

Delaware Delegation Announces Millions in Federal Funding to Reverse Erosion on Bethany Beach -- March 20, 2007

WASHINGTON - Delaware's Congressional Delegation - Senators Joe Biden (D-DE) and Tom Carper (D-DE) and Congressman Mike Castle (R-DE) today announced that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will provide \$14.4 million in federal funds to protect and fully replenish the severely eroded Bethany/South Bethany beaches.

Due to several significant storms and years of steady erosion, the shoreline along the Bethany/South Bethany beaches has significantly diminished, threatening the coastline and the homes and businesses along it. The federal funding will pump 4 million yards of sands onto the coastline, providing for the construction of a 100 foot dune and the creation of a 200 foot beach.

Construction is expected to begin soon after Labor Day 2007, and will continue throughout the winter of 2007-2008.

"Delaware's costal communities are vitally important to the economic health and environmental well-being of the state," said Senator Biden. "Our beaches have always been a popular vacation spot for folks up and down the coast, but obviously, smaller beaches would mean fewer tourists. Beach replenishment is a worthwhile investment in our economy and I am pleased that we can complete the project this year."

"I value the Army Corps of Engineers commitment to restore Bethany beaches, one of our state's main tourist attractions and a key ingredient to the economic health of Sussex County," said Senator Carper. "I hope this project will do for Bethany what similar projects have done for Rehoboth and Dewey beaches, and that is to re-establish the beach for the residents, as well as the tens of thousands of people who visit from near and far every year."

"Just a few weeks ago, I stood on the steps of the Addy Sea, hoping that this announcement was in the works -- providing full funding for this project is absolutely the right decision, so the Army Corps and DNREC can jumpstart the replenishment and complete it within the next year," said Representative Castle. "There is no doubt that the tourism economy will see a boost from this decision and the towns and residents of Bethany and South Bethany will certainly benefit from greater storm protection. I was happy to work with the Army Corps, the Office of Management and Budget and the Delegation in ensuring this funding would come to this beach area and look forward to the kick off of the replenishment this fall."

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