



COMMERCE NEWS

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Commerce Secretary Gary Locke Celebrates Earth Day at Recovery Act Restoration Project in New Jersey

Jersey City's Lincoln Park Project is Putting People Back to Work Transforming Local Dump to Healthy Wetland

NEW JERSEY – U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke today celebrated Earth Day at an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) restoration project that is putting people back to work transforming a local dump into 35 acres of wetland and creating a new public trail in Lincoln Park.

“The jobs that are being created here in New Jersey are a critical and growing part of the green economy,” Locke said. “Not only are coastal restoration projects like this one directly employing people, they are preserving the coastlines that are absolutely essential to America's economy.”

The Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provided \$10.6 million in Recovery Act funding to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to remove sediment, trash and other landfill from a damaged wetland that was used as a dump, as well as construct contours that allow tidal creeks to return saltwater. The project is supporting jobs for construction workers, engineers, landscapers, masons, graphic designers and custom signmakers.

When completed, the Lincoln Park Wetlands Restoration Project will have restored 35 acres of wetlands, created tidal creeks and made a juvenile fish foraging habitat along the Hackensack River. The Recovery Act project will also create just under a mile of trail and a new pedestrian bridge over the creek for bicyclists, joggers and walkers. The trail will become part of the Liberty to Water Gap Trail, a 130-mile trail that links historic and natural sites from the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor to the Delaware Water Gap in Pennsylvania.

The Lincoln Park Wetland Restoration project is one of 50 coastal and Great Lakes habitat restoration projects funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Last June, Locke and NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco announced \$167 million in NOAA

Recovery Act funding to high-quality, high-priority coastal restoration projects around the country.

Less than a year later, more than 30 projects have broken ground along the coasts, with the remaining preparing to start in the next year.

When all the planned projects are complete, 8,900 acres of habitat will be restored, and fish will gain access to 700 stream miles that had been blocked by obsolete and unsafe dams. The projects also will remove more than 850 metric tons of abandoned fishing gear and other marine trash, rebuild oyster and other shellfish habitat, and reduce threats to 11,750 acres of coral reefs.

Coastal areas generate more than 28 million jobs in the United States. Commercial and recreational fishing employs 1.5 million people and contributes \$111 billion to the nation's economy.

The Department of Commerce's NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. Visit us at <http://www.noaa.gov>.

On the Web:

NOAA Recovery Act: <http://www.noaa.gov/recovery>

NOAA Earth Day: <http://www.noaa.gov/earthday>