

Delaware River Basin Commission

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## About DRBC

A breakthrough in water resources management occurred in 1961 when President Kennedy and the governors of Delaware, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and New York for the first time signed concurrent compact legislation into law creating a regional body with the force of law to oversee a unified approach to managing a river system without regard to political boundaries.

The [members](#) of this regional body - the **Delaware River Basin Commission** (DRBC) - include the four basin state governors and the Division Engineer, North Atlantic Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, who serves as the federal representative.

When the DRBC was created, some 43 state agencies, 14 interstate agencies, and 19 federal agencies exercised a multiplicity of splintered powers and duties within the watershed, which stretches 330 miles from the Delaware River's headwaters near Hancock, N. Y., to the mouth of the Delaware Bay.

The Compact's signing marked the first time since the nation's birth that the federal government and a group of states joined together as equal partners in a river basin planning, development and regulatory agency.

The five members appoint alternate commissioners, with the governors selecting high-ranking officials from their state environmental agencies. Each commissioner has one vote of equal power with a majority vote needed to decide most issues. Exceptions are votes on the commission's annual budget and drought declarations, which require unanimity.

Commission programs include water quality protection, water supply allocation, regulatory review (permitting), water conservation initiatives, watershed planning, drought management, flood loss reduction, and recreation.

The DRBC is funded by the signatory parties, project review fees, water use charges, and fines, as well as federal, state, and private grants.

Annual elections are held for commission chair, vice chair, and second vice chair, based on a rotation of the five signatory parties. Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett is currently serving as chair for the July 1, 2012 to June 30, 2013 term. The other commission members are New Jersey Governor Chris Christie (vice chair), New York Governor Andrew Cuomo (second vice chair), Delaware Governor Jack Markell, and Federal Representative Colonel Kent Savre.

The commission holds business meetings and hearings on policy matters and water resource projects under regulatory review. These sessions, along with meetings of the commission's various advisory committees, are open to the public.

The fact that five separate governmental bodies with their own sovereign powers can successfully work together on an equal footing in managing a common resource has caught the eye of other river managers not only in this country, but around the world. In recent years, commission representatives have been invited to Australia, Slovakia, and Bulgaria to tell the DRBC story and offer assistance. Officials from those countries also visited the commission's offices in West Trenton, N.J., as have delegations from Sri Lanka, the [People's Republic of China](#), Indonesia, the United Kingdom, South Korea, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Jordan, Portugal, Sweden, [Turkey](#), Uganda, Uruguay, India and Japan, among others.

- ▶ [Compact \(pdf 263 KB\)](#)
- ▶ [Milestones](#)
- ▶ [Budget](#)
- ▶ [DRBC's 50th Anniversary](#)



More Information

DRBC Vision/Mission Statement (pdf 69 KB)

Executive Director Carol R. Collier's Testimony Before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Water Resources and Environment - June 24, 2008 (pdf 232 KB)

River Basin Commissions: An Alternative to Interstate Water Wars (pdf 16 KB)

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