

## Chavez not only gave Obama a book...but also an Island in New Jersey

Last Sunday, the President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, announced during the Summit of the Americas that the Venezuelan Government will donate to United States, through CITGO Petroleum company, the Petty's Island located in New Jersey state. Since 2004, CITGO, a Venezuelan subsidiary of the Venezuelan state-owned oil company Petroleos de Venezuela S.A. (PDVSA), headquartered in Houston, Texas, has offered the island to carry out an environmental cleanup and transform the place into a wildlife refuge.



Petty's Island is an island of 392 acres in the Delaware river off the coast of Camden City, yet it is technically part of Pennsauken.

Currently, CITGO does not carry out any commercial operation in the island, but only environmental restoration projects, which have been established through a memorandum of understanding endorsed with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The island will be transformed into a wildlife refuge, thanks to the flora and fauna diversity of the region, some of them endangered species.

Petty's Island has been the most relevant matter in New Jersey politics since 2004. Indeed, the current Governor of the state, Jon Corzine, offered during his electoral campaign to transform the island into an ecological refuge, thanks to Venezuela's donation.

The President Hugo Chavez underscored that the relations with the North American country are getting stronger with actions like this one, in the framework of respect and looking for equity. Representatives of the former Governor of New Jersey, James McGreevey, blocked CITGO's offer in 2004, the *New York Times* informed (October 2, 2004), with the intention of "leaving the island to developers for a hotel, a conference center, a golf course and 300 homes."

On January, 2009, Corzine announced that the directive board of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) voted to accept a conservation easement for Petty's Island.

"Now, CITGO must remove structures associated with former petroleum operations and complete cleanup of industrial contamination before the island can be transferred to the state for ownership and management," the news release from the DEP adds. Source: ABN

Image: Petty's Island as it looks today [Zoom Image](#)