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Newark, N.J.

ICYMI: Governors of Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania Commit to Restoring the Delaware River Watershed

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PHILADELPHIA – The governors of Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania today made a shared commitment to protect the Delaware River watershed and agreed to work as equal partners to grow the region's economy and protect America's "founding waterway." The Governors signed a proclamation agreeing to work together to make the Delaware River Basin the national model for sustainable economic development, drinkable clean water, healthy fish and wildlife populations, outdoor recreation and nature-based climate resilience.

Conservation organizations cheered today's action, which came during a moderated forum at the Independence Seaport Museum as Governors Carney, Murphy and Wolf discussed the challenges and opportunities for restoring the Delaware River watershed.

"The Delaware River Basin is not only the cradle of American democracy, it's an economic engine for our region and provides drinking water for nearly 15 million people. In the face of escalating climate impacts and the Trump Administration's rollback of basic clean water protections, collaborative, cross-state solutions are needed more now than ever to grow our economy, ensure clean drinking water, recover fish and wildlife populations, expand outdoor recreation opportunities and improve our resilience to climate impacts," said Collin O'Mara, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. "We commend Governors Carney, Murphy and Wolf for committing to work together on making the restoration of the magnificent Delaware River Watershed a national model."

Each of these states has a unique relationship with the river. In Delaware, for instance, the Delaware Bayshore provides a world-class destination for outdoor recreation, especially birding, fishing, hiking and paddling. Right now, thousands of red knots and other shorebirds are stopping over in Delaware Bay to feast upon the eggs of horseshoe crabs as part of their annual migration to their Arctic breeding grounds.

"Millions of people in our region depend on the Delaware River Basin for clean drinking water, and the river remains vitally important for outdoor recreation and economic development for communities in Delaware and beyond," said Governor Carney. "I am proud to join Governor Wolf and Governor Murphy in protecting this precious resource for the residents of our states, and for future generations."

Millions of New Jersey residents depend on the Delaware River watershed for clean drinking water, bird watching and other recreation opportunities. [Back to top](#)

"For the vibrant communities along our state-side riverfront, and many more within the nearly 3,000 square miles of Delaware River watershed within New Jersey, the waterway and its tributaries are the backbone of economic development, recreation, and the source for approximately 25 percent of our clean drinking water," said Governor Phil Murphy. "I am proud to stand alongside Governors Carney and Wolf as we pledge to preserve these vital waters that flow from and in between our states from the impacts of climate change."

Seventeen Pennsylvania counties lie entirely or partly within the Delaware River watershed, and the river provides drinking water and outdoor recreation opportunities and supports countless wildlife species.

“The Delaware River is a great resource for recreation, an economic engine for the eastern part of our state, and a vital drinking water source for millions of Pennsylvanians,” said Governor Tom Wolf. “We’re proud of the work we’ve done to clean up our waterways and look forward to working with our neighboring states to continue our progress.”

Participants at the event noted that today’s action accelerates the growing private-public investment in the Delaware River watershed; it comes on top of major philanthropic support, local groups caring for community resources and the first-ever dedicated federal funding of \$5 million for restoration.

Delaware, New Jersey and Pennsylvania all rely on the 13,539 square mile Delaware River watershed for jobs, clean drinking water and outdoor recreation opportunities. The river supports a more than \$22 billion economy and provides drinking water for nearly 15 million people. About 600,000 jobs are tied to the watershed.

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