

Sea Level Rise Awareness Week Sept. 14 – 22 encourages citizens to take actions to reduce impacts of sea level rise and climate change

WILMINGTON (Sept. 12, 2013) – At the DuPont Environmental Education Center on the Wilmington Riverfront, Governor Jack Markell, DNREC Secretary Collin O'Mara, EPA Region 3 Administrator Shawn M. Garvin, Delaware Nature Society Exec. Dir. Brian Winslow and Delaware Wild Lands Exec. Dir. Kate Hackett joined with environmental organizations to announce the kick-off of Delaware's first Sea Level Rise Awareness Week, Sept. 14 – 22. The week of activities, being sponsored by 14 Delaware environmental advocacy groups, was organized to raise awareness and encourage citizens to take actions to help reduce the potential impacts of sea level rise and climate change.

"Sea Level Rise Awareness Week encourages Delawareans to get involved in activities that will help reduce the potential impacts of sea level rise," said Governor Markell. "I want to thank the environmental groups for sponsoring events that educate and encourage citizens to take common sense actions to protect our natural resources and the quality of life we enjoy in the first state."

As a low-lying coastal state, Delaware is vulnerable to the effects of sea level rise. These effects will be experienced statewide and will impact Delaware's communities, economy, natural resources and quality of life. The state is working to proactively address these potential impacts, most recently by developing recommendations for adapting to sea level rise,

approved by the Sea Level Rise Advisory Committee.

“Sea Level Rise Awareness Week will increase awareness and understanding of the challenges facing Delaware, as the state with the lowest average elevation in the nation,” said DNREC Secretary Collin O’Mara. “Making Delaware more resilient to heavy rains, extreme storms, higher temperatures, and sea level rise through strategic investments and actions is critical to ensuring public safety, improving public health, growing the economy, and conserving our natural resources. I encourage all Delawareans to take advantage of the outstanding events and activities being offered and take simple actions in their daily lives that will reduce their carbon footprint and improve the state’s resiliency to sea level rise.”

The campaign to raise awareness about sea level rise – SOS Delaware – includes a new website with resources, information, and a downloadable brochure on the actions citizens can take to reduce the impacts of sea level rise. The website includes Sea Level Rise Awareness Week events and activities scheduled in all three counties – including volunteer tree plantings, field trips and educational presentations. In addition, a new sea level rise video by Wilmington filmmaker Michael Oates will be featured on WHYY-TV’s Delaware First program at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 13. After the premier, the film will be screened during Sea Level Rise Awareness Week events and will be available online at www.sosdelaware.org.

“With its 381 miles of shoreline– including the diverse flora and fauna of the Delaware Bay Estuary–Delaware is particularly susceptible to increased coastal erosion and wetlands inundation from sea level rise,” said EPA Regional Administrator Shawn M. Garvin. “That’s why it’s so essential we take action now.”

“This is a great opportunity for the Delaware Nature Society to get to work together with other organizations on the common goal of raising public awareness about sea level rise,” said

Brian Winslow, Executive Director of the Delaware Nature Society. “Through education, advocacy and conservation, the Delaware Nature Society works to improve Delaware’s environment.”

“Standing at the edge of Delaware Wild Lands’ Milford Neck property,” Kate Hackett, Executive Director of Delaware Wild Lands says, “I can readily see how sea level rise is impacting our saltmarsh, freshwater wetlands, and coastal forests. Given the pace of these changes, we at Delaware Wild Lands are working and reworking our restoration plans to increase resiliency of our natural resources and wildlife habitat. And it is critical that we – as organizations, as individuals, as a community, and as a State – do the same. It’s easy to get started. For ideas, visit SOSDelaware.org.”

The 14 collaborative sponsors of Sea Level Rise Awareness Week are: [Delaware Nature Society](#); [Delaware Center for Horticulture](#); [Delaware Wild Lands](#); [Delaware Center for the Inland Bays](#); [Partnership for the Delaware Estuary](#); [The Nature Conservancy – Delaware Chapter](#); [Clean Air Council](#); [Sierra Club – Delaware Chapter](#); [Delaware Interfaith Power & Light](#); [Delaware Greenways](#); GreenWatch Institute; [League of Women Voters of Delaware](#); [Delmarva Ornithological Society](#); and [Delaware Audubon](#).

The Delaware legislature endorsed this statewide initiative, when in June the 147th General Assembly passed a House Concurrent Resolution ([HRC-17](#)) officially proclaiming September 14 – 22 as Sea Level Rise Awareness Week.

For more information visit, www.SOSDelaware.org.

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