



PRESS RELEASE

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[Summit Agenda](#)

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[Social Media](#)

2025 Delaware Estuary Science & Environmental Summit Kicks Off in Wilmington

20th Biennial Summit Celebrates Bridging the Gap between Science, Policy, and Action

WILMINGTON — Twenty years ago, the first Delaware Estuary Science & Environmental Summit started a conversation, that continues to this day, about the key issues affecting the Delaware Estuary. Since then, science has been the foundation of Partnership for the Delaware Estuary's (PDE) mission and core values.

“Today, our research and educational programs help scientists, teachers, students, and the public connect the dots between science, nature, and their communities,” said PDE Executive Director Kathy Klein.

On Tuesday, for its 20th anniversary, PDE opened this year's Summit in Delaware, the place where it all started.

“We're especially pleased to bring the Summit back to Delaware this year, 20 years after the inaugural event in 2005,” Klein said. “We look forward to seeing and learning from partners from across the region as we celebrate our shared commitment to improving the environmental health of our waterways, habitats, and communities.”

The first day's keynote speaker was Tony MacDonald, Director of the Monmouth University Urban Coast Institute (UCI) in West Long Branch, New Jersey, whose topic was “Change Climate and Environments – A Policy Perspective and Actions We Can Take.” Wednesday's keynote speaker is Rachel Hogan Carr, Executive Director of the Nurture Nature Center in Easton, Pennsylvania. Her topic will be “Connecting Science to Communities.”

There are more than 70 presentations at this year's summit focused on what you can find in, around, and on the water in the Delaware Estuary and Basin. Topics range from technical science

deep dives such as “Improving Dissolved Oxygen in the Delaware River Estuary” and “Investigating the Use of Diatoms as Inundation Indicators on Living Shorelines” to more engagement-related topics such as “Celebrating 75 Years of Sport Fish Restoration in the Delaware Estuary” and “Making the Outdoors More Accessible in the Delaware River Watershed.”

“For the past 20 years, dedicated scientists, practitioners, and community members have been working to sustain the Delaware Estuary and River Basin,” said PDE Estuary Science Director LeeAnn Haaf, Ph.D. “For this Summit, we’re celebrating how decades of science and research have successfully informed policies and led to action, lending to our collective achievements in healthy habitats, clean waters, and resilient communities.”

This year, PDE and partner organizations are proud to honor U.S. Sen. Thomas R. Carper at a special dinner on Tuesday night. Carper has served Delaware in elected office since 1976 as state treasurer, governor, U.S. Representative, and U.S. Senator. He has been a longtime champion of the environment as an advocate for the National Estuary Program and in federal investments in local coastal community conservation and restoration efforts. In the Senate, he was chairman of the Environment and Public Works Committee and led the passage of the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act.

This Summit is a great opportunity to meet and network with scientists and environmental professionals. If you’re a journalist, this event is a goldmine for story ideas and contacts.

Keep up with the Summit on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Flickr. Our handle is @DelawareEstuary. Visit PDE’s website at www.delawareestuary.org/summit for more information.

QUESTIONS? For more information about the Summit, contact PDE Communications Manager Kate Layton at klayton@delawareestuary.org or by phone at (302) 255-6878.

PDE extends its thanks to the PSEG Foundation for providing a scholarship opportunity to a number of community leaders from across the Delaware River Watershed to attend the Summit. The Summit provides a space for the awardees to network and exchange ideas with other attendees and presenters, learn more about environmental and sustainability topics, and discuss resources.

PDE also thanks the following Benefactor and Patron sponsors for making the 2025 Summit possible: The Energy Transfer/Sunoco Foundation, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Artesian Water, Constellation Energy, Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Delaware River Basin Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Veolia. Additional funding support is provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

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The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, host of the Delaware Estuary Program, leads collaborative, science-based efforts to improve the Delaware River and Bay, which covers portions of Delaware, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.