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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Highlands Council Names Gabrielle Gallagher Chief Counsel

CHESTER, N.J. — At its most recent meeting the Highlands Council voted to appoint Gabrielle Gallagher to the position of Chief Counsel. Gallagher has been serving as Senior Counsel at the Highlands Council since November 2019, and has extensive experience in land use, real estate and administrative law.

“Gabrielle’s depth of knowledge from working with the Council over the past few years, as well as her experience elsewhere in state government is a tremendous asset and her contributions at the Council have been consistently of the highest quality,” said Carl Richko, Highlands Council Chairman. “We are fortunate to have her move into the Chief Counsel role.”

Joining the Highlands Council right before the onset of the global COVID pandemic, Gallagher was integral to the smooth transition of staff to remote work and the return to office, still in progress. In addition, she has been instrumental in the expansion of the Plan Conformance grant program and crafting numerous Requests for Proposals and Requests for Qualifications to identify consulting partners to help advance the work of the Council.

Prior to joining the Highlands Council, Gabrielle was the Director of Legal & Regulatory Affairs for the Department of Community Affairs. In that role, Gabrielle was the Commissioner’s designee to the Meadowlands Conservation Trust where she worked on several significant environmental policy issues. In addition, Gabrielle served as the Department’s Administrative Practice Officer, Open Public

Records Officer and Ethics Liaison. Gabrielle also worked for the Department of Banking and Insurance as Deputy Executive Director and developed the Department's business continuity plan. Gabrielle's experience also includes several years in private practice including managing her own law firm.

Gabrielle has a B.A. from Fairleigh Dickinson University in Political Science, and a J.D. from Rutgers University School of Law, where she was a part of the Constitutional Law and Special Education Law Clinics. She is admitted to practice law in New Jersey and New York.

"Gabrielle is clearly committed to the mission of our agency and her experience is exceptionally valuable," said Lisa J. Plevin, Highlands Council Executive Director. "Chief Counsel is a critical leadership position and I know she will be an asset to that team."

Gallagher fills the position left vacant by the retirement of Christine LaRocca in August.

Actions taken by the Council at this meeting will take effect following the Governor's review and consideration of the meeting minutes, up to 10 business days from receipt of the minutes. Materials related to this meeting including resolutions, presentations, audio and minutes will be posted at: [www.nj.gov/njhighlands/about/calend/](http://www.nj.gov/njhighlands/about/calend/) (click on September 23, 2021 meeting).

*The Highlands Council is a regional planning agency established in 2004 with the passage of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act and charged with implementation of the Act. More information is available at [www.nj.gov/njhighlands](http://www.nj.gov/njhighlands).*

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