



Home | Newsroom | Media | Administration | NJ's Priorities | Contact Us

Press Releases | Public Addresses | Executive Orders | Press Kit | Reports

Home > Newsroom > Press Releases > 2010 > Governor Chris Christie Reacts to GAO Report on Delaware River Dredging

Governor Chris Christie Reacts to GAO Report on Delaware River Dredging

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Trenton, NJ - Today Governor Chris Christie issued the following statement on the recent report by the Government Accountability Office on Delaware River dredging:

"The GAO report released yesterday raises more questions about the economic justifications the US Army Corps of Engineers is using to deepen the river, buttressing New Jersey's position that the Corps is barreling ahead with this project armed with only half the facts. I call on the US Army Corps of Engineers to immediately stop all work on this misguided dredging project. The new GAO report affirms what we've said all along," Governor Chris Christie said.

"The Department of Environmental Protection has been demanding that the Army Corps perform environmental studies to prove that dredging and the disposal of spoils won't harm the river and South Jersey's ecological resources" DEP Commissioner Bob Martin said.

New Jersey raised several concerns to the Army Corps of Engineers and the GAO that we believe have not been adequately addressed. They include the fact that the large segments of the Delaware River will be dredged and the sediment has not been comprehensively sampled. This potentially contaminated dredged material will be dumped in NJ. The costs of this sampling and the treatment of this material have not been calculated in the US Army Corps of Engineers costs.

The GAO points out that the Corps needs to evaluate changing market conditions, especially dramatic changes to the region's oil industry which is supposed to be the biggest beneficiary of a deeper channel. The Army Corps needs to do the right thing and stop trying to will this poorly conceived project on the region. They need to do their homework.

"This is a great victory for taxpayers. If the Army Corps can't determine whether the project has any economic benefit, why should the federal government fund it?" said Congressman Rob Andrews. "We are in no position to gamble with taxpayer dollars, which is why President Obama didn't include a single cent towards this effort in his budget. The Army Corps is over \$185 million shy of this \$320 million price tag and we cannot continue to throw money at a project that cannot guarantee profit for our region."

"When independent analysts can't even determine whether dredging is profitable, how can we allow the Army Corps to roll the dice with millions of taxpayer dollars? We will continue to fight against this damaging project that has no proven economic benefit for our region," Senate President Sweeney said.

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