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Environmentalists Cry Foul – Army Corps Funds Deepening Despite Legal Challenges, New Endangered Species Litigation, and State Opposition

Washington, D.C.: The Army Corps announced today \$16.86 million for Delaware River deepening project using a “slush” fund created to circumvent the ban on earmarks passed last year. Environmental and community advocates cried foul – pointing out that the Army Corps chose this path to fund the Deepening because it cannot honestly demonstrate the project meets minimum guidelines generally used to make taxpayer funding decisions.

“This is the ugliest example of political manipulation we have ever seen regarding this project – facts, law and good policy have been thrown out the window to serve the political whims of Senators Casey and Toomey,” said **Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper**. “This project is an economic loser, is unnecessary for the ports, and inflicts major environmental and community harm. The project is still hundreds of millions of dollars shy of what is needed to complete it. In short, the project is an embarrassment and waste of money, and we will continue to work to stop it now,” **van Rossum** said.

"If this were a project worth \$16.9 Million, the private sector would find the \$16.9 Million to make it happen. In an era when the country is in major deficit, we should not be spending any taxpayer funds on projects that are known to be a loser, not a project that will choke the Delaware Estuary," said **Brady Russell, Eastern PA Director, Clean Water Action**.

“This is blood money; they are taking money from the tax payers to try to destroy our river and estuary. The Delaware deepening will cause irreparable harm to the Delaware River, the aquifer, and the

people of South Jersey. Instead of using this money to protect our drinking water and the environment it is being used to destroy it,” **said Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Sierra Club.** “This is an outrageous abuse of governmental process.”

“The Delaware River deepening is a major threat to the Delaware River, including the fish, shellfish and wildlife that today are needed to provide healthy food and hundreds of millions of dollars a year supporting income and jobs. The Army Corps’ own documents, when investigated by experts, demonstrate that the Delaware River deepening is not needed to support the ports of the region, will not result in increased goods coming to the region, does not meet basic criteria used to guide taxpayer funding decisions, and will likely lose money for every dollar invested in the project. It is stunning that in today’s economic climate an unsubstantiated claim for port jobs is allowed to justify a \$300 million dollar expenditure in a project that will harm family supporting river jobs in existence today,” **said Delaware Riverkeeper van Rossum.** “It is disturbing that false and undocumented claims of jobs are allowed to rob families who depend upon a healthy River and Bay for their livelihood, like fishermen and oystermen, simply because they don’t have the same political sway as the industry groups, the army corps and the ports pushing this wasteful and environmentally harmful project forward.”

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