



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Senator Murphy, Assemblyman Buchwald, pass landmark legislation to cleanup Westchester waterways

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VALHALLA, NY - Flooding and watershed concerns have plagued Westchester County for years but today Senator Terrence Murphy and Assemblyman David Buchwald announced the signing of measures which will provide crucial funding for local municipalities to address these environmental needs. The legislation, which was signed by Governor Cuomo, adds the first tributaries in Westchester County to New York's list of inland waterways.

"Today's announcement only further proves that when we work together we can accomplish great things," said Senator Terrence Murphy. "By adding these rivers and lakes to the list of inland waterways, we have empowered our local communities the ability to improve our environment, infrastructure and economy through crucial grant opportunities. I applaud my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, and in both houses, for supporting this important initiative on behalf of the localities we represent every day."

The idea to initiate this legislation was born from the Board of Legislator's Bronx River Advisory Board and the Saw Mill River Advisory Board. Recognizing the need to address frequent flooding concerns left lawmakers with budgetary needs that can now be addressed. According to the Department of Environmental Conservation, the Inland Waterways Program is used to protect coastal and inland waterway resources as well as revitalize waterfront communities. The program is administered through the Department of State.

"Our communities deserve every opportunity to have clean lakes and rivers," said Assemblyman David Buchwald. "By designating these bodies of water as 'inland waterways,' our villages, towns, and cities will have the ability to tap into state funds to make vital infrastructural advances, improve water quality, and expand public access to the beauty of Westchester. Clean and accessible waterways are imperative to sustaining a high quality of life for our area's residents, and I am pleased that our communities can now take advantage of state resources to improve our environment."

The legislation now adds the Bronx River, Pocantico River, Saw Mill River, Campfire Lake, Echo Lake and Peach Lake to the state's inland waterway list. The Department of State can now appropriate funds to municipalities which border these waterways for the purposes of improving water quality, ensuring coastal resource and environmental protections, mitigating flooding and increasing public access to the public waterways.

"I would like to thank Senator Murphy and Assemblyman Buchwald for delivering this important piece of legislation," said New Castle Supervisor Rob Greenstein. "We continue to grapple with flooding concerns along the Pocantico and Saw Mill Rivers and we now have the resources to address them without dipping into the pockets of hardworking taxpayers."

"Revitalizing the Bronx and Saw Mill River waterfronts are critical to Yonkers and the entire New York City and Westchester watershed," said Yonkers City Council President Liam J. McLaughlin. "Thanks to Senator Murphy, Assemblyman Buchwald, the BRAB and the SWAB, not only will we remove pollutants, but we can also greatly mitigate flooding with these dollars and increase smart waterfront development, projects that will create jobs."