

## News from SALEM COUNTY

Office of Public Information

Mr. Robin B. Weinstein, Public Information Officer Office Phone: (856) 935-7510 ext. 8202

After Hours: (856) 297-5433

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#### BI-STATE COALITION PROMOTES THREE FORTS FERRY

(Delaware River, NJ/DE)— Today, tourism and economic development leaders in Delaware and New Jersey announced the formation of a bi-state coalition to jointly promote cultural, historical and environmental assets that are serviced by the Three Forts Ferry operation. The Three Forts Ferry, operated by the Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA), connects Delaware City, DE, Fort Delaware on the Delaware River and Fort Mott in Salem County, New Jersey. The coalition's intent is to increase public awareness of the many unique features this region has to offer and to encourage residents and visitors to enjoy them.

"Salem County's tourism initiative is in its second year, and we have seen tremendous results in marketing our County's assets," said Freeholder Beth Timberman, chair of the Transportation, Tourism, and Agriculture Committee. "We saw that, with a minimum investment, we were able to increase attendance to Fort Mott by 20,000 visitors. The Three Forts Ferry provides a tourism link between both sides of the Delaware. Through joint marketing partnerships, we believe that we can leverage the coalition's limited financial resources to increase usage of the Ferry, which will bring more tourism revenue to both sides of the Delaware River."

"Delaware City is emerging as a destination for both heritage and eco-tourism and our location on the Delaware River is a key asset," said Mayor John W. Martin. "In linking Delaware City with Fort Delaware and Salem County, NJ, the Three Forts Ferry creates a unique and exciting experience for visitors that spans two centuries and two states. We believe that this Delaware River tourism initiative will be an important contributor to economic development on both sides of the river.

Coalition members include representatives from Fort Mott, Fort Delaware, Fort DuPont, DRBA, Salem County, Pennsville Economic Development Association, the City of Delaware City, Main Street Delaware City, Delaware Military Heritage & Education Foundation, National Park Service, Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Delaware Tourism Office.

"The DRBA is pleased to participate in this new partnership initiative," remarked DRBA Commissioner Ceil Smith. "This coordinated marketing effort by a united, bi-state coalition will be more viable and effective in promoting the region. As a resident of



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Salem County, I know the region has a lot to offer and I am excited about this opportunity to encourage more people to visit and enjoy our great attractions."

The coalition is currently developing a joint marketing initiative involving events taking place on July 17-18, 2010, and in the month of October. Utilizing the unique character of the Three Forts Ferry, the coalition is working to inform families and visitors of the fun available on both sides of the river.

The "Weekend on the Delaware" event takes place on July 17-18, 2010 and features Coast Defenses Living History Weekend at Fort Mott State Park, Fort Delaware State Park tours, and the Delaware City Day Festival.

"Fort Mott's Staff and volunteers will be demonstrating what life was like at the fort during the years it was in operation," said Fort Mott Superintendent Vince Bonica. "Visitors can see the searchlight in action, enjoy expansive views of the river from the Fire Control Tower and see an early working telephone system that would have served the fort when it was in operation as a military installation."

On July 17, a spectacular fireworks show caps off Delaware City Day with great viewing from both sides of the river at Fort Mott or Delaware City. More information on these events will be available at the Three Forts Ferry website, <a href="www.threeforts.com">www.threeforts.com</a> and <a href="www.delawarecityday.com">www.delawarecityday.com</a>.

"The connection between these three military heritage sites and their link via the Delaware River provides rich possibilities for further development of tourism in Delaware City and Salem County," said Stephanie Przybylek, Executive Director of the Delaware Military Heritage & Education Foundation at Ft. DuPont. "Creating new tourism opportunities could certainly attract military history enthusiasts, but also people who enjoy spending time in the natural environment and visiting waterfront locations."

History lovers can enjoy an exciting day in the 19th century when they take round-trip boat excursions to these military sites on the Delaware River. From April through October, visitors to Fort Delaware experience authentic civilian and military Civil War reenactments, "lantern tours" of the fort at night and demonstrations of how people lived in the 1800s. Programs at Fort DuPont and Fort Mott compliment the stories told at Fort Delaware. School groups are encouraged to visit this fascinating glimpse into the area's history.



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For more information on the Three Forts Ferry, please visit <u>www.threeforts.com</u> or <u>www.visitsalemcountynj.com</u>.