

Protecting Natural Floodplain Functions

Photo: Emie Oros Wildlife Preserve, Omar Ave., Avenel

Credit: Beth Schreier



Let's Keep Our Waterways and Natural Areas Clean and Pristine

Nuisance flooding during full-moon high tides, heavy rain events, and strong coastal surges during storm seasons have been increasing in velocity, frequency, and intensity. In addition, climactic shifts due to an increase in greenhouse gas emissions continue to show flooding issues climbing higher than predictions. Critical near-shore habitats, wetlands, and upland forests can function as buffers to absorb excess water and wind energy introduced into a watershed.

Natural habitats are the definition of resilient infrastructure, as they are more readily able to rebound after powerful storm events. In addition to providing flood storage capacity, these areas are havens for safeguarding the existing benefits associated with healthy natural areas, such as filtration of nutrient run-off and carbon storage. And, there important ecological features strengthen biodiversity, and provide exciting recreational opportunities.

Flooded With Favorable Functions

Vegetation helps to filter floodwaters and regulate temperatures associated with nearby waterways.

Biological resources are of critical importance, as these areas are located where uplands and aquatic environments meet and produce a diversity of life. According to the Association of State Wetland Managers nearly 70% of wildlife species rely on natural areas typically found within floodplains.