

Governor Phil Murphy

# Governor Murphy Highlights Resilience Project in Port Monmouth During Superstorm Sandy 10-Year Anniversary Commemoration

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*Union Beach, Atlantic City, and Highlands Among Coastal Locations with Ongoing Resilience Projects*

**PORT MONMOUTH** – A decade after Superstorm Sandy hit New Jersey, devastating the Garden State’s coastal communities, Governor Phil Murphy today toured the Port Monmouth Flood Protection project in Monmouth County to commemorate the anniversary of the storm and to highlight more than \$10 billion in federal investments in housing, economic, and flood resilience infrastructure to help rebuild the State and to make it more resilient to future storms.

The Port Monmouth Flood Protection project is a Hurricane and Storm Damage reduction project involving the construction of levees, floodwalls, a tide gate, a road closure gate, drainage improvements, dunes, and beach renourishment along the Raritan Bay and Sandy Hook Bay in the Port Monmouth area of Middletown Township. The project was in the “works” for about 20 years but moved forward urgently post-Superstorm Sandy. Led through a coordinated effort by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Army Corps) and the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), the project is estimated to cost about \$265 million and expected to be completed by April 2025. The Superstorm Sandy surge and tidal flooding damaged 750 (>50%) out of the 1,441 local housing units, devastating the small coastal town of Port Monmouth, which is home to about 3,800 people.

“A decade ago tomorrow, our state experienced the greatest natural disaster in its history, which decimated the Jersey Shore and caused major damage to many beloved communities across New Jersey,” **said Governor Murphy**. “Today, we remember the at least 35 lives lost directly caused by the storm, the more than 300,000 destroyed properties that left tens of thousands of residents with no home, and the nearly 3 million residents without power for days. As we remember the past, we must also look to our future. A future in which New Jersey is more resilient to storms thanks to the flood protection measures that we have taken since that tragic day 10 years ago.”

“The task of recovering from Superstorm Sandy was monumental and laid bare the enormous challenges of helping people and communities overwhelmed by despair after a disaster,” **said Lt. Governor Sheila Oliver, who also serves as Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, which includes the Division of Disaster Recovery and Mitigation**. “While the recovery is still ongoing, in the 10 years since Sandy, the State has accomplished a great deal. For example, thousands of people’s homes along the bays, shore, and waterways have been reconstructed and elevated to protect them against future flooding. But Governor Murphy and I understand New Jersey must be proactive in preparing for the next storm. This is why the State has allocated so many resources to resiliency initiatives like the Port Monmouth Flood Protection Project, which are a proven way to protect lives and properties from destruction.”

The Port Monmouth project is among several other Army Corps and DEP-led resilience projects actively being built in New Jersey. The first phase of a massive resilience project consisting of levees, floodwalls, tides gates, and pump stations providing protection for Union Beach along Raritan Bay is moving forward, with construction scheduled to begin in March 2023. Once fully constructed, the Union Beach Resiliency project will surround low-lying, vulnerable areas with infrastructure that will help protect properties and lives from future storms such as Sandy. The overall project is expected to cost about \$395 million and encompasses about 1.8 square miles.

Design is also currently underway for a project involving the borough of Highlands. The Army Corps and the DEP are working with the community to install floodwall, levees, pump station, road closure gate and interior drainage within the .7 square mile Borough. This project is estimated to cost about \$198 million.

Major funding was made available for these projects at the federal level.

In the ten years since Superstorm Sandy devastated New Jersey’s coastline and inland areas, the DEP has worked with the Army Corps to invest approximately \$2 billion for coastal and flood protection projects focused along the Shore. In addition to the Port Monmouth, Union Beach, and Highlands project, other Army Corps-funded projects include:

\$96.8 million beach and dune construction project in Cape May County (encompassing beaches in southern Ocean City, Upper Township, and Sea Isle City) that is complete.

\$140.4 million project to construct beaches and infrastructure in Monmouth County (Loch Arbour, Allenhurst, Deal, and Long Branch) that is complete.

\$159.9 million beach and dune construction project covering 12.7 miles of beach on Long Beach Island that is complete.

\$39.3 million seawall and boardwalk project along Absecon Inlet that is complete in Atlantic City.

\$59.3 million beach and dune construction project on Absecon Island (Renourish Atlantic City and Ventnor and Initial Construction Longport and Margate) that is complete.

\$131.4 million beach and dune project for Northern Ocean County (for all towns from Point Pleasant Beach to Berkeley Township) that is complete.

\$11.4 million project to initially construct beach berm along Oakwood Beach in Elsinboro Twp. along the Delaware River that is complete.

The Army Corps also completed the repair and restoration of all of the pre-Sandy coastal protection projects along the Monmouth, Ocean, Atlantic, and Cape May counties coastline at a cost of over \$200 million.

In addition to immediate post-Sandy repairs, the Army Corps has also completed over \$300 million in periodic beach nourishment since the completion of Sandy-related work.

These large-scale projects are in addition to the many more Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Housing & Urban Development, Department of Transportation, and State-funded emergency response and resiliency projects completed all across the areas impacted by Superstorm Sandy on October 29, 2012 that, in total, invested more than \$10 billion to rebuild New Jersey in a more resilient-way.

“Ten years ago, Hurricane Sandy devastated communities across the state – from small towns down the shore to urban hubs up north,” said **U.S. Senator Robert Menendez**. “As impacted communities worked to recover and rebuild, I fought in Washington to ensure they had the tools to do so. In the past decade, I’ve secured tens of billions of dollars in federal funding to help our state rebuild and make investments in mitigation, including millions for the Port Monmouth Flood Protection project. I exposed widespread lowballing of flood insurance claims and successfully pushed FEMA to reopen every Sandy flood insurance claim for review, which resulted in Sandy survivors being compensated with over \$260 million in additional payments. While we’ve made tremendous progress in the past decade, there’s still much more work to do and I am committed to continuing to advocate on behalf of Sandy survivors.”

“Superstorm Sandy’s devastation was a wakeup call to commit to protecting our state and our country from severe weather and climate change. I’m heartened by the progress we’ve made in rebuilding Port Monmouth to be more resilient. I remain committed to strengthening our state’s critical infrastructure and protecting New Jerseyans from future disasters,” said **U.S. Senator Cory Booker**.

“Ten years ago, Superstorm Sandy devastated our state. Since then, I’ve fought for federal funding to make sure our coastal communities are better protected from the next major storm and flooding events. After the storm, I secured \$110 million in a federal spending bill for the Port Monmouth Flood Control Project, and it’s great to see firsthand the progress we’re making in building more resilient coastal communities. I also fought for families who were decimated by the storm by securing in a House spending bill forgiveness of millions of dollars they owe through no fault of their own. We’ve come a long way, but there’s still work to do. In Congress, I’m fighting for a better flood insurance program that prevents insurance companies and contractors from taking advantage of homeowners. I’ll continue to fight for New Jerseyans and make sure our state is protected from major weather events,” said **U.S. Congressman Frank Pallone**.

“The actions taken by the USACE and its partners following Superstorm Sandy have demonstrated how a whole-of-government effort can transform a region to be more resilient. By using a comprehensive approach that includes consideration of solutions ranging from nature-based to structural and incorporation of feedback from a variety of partners has enabled much greater coastal resilience for this region. Recent investment from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law will advance these projects and bring them online faster to better protect these communities,” said **Jaime A. Pinkham, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Army for Civil Works**.

“Hurricane Sandy impacted our region in an unprecedented manner, wreaking havoc in ways we had never before experienced. State, local and federal governments rose to this historical occasion by joining forces to collaboratively find innovative ways to respond and recover. Projects like the one we are highlighting here today show how rebuilding more resiliently helps us mitigate future hazards together in a more proactive approach,” said **David Warrington, Regional Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 2**.

“Superstorm Sandy had a devastating impact on New Jersey, including communities that suffered severe flood damage,” said **Senate President Scutari**. “It was destructive, costly and extremely disruptive to the lives of residents. Projects such as this will help prevent this from happening again by better protecting communities that are prone to flooding.”

“Ten years on and we continue to stand strong in the wake of Superstorm Sandy, reminded of the families and victims who lost homes, businesses, and their lives during this tragic disaster,” said **Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin**. “It is in the wake of its destruction that New Jersey has recognized greater need for storm preparedness and has invested in resilient infrastructure. As climate change remains a fundamental threat to people’s homes and livelihoods, we must keep fighting to protect future generations.”

“Superstorm Sandy remains a defining moment in New Jersey history; a wake-up call from the reality of our changing climate,” said **Commissioner of Environmental Protection Shawn M. LaTourette**. “Sandy called on us to build greater resilience for all New Jersey communities, and we have come a long way. Today, our coastal communities are better protected by miles of engineered dunes, living shorelines, continually replenished beaches, and flood resistant infrastructure. The continued investments by the Murphy Administration and our Legislature in shore protection, flood control, natural resource restoration, and climate resilience planning will help to ensure that New Jersey residents and businesses are better prepared for the storms of the future.”

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