

Enhancing the Environment

Within the heart of the Delaware Estuary in New Jersey and Delaware, tidal wetlands are thriving, as are the fish and wildlife that call it home. As one of the most productive ecosystems in the region, the wetlands perform many valuable functions, including filtering impurities from storm water runoff, minimizing the damage of storm surges, providing shelter and food for migrating birds and serving as spawning, breeding and nursery grounds for fish and wildlife.

These successes are not by accident but the result of advanced wetlands science and engineering principles. Through a unique public/private partnership, scientists, environmental groups, natural resource and land management agencies, public officials and local communities are working together to restore the estuary.

Created by PSEG in 1994, the Estuary Enhancement Program is designed to minimize any potential adverse environmental effects of PSEG's Salem Generating Station. The Estuary Enhancement Program represents an innovative approach to resolving complex environmental issues in a way that provides long-term benefits for the ecology, environment, fisheries, wildlife, economy and people of the Delaware Estuary region.

Encompassing more than 32 square miles throughout South Jersey and Delaware and one and a half times the size of Manhattan, it is the nation's largest privately funded wetlands restoration project.

Through the project, habitats for fish and other aquatic species are expanded and protected by

restoring tidal exchange to formerly diked wetlands and controlling sites dominated by phragmites, a tall invasive plant. By creating channels and dikes and inducing the re-establishment of smaller channels, fish production in these degraded marshes is enhanced. In addition, the program has installed over a dozen fish ladders on estuary tributaries to help river herring overcome barriers that block their migration into historical freshwater spawning and nursery grounds.



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Studies show that the overall health of the estuary continues to improve with analysis of long-term fish populations in the estuary generally remaining stable or increasing. For its success, this unique project has been recognized with numerous awards and now serves as an international model for wetlands restoration.

Locally, the Estuary Enhancement Program's vast natural areas provide access for recreation, environmental education, research and ecotourism. To promote the area, the program has constructed public use facilities and enhancements, developed public use programs and installed educational signs to promote the area.

When it comes to the environment, success can only be measured by nature and its response to changes. With nature thriving and life flourishing as it does today, the successes achieved in the Delaware Estuary will live on for generations to come.

What's your view? Please let us know at Opinion@PSEG.com.



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