



PRESS RELEASE

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Delaware Bay to Benefit from Third Year of Oyster Project

The Delaware Bay Oyster Restoration Task Force began spending the bulk of its 2007 Congressional appropriation this month when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Philadelphia District took measures to place approximately 550,000 bushels of clean clam shells onto existing oyster reefs. This "shell planting" will take place during the narrow June 15-to-July 15 timeframe that, according to studies, yields the greatest setting rates for oyster larvae.

According to projections, the Delaware Bay Oyster Restoration Project will generate \$50 for every \$1 invested during its first harvests in 2008 and 2009. This has been made possible by local, state and federal partners who have banded together since 2005 to revive an oyster population that has suffered for decades as a result of climate change, habitat loss, and other natural factors.

This year's Congressional appropriation was initiated in the Senate by Sens. Joe Biden (D-Del.), Tom Carper (D-Del.), Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.) and Robert Menendez (D-N.J.). It has also been supported in the House of Representatives by Reps. Mike Castle (R-Del.) and Frank LoBiondo (R-N.J.).

"This is such an important project," Senators Biden and Carper and Representative Castle agreed. "We are proud of the collaboration that continues among various local, state and federal officials, the Army Corps of Engineers, environmental groups, and educational facilities. The Delaware Bay Oyster Restoration Project not only revitalizes our oyster harvest, but it also helps keep our waterways clean. This is a win-win situation for all involved, and we congratulate the team for their ongoing dedication and support of this mission."

"I am proud to continue to support the Delaware Bay Oyster Restoration Project, which is providing positive economic and environmental benefits to the bay and the bayside communities that depend on it," added Representative LoBiondo. "The program has been highly successful due to the commitment of all its partners. I will continue to work with my colleagues in South Jersey and Delaware to ensure the future of oysters in the Delaware Bay is bright."

"Continued expansion of the oyster industry is critical to New Jersey. Increased oyster production will have a real economic impact in our state, especially in Salem, Cumberland and Cape May Counties. I am proud to have secured funding for this effort and will continue to do all I can to provide the industry with the resources it needs to thrive," said Senator Lautenberg.

This year's \$2 million budget will be administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Philadelphia District, a member of the Delaware Bay Oyster Restoration Task Force. Other members responsible for implementation include Rutgers University's Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory, the Delaware River Basin Commission, the Delaware and New Jersey Shellfish Industry, the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Delaware State University, and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The Delaware River and Bay Authority has provided an additional \$134,000 toward this project, and the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary continues to fulfill its education and outreach objectives.

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