

## Delegation Announces \$5.7 Million in Federal Funding for Blackbird Creek -- July 5, 2007

Townsend, DE -- Today

Delaware's Congressional Delegation announced the Department of Natural Resources and Environment Control is set to receive nearly \$5.7 million for the expansion of Blackbird Creek Reserve from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP). Senator Tom Carper and Congressman Mike Castle were joined by Secretary John Hughes of DNREC; David Kennedy, the Director of the Office of Ocean & Coastal Resource Management; Rodger Jones, State Director of the Delaware Chapter of the Nature Conservancy; and various other DNREC officials for the announcement.

DNREC plans to use the funding to purchase properties adjoining Blackbird Creek, including more than 360 acres along Eagles Nest Road Area and 200 acres of land near the Core Area Headwaters of Blackbird Creek. Both of these properties are adjacent to the core area of the Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve (DNERR).

Following the announcement, Sen. Carper and Rep. Castle ventured through the Blackbird Creek Reserve to get a first-hand look at the land which will be expanded through the acquisition of the adjoining properties with this funding.

This region has been called one of the most ecologically valuable areas remaining on the Delmarva Peninsula, and this purchase will ensure the conservation of the land for the future as well as the protection of Delaware's coastal zone.

Since 2003, Delaware's Congressional Delegation has helped to secure \$4 million in federal funding for the purchase of five parcels of nearly 385 acres that have been added to Blackbird. CELCP was established in 2002 to protect coastal and estuarine lands considered important for their ecological, conservation, recreational, historical, or aesthetic value.

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