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## Governor Chris Christie Announces the Creation of a Passaic River Basin Flood Advisory Commission

Friday, April 23, 2010 • Tags: [Executive Orders](#)

**Trenton, NJ** – Governor Chris Christie today signed an Executive Order creating a Passaic River Basin Flood Advisory Commission to develop and recommend solutions to chronic flooding problems in the basin. The Commission will be administered by the Department of Environmental Protection. DEP Commissioner Bob Martin will serve as chairman of the Commission.

"The floods caused by the recent wave of winter storms drove home the point that we need to develop long-term strategies to reduce threats to property owners in the Passaic River Basin," Governor Christie said. "Hoping for the best every time a major storm hits is no longer acceptable. It's time take action."

The seven-member Advisory Commission will be comprised of three elected officials from the Passaic River basin, two individuals with expertise in the area of engineering, flood mitigation and related issues, the Commissioner of the DEP and the Superintendent of the State Police.

It will identify short-term and long-term recommendations to improve flood-mitigation efforts, emergency response planning and improving post-flood recovery response and efforts.

"The Passaic River Basin poses unique challenges," Commissioner Martin said. "It consists of a large number of rivers and streams that drain a large portion of northern New Jersey that has experienced intense development. The people who live in this area deserve solutions that will provide them with relief from anxiety, worry and the cost of repeatedly cleaning up."

The Executive Order directs the Commission to submit to the Governor a final Passaic Basin Flood Mitigation report presenting recommendations by December 31.

Among its many duties, the Commission will look at expanding and expediting purchases of properties in the floodway; identifying areas the state could acquire for possible flood water storage and wetlands creation; reinvigorating the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers study and analysis of potential engineering projects for long-term flood damage reduction, evaluating river characteristics in order to better predict and respond to floods; reviewing the status and effectiveness of county and local emergency response plans; and investigating the operations of the Pompton Lake Dam flood gates for potential impacts on downstream communities.

The Executive Order authorizes the Commission to consult with experts or other knowledgeable individuals in the public or private sector on any aspect of its mission, including the existing Passaic River Basin Flood Task Force, the New Jersey Congressional Delegation, the U.S Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

DEP continues to work with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and North Jersey District Water Supply Commission to review operations of the flood gates.

In addition, the DEP currently has dedicated approximately \$31 million to Blue Acres acquisitions. Blue Acres buys properties that are vulnerable to flooding and storms to get people out of harm's way. The DEP has developed a streamlined permit process for the removal of debris such as tree snags that can exacerbate flooding.

The DEP is also working with the Federal Emergency Management Agency to secure significant funding for a variety of mitigation efforts across New Jersey, including updating flood zone mapping and performing hydrologic modeling. In some cases, this information is several decades old.

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**Press Contact:**  
Michael Drewniak  
609-777-2600

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Office of the Governor

PO Box 001

Trenton, NJ 08625

609-292-6000