

Governor Carney, DNREC cut ribbon on new wildlife-viewing tower at Little Creek Wildlife Area

(Cutting the ribbon for the Little Creek Wildlife Area boardwalk trail and wildlife-viewing tower east of Dover are, left to right: Governor John Carney, DNREC Division of Fish & Wildlife Director David Saveikis, Delaware Bayshore Initiative Coordinator Anthony Gonzon, DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin, past DNREC Secretary David Small, Representative Bill Carson, Little Creek Mayor Glenn Gauvry, Federal Highway Administration Delaware Division Administrator Doug Atkin, and DeLDOT Byways Program Manager Mike Hahn. DNREC photo by Joanna Wilson.)

Division of Fish & Wildlife-managed facility offers Bayshore views for visitors of all abilities

DOVER – Delaware Governor John Carney and DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin were joined today by State Representative Bill Carson, Division of Fish & Wildlife Director David Saveikis, Little Creek Mayor Glenn Gauvry, Federal Highway Administration Delaware Division Administrator Doug Atkin, and DNREC Division of Fish & Wildlife and DeLDOT staff to cut the ribbon officially opening the newly-completed Little Creek wildlife-viewing tower and accompanying boardwalk on the Little Creek Wildlife Area east of Dover.

The two-level observation tower's boardwalk trail, lower level deck, and parking are fully-accessible for visitors with disabilities. The tower includes a unique railing design and expanded toe box on the lower level to allow disabled visitors to move closer to the rails for a better view.

A popular location with local bird watchers for decades, the new Little Creek Wildlife Area facility replaces an outdated tower that was not accessible to visitors with physical limitations and disabilities. Seasonally, visitors can view a variety waterfowl, wading birds, shorebirds, raptors, and songbirds from the tower and along the boardwalk. Travelers along the Route 9 corridor, part of Delaware's Bayshore Byway, can stop at this new destination to take in the beauty of Delaware's Bayshore. Interpretive signs provide visitors with information about the wildlife, habitat, and management of the Little Creek Wildlife Area.

"Delaware's Bayshore, and the Delaware Bayshore Byway that brings visitors here, are among our state's treasures, from its woods, waters, and wetlands, to its historic small towns nestled along our eastern coastline," said Governor Carney. "The accessible features of this specially-designed tower, boardwalk, and parking make it convenient for all visitors – including those with disabilities – to see and enjoy this part of our beautiful Bayshore."

"The new Little Creek wildlife-viewing tower provides a sweeping view of the Delaware Bay and some of its many marshes to attract birders as well as visitors simply enjoying a beautiful day on the Bayshore," said Secretary Garvin. "This new facility also demonstrates DNREC's commitment to providing exceptional outdoor recreational experiences for visitors of all abilities."

Funding for the \$1.06 million project comes from Delaware Bayshore Initiative Bond Bill funds, Trails and Pathways Bond Bill funds, and Federal Highway Administration Scenic Byway Grant funds for the Delaware Bayshore Byway. The project supports the Delaware Bayshore Initiative by enhancing outdoor recreation access and supporting local communities like nearby Little Creek.

Managed by DNREC's Division of Fish & Wildlife, the Little

Creek Wildlife Area provides opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, boating, and other similar outdoor recreation activities. The Division of Fish & Wildlife manages 19 wildlife areas totaling more than 60,000 acres statewide, including dozens of public-use facilities.

DNREC's Conservation Access Pass (CAP) requirement for registered motor vehicles used to access wildlife areas is waived on the Little Creek Wildlife Area from Friday, Nov. 8 through Monday, Nov. 11. CAP revenues generated throughout the year are used by the Division of Fish & Wildlife to maintain wildlife-viewing structures and for habitat management on wildlife areas.

The Little Creek Wildlife Area is part of Delaware's Bayshore Region, the area that stretches from New Castle to Lewes along the Delaware River and Bay coastline. The Delaware Bayshore Initiative enhances and promotes the region as a world-class conservation and low-impact recreation area, strengthens local communities, and improves the quality of life for all Delawareans. The initiative received recognition from the U.S. Department of the Interior, as one of the country's most promising ways to reconnect America to the natural world.

Formally launched in 2015, the Delaware Bayshore Byway follows Route 9 starting in historic New Castle and ending in the City of Lewes, meandering along Delaware's river and bay shoreline through coastal marshes and forests, fields and farms, quiet coastal communities, and recreational and historic sites. The Scenic Byway Grant, administered to DNREC by DelDOT through the Federal Highway Administration, provides funds to enhance wildlife viewing opportunities along the Bayshore Byway.

For more information on the Little Creek Wildlife Area, please contact the DNREC Division of Fish & Wildlife's Wildlife Section at 302-739-9912.

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