

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 4, 2021

Mr. Robert Fairweather
Acting Director
United States Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Acting Director Fairweather:

We write in strong support of funding the Hudson-Raritan Estuary (HRE) Ecosystem Restoration project in the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 budget. As you may know, the Congress included authorization for the HRE ecosystem restoration project in the Water Resources Development Act after the completion of the Chief's report last year. The HRE is designed as an estuary of national significance under the Environmental Protection Agency's National Estuary Program and deserving of support in this budget cycle.

There are currently 27 federally threatened or endangered species under the Endangered Species Act that utilize the HRE for habitat. After years of collaboration with stakeholders, the HRE Comprehensive Restoration Plan (CRP) was created to provide a regional consensus for the estuary.

The reporting officers recommended construction authorization of a National Ecosystem Restoration (NER) Plan that will provide for the restoration of approximately 381 acres of estuarine wetland habitat. Of note, this includes habitat restoration in the Metromedia Tract and Meadowlark Marsh areas of the Hackensack River. These are important restoration projects for my district in Northern New Jersey.

As an authorized construction project, support for the HRE must be included in the President's FY22 budget for consideration by Congress to receive appropriations in the upcoming fiscal year. The total federal match for the HRE is \$273,933,000, while non-federal remains at \$147,502,000. To begin work on the recently completed Chief's report and achieve its status as a "world class estuary," we urge support for this project in the President's FY22 budget.

Thank you very much for your attention. We look forward to working with you to restore ecosystems in our communities.

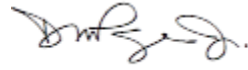
Sincerely,



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable John E. Whitley, Acting Secretary of the Army
Lieutenant General Scott A. Spellmon, Chief of Engineers and Commanding General of
the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers