



MEMO

To: Communities of Pickering Beach, Kitts Hummock, Bowers Beach, and Slaughter Beach

From: Gregory Patterson, Secretary
Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

Lt. Col. Ryan Baum, Philadelphia District Commander
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Date: September 10, 2026

Re: Revised Schedule for the Delaware Bay Beach Nourishment Project

As partners in the upcoming Delaware Bay Beach Nourishment Project, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) have been working to expedite the project's construction. A key requirement before the project can be put to bid is DNREC's acquisition of all necessary real estate. Given the depleted condition of some bay beaches, DNREC and the Corps have been attempting to do in a matter of months what has taken two years or more in other coastal nourishment projects.

Unfortunately, because these real estate requirements have not been fully met, the project cannot proceed to bid and construction in the fall/winter of 2026. Construction is now targeted to begin in the fall of 2027 when Federal and State environmental regulations permit beach construction activities.

Several factors contributed to this revised timeline:

- **Incomplete Real Estate Acquisition:** Despite significant efforts from DNREC, USACE, and community leaders, many property easements are still outstanding. As of Sept. 4, about 100 of the 166 required permanent easements from beachfront property owners across all four communities have been secured. Resolving the remaining easements is critical to moving forward.

- **Project Must Start In Fall/Winter:** To protect horseshoe crabs and shorebirds, there is an environmental restriction that runs from April 15 to September 15 each year, meaning nourishment work cannot generally be done during that period. Work started in fall or winter 2026 would need to finish before the restricted window begins on April 15, 2027.
- **At Least Seven Months Are Needed From Bid Decision To Project Completion:** In order to finish by April 2027, a decision to start the bid process would have needed to be made by Sept. 1, 2026.
- **Project Cannot Be Divided:** It is not feasible to split the project by community. The high cost of mobilizing and demobilizing large-scale dredging equipment makes it impractical to pause and restart the work. A single, continuous project ensures that we can place the maximum amount of sand and deliver the intended level of coastal storm risk management.

To keep the project on track for a fall 2027 start, all necessary real estate easements must be acquired in time for USACE to solicit bids by March 2027. We urge property owners who have not yet completed their easement packages to do so as soon as possible. If you have questions or foresee issues with your easement, please contact the DNREC project team as soon as possible.

While this delay is disappointing, the extended timeline is expected to result in lower project costs, maximizing the quantity of sand placed on Delaware beaches.

In the interim, DNREC will place limited amounts of sand at Pickering Beach and Kitts Hummock via truck haul to provide increased coastal storm risk management for the upcoming 2026-27 winter season. These smaller projects are scheduled to occur between October and January. Affected property owners will receive more detailed information from DNREC shortly.

We understand the frustration this delay may cause. Both of our agencies remain fully committed to completing this vital project for your communities.

For continued updates, please visit our project website: [Bay Beach Nourishment Project - DNREC](#). For any easement-related questions, please contact DNREC_shorelines@delaware.gov.