

United States Senate

January 23, 2024

The Honorable Richard Spinrad
Administrator
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
14th Street and Constitution Avenue, NW
Floor 6, Room 62008

Dear Administrator Spinrad:

I write in support of the New Jersey Sports & Exposition Authority's (NJSEA) application for funding through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Climate Resilience Regional Challenge. The NJSEA's *Building a Climate Ready NJ* is a tidal marsh restoration pilot project for the Sawmill Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA), which spans 727 acres in the municipalities of Kearny, North Arlington, and Lyndhurst.

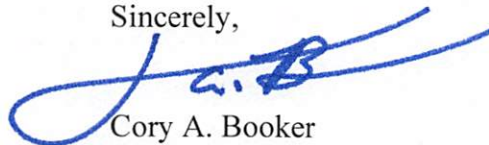
The NJSEA is part of a statewide consortium of over 20 cooperating organizations seeking NOAA funding to protect the important infrastructure that runs through the Meadowlands District. This proposal addresses sea level rise and a lack of sediment re-nourishment that continue to threaten the remaining areas of vegetated marsh. The existing high and low marshes within the Sawmill Creek WMA act as a carbon sink; restoring the vegetated marshes would serve to protect the remaining organic carbon stored in the sediments and increase organic carbon storage.

In addition to restoring the shorelines and marshes of the Sawmill Creek WMA, this project will expand stakeholder engagement and showcase demonstration sites to other communities throughout the state and region. These ecological restoration actions will improve water quality, enhance habitat, and provide improved access to natural areas and waterways for local underserved and overburdened communities in the Meadowlands District and the surrounding New York/New Jersey Harbor Estuary.

The marsh provides forms of recreation for the local community while absorbing storm surges, filtering water, and providing habitat for wildlife. Federal funding will support an enhanced understanding of climate change effects on tidal wetlands related to sea level rise and other stressors impacting soil and vegetation health, as well as inspire and inform future tidal wetland restoration projects. Therefore, this project increases organic carbon storage, builds coastal resiliency, improves water quality, and enhances the habitability for wildlife and humans alike.

I ask that you give all due consideration to this grant application, and I thank you in advance for your attention to this important project. Should you have any questions, please contact me or my staff at (973) 639-8700.

Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator