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NEWS FROM THE PEQUANNOCK RIVER COALITION

News on Flooding Remedies

November 23, 2011

To all:

Today I received the press release below. I also contacted the DEP for more information. Our main concern is that this not turn into wholesale dredging of these rivers, but the DEP assures me that the work is limited to the removal of downed trees and the elimination of shoals around bridges, as detailed in the original Commission report. I am attempting to get the specific contracts for this project, and will have more detail then.

I also discussed the removal of the Pompton Feeder Dams with the DEP. They are still in the phase of deciding how the dams will be removed and studying potential impacts on downstream communities. Good first steps! We will continue to follow this issue closely.

Have a great Thanksgiving!

Thanks,

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Subject: DEP Release: River & Stream Clearing Grant Awarded to Passaic River Towns

IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Nov. 23, 2011

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RIVER AND STREAM CLEARING GRANT AWARDED TO PASSAIC RIVER TOWNS; PART OF CONTINUING EFFORT BY CHRISTIE ADMINISTRATION TO ALLEVIATE FLOODING IMPACTS IN THE PASSAIC RIVER BASIN

(11/P133) TRENTON - The Department of Environmental Protection has awarded a \$350,000 grant to four towns in Morris and Passaic counties for Passaic River Basin stream and river

desnagging and clearing efforts to improve the flow of water and help alleviate future flooding problems, Commissioner Bob Martin announced today.

The grant is another step in the Christie Administration's ongoing efforts to lessen the impact of flooding in the flood-plagued river basin.

Pequannock, Pompton Lakes, Riverdale and Wayne were awarded the grant for clearing work to be done on the Pequannock and Ramapo rivers. The towns will jointly contract for stream and river flow improvements. The DEP already has awarded permits for these efforts, while the towns are preparing the scope of work and contract documents in anticipation of going out to bid on Dec.1.

"There is no silver bullet that can stop flooding in this river basin," said Commissioner Martin. "But this contract is a positive step forward to help minimize the impact of flooding that has disrupted the lives of so many residents in this region. It is just one of a long list of continuing steps identified in Governor Christie's Comprehensive 15-Point Passaic River Flood Plan, which seeks to move people out of harm's way and to provide some relief to flood-weary residents."

Work to be done under this \$350,000 contract includes the removal of flow constrictors such as fallen trees and sediment shoals from the waters, which may provide reductions in floodwater elevations by improving river and stream flow.

The Pequannock and Ramapo rivers flow into the Pompton River, which is a tributary of the Passaic River. In some areas, the flows of the Pequannock and Ramapo are blocked by dead trees, brush, and natural growth, plus sediment deposits that have formed near bridges or abutments, requiring cleaning or removal to allow the rivers to flow freely. Eliminating these obstacles is expected to provide at least some localized future relief to some floodplain residents.

Governor Christie's Passaic River Flood Advisory Commission earlier this year unveiled a comprehensive 15-point plan to mitigate the impact of floods in Morris, Passaic and Bergen counties. It targeted long- and short-term steps to reduce flooding, minimize the impacts of floods, better prepare for the periodic flooding and improve efforts to help flood victims, who have been particularly hard hit this year due to severe weather.

The package of small and large measures include enhanced efforts to buy flood-prone properties, elevate homes in flood areas, improve the operation of the Pompton Lake floodgates, increase river de-snagging and shoal dredging efforts, create larger flood water storage areas, steer future development away from flood zones, create better water flow in Passaic Basin rivers, and directs the DEP to expedite permits for county and municipal projects aimed at eliminating or reducing flooding.

The Passaic River watershed is about 935 square miles, with 84 percent located in New Jersey and the remainder in New York State. The Passaic River has seven major tributaries: the Whippany, Rockaway, Pompton, Pequannock, Wanaque, Ramapo, and Saddle rivers, all of which have periodic flooding problems.

The Commission's complete plan, with a detailed accounting of the recommendations, can be viewed at: <http://www.nj.gov/dep/passaicriver/docs/passaic-report201101.pdf>