

Helping Families Rebuild Stronger

Christie Administration Announces 300th Property Acquisition Through Superstorm Sandy Blue Acres Buyout Program

Two years after the launch of the Superstorm Sandy Blue Acres program to remove flood-damaged homes out of the way of future storms, Governor Christie announced the 300th property acquisition in Manville. The administration also announced the first purchase of a home in a flood-prone section of Pompton Lakes, an area of the state that has repeatedly flooded but was not impacted by Superstorm Sandy.

Giving Homeowners The Option To Sell Sandy-Damaged Property

Through New Jersey's existing Blue Acres Program, the Christie Administration is giving homeowners the option of selling their properties damaged by Superstorm Sandy in tidal areas of New Jersey. The program is designed to give homeowners the ability to choose the best option for their individual situation.

- **673** voluntary buyout offers have been made, and 468 willing sellers have accepted.
- The State has been evaluating more than 1,000 homes in repetitive flooding communities and over **716** applicants have already been approved in 10 municipalities across six counties.
 - ***So far, 309 homes have been purchased.***
 - 207 homes have been demolished.
- The Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant Program has approved more than \$100 million in federal funds for the Blue Acres program, which have been processed through the New Jersey Office of Emergency Management.
- The Christie Administration is working to aggressively identify and reach out to additional eligible residents to inform them of buyout opportunities and assist them with the application process.

Strengthening Communities Against Flooding:

Long Term Flood Relief: In April 2015, Governor Christie announced a \$202 million resiliency project that will bolster storm protection for Union Beach, which is located along the Raritan Bay, and was one of the communities hardest hit by Superstorm Sandy.

- The massive flood control project – funded by federal, state and local contributions – will consist of construction of levees, floodwalls, tide gates and pump stations.
- The project will also rebuild beaches, dunes, and groins, which are jetty-like structures that are designed to slow loss of sand from beaches.
- In addition, more than 25 acres of degraded wetlands will be restored to help better absorb flood waters.

Beach Restoration and Dunes: Since Superstorm Sandy, the State has been working closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on a massive undertaking to repair and improve beaches, and to build the most comprehensive and continuous coastal protection system it has ever had.

- Last summer, the Army Corps completed the repair and restoration of 21 miles of previously constructed beaches along the Monmouth County coastline at a cost of \$345 million.

Approximately 8 million cubic yards of sand was replaced to restore beaches from Sandy Hook to Manasquan to their original design standard.

- DEP is working with the Army Corps to build 11 new coastal and flood protection projects statewide. These projects, which will cost more than \$1 billion, will help create an engineered, comprehensive shore protection system along the Atlantic coast, while also bolstering protections on the Delaware Bay coast, Raritan Bay, Sandy Hook Bay and tidal portions of the South River and the Passaic River.
- The Army Corps and DEP also are advancing studies of other flood-prone areas throughout the State, including South River, Leonardo, Shrewsbury River and the Highlands.

Easements To Ensure Shore Protection: Through an aggressive easement acquisition strategy, the State has now obtained more than 80 percent of the property easements needed to enable construction of shore protection and flood mitigation projects along the State's 127 miles of shoreline. The Army Corps has signed off on all major Shore protection projects and construction on three of those projects will begin this month.

Sea Bright Sea Wall: In August 2014, the Christie Administration announced that Sea Bright will receive \$8.5 million in state funding to repair and extend the borough's sea wall, which is vital to the protection of this northern Monmouth County town from future storms.

Mantoloking and Brick Steel Sheet Piling: DEP completed construction on this project in November 2014, which involved the installation of steel sheeting into the beaches in Mantoloking and Brick to protect a four-mile section of Route 35 and nearby homes and businesses from future severe storms.

Coastal Resiliency Projects: In June 2014, the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) announced that it would award \$25.3 million in competitive matching grants to New Jersey-based projects through the Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resilience Grant Program. These projects are designed to mitigate the threat of extreme weather events to coastal communities using science-based solutions. Work is beginning on approved projects, including:

- Reusing Dredged Material to Restore Salt Marshes and Protect Communities: Reuse dredge materials to restore 90 acres of salt marsh for Avalon, Stone Harbor and Fortescue. Enhanced salt marsh will provide wildlife habitat and reduce flooding and erosion impacts on nearby communities.
- Building Ecological Solutions to Coastal Community Hazards: Develop, design and deliver green infrastructure techniques that add ecological value and enhance community resiliency for coastal communities.
- Enhancing Liberty State Park's Marshes and Upland Habitats: Create and improve Liberty State Park's 40 acres of salt marsh and 100 acres of upland habitat in Jersey City. Project will improve ecosystem resiliency and create a new publicly accessible area within the park.

Comprehensive Flood Mitigation: Last summer, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced that New Jersey will receive \$380 million to implement two flood mitigation projects designed and selected through a HUD-sponsored design competition, Rebuild by Design. Since then, DEP has been working closely with the towns within the project areas along with a diverse array of stakeholders to advance the design and development of these projects. The projects are:

- **"New Meadowlands":** This flood risk reduction project consists of a large natural reserve along the Hackensack River, designed to help reduce flooding in Little Ferry, Moonachie, Carlstadt, Teterboro and South Hackensack. The design envisions using an intricate system of green infrastructure, including berms and marshes, to protect against ocean surges and help reduce sewer overflows in adjacent towns.

- **“Resist, Delay, Store, Discharge”**: This flood risk reduction project is a comprehensive urban water strategy that will use hard infrastructure and soft landscape for coastal defense, while also addressing systemic drainage issues. It includes a variety of flood risk reduction infrastructure that will be built along the Hudson River, stopping flood waters from intruding into Hoboken and parts of Weehawken and Jersey City. This new infrastructure will complement resilience measures undertaken in the area by New Jersey Transit, including proposals currently being reviewed by the Federal Transit Administration for competitive recovery funds.

Local Flood Risk Reduction Grant Program: In November 2014, DEP announced a \$50 million grant program open to Sandy-impacted communities to address the flood risks posed by coastal lakes, the need for flood risk reduction infrastructure, storm water management and the beneficial use of dredge material. DEP has been working with program applicants and expects to announce awards shortly.