



Credit: Sandi Bisgood

# Delaware Estuary Program

## Water Table Project – Phase 2

# History of the National Estuary Program

- Under the 1987 amendments to the Clean Water Act, the National Estuary Program (NEP) was authorized by Congress to maintain the health and ecological integrity of estuaries of national interest.
- Each NEP required to develop a Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan (CCMP)
- The Delaware Estuary was nominated for inclusion in the NEP on May 31, 1988 by the governors of NJ, PA, and DE. EPA added DELEP to the NEP on July 18, 1988
- The Delaware Estuary Program(DELEP)'s structure includes a Steering Committee (EPA Regions 2 and 3, the 3 states, PWD, DRBC, and PDE); Estuary Implementation Committee (comprised of one representative from each agency on the Steering Committee); and a Science and Technical Advisory Committee.
- Currently there are 28 National Estuary Programs.



# Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Inc.

- **PDE was incorporated in 1996 – was an Action Item in DELEP’s CCMP and created to provide a forum for public input into:**
  - **Protecting the environment, promoting conservation of natural resources,** and contributing to the usefulness of the Delaware Estuary and its tribs for recreational and commercial purposes that are compatible with the sustainable use of estuarine resources;
  - **Engaging in the implementation, continued development, and updating on a periodic basis of the CCMP,** including but not limited to tracking implementation, monitoring environmental trends and environmental/ecological threats, identifying scientific and environmental research and monitoring needs, highlighting conservation and management barriers and management opportunities and barriers;



# PDE's Roles Continued

- **Advancing knowledge, promoting sound technology and scientific methods, and facilitating the exchange of ideas and information** through such means as the development of an estuary-wide information clearinghouse and the promotion of increased understanding and appreciation of the Delaware Estuary and its tributaries.
- **Serving as an independent fundraising vehicle** that can accept federal and state funds and attract scientific and environmental research, planning, and implementation funds as charitable gifts from private foundations, industry and individuals;
- **Supporting, assisting, making grants,** and providing other incentives to aid in the protection and enhancement of the Delaware Estuary.



# Revised CCMP 2019

## 10 year plan to be updated every 5 years

- **Overarching priorities of environmental justice and climate change**
- **Theme 1 - Clean Waters**
  - Goal 1: Reduce nutrient pollution and its impacts
  - Goal 2: Reduce other pollutants and their impacts
  - Goal 3: Sustain flow for drinking water and ecosystems
- **Theme 2 - Healthy Habitats**
  - Goal 1: Prevent wetland loss
  - Goal 2: Stem forest loss
  - Goal 3: Increase and improve fish and shellfish habitat
- **Theme 3 – Strong Communities**
  - Goal 1: Increase community resilience and access
  - Goal 2: Improve public awareness and stakeholder engagement



# Challenges

- Huge geography with priorities that vary greatly
- Funding
- Limited people power
- Complex political landscape
- Complex stakeholder landscape
- Many management plans that are not linked with the CCMP
- Difficult to track progress of CCMP implementation
- Lack of branding for the Delaware River and Bay





Partnership for the  
**DELAWARE  
ESTUARY**

# Let's Collaborate

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*Connecting people, science, and nature  
for a healthy Delaware River and Bay*