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Governor Christie, Army Corps Announce \$202 Million Resiliency Project To Bolster Union Beach Against Storms And Flooding

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Construction of Beaches, Dunes, Levees, Tide Gates and Pump Station Will Protect Vulnerable Community from Future Storms

Trenton, NJ – Governor Chris Christie and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner Bob Martin, in partnership with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, today announced a \$202 million resiliency project that will bolster storm protection for Union Beach, one of the communities hardest hit by Superstorm Sandy. The majority of funding for the massive flood control project will come from the federal government at \$132 million. New Jersey will fund about \$53 million and Union Beach will provide \$17 million.

“Union Beach has long been one of the most susceptible areas to coastal flooding in New Jersey, a vulnerability that was made all too real when Sandy slammed the town with its record 14-foot storm surge,” said Governor Christie. “As part of our long-term recovery strategy, this \$202 million resiliency project will finally give this close-knit community the protection they need and the sense of security they deserve to withstand future storms.”

Overall, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) project 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.

“I thank the Army Corps for its ongoing commitment in making New Jersey’s coastal communities more resilient by working with us to construct a full and robust coastal protection system for New Jersey that will save lives and protect property from future storms and flooding,” said Commissioner Martin. “This project for Union Beach is part of an overall coastal flood protection system for Raritan Bay which will protect Keansburg, Port Monmouth and Union Beach.”

This particular project was designed more than a decade ago, with engineering and design under way as part of the pre-construction phase of development when Sandy hit. The Army Corps re-evaluated and modified the plan to incorporate advancements in construction technologies, including advancements in flood wall, levee and flood gate design.

“On behalf of the borough of Union Beach I would like to thank the Governor, Lt. Governor and their staff, Commissioner Martin and his staff, the Army Corps of Engineers, all of our councilmembers present and past, Ed Broberg, Dennis Dayback and T&M Associates,” said Mayor Paul Smith, Jr. “This has been a project we have been working on since 1995 and to finally see our dream come true is truly a special day for Union Beach. I believe there are many residents who will be truly elated at this wonderful news. Sandy beat us up, but we will continue to fight for our people to the best of our ability.”

The DEP has signed off on the plan modifications, known as a Limited Reevaluation Report, triggering the start of final

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design of the project for launch next year. This reevaluation provides updated costs associated with changed conditions and provides an updated economic analysis that demonstrates the plan is economically justified, environmentally sound and technically acceptable.

Project contracts will be bid in phases, with the first bid expected to be awarded in the second half of 2016. There will be a request for proposals from contractors to construct a nearly 3,200-foot beach and dune system.

Subsequent contracts will be issued for construction of 14,320 feet of levee and 6,925 feet of floodwalls. In addition, two pump stations and flood gates will be constructed and, finally, the project to restore 25 acres of wetlands.

"The Army Corps of Engineers is pleased to be moving forward with the Union Beach project. This is another example of the tremendous partnership between the Corps of Engineers and the state of New Jersey," said Col. Paul Owen, commander, Army Corps of Engineers, New York District. "The Army Corps of Engineers is committed to working with our partners to reduce coastal storm risks through the construction of the Union Beach Coastal Storm Risk Reduction Project."

In all, the DEP and Army Corps are teaming up to rebuild virtually the state's entire shoreline from Union Beach to Cape May.

The Army Corps and DEP are teaming up on a number of projects bolstering the Raritan Bay shoreline, including the design and construction of the Port Monmouth Project. The Corps is also currently performing a post-Sandy reevaluation of the South River project as well as feasibility studies for Leonardo, Shrewsbury River and the Highlands. In addition, last year the Army Corps, in partnership with the DEP, completed beach, dune, levee and bulkhead repairs in Keansburg and East Keansburg.

Union Beach is a predominantly low-lying area along Raritan Bay in Monmouth County, susceptible to flooding from numerous small creeks, a situation that has progressively worsened over the years due to increased urbanization in the area.

The powerful storm surge from Sandy, estimated at nearly 14 feet, pushed up Raritan Bay devastating Union Beach. The surge destroyed or damaged a majority of the borough's homes and businesses. Union Beach is recovering from the storm, reconstruction and elevation of many structures under way to meet today's storm protection standards. To date, the municipality has issued more than 1,700 construction permits.

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