

New Cedar Creek Boat Ramp Dedicated in Slaughter Beach

Governor, Congressional Delegation, DNREC Secretary cut ribbon on \$3.2M Bayshore Initiative facility

✘ SLAUGHTER BEACH (July 30, 2012) – Governor Jack Markell, Senator Tom Carper and Senator Chris Coons joined DNREC Secretary Collin O’Mara and Slaughter Beach Mayor Amy J. Reed Parker today to cut the ribbon and dedicate the new Lacy E. Nichols Jr. Cedar Creek Boating Access Area in Slaughter Beach east of Milford. The new facility is a key project in the recently announced Delaware Bayshore Initiative, which promotes conservation and restoration of natural resources, enhances recreational opportunities and encourages low-impact ecotourism to support the local economy along Delaware’s coastline.


The \$3.2 million project was recently completed by Delaware contractor Kuhn Construction of Hockessin. Funding to replace the old facility consisted of 75 percent Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Funds allocated to DNREC by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and 25 percent State of Delaware matching funds from recreational fishing license fees. The Federal Aid funds come from excise taxes on fishing equipment and a portion of the federal motor fuels tax.

“This project put Delawareans to work, building a new facility that now provides anglers and boaters with improved access to the Delaware Bay,” said Governor Jack Markell. “Because of people working together on this project, so many more people will enjoy the waterways of the Delaware Bayshore.”

“Boating and fishing are vital components in Delaware’s tourism economy, supporting nearly 60,000 jobs in our state,” said U.S. Senator Tom Carper (D-Del.). “Cedar Creek has long

been one of the busiest boat launch locations in the state. Replacing the old ramps with this attractive, efficient, eco-friendly facility is a smart investment that will support our tourism industry.”

“This expansion and improvement to the Cedar Creek boat ramp will greatly improve access to the Delaware Bayshore while marking an important step in promoting ecotourism and recreation and ultimately in boosting the local economy,” U.S. Senator Chris Coons said. “As one of Delaware’s busiest boat launch locations, I am pleased that a combination of federal and state funding was used for this important project. It’s a terrific example of why partnerships are essential in moving forward projects that will help strengthen our economy.”

“Mispillion Harbor is one of the many gems of the Delaware Bayshore,” said DNREC Secretary Collin O’Mara, “and the Cedar Creek facility will significantly expand access for fishing and ecotourism. Through habitat restoration efforts and recreational enhancements, we will make the Delaware Bayshore a world-class conservation area and low-impact recreation destination.” 

The new Cedar Creek facility is designed following national standards and guidelines developed by the States Organization for Boating Access, and will be barrier free, meeting all Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations for accessibility. The facility features eight 16-foot wide concrete launch lanes with a deep V groove finish, and five full-floatation, low-maintenance aluminum boarding docks and one full-floatation aluminum courtesy dock with an aluminum gangway connected to a 30-foot timber walkway.

Ample parking is provided in a lighted area paved with specialized permeable concrete pavers – similar in appearance to patio bricks with holes that allow rain, stormwater and tidal water to drain through the parking surface. The facility includes 148 car/trailer parking spaces, 13 handicapped access

spaces, 10 single car spaces, seven staging spaces and six spaces reserved for enforcement/fire rescue/emergency vehicles. The new facility also includes an approved stormwater management system with about 8,800 square feet of wetland plantings, a pump-out station and porta-potties.

The new boat ramp is named for Lacy E. "Nick" Nichols of Dover, who worked for the DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife for 23 years. As the Division's construction manager, Nichols oversaw many key maintenance and construction projects at Division properties throughout the state, including popular fishing piers at Woodland Beach and Cape Henlopen and many facility upgrades such as the Aquatic Resources Education Center near Smyrna and the DuPont Nature Center at Slaughter Beach.

Nichols also worked on and oversaw numerous boat ramp upgrades and construction/ replacement projects, including Masseys Landing near Ocean View, Seaford on the Nanticoke River, Phillips Landing near Bethel on Broad Creek accessing the Nanticoke River, Scottons Landing on the St. Jones River near Dover, Delaware City on the Delaware River, and the Lewes Boat Ramp, completed in 2009. Overseeing the replacement of the Cedar Creek boat ramp was Nichols' most recent project – and one of the largest – prior to his retirement this past April.

✘ "Nick Nichols did outstanding work for the Division, and the projects he worked on will benefit Delawareans and visitors for many years to come," said Division of Fish and Wildlife Director David Saveikis. "We are naming this great facility for Nick as a lasting tribute to his hard work and contributions to outdoor recreation and conservation in Delaware. His innovative and successful projects have served and will continue to serve Delaware's boaters and anglers."

The old Cedar Creek ramp facility was outdated, with the 6-lane portion built in the early 1970s and the original 2-lane launch area even older. The facility also was too small to

handle the amount of use it received as one of the busiest boat launch locations in the state. Construction on the new facility began in late November of 2011.

This project is part of DNREC's Bayshore Initiative, a landscape approach to restore and protect fish and wildlife habitat, increase volunteer participation in habitat stewardship projects, enhance low-impact outdoor recreation and ecotourism opportunities, and promote associated environmentally compatible economic development. In 2011, the Delaware National Bayshore plan received national recognition as one of two Delaware projects included in a 50-state report from the U.S. Department of the Interior outlining some of the country's most promising ways to reconnect Americans to the natural world.

Since 1937, Delaware has received matching funds for fish and wildlife conservation projects from the federal Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program. This pioneering program today serves as a model for cost-effective fish and wildlife conservation and fishing and hunting access funded by those who directly benefit from the resource – the anglers and hunters. Their contributions through this “user pay, public benefit” conservation funding model benefit all Delawareans. In 2012, the DNREC Division of Fish and Wildlife and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are celebrating the 75th anniversary of this longstanding and very productive state and federal partnership.