



# Saving America's Most Crowded Watershed

118<sup>th</sup> Congress

Lead Sponsors: Rep. Tonko (D-NY), Rep. Malliotakis (R-NY), Senator Booker (D-NJ), and Senator Gillibrand (D-NY)

## The NY-NJ Watershed is a Regional & National Resource

- The NY-NJ Watershed encompasses the watersheds that flow into the NY-NJ Harbor, their associated estuaries, and the Harbor itself, and provides invaluable ecosystem, community, and economic benefits to the states of New York, New Jersey, and beyond.
- The watershed is located in one of the most densely populated and economically important regions in the country, generating more than **\$60 billion in annual revenue** from tourism, fishing, and recreational activities.
- Millions of Americans enjoy **health, quality of life, and property value benefits** from the trails, parks, beaches, and greenspaces in the watershed.
- Wetlands in the region provide substantial **water quality and storm surge benefits**.

## Our Waterways Need Restoration & Increased Access

- The NY-NJ Watershed faces serious and ongoing threats.
- **Hazardous waste, legacy chemicals, and partially treated or untreated wastewater** continue to diminish water quality in both major and minor rivers within the watershed.
- New York and New Jersey share nearly **500 miles of coastline** that is vulnerable to increasingly frequent storm surges and rising seas.
- Many residents of the watershed region lack adequate access to clean water, greenspaces, and other natural resources.

## Congress Must Act to Restore this Vital System!

### The New York-New Jersey Watershed Protection Act of 2023:

- **Establishes a new program**, administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and modeled on other successful regional watershed restoration programs, to coordinate restoration efforts
- **Ensures that restoration efforts utilize science-based principles** to protect fish and wildlife habitat, improve water quality, increase public access to the watershed, mitigate flood risks, and develop public outreach and educational activities.
- Emphasizes the need for restoration funds to be delivered to **frontline communities experiencing environmental injustice**.
- **Authorizes \$20,000,000 annually** for watershed restoration grants through Fiscal Year 2029.

*This legislation would protect and restore our watersheds and estuaries, improving recreational and economic opportunity for millions of Americans!*