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LONG ISLAND



Rep. Peter King, Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano, state Environmental Commissioner Joseph Martens, and Jamie Rubin, director of the governor's office of storm recovery, attend the Long Island Resiliency & Clean Water Infrastructure Meeting at the Nassau County Legislative Building in Mineola yesterday.

Aid for Bay Park treatment

- **State seeks funds** to help storm-damaged plant
- **Grant would fund pipe** to carry water into Atlantic

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New York has asked the federal government for a disaster grant to build a pipe to send treated wastewater from the Sandy-damaged Bay Park Sewage Treatment Plant into the Atlantic in an effort to protect coastal communities during future storms.

Joe Martens, commissioner of the state Department of Environmental Conservation, made the request in a May 6 letter to W. Craig Fugate, administra-

tor of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Martens' letter asks that FEMA grant the state an estimated \$690 million in public assistance funds for a "large outfall pipe" to send treated wastewater from the Nassau County-owned Bay Park plant into the Atlantic Ocean. It also asks that an additional \$130 million be used for treatment to reduce the amount of nitrogen in the effluent, which is discharged into Reynolds Channel, part of the Western Bays.

Excess nitrogen weakens

coastal marshlands, which are critical in buffering coasts from wave activity and flooding during severe storms, according to a report DEC released last week.

The letter also asks that the federal government consider funding a project that would convert small sewage-treatment plants in Long Beach and Atlantic Beach into pumping stations that would send effluent from those communities to the Bay Park plant in East Rockaway. A cost estimate for that project is not known.

New York already is receiving \$810 million in federal funding to upgrade the Bay Park plant, which was overwhelmed by floodwater during superstorm Sandy. The facility

serves about 40 percent of Nassau County.

Martens mentioned the letter yesterday at the first of four public meetings called by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo on Long Island's groundwater and future storm protection.

"Reducing nitrogen is a resiliency issue as well as a water-quality issue," Martens said at the meeting, held in Nassau County's legislative chambers in Mineola. The next governor's meeting is May 19 in Stony Brook.

Nassau County Executive Edward Mangano said the project would remove more than three-quarters of the nitrogen from the Western Bays.

"It's going to take the collective voice of all those involved

in the Nassau County community, both the environmentalists and the business community, to achieve . . . the ocean outfall pipe," he said.

Speakers at the meeting, including environmentalists, business leaders, scientists and federal and local government officials, also spoke in support of the pipe.

Lawrence Swanson, associate dean of the School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences at Stony Brook University, presented results of research showing how the effluent from Bay Park has damaged the Western Bays. "If you were to design an outfall today with 50 million gallons, it never would have been put in Reynolds Channel in the first place," he said.