

Upstream Opportunities: *A listening approach to early public engagement in DRBC climate resilience planning*

February 11, 2025

PDE Science & Environmental Summit

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Delaware River Basin Commission

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PENNSYLVANIA • NEW YORK
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Acknowledgements

DRBC's Resilience Team

Sarah Beganskas, Ph.D.*

Jake Bransky

Eric Engle

Joey Fogarty, Ph.D.*

Sara Sayed

Raveena Pachuki



The DRBC's
authority and
jurisdiction
comes from
the
**Delaware
River Basin
Compact.**



Our Mission

Manage, protect, and improve the water resources of the Delaware River Basin.

Our Vision

Provide trusted, effective, and coordinated management of the Basin's shared water resources.

Our Work

- Water Quality
- Water Supply Planning and Water Conservation Initiatives
- Project Review and Permitting
- Flow Management and Hydrology
- Flood Loss Reduction and Drought Management

*White House ceremonial signing of the
Delaware River Basin Compact, Nov. 2, 1961.*

The Basin state Governors and the USACE NAD Commander are the Commissioners of the DRBC.



New York Governor, Kathy Hochul,
DRBC Chair



Delaware Governor, Matt Meyer,
DRBC Vice Chair



North Atlantic Division Commander
US Army Corps of Engineers, BG John Lloyd



Pennsylvania Governor, Josh Shapiro



New Jersey Governor, Phil Murphy



Commission Action: Resolution 2024-04

- Recognizes the state of climate science
 - Highlights climate action plans developed by Commission members
 - Finds that climate change impacts the water resources of the Basin and the functionality and resilience of water infrastructure
-
- Directs the Commission to include a climate section in the **Water Resources Program** and to develop its own **Climate Resilience Plan**

Draft Vision Statement

The Climate Resilience Plan will inform DRBC actions and activities to **prepare and adapt the Basin's shared water resources to withstand the known and potential impacts of climate change.**

Climate Resilience Plan



- **Commission Action: DRBC Resolution 2024-4**

- Finds that climate change impacts the water resources of the Basin
- Directs the Commission to develop a Climate Resilience Plan

- **Climate Resilience Plan Development**

- Focus on water resource matters within Commission authority and jurisdiction
- Complementary to efforts being made by Commission members
- Prioritized actions for evaluating impacts and formulating management approaches

- **Areas of Potential Action**

- Flow and drought management
- Flood loss
- Water quality
- Water use and efficiency
- Water equity and environmental justice

- **Timing**

- Scoping/Phase 1 – 2025
- Additional Assessment, Planning and Implementation to follow

DRBC's Climate Resilience Planning Is Underway

**Resilience
Team**

1

Climate
resilience plan
framework

2

Vulnerability
assessment &
gap analysis

3

Revise,
update,
re-evaluate

DRBC

Staff continue ongoing
climate-related work

Commission considers additional
actions as identified in CRP

Climate Resilience Plan Framework (Phase 1)



1. CLIMATE RESILIENCE PLAN OVERVIEW

2. PHASE 2 WORKPLAN

Approach to prioritizing actions and activities

Impact	}	2.1 Vulnerability assessment
Urgency		
Reach	}	2.3 Gap analysis
Synergy		
Feasibility	—	2.4 DRBC's climate-related work
Stakeholder relevance	—	2.5 Public and partner input

3. PHASE 3 WORKPLAN

Periodically update planning documents in light of scientific advances, climate-related events, and/or other changes in context.

DRBC will seek **public and partner input** during Phase 1

Goal for Phase 1: Ensure that **the scope of the climate resilience plan considers the breadth of public and partner concerns** about climate change and water resources.

- Informal: **No comment response** on Phase 1 public input
- **“Comment card”**: Online form to solicit answers to broad, open-ended questions
 - What are your concerns about climate change and/or water resources in the future?
- **Listening sessions**: Hosted virtual and in-person sessions
 - Distinct from open public comment, discussion focused on specific questions
- **Meet people where they are**:
 - Incorporate into partner meetings, events, other public DRBC meetings/events

Virtual Comment Card




- **Comment Card active throughout Phase 1.**
- **Publicly available and accessible online.**
- **Participants can answer any/all of 4 questions.**
- **Partnership ensures diverse input.**
- **No formal comment response – will report out.**

Fill Out a Comment Card: Phase 1 Questions

- 1. How has climate change affected you and your life?**
- 2. What are your concerns about climate change and/or water resources in the future?**
- 3. What actions would you like to see the Commission take to protect water resources?**
- 4. How would you want to stay informed and engaged about DRBC's climate plan?**

Fill one out today!



Listening Sessions

- Multiple public listening sessions, mix of webinars and in-person.
- Stakeholders can share comments informally, discuss their views, ask questions.
- Co-hosting with partners ensures a variety of stakeholders and viewpoints.
- Distinct from DRBC's "open public comment" sessions.
- No formal comment response.



Listening Sessions

Share Your Thoughts DRBC's Climate Resilience Plan

Webinars:

February 19, 2025, 7 pm
March 12, 2025, 9 am
March 19, 2025, 7 pm
May 12, 2025, 7 pm
May 20, 2025, 7 pm

In-Person Sessions:

April 23, 2025, 7 pm, New Castle, Del.
April 30, 2025, 7 pm, Liberty, N.Y.
May 5, 2025, 7 pm, West Trenton, N.J.
June 11, 2025, Time and location TBA

<https://tinyurl.com/DRBCClimatePlan>

Co-Hosts:

R | **RUTGERS UNIVERSITY**
Rutgers Climate and Energy Institute
New Jersey Climate Change Resource Center



...and your organization?

Sign up today!



Meet people
where
they are



Incorporate into partner meetings, events, bespoke opportunities.

- Case Study: Trenton Walks!

Your next event?



Couple with DRBC meetings and Our Shared Waters events

- June Commission Meeting features wraparound events



Phase 1 Milestones



Activities and Milestones

- Launch CRP page on DRBC website
 - Start collecting “comment card” feedback
 - Host listening sessions for public and partner input
-
- **First draft of Phase 1 report (internal review)**
 - ACCC Meeting
-
- **Final draft of Phase 1 report (external review)**
 - ACCC Meeting
-
- **Publish Phase 1 report**
 - Begin planning Phase 2
 - ACCC Meeting

Tell us what you think!

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