



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER

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CHRIS CHRISTIE

Governor

KIM GUADAGNO

Lt. Governor

BOB MARTIN

Commissioner

May 13, 2013

Dear Resident:

I write to request your assistance to help protect New Jersey lives and property by allowing the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ("Army Corps") to engineer beaches and build dunes or other critical protective barriers along the shoreline of your community. By granting easements, oceanfront property owners will allow the Army Corps to expeditiously construct these vital shore projects that will protect New Jersey residents and property.

We are still rebuilding from the catastrophic damage that resulted from Superstorm Sandy. The storm uprooted families and destroyed a substantial number of homes and businesses. The State is committed to making resources available to assist New Jersey residents so that they may recover and rebuild. We are developing programs as quickly as possible to help meet the long-term recovery needs of your community.

In the months after the storm, we have been surveying and studying our coastline. One lesson we have learned is that those communities with a strong dune system and engineered beaches suffered much less damage than those communities without these protective barriers. It is critical that we reinforce our coastline as soon as possible to ensure that we are better prepared for the next storm.

The Army Corps, which is the federal agency tasked with managing dune replenishment and other coastal protection programs, is set to begin work in New Jersey in the near term. In advance of commencing work, the Army Corps requires that municipalities seek easements from oceanfront property owners so that they can construct the dunes necessary for the protection of everyone. An easement is a right of use to allow the Army Corps to build, to the extent necessary, approved beach replenishment and dune construction projects on private oceanfront property.

Many oceanfront property owners already have voluntarily provided easements that will allow government officials to build these invaluable storm protections. I commend these property owners who, in light of Sandy's devastation, have acted to protect their families and their communities.

Unfortunately, some property owners have not yet provided an easement. I implore these property owners to immediately deliver a signed easement to their local officials, so that we can continue to rebuild a more resilient Jersey Shore for everyone without further delay.

With such an important issue at the forefront of our State's efforts to recover and rebuild, I also write to clarify a common misconception about the State's plans with respect to engineered dune and beach reconstruction. The easements being sought by local officials have been limited and will not allow construction beyond the clearly defined scope of the Army Corps approved beach replenishment and dune construction project. It will not allow public boardwalks or bathroom facilities to be built on private property. Property owners who convey easements still retain the right to use and enjoy the beach. The public will also be permitted use of the replenished beach.

Permitting the State and the Army Corps to engineer beaches and erect dunes is intended to do one thing and one thing only: protect our Shore, our Shore residents, and our Shore towns.

Admittedly, the reconstruction of engineered dunes and beaches may, in some cases, alter the view of some of our oceanfront property owners. That, however, must be secondary to protecting the lives and property of all of our Shore residents and business owners. Many concerned oceanfront property owners have made the same calculation and put their families, property, and neighbors first by granting easements. I am hopeful that more property owners will take the responsible action and voluntarily grant easements to help our collective efforts to rebuild the Shore.

I will continue to work with local officials and the Army Corps, and I will remain focused on this issue until the safety and welfare of all New Jerseyans are protected by a comprehensive and cohesive engineered dune and beach protection system.

If you have any questions, please contact the DEP at (609) 341-2875 or visit <http://www.nj.gov/dep/special/hurricane-sandy/docs/beach-easements-faqs.pdf> for more information.

Sincerely,



Bob Martin
Commissioner