

Initial funds were provided by Congressional adds but the program was included in the President's FY2006 budget. The FY 2006 appropriation includes \$ 1,000,000 in additional funds for the program. There is the possibility that a new solicitation for proposals will be published in the early spring of 2006.

Information on the program is available on our web site <http://www.usace.army.mil/estuary.html> where you may also sign up for the ERA list serve. Or contact [Ellen Cummings](#), CECW-PB at 202-761-4750.

Environmental awareness is for the birds! ... and everyone else

JoAnne Castagna, New York District



East Inlet Island (Provided by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Long Island Field Office).

A flock of young shore birds spread their wings and fly away from their nests on East Inlet Island in the Long Island Intracoastal Waterway in New York, for their first major flight south for the winter. A few years ago, this wouldn't have occurred because many of these birds are threatened and endangered. It's a reality now because several agencies put their minds together and created a project that not only benefits wildlife but their team players as well.

In 2002, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District in cooperation with several environmental, state and local agencies created a wildlife habitat on this island for threatened and endangered bird species using dredged sand from the waterway. Sand is regularly dredged to ease boat travel.

This sand was placed on the mainland in the past, but Long Island's growing residential and business developments has limited land space, so the team of agencies had to think of another location and they decided on an environmentally beneficial one.

For the past few years shorebirds, such as least terns, common terns, piping plovers and roseate terns have colonized, nested and breed on this island, demonstrating just one example of how the Corps is collaborating with partnering agencies to produce successful environmental projects.

"In the past our dredging projects were criticized by the public for affecting endangered shorebird habitats," said John Tavolaro, Chief, Operations Support Branch. Tavolaro lead the wildlife habitat project.

"Once the Corps proposed creating a bird habitat with the same dredged sand, we received enthusiastic support. Some of our most vocal critics turned around and actually supported the innovative things we were doing."

Tavolaro said that performing environmentally friendly projects is hard at first but is beneficial to all involved in the end. Following are the benefits that can be expected:



Piping Plover (Provided by USACE).

-Strengthens customer relationships: When customers, such as environmental agencies, see the positive results of environmentally aware projects this increases their trust. As a result, these customers who may have been wary originally may be more open to providing additional ideas for improving the project.

-Builds public trust: When the public realizes that their quality of life has been enhanced in ways above and beyond the ones originally envisioned for the project this increases their trust and support of the project.

-Saves time and money: Performing environmentally aware projects is harder at first, but it gets easier. In the beginning you may find yourself educating and convincing your organization of the benefits of environmentally aware projects. You will also have to build trust with environmental groups and agencies so that they agree with what you want to do.

-Once you have a project success story, your efficiency will increase because it is easier for you to do the project. For example, there will be less difficulty in securing permits from locals and greater local support for the project. Being more efficient saves money and time.

-Expands engineer's skills: You will experience a wider breadth of professional experience of the environmental field and gain personal satisfaction that you are doing good things, smart things.

-Produces better projects: When a project is successful this increases customer support of it and it's produced more efficiently. Customers who are happy with the project will be open to providing additional ideas and suggestions for improving it and will work to remove any potential project barriers, such as securing permits, saving the project time and money.

Want to be more environmentally aware? Tavolaro suggests the following:

-Talk & Listen: Talk to the locals and resource agencies to get to know them and to find out what they value and find out about their top issues. Put your heads together with whomever has any ideas on how to make your project more environmentally friendly. This not only brings fresh ideas into the mix but also improves your relationships with these individuals and groups. Tavolaro said that this process has made him a better listener.

-Research: It also doesn't hurt to check out the websites of the major agencies or groups that you plan to work with to see what their mission and priorities are. It might give you ideas.

-“Being environmentally friendly in projects is an innovation,” said Tavolaro. “It requires creative thinking. As with any innovation or creative endeavor, it helps to have input. You cannot do this without including other folks who do not look at the world as you do.”

He continued, “This is the hard part – gaining trust and making a diverse group productive. Group dynamics are the key management challenge.”

[Dr. JoAnne Castagna](#) is a technical writer/editor for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District.

Historic spawning area opens to fish on the Batsto River after 100 years

Mark D. Eberle and Merv E. Brokke, Philadelphia District

Restoration project earns 2005 Coastal America Partnership Award for Philadelphia District and its Partners

For its innovative partnership and project success, Coastal America Director Virginia K. Tippie and John Paul Woodley Jr., Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, presented the Philadelphia District and its partners with its 2005 Coastal America Partnership Award during a ceremony on the Batsto River October 17.

“It is indeed an honor to receive this prestigious Coastal America award. I am proud of the work accomplished by the professionals on this team. They are true stewards of our land. Partnerships are what makes the Corps of Engineers the premier public engineering organization it is. This partnership has constructed a project that will benefit the river ecosystem, the fish, and the thousands of visitors to Batsto State Park for years to come,” said Lt. Col. Robert J. Ruch, District Engineer for the Philadelphia District.

Along with the non-federal sponsor the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection there were other federal and non-federal partners who honored for the contributions to the project: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, New Jersey Corporate Wetlands Restoration Partnership, Pinelands Preservation Alliance, American Rivers, Alden Research Laboratory, and the contractor Kuhnel Company.