



Revisions to Pinelands Management Areas

(revised January 2011)

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The New Jersey Pinelands Commission is considering revisions to the boundaries of Pinelands Management Areas based on a comprehensive re-examination of the region's ecological characteristics.

Under the Pinelands protection program, there are nine land-use management areas with varying goals, objectives, development intensities and permitted uses. These management areas are charted on the Pinelands Land Capability Map.

Commission scientists recently completed a study, called the Ecological Integrity Assessment (see below for details), that evaluates the current status of the Pinelands ecology by analyzing landscape and watershed conditions throughout the million-acre region.

The Commission is using information from this study, among other data, in considering these management area changes, which seek to ensure that important natural areas receive the appropriate protection.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. What is the Ecological Integrity Assessment study?

The Ecological Integrity Assessment, or EIA, is an advanced, quantitative look at three types of integrity. Each type of integrity expands upon the principles used in the original Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan and on the management of threatened and endangered plant and animal species through ecological management. Rather than just focusing on the sightings of threatened or endangered species or the presence of habitat, the landscape is evaluated for its quality and hence its long term sustainability.

The Ecological Integrity Assessment provides a relative ranking of the ecological integrity of Pinelands habitat throughout the Pinelands Area. Pinelands habitat includes upland forests, wetlands, and water bodies. Habitat was broken up into 10×10-m pixels and, using different methods, a separate landscape-, aquatic-, and wetland-drainage integrity score was determined for each 10×10-m habitat pixel. Detailed methods for determining landscape, aquatic, and wetland-drainage integrity can be found on pages 11, 12, and 14 of the EIA report, respectively. For each 10×10-m habitat pixel, the three separate integrity scores were then averaged for an ecological-integrity score, which ranged from >0 to 100%. The ecological-integrity scores were grouped into ten classes (<0-10%, 10.1-20%, 20.1-30%, 30.1-40%, 40.1-50%, 50.1-60%, 60.1-70%, 70.1-80%, 80.1-90%, 90.1-100%).

2. How is it being analyzed for use as a tool to possibly change some management area lines?

The Planning Office is using a wide range of data sources to inform the process of adjusting the Pinelands Management Areas. In addition to the EIA data itself, data sources being used to determine management-area changes include, but are not limited to: wetlands, agricultural soils, soils unsuitable for septic systems, sub-watershed boundaries, known threatened and endangered species hot spots,

recent web-based aerial photography, parcel data, roads and other prominent features, sites committed as of 2002, sites with other permitting activity (e.g.; PDCs, LOIs, etc.), state lands, open space plans, and public development plans. Our Planning Office is also relying on the field expertise of our Science and Regulatory Programs staff and the input of municipalities, counties and the public. Planning Office staff has already met with the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, Great Egg Harbor River Watershed Association, New Jersey Environment Federation, ENSP staff and many of the Pinelands municipalities to obtain their input regarding potential management area changes.

3. After analysis, how will it be implemented?

Through the formal rulemaking process prescribed by the Administrative Procedure Act, N.J.S.A. 52:14B-1 et seq., and the Office of Administrative Law's Rules for Agency Rulemaking, N.J.A.C. 1:30. Opportunities for public input will be available both before and during the formal rulemaking process. The following outlines the process by which the Commission may consider adoption of an implementing rule (dates subject to change):

- 1. Draft management area boundary changes (Fall 2008)
- 2. Meet with municipal officials and review new information (Fall 2008/early Winter 2009)
- 3. Commission review of final draft map changes (Fall 2009 - Winter 2010)
- 4. Formal rulemaking process (Winter 2010 - Spring 2010)
- 5. Revised map takes effect (late Spring 2010)
- 6. Municipalities adopt revised zoning maps (late Spring 2010 - late Spring 2011)

4. How much land might be affected?

Approximately 3% of the Pinelands Area.

5. Where can I see a map?

A map has been posted on the Commission's web site (www.nj.gov/pinelands) and will be updated throughout the process outlined above.

6. How and when can a municipality or county get involved?

- a. Provide Commission staff with information and updates on the data being used to draft the management area lines.
- b. After publication of a draft rule, provide comment thereon.
- c. After adoption, work with the Commission to implement the rule.

7. How and when can a landowner get involved?

- a. Work through your municipality to update the data being used to draft the management area lines.
- b. After publication of a draft rule, provide comment thereon.
- c. After adoption, work through your municipality with the Commission to implement the rule.

8. How and when can a citizen get involved?

- a. Work through your municipality to update the data being used to draft the management area lines.
- b. After publication of a draft rule, provide comment thereon.
- c. After adoption, work through your municipality with the Commission to implement the rule.

9. Whom should municipalities, counties, landowners and citizens contact?

- a. Their municipalities.
- b. For general information, Paul Leakan (609-894-7300).
- c. For more specific information, Paul W. Tyshchenko, Esq. (609-894-7300). However, please note that the Commission's web site will be updated periodically throughout this process with the most recent versions of our maps available.