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## Governor Christie Announces \$6.2 Million Flood Resiliency Project for Belmar

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### *Flood Hazard Risk Reduction Grant Program Assists Municipalities Prepare for Future Storms*

**Trenton, NJ** – Acting to protect vulnerable communities and neighborhoods from the impact of future storms, Governor Chris Christie today announced that Belmar is one of the first municipalities to receive funding from the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Flood Hazard Risk Reduction grant program. The nearly \$6.2 million grant is for the construction of a discharge piping system for Lake Como, which regularly floods significant portions of the borough when it storms.

"Over the past two and a half years, we have worked diligently to deliver assistance to residents, businesses and communities at the Jersey Shore as they build back stronger and more resilient to withstand future storms," said Governor Christie. "Through this grant program, we are taking another step in our commitment to fund risk reduction projects that will protect lives, homes and infrastructure, a crucial element of our overall comprehensive storm-resiliency strategy."

The Flood Hazard Risk Reduction program is funded by a \$50 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program to help municipalities pay for critical storm resiliency projects.

In Belmar, the grant will fund a project to replace a narrow pipe that currently drains to the ocean. When complete, it will help control lake levels and prevent future flooding. The area surrounding Lake Como floods repeatedly in heavy rain storms, causing repetitive property damage to the homes that surround it. During Sandy, this area of Belmar was under water for more than a week.

"This is the largest single grant our community has ever received in its history and it will help us protect hundreds of Belmar families from flooding," said Mayor Matthew Doherty. "Without Governor Chris Christie and Commissioner Bob Martin and his staff, this would not have been possible. The DEP listened to our residents' concerns, worked with our engineers and town officials, and made this historic opportunity happen."

In addition to Belmar, Little Ferry and Brigantine also are receiving funding. Brigantine in Atlantic County is receiving \$1.4 million for construction of three pump stations to protect roadways that are part of evacuation routes; Little Ferry in Bergen County is receiving nearly \$653,000 for upgrades to a tide gate and pump station for this low-lying area along the Hackensack River. Total combined funding for the three projects is \$8.25 million.

"The projects in Belmar, Little Ferry and Brigantine are being funded now because they are far along in the planning and design process," DEP Commissioner Bob Martin said. "These are just the first of many projects that will help make New Jersey stronger and more resilient."

The program complements the Administration's comprehensive Sandy recovery and resiliency efforts, which include construction of a statewide network of engineered shore protection projects, Blue Acres buyouts of flood-prone residential properties, financing for hardening of water and wastewater infrastructure, and elevation of homes in flood-prone areas.

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The HUD-funded Flood Hazard Risk Reduction program focuses on critical risk reduction initiatives, which include addressing flood risks posed by coastal lakes and inland waterways, enhancing storm water management systems, and incorporating both man-made flood barriers and nature-based solutions, such as restoration of wetlands and creation of living shorelines, where appropriate.

The period for applying for grants is now closed. The DEP continues to review applications for projects across the state.

Projects must be in the counties most impacted by Superstorm Sandy, as determined by the federal government, including Atlantic, Bergen, Cape May, Essex, Hudson, Middlesex, Monmouth, Ocean, and Union. Preference may be given to areas of low and moderate income in accordance with HUD's national objectives.

Each application is being evaluated for potential effectiveness in reducing flooding and enhancing resiliency, compliance with environmental reviews, constructability, analysis of cost-to-benefits, protection of critical infrastructure, and other factors. The maximum grant award for any project is \$15 million.

For more information on the Flood Hazard Risk Reduction grant program, visit: <http://www.nj.gov/dep/floodhazard/>

**Press Contact:**

Kevin Roberts  
Brian Murray  
609-777-2600



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Office of the Governor  
PO Box 001  
Trenton, NJ 08625  
609-292-6000

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