

COMFORT BURTON LAND CONSERVATION SPONSORSHIP

STATE PROGRAM: Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

ASSISTANCE RECIPIENT: Sussex County Council

ASSISTANCE AMOUNT: Two loans, \$40,481,095 and \$2,734,634



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In Georgetown, Delaware, the Sussex County Council implemented the Comfort-Burton Property – Land Conservation/Water Quality Sponsorship project to prevent the development of a 190-acre parcel of land. Permanent protection of the parcel will create approximately 2000-acres of contiguous publicly owned open space in an area that is rapidly developing. CWSRF funds will be used to enhance biodiversity of the site which is currently planted as a monoculture pine plantation and to restore elements of a first order stream, including wetlands creation. The project will include the reforestation of approximately 60 acres of tillable land that is currently under County ownership as part of the Inland Bays Wastewater Treatment Plant. The financing for this project was made available through an interest rate reduction of the City of Rehoboth Ocean Outfall and Wastewater Treatment Plant Loans. The City requested a lower CWSRF interest rate for its two loans, and the Delaware CWSRF allowed them to go to a 2 percent interest rate for both loans, provided they sponsor a land conservation or water quality sponsorship project. The City's loans were \$40,481,095 and \$2,734,634, and the interest rate was reduced from 2.87 percent and 3.15 percent, respectively. This created \$5,744,784 in capacity to fund the Comfort-Burton Property – Land Conservation/Water Quality Sponsorship project with 0 percent interest while maintaining the same level of debt service for the City of Rehoboth.

To read more about this case study, please visit <https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2022-02/2021-pisces-compendium.pdf>.