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## **Restored Salt Marsh Will Bring New Life to Woodbridge Creek Media and public invited to tour of salt marsh and dedication on Tuesday, Oct. 16**

NOAA Fisheries Service will join with its partners Tuesday, Oct. 16 to celebrate the restoration of 64 acres of salt marsh in Woodbridge, N.J. The \$7.2 million project has transformed a damaged wetland along one and a half miles of Woodbridge Creek, Cove Creek, and Wedgwood Brook into a well-functioning salt marsh.

Coastal America will also award the project partners—the Army Corps of Engineers, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA, the township of Woodbridge and other local partners—with the Coast America Spirit Award for the successful restoration.

“The Woodbridge Creek salt marsh has been restored thanks to the dedicated efforts of government and the local community,” said Timothy R.E. Keeney, NOAA’s deputy assistant secretary for oceans and atmosphere. “This restored area is now bathed regularly with tidal water creating important habitat for blue crab, American eel, bluefish, striped bass, white perch, river herring, many birds and other animals.”

**The public and media are invited to the ceremony dedicating the restored marsh, which begins at 11 a.m. at the Hungarian American Club, 95 Port Reading Ave., Woodbridge, N.J. The public and media are also invited to tour the project at 10 a.m. Please meet at the Hungarian American Club parking lot for the tour and the dedication ceremony.**

“This salt marsh restoration is an example of successful mitigation brought about when the Army Corps works together with its partners for the benefit of New Jersey,” said Army Corps Colonel Aniello L. Tortora, commander of the New York district. “The Corps will continue to work with its partners to maintain a healthy, diverse, and sustainable salt marsh that restores vital habitat for fish and wildlife.”

The project involved the excavation of fill from 36.5 acres and the planting of more than 360,000 marsh plants. The restoration was completed under the terms of an agreement with the Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. The design for the restoration was developed with significant negotiation and technical guidance from the NJDEP and the township of Woodbridge.

The Army Corps was required to do a habitat restoration project that would offset potential, unavoidable damage to shallow water habitat in Newark Bay and the Arthur Kill when the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey deepened the harbor to ensure safe and efficient shipping and commerce. A part of the marshland restoration at Woodbridge Creek was also designed to compensate for injuries to natural resources from oil spills in the Arthur Kill and Lower New York Harbor. This agreement between the agencies allowed the partnership to maximize its financial resources to do the largest, most economic and technically sound salt marsh restoration.

The restoration will be completed by mid-November. Two observation platforms will be constructed next year to make it easier for the public to view the expanse of marshlands and observe birds and other wildlife.

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources and their habitat through scientific research, management and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries Service provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is celebrating 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the Survey of the Coast in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Commission of Fish and Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 70 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

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On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

NOAA Fisheries: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>