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Funding will be used for continuation of the Environmental Study and Restoration of the 8,400 Undeveloped Acres

Washington, DC- Continuing his efforts to turn the 8,400 undeveloped acres of the Hackensack Meadowlands into an environmental park, Congressman Steve Rothman (D-Fairlawn) announced that he has secured \$1.43 million dollars in federal funding for environmental studies and remediation in the Meadowlands. Through his position as a member of the House Appropriations Committee, Rothman was able to convince his colleagues to provide \$950,000 for the Army Corps of Engineers to continue their restoration study and begin remediation of contaminated sites, \$180,000 for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to continue its work on a joint federal-state study of how to remediate the 8,400 undeveloped acres, and \$300,000 for the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC) to support restoration activities.

"I'm delighted that Congress understands the environmental benefits of preservation and remediation of the 8,400 undeveloped acres in the Meadowlands," Rothman said. "This \$1.43 million will help us determine how best to create our environmental park and begin the important process of cleaning up the polluted areas."

\$350,000 of the funding for the Army Corps, the \$180,000 for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the \$300,000 for the NJMC will allow for the continuation of their joint study on how to preserve and clean-up the 8,400 undeveloped acres and turn them into an environmental park. In a major victory that will allow significant clean-up of contaminated sites, \$600,000 of the Army Corps funding will be used for remediation efforts. Over the past several years, Rothman has secured \$4.2 million for land acquisition in the Meadowlands, which the NJMC has matched for a total of \$8.4 million.

Additionally Rothman has previously secured \$1 million for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to conduct the study and he has secured a total of \$370,000 in previous years for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to provide environmental consultant to the Army Corps. Rothman has also previously brought home \$500,000 in federal funds for remediation of the 8,400 acres. In total, Congressman Rothman has now secured \$7 million in federal funds to make his dream of an environmental park in the Meadowlands a reality.

"This funding will continue to allow the Army Corps, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the New Jersey Meadowlands Commission to work together for the common goals of the remediation of the 8,400 acres and the opening of the environmental park," Rothman said. "Over the past few years, we have seen the Meadowlands grow as a popular eco-tourist destination. As our work continues and the park is completed, New Jersey residents will have an environmental oasis in an area once written off by many as a toxic wasteland."

Rothman, a lifelong resident of Bergen County, has made the preservation of the 8,400 undeveloped acres of the Hackensack Meadowlands-less than half a mile from the Arena/Giants Stadium property and ten times the size of New York City's Central Park-a top priority. He has led the effort to spare the presently undeveloped wetlands, landfills, and toxic sites from development with the intention of cleaning them up, revitalizing them, and turning them into an environmental park with opportunities for canoe trips, nature walks, bird watching, eco-tourism, other recreational activities, and an environmental education center for children.

These funds that Rothman has secured were part of final Fiscal Year 2005 spending bill, which passed both the House and Senate on November 20, 2004. The measure has moved to the White House and is awaiting President Bush's signature.

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[Go back](#)