

****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****

Delaware Center for the Inland Bays breaks ground on Phase II of the James Farm Master Plan

The Delaware Center for the Inland Bays (Center) celebrated the groundbreaking of Phase II of improvements at the James Farm Ecological Preserve in Ocean View on June 12th.

The James Farm Ecological Preserve (Preserve), managed by the Center on behalf of Sussex County since 1998, is a 150-acre nature preserve located along the Indian River Bay. The Preserve is open to the public 365 days a year and serves as the hub of the Center's environmental education programming. The Preserve saw over 33,000 visits last year and is a vital educational and recreational resource for visitors, students, and scientists alike.

Phase II of the James Farm Master Plan focuses on enhancing the Preserve's infrastructure to better accommodate environmental education, restoration, research, and community recreation activities. Planned enhancements include trail system improvements and updates, a habitat restoration staging area, expanded storage and maintenance facilities, new integrated interpretive and wayfinding signage, and the construction of a three-season environmental education building with capacity for up to 70 individuals, equipped with electricity, presentation capabilities, counter space, and sinks for lab activities.

"Sussex County is excited to see its long-standing partnership with the Center for the Inland Bays flourish in this project to build a new educational center showcasing the James Farm," said County Councilman Doug Hudson, whose district includes the Preserve. "Improvements like this will help in our collective mission of educating children and adults alike about the importance of the Inland Bays ecosystem here in Sussex County, as well as preserving and protecting this coastal gem for generations to come."

To secure funding for the implementation of the James Farm Master Plan, the Center has undertaken a capital campaign. This campaign seeks state- and county-level funding, foundation grants, individual and corporate gifts, and in-kind donations of professional services, materials, and labor. The campaign's goal is \$2.8 million. If you would like to support the capital campaign, please visit: <https://inlandbays.org/james-farm-master-plan-capital-campaign/>

The Delaware Center for the Inland Bays, established in 1994, is a nonprofit organization and one of 28 National Estuary Programs dedicated to preserving, protecting, and restoring Delaware's Inland Bays and their watershed. For more information, please visit <https://www.inlandbays.org> or contact the Center directly at (302) 226-8105.

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Photo 1 Caption: (L to R) Bob Collins, Center Manager of Facilities & Programs, Angela Padeletti, EPA Region 3, Rob Jadick, Bancroft Construction Regional Vice President, Anna Fagan, Center Deputy Director, Christophe Tulou, Center Executive Director, Michelle Koenig, Center Director of Conservation & Watershed Planning, Pat Coluzzi, Center Board President, George Cole, former Sussex County Councilman, Gerard Esposito, Center Board Elected Director & Development Committee Chair, David D. Quillin, David D. Quillin Architecture, Doug Hudson, Sussex County Councilman, and Todd Lawson, Sussex County Administrator.



Photo 2 Caption: Center staff and volunteers at the groundbreaking. L to R: Michelle Koenig, Jazz Petersen, Matthew Buczik, Daniel Fulton, Logan Carey, Taylor Hoffman, Lisa Swanger, Marina Feeser, Caitlin Chaney, Sue Sigvardson, Jackie Knoll, Anne Koenig, Lori Whitehaus, Mary Hartnett, Nivette Perez-Perez, Bob Collins, Maddie Fox, Morgan Krell, Mark Carter, Tom Whitehaus, Anna Fagan.

JAMES FARM ECOLOGICAL PRESERVE MASTER PLANS



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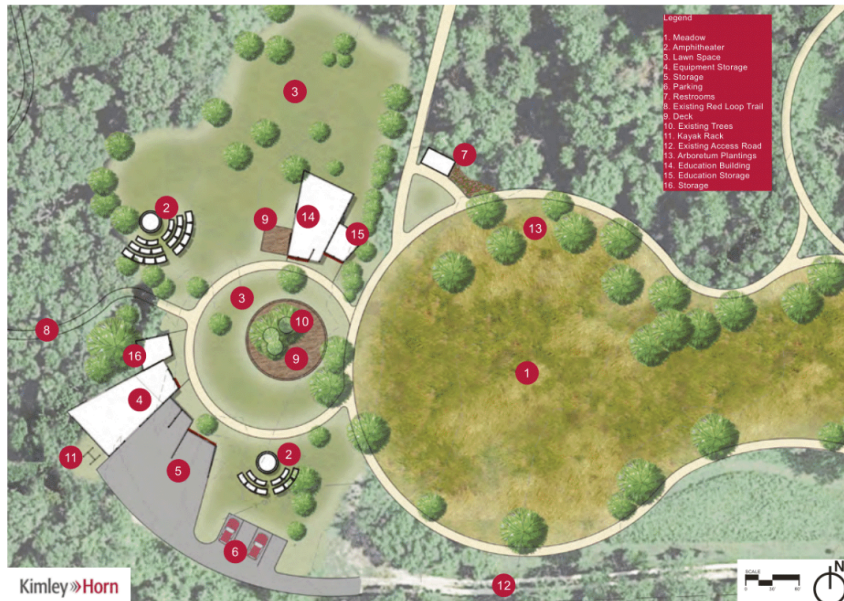


Photo 3 Caption: Construction renderings of the planned improvements at the James Farm

Ecological Preserve, including the new environmental education building. Architecture by [David D. Quillin](#)