

## Wastewater Battle in Sussex County

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In 1996, the Littoral Society and Sierra Club brought a case against the EPA for failure to perform its mandatory duties in the state of Delaware, with regards to applying the Clean Water Act section 303(d). Part of the settlement of that case mandates the Wastewater Treatment Facility for the City of Rehoboth to stop releasing its effluence into the Lewes Rehoboth Canal by December 14, 2014. The City hired the engineering firm Sterns and Wheeler to conduct a thorough study of its options. Four different alternatives were evaluated. Land application, rapid infiltration beds and substrate injections were considered but ocean outfalls was the choice recommended by the firm in 2005. The City Council held public information sessions to announce their decision. Strong opposition to the choice has delayed the final approval. Private utility companies have revived the spray irrigation option. The city must make a decision during the summer of 2009 in order to meet their deadline. This paper will examine the many stakeholders involved in this coastal issue. The process of reaching a final decision will provide the information for answering the following questions: How is the planning process for the City of Rehoboth Beach, Sussex County and the State of Delaware effective in dealing with an issue requiring immediate attention and long range planning?

How does the City of Rehoboth Beach implement an ecosystem based management plan that reflects the needs of the city and accommodates the demands from multiple outside stakeholders?