



110 South Poplar St., Ste. 202
Wilmington, DE 19801

toll free 800-445-4935
phone 302-655-4990
fax 302-655-4991

DelawareEstuary.org

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Kate Layton

Phone: (302) 655-4990, ext. 113

Email: klayton@delawareestuary.org

****Tune in for our webinar on June 11****

WHAT: Public comment period on revised Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the Delaware Estuary (CCMP)

WHEN: Comment period runs May 21 - July 20.

WHY: PDE values your insights and comments

Facebook and Twitter: @DelawareEstuary

To sign up and participate in our June 11 webinar (or to watch later), review the draft revised CCMP, or submit comments, go to: www.DelawareEstuary.org/our-plan.

Comments Sought on Revised Long-Range Plan for the Delaware Estuary

WILMINGTON, Del. — Things change after 20 years. Scientific research provides us with new knowledge about the Delaware Estuary. Storms and hurricanes like Sandy in 2012 have heightened our understanding and awareness of the potential impacts of climate change. The organizations and people working together to protect and enhance the Delaware Estuary have evolved too. Their goals and vision for working together remain strong, but new goals and strategies have developed. A newly revised comprehensive plan reflects both the PDE's and the environment's ebbs and flows.

Partnership for the Delaware Estuary invites comments on the revised draft Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the Delaware Estuary (CCMP). This comment period runs from May 21 to July 20. PDE additionally will hold a webinar at noon on Monday, June 11 to provide information on the CCMP revision process and how to comment.

The CCMP is the blueprint that will guide the work that PDE and its partners will undertake over the next 10 years or more as well as guide how funds from the National Estuary Program are used. By revising this plan, the PDE and its partners are complying with federal regulations and lending a fresh perspective to its goals.



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“We’re so excited,” PDE Executive Director Jennifer Adkins said. “We worked with hundreds of people to create this draft, but we know there are so many others out there who care about our rivers and streams and may want to have input.”

This the first revision to the CCMP, which originally was published in 1996. The original plan outlined 77 different actions on land and water, involving people and organizations in Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey. It was a successful guide for more than 20 years, and the Delaware Estuary is showing clear signs of improvement as a result. As recently reported in PDE’s Technical report for the Delaware Estuary and Basin, (TREB), contaminants like PCBs are in decline, fish like striped bass are thriving, and there are new opportunities for people to enjoy waterfront areas.

But the TREB also shows that new strategies are needed. For example, it shows there are continued losses of wetlands and shellfish, with accelerated losses since 1996 in some cases. In response, PDE and others have developed new programs and activities like PDE’s freshwater mussel recovery initiative.

PDE held multiple phases of public outreach to engage scientists and other experts and stakeholders during the revision process, which started in 2016. This input was used to create the draft revised CCMP which includes 39 strategies for clean water, strong communities and healthy habitats. Clean water strategies focus on reducing pollution and ensuring plentiful water for the future. Strategies for strong communities focus on improving community access and resilience, and engaging people as environmental stewards. Those for healthy habitats focus on sustaining wetlands, forests and shellfish, particularly for their water filtering benefits. Education and involvement are weaved throughout the CCMP.

The Estuary spans from Trenton, New Jersey and Philadelphia to Lewes, Delaware. It relies on clean water from streams throughout the Delaware River Watershed, including those in the Delaware, Schuylkill, and Brandywine river valleys, and along the bay shores of Delaware and New Jersey. The plan aims to make watershed improvements to benefit millions of people who live, work, and play in the tristate Delaware Valley. The Delaware Estuary is one of 28 estuaries of national importance in the United States identified by Congress and included in the National Estuary Program.

After public comments are received and any changes are made, the CCMP must go to PDE’s steering committee and the EPA for final approval and adoption. Along with a copy of the draft revised CCMP, a copy of the 1996 plan is available to view on the PDE website. To sign up for the webinar (or view it afterward), review the draft revised CCMP, or submit comments, visit www.DelawareEstuary.org/our-plan.



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If you are unable to send your feedback through the online form or email, please mail your written comments to: Emily Baumbach, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Inc. 110 South Poplar St., Suite 202, Wilmington, DE 19801

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The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary is a nonprofit organization that brings together people, businesses and governments to restore and protect the Delaware River and Bay. From its headquarters in Wilmington, PDE focuses programs and scientific research on the entire environment affecting the Estuary — from Trenton to Cape May, New Jersey and Lewes, Delaware. We encourage collaboration among the Estuary's many stakeholders and seek practical solutions to help restore the natural vitality of the Delaware River and Bay on which plants, wildlife, people and businesses rely.

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Connecting people, science, and nature for a healthy Delaware River and Bay