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Governor Christie Signs Executive Order To Move Forward With Dune Construction And Other Flood Hazard Risk Reduction Measures

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Directs Attorney General To Coordinate Acquisition Of Easements, Creates Office Of Flood Hazard Risk Reduction Measures To Lead Effort

Trenton, NJ – Taking aggressive and necessary action to build protective sand dunes, berms, engineered beaches and other flood hazard risk reduction measures to make New Jersey's coastline and other flood-prone regions safer and more resilient to future storms, Governor Chris Christie today signed Executive Order No.140. Among other things, the Governor's action will assist local communities by clearing the way for dune construction to protect countless homes and businesses along New Jersey's 127 miles of shoreline.

The EO, which takes effect today, paves the way for the U.S Army Corps of Engineers to begin dune construction by doing two things:

Directs Acting Attorney General John Hoffman to immediately coordinate legal action to acquire the necessary easements to build dunes; and

Creates the Office of Flood Hazard Risk Reduction Measures within the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to lead and coordinate the efforts to acquire the necessary property to build dunes.

"It is a proven fact that having dunes along our coastline makes everyone safer, and today I'm acting to move the building process forward," said Governor Christie. "As we rebuild from Superstorm Sandy, we need to make sure we are stronger, more resilient and prepared for future storms, and dunes are a major component of this process. I am doing everything in my power to get them in place as soon as possible. We can no longer be held back from completing these critical projects by a small number of owners who are selfishly concerned about their view while putting large swaths of homes and businesses around them at risk."

As the Governor has previously noted, many of these recalcitrant property owners have held out with the hope of leveraging a major "pay day" from local governments for their easement agreements – for the "lost value" of their ocean views. But the Governor's Executive Order comes less than 24 hours after a settlement between the Department of Environmental Protection, the Borough of Harvey Cedars, and a Harvey Cedars couple, in which the couple agreed to give the easement to the town in return for the sum of one dollar. The settlement, after years of litigation, was reached after the Supreme Court in July set aside an earlier verdict in the couple's favor awarding them \$375,000 for the value of their easement.

"The impact of that court ruling should now be clear to anyone who thinks they were in line for a big government check," continued Governor Christie. "Sandy changed everything. It's time to do the right thing to not only protect your own property, but the property of all your neighbors."

When Sandy hit, oceanfront communities without dunes and other shore protection measures experienced significantly more catastrophic damage than communities with the protection measures in place. In its Sandy relief package, Congress allocated funds for dune construction, and New Jersey has begun the process of designing Flood Hazard Risk Reduction Measures for all appropriate areas of the New Jersey coastline. Some of the land on which this system of measures must be built is privately owned, and some residents have refused to grant easements to the state.

A copy of the Governor's Executive Order No.140 [[pdf 15kB](#)]

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