glory as an asset to the communities lining its shores," said Forrest.