



State of New Jersey

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council
100 North Road (Route 513)
Chester, New Jersey 07930-2322
(908) 879-6737
(908) 879-4205 (fax)
www.nj.gov/njhighlands



PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

CARL J. RICHKO
Chair

LISA J. PLEVIN
Executive Director

Contact:

Carole Ann Dicton, Manager of Communications
(908) 879-6737 ext. 105 or caroleann.dicton@highlands.nj.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 23, 2021

Highlands Council Grants Help Advance Water Quality and Sustainable Planning Goals in Phillipsburg, Hopatcong and West Milford

CHESTER, N.J. — At its most recent meeting, the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council approved more than \$190,000 in Plan Conformance grants to Highlands municipalities for local planning priorities. Plan Conformance grant funding is available to any municipality or county in the Highlands region for activities that help bring local land use and resource management provisions into alignment with the Highlands Act and Regional Master Plan (RMP).

“The projects being funded today are great examples of what can come from a strong partnership approach to regional planning,” said Lisa J. Plevin, Highlands Council Executive Director. “These grants support our mission of protecting water quality and supporting good planning. We are pleased to work with Highlands municipalities to advance these priorities at the local level.”

Following is a summary of municipal requests approved for funding at this meeting.

- **Town of Phillipsburg, Warren County – Circulation Plan Element**

Not to exceed \$50,000

The Town of Phillipsburg intends to update its 2004 Circulation Plan and restate its vision for safe pedestrian and bicycle movement through the town. The comprehensive plan will explore linking existing sidewalks and paths, developing new linkages, and opportunities for crosswalks, traffic calming, bike lanes, shared travel lanes, and other important features to move people safely through the town.

- **Hopatcong Borough, Sussex County – Stormwater Improvement Project in Witten Park**

Not to exceed \$54,000

Hopatcong Borough is about to embark on an innovative stormwater management project that will

convert a small stream in the park, which is currently eroding and transporting soil particles and associated adsorbed phosphorus into Lake Hopatcong, into a Regenerative Stormwater Conveyance (RSC) system. The RSC system has the potential to remove up to 160 pounds of phosphorus per year from the lake and is part of a larger restoration project within Witten Park. This grant will fund the design phase of the RSC system project.

- **West Milford Township, Passaic County – Lake Management Plan**

Not to exceed \$86,250.

West Milford will complete Phase II of a lake management project initiated in 2020. The initial phase focused on a township-wide assessment of multiple watersheds surrounding more than 20 lakes in West Milford. The second phase, funded through this award, will include in-lake water quality monitoring, trophic state analyses, and final reporting. The resulting General Assessment Report will include a summary of all findings, identify watershed management techniques and measures to address identified issues (including preliminary cost estimates for each recommended project), and provide a long-term water quality monitoring plan covering all lakes in the study area.

“It’s very rewarding when we can provide support to help a municipality advance a local priority that also helps advance the goals of the Highlands Act,” said Carl Richko, Chairman of the Highlands Council. “In looking at these three projects, you can draw a line from the Delaware River in Phillipsburg, through Lake Hopatcong in the middle of the New Jersey Highlands, straight up to West Milford along the New York border, and you’re reminded of why this great region is being protected.”

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/index.html (click on September 23 meeting).

The Highlands Council is a regional planning agency, established in 2004 with the passage of the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act and charged with implementation of the Act. More information is available at www.nj.gov/njhighlands.

#