

PHILIP D. MURPHY Governor SHEILA Y. OLIVER Lt. Governor

State of New Jersey

THE PINELANDS COMMISSION PO Box 359 New Lisbon, NJ 08064 (609) 894-7300 www.nj.gov/pinelands



RICHARD PRICKETT Chairman NANCY WITTENBERG Executive Director

General Information: Info@pinelands.nj.gov Application Specific Information: AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov

MEMORANDUM

To:	CMP Policy & Implementation Committee
From:	Susan R. Grogan Ab Chief Planner
Date:	September 18, 2019
Subject:	September 27, 2019 Committee meeting

Enclosed please find the agenda for the Committee's upcoming meeting on September 27, 2019. We have also enclosed the following:

- The minutes from the Committee's August 23, 2019 meeting; and
- A draft resolution relating to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's request for Commission endorsement of a transfer in ownership of lands acquired using federal "Section 502" funding. A letter from the Department is also enclosed, as is the Department's detailed report on the proposed land exchange with Ocean County.

/CS15

cc: All Commissioners (agenda only)



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Application Specific Information: AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov CMP POLICY & IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

General Information: Info@pinelands.nj.gov

Richard J. Sullivan Center Terrence D. Moore Room 15 C Springfield Road New Lisbon, New Jersey

September 27, 2019

9:30 a.m.

Agenda

- 1. Call to Order
- 2. Pledge Allegiance to the Flag
- 3. Adoption of minutes from the August 23, 2019 CMP Policy & Implementation Committee meeting
- 4. Pinelands Acquisition Program
 - Update on Section 502 funding, target areas and acquisition activity to date
 - Consideration of the Department of Environmental Protection's request to convey Stateowned lands acquired with 502 funds to Ocean County
- 5. Update on efforts to protect the Pinelands Area from off-road motorized vehicle damage
- 6. Public Comment

CMP POLICY & IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING Richard J. Sullivan Center Terrence D. Moore Room 15 C Springfield Road New Lisbon, New Jersey August 23, 2019 - 9:30 a.m.

MINUTES

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: Chairman Richard Prickett, Jerome H. Irick, Jordan Howell, Ed Lloyd, and Mark Lohbauer

MEMBERS ABSENT: Candace Ashmun and Sean Earlen

STAFF PRESENT: Nancy Wittenberg, Larry L. Liggett, Stacey P. Roth, Susan R. Grogan, Gina Berg, John Bunnell and Betsy Piner. Also in attendance was Brian T. Wilton with the Governor's Authorities Unit.

1. Call to Order

Chairman Prickett called the meeting of the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) Policy and Implementation (P&I) Committee to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. Pledge Allegiance to the Flag

All present pledged allegiance to the Flag.

3. Adoption of minutes from the July 26, 2019 CMP Policy & Implementation Committee Meeting

Commissioner Lohbauer moved the adoption of the July 26, 2019 meeting minutes. Commissioner Irick seconded the motion. The minutes were adopted, with all Committee members voting in the affirmative.

4. Pinelands Infrastructure Trust Fund: July 2019 Master Plan amendment for project selection and funding levels

Ms. Berg reviewed the Pinelands Infrastructure Trust Fund (PITF) Master Plan amendment (*Attachment A to these minutes and posted on the Commission's website at:* <u>https://www.nj.gov/pinelands/home/presentations/PITF%20Priority%20projects%20082319.pdf</u>)

Ms. Berg described both the ten funding applications received as well as the five priority projects recommended for approval. For the recommended projects, she also discussed the potential use of PDCs for each and noted that both Winslow and the Manchester Township/Jackson Municipal Utilities Authority projects offered contributions larger than the base amount required for local match, thus allowing funding for all five recommended projects. She said if the Committee advances this amendment today, the Commission is scheduled to take action at its September 13, 2019 meeting. From there, the amendment will be forwarded to the Infrastructure Bank in October and then to the legislature for a funding appropriation in January.

Ms. Berg said staff had met with representatives of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) regarding its request for future eligibility of all wastewater funds to be used as a match for federal wastewater funds. She said currently that is about \$7 million and staff recommends allowing the match. Also, she said, staff is recommending that the water supply projects be included in this round, even though the NJDEP Subchapter 22 rules have not yet been amended to allow administration of the funding of those projects. She said the applicants for water projects could choose to apply to the Water Bank for funding but there could be a delay until the necessary amendments are in effect.

Ms. Berg said NJDEP thought it might be able to offer a waiver of the rules to allow the water projects to proceed. However, she said, any rules related to funding may not be eligible for a waiver.

In response to Commissioner Lloyd's question if allowing the \$7 million to be used by NJDEP as matching funds for wastewater projects would foreclose on other options the Commission might have in the future, Ms. Berg said all PITF funding in the past was dedicated to wastewater. She said most recently there was an interest in expanding to other types of infrastructure. However, she said, wastewater projects will continue to be higher cost items. She said NJDEP would use both the grant and loan funding as the match for the federal funds.

Mr. Liggett noted that there are other infrastructure needs in the Pinelands Area and staff has discussed approaching legislators to secure additional funding that could be awarded to projects in Pinelands Towns, not just Regional Growth Areas.

In response to Chairman Prickett's question as to how much of the loans have been paid back, Mr. Liggett said since 1985, probably most have been paid. He said funding is tracked by the Treasury Department. Commissioner Prickett asked staff to research how much from past funding rounds has been re-paid and how much, if any, is being returned to PITF annually.

Commissioner Lohbauer moved the recommendation to the full Commission to approve the July 2019 Pinelands Infrastructure Trust Fund Master Plan Amendment for projects and funding. Commissioner Lloyd seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

5. Garden State Parkway Interchange 44 Secondary Impacts Agreement

Ms. Grogan told the Committee that what she would be discussing today was an agreement with Atlantic County, not a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). (*Attachment B to these minutes and posted on the Commission's website at:*

https://www.nj.gov/pinelands/home/presentations/exit44%208-23-19%20PI.pdf)

Ms. Grogan said in 2006 the CMP was amended to create the Parkway Overlay District, the boundaries of which coincide with the Garden State Parkway right-of-way for its entire length through the Pinelands. She said the purpose was to allow consistent treatment of the Parkway, regardless of the underlying Pinelands Management Area. She said permitted uses in the Overlay District are limited to typical highway related activities (roads, bridges, accessory facilities associated with the highway), local communications facilities, public service infrastructure, and, important to today's discussion, the improvement, expansion, and repair of existing interchanges. She said new interchanges are not a permitted use.

Ms. Grogan said in May, 2013 the Commission approved the expansion from a partial to a full interchange for Interchange 44 at Pomona Road near Richard Stockton University. She said this site is in the Rural Development Area (RDA) where housing is permitted at one dwelling unit per five acres, commercial building coverage is allowed at a 2% maximum and sewer service is not permitted. She said there was concern that pressure to redesignate the area to a Regional Growth Area with associated higher density development and sewer service would result from the improvement of the interchange. She said in order to prevent secondary impacts, those changes in the location, pattern or intensity of land use which would be inconsistent with Pinelands standards, an agreement was signed with Atlantic County obligating it to purchase lands or otherwise memorialize the existing zoning. She said the County agreed to a total of 356 acres within 1.5 miles of the Interchange to be completed within six years (December 2019).

Ms. Grogan introduced Ms. Ranae Fehr, Manager, Atlantic County Open Space Acquisition Program.

Ms. Fehr said, under the agreement, the County agreed to purchase all the required lands for both the right of way and the secondary impacts. She said the County preferred fee simple purchases as they result in a higher degree of protection but had been willing to consider conservation easements, albeit they require more oversight.

She described the process of contacting, originally eight, landowners, and the various responses, noting that, to date, the County has acquired 326 acres and anticipates closing on the remaining 30 acres by the end of the year. She said the County will continue to acquire infill properties even after the 356 acre goal has been achieved, resulting in an even higher level of protection.

In response to Commissioner Lloyd's question, Ms. Fehr said all the properties will be placed on the Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI) and no intensive recreation will be permitted.on these lands.

Members of the Committee congratulated the County for its success.

Ms. Wittenberg said the Commission likes to share its success stories and Atlantic County had stepped up and done an excellent job.

6. Discussion of an amended Memorandum of Agreement between the Pinelands Commission and Atlantic County related to proposed development of the Atlantic County Park at Lake Lenape

Ms. Roth said she would be discussing a request from Atlantic County to amend a 1998 MOA with Atlantic County for its park at Lake Lenape. (*Attachment C to these minutes and posted on the Commission's website at:*

<u>https://www.nj.gov/pinelands/home/presentations/Atlantic%20County%20Lake%20Lenape%20PI%2</u> <u>OPresentation.pdf</u>)

She said the 1998 MOA permitted deviations from the development standards of the Pinelands CMP. Specifically, it allowed for construction of sewer in the Forest Area and relaxed wetland buffer requirements in order to facilitate development of the new camping sites and water dependent recreational uses at the park. She said, as the offset for the 1998 MOA, the County deed restricted 1,822 acres of the park in order to permit development on the remaining 76 acres. She noted a portion of the deed restricted land is adjacent to Makepeace Wildlife Management Area. Ms. Roth then introduced Atlantic County Assistant Counsel, Anthony Pagano.

Mr. Pagano said he had been involved with Lake Lenape for more than twenty years. He provided a presentation on the County's interest in reconfiguring the floating docks at the park for safety and efficiency (*Attachment D to these minutes*). He said the current boat launch area serves as a funnel to the lake where kayakers, sculls, swimmers, motor boats, etc. all gather. This creates a hazardous and, for the sculls, an unwieldy situation. The current dock is in need of upgrading and rather than invest in restoring an outdated dock, the County is proposing reconfiguring the existing dock to accommodate the smaller watercraft and constructing a new dock to accommodate the sculls, which can be some 60' long. He said because the language of the MOA is so specific as to the improvements that are permitted, (site, dimension, etc. for the dock), it will be necessary to lift the Green Acres deed restriction in order for any changes to the dock configuration to be made.

Mr. Erick Husta, Atlantic County Park Superintendent, said the facility is used by thousands of visitors and there is a real need to separate the types of users. He said the County is not looking to increase the number of users, but rather to resolve incompatibility. He said the original MOA did not anticipate the conflict brought about by having vehicles backing trailers down the boat ramp next to a dock being used by kayakers and other small boats, or the difficulties encountered by the large sculls in maneuvering around an L-shaped dock. He said the proposed floating docks, a shorter one located near the existing dock at the boat ramp and a longer one on the far side of the boathouse, will not be permanent structures, have no pilings, and are not anchored to the lake bottom. Rather, the docks have concrete weights to hold them in place. He said the County has received a lot of support from the various user groups.

Mr. Pagano said the County has not yet started the formal State and Pinelands Commission public hearing processes as it wanted to meet with the Commission first. He said there will be no impact on land use standards and the County is willing to give up the opportunity to construct a second boat ramp at "Danger Beach" on the opposite side of the lake. He said although the county feels that second location would provide beneficial access to the lake, the safety concerns at the current dock location outweigh any benefits of having a second access point.

In response to a question from Chairman Prickett if the County might want to move the second, longer dock from the suggested location, Mr. Husta said that was unlikely because it needs to be in close proximity to the boat house where the sculling groups store their equipment. He also provided more detail about the proposed new docks and the ballast and tethering systems.

In response to a question from Chairman Prickett, Mr. Pagano said the County had no interest in seeing a housing development at the edge of the lake as many had called for when the park was first developed.

Commissioner Lohbauer said it was rare to have an attorney before the Commission who is so passionate about preservation and recreation.

Ms. Roth said the County cannot change the configuration of the dock area without the current deed restriction being lifted by the NJDEP Commissioner. Ms. Roth said Green Acres is amendable to the changes but, like the Commission, requires a public hearing so she is working with Green Acres to have both processes conducted concurrently.

In response to Chairman Prickett's question if the new language of the MOA can be less specific to allow for more flexibility in the future, Ms. Roth said, yes, and it will allow for development areas but not with the specificity of the original MOA. She said this is a minor change and more of a technicality due to the way in which the 1998 MOA was written.

Chairman Prickett said this seems to be an easy MOA and he was glad that Atlantic County has come before the Committee.

Commissioner Irick moved that staff be authorized to proceed with development of an amendment to the MOA with Atlantic County for Lake Lenape. Commissioner Lohbauer seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

6. Public Comment

Mr. Fred Acres applauded Atlantic County for its support of the federal designation of the Great Egg Harbor River as a Wild and Scenic River. He said in 1992, 129 miles of the river and 17 tributaries received the designation and the associated National Park Service "passport" stamp is available at the Fox Nature Center in Estell Manor.

Ms. Rhyan Grech, with the Pinelands Preservation Alliance (PPA), advised the Commission of the extensive damage inflicted last weekend by off-road vehicles (ORVs) upon the recently acquired Katz property (*a Pinelands Conservation Fund project*) in Pemberton Township. She said freshly planted seedlings were obliterated and trash and a smoldering fire were left behind. She said PPA was working with the Rancocas Conservancy on protecting the property.

A brief discussion ensued with the Commission noting that, with limited resources, NJDEP, the State Police, and the Commission depend upon the public to be notified of such activity and more education and enforcement are needed to deter such wanton destruction.

Mr. Bunnell said the barriers erected to protect certain ponds have been effective on State lands.

Mr. Jay Mounier, Franklin Township resident, said the problems of trespassing and vandalism is of no surprise to the agricultural industry as this has been a long time problem for farmers. He noted that yesterday, a neighboring farmer encountered a woman trespassing on his alfalfa field, using her metal detector, digging holes and damaging the smooth fields required for safe operation of equipment. She did not care that she was trespassing. Mr. Mounier said there needs to be more effective penalties, including confiscation of vehicles.

Chairman Prickett noted that Pemberton Township has a particularly difficult problem as there is a community culture of riding ORVs, including on protected lands such as the J.J. White farm and Whitesbog Village. He said it is not easy to change behavior.

Commissioner Irick noted that some states provide recreation areas for ORVs and he cited the extensive program in Virginia.

Commissioner Lloyd said the State, with participation by the Commission, had tried but was unable to find a suitable tract that could accommodate such vehicles.

There being no other items of interest, the meeting adjourned at 11:06 a.m. (moved by Commissioner Lohbauer and seconded by Commissioner Irick).

Certified as true and correct:

elas lais

Betsy Piner, Principal Planning Assistant

Date: August 29, 2019



Actions Today

I

- Review PITF amendment to select projects and recommend funding
- Recommend forward to full Commission for adoption of PITF Master Plan amendment
- Note Water Bank administration challenges

Applicant	Project	Total Project Cost	PITF Sum
Pemberton	BCI Water system improvement	\$2,929,000	\$2,636,100
Manchester Twp/ Jackson MUA	Water & Sewer	\$7,192,035	
Monroe Twp	Williamstown Square Transportation	\$3,962,000	\$3,209,220
Galloway Twp	Pinehurst sewer extension	\$3,493,440	\$3,144,096
Winslow Twp	Water & Sewer	\$1,728,940	\$1,410,562

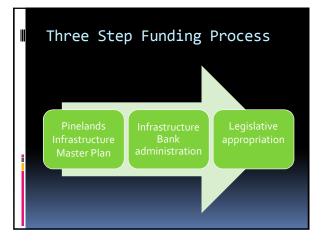
	Applicant	Project	Total Project Cost	PITF Sum
	Monroe MUA	Blackhorse Pike Water & Wastewater	\$6,577,800	\$5,920,020
	Egg Harbor Twp	Tremont Sewer Extension	\$1,832,400	\$1,649,160
	ACUA	UST replacement	\$155,250	\$139,725
-	ACUA	pump stations upgrades	\$3,589,350	\$3,238,515
	Evesham MUA	water tower	\$2,600,000	\$0
	То	tal	\$34,060,215	\$26,837,420

Recommendation = Approve Priority Project List

Project	PITF Sum	PDC Potential Demand
Pemberton Township – Burlington County Water System Improvements	\$2,636,100	85 PDCs (340 rights)
Manchester Township/Jackson MUA –Water and Sewer Main Extensions	\$5,490,022	85.5 PDCs (342 rights)
Monroe Township – Williamstown Square Transportation Improvements	\$3,209,220	21 PDCs (84 rights)
Galloway Township – Pinehurst Sewer Extension	\$3,144,096	41. 25 PDCs (165 rights optional)
Winslow Township – Water and Sewer Main Extensions	\$1,410,562	9.25 PDCs (37 rights)
Total for Five Projects	\$15,890,000	242 PDCs (968 rights)

Recommendation = Matching Funds

- NJDEP Water Bank requested that the Commission allow PITF funds to be used as a match for federal wastewater funds
- If used, only PITF associated with wastewater projects will be considered as matching
- Future use of matching funds is restricted to wastewater projects
- Staff recommends allowing match



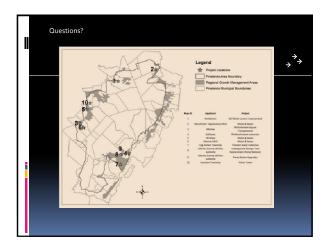
Administrative Challenges

Water Bank rules outdated

- Planned for amendment, but delayed
- Rule waiver offered, but uncertain
- Impacts water supply projects
- Adopt PITF Priority Project List
 - Wastewater and transportation projects can receive appropriations
 - Water supply projects may proceed without PITF funding or be delayed = applicant's choice

Next Steps

- Commission Meeting in September for Adoption of PITF Master Plan Amendment
- Forward amendment to Infrastructure Bank (October)
- Notify five projects of eligibility
 - Caveats: Pemberton Township, Jackson MUA piece of Manchester/Jackson water supply projects, and water supply piece of Winslow Township project
 - Water supply projects are included in PITF Master Plan, but ineligible to apply through Water Bank until rule amended
- Continue working with NJDEP to revise NJAC 7:22



Parkway Overlay District

- Established through an amendment to the CMP in 2006.
- Boundaries coincide with Parkway right-of-way
- Includes lands in the Preservation Area District, Forest Area, Rural Development Area, Regional Growth Area, Military and Federal Installation Area and two Pinelands Villages
- Allows for consistent treatment of the Parkway, regardless of the underlying management area designation

Permitted Uses

- Roadways, bridges and outlying and accessory facilities associated with operation and maintenance of the Parkway
- Improvement, expansion, repair and reconstruction of <u>existing</u> interchanges
- Public service infrastructure
- Local communications facilities

Secondary Impacts

Proposed development cannot result in changes in the location, pattern or intensity of land use which would be inconsistent with the Pinelands land use program

Garden State Parkway Interchange 44

- Interchange 44: Garden State Parkway and Pomona Road
- Expansion from partial interchange to full interchange
 Northbound exit ramp
 - Southbound entrance ramp
 - In Parkway Overlay District
- Project approved by the Commission in May 2013
- Secondary impacts agreement with Atlantic County signed December 2013

Interchange 44 in 2013



Current Zoning and Potential Secondary Impacts

- Current zoning:
 - Rural Development Area
 - Permitted density: 1 unit/5 acres
 - Commercial building coverage: 2% maximum
 - Sewer service not permitted
- Potential secondary impacts
 - Pressure to redesignate to RGA for high density residential or intensive commercial development
 - Pressure to allow sewer service

Addressing Secondary Impacts

- Identify parcels fronting on major roads leaving the intersection for a distance of 1.5 miles
- Include contiguous parcels under common ownership
- Freeze or "memorialize" the current zoning through acquisition of land or easements

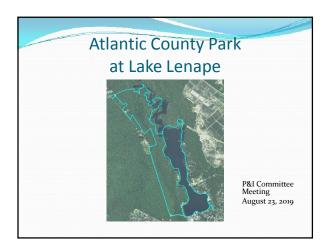


Secondary Impacts Agreement

- Atlantic County agreed to acquire lands or memorialize zoning
 - 356 acres within 1.5 miles of Interchange 44
 - Lands in outer tiers (further from Interchange 44) to be considered after 3 years, if necessary
 - Complete within 6 years (December 2019)











- acres
- Deed Restricted the Remainder







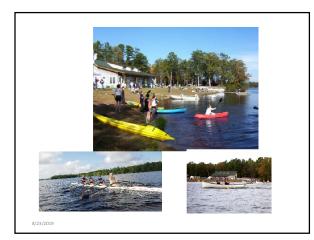


PROPOSED RECONFIGURATION OF FLOATING DOCKS AT THE LAKE LENAPE BOAT HOUSE AND BOAT RAMP

PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF THE MARCH 1998 MOA BETWEEN THE COMMISSION AND ATLANTIC COUNTY TO AUTHORIZE DOCK RECONFIGURATION

8/23/2019







	The March 1998 Memorandum of Agreement
	 Authorizes Atlantic County to proceed with improvements to enhance public park use and access, in an area designated as the Western Lake Shore at Lenape Park, in Hamilton Twp., Atlantic County
	 The MOA Defines limits of development activities throughout the park property consisting of approximately 1,898 acres
	 The MOA was necessary to allow extension of waste water service into the park's Western Lake Shore, and also to relax Fresh Water Wetland Buffers for specific lake and park access improvements
8/23/2019	 in exchange for consent to proceed with the development described in the MOA, the County permanently deed restricted approximately 1,822 acres of the Park, to permanently preserve it in a natural state

The Dock at the Boat House And Boat Ramp

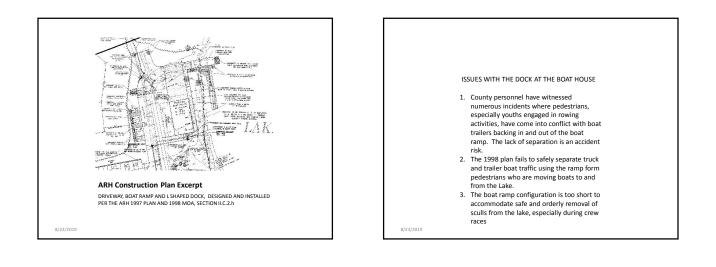
MOA Section II.C.2 provides a list of improvements that the County is permitted develop, including trails, a boat house, boat ramps, camp sites and related improvements.

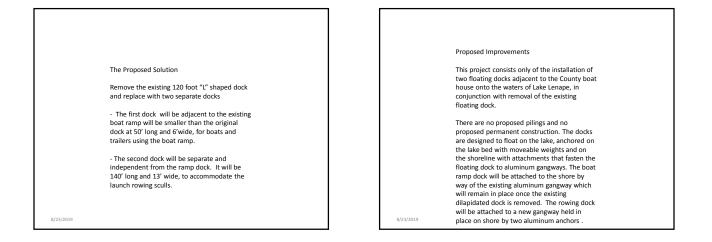
The authorized improvements include a specific description of a dock that serves the boat house and the nearby boat ramp:

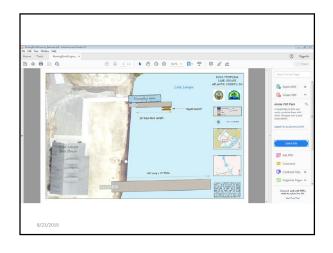
"Improvements to the Western Lakeshore Area shall be limited to the following:

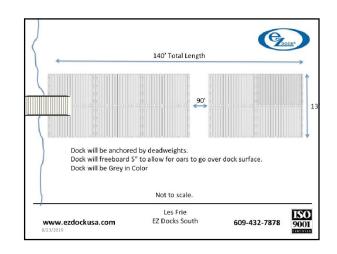
.h a 40 feet by 20 feet partially submerged rippled concrete boat ramp, and a 120 feet L shaped dock varying in width 6-8 feet adjacent to the first aid restroom boat house building"

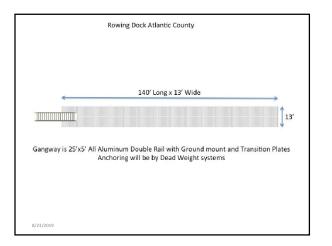
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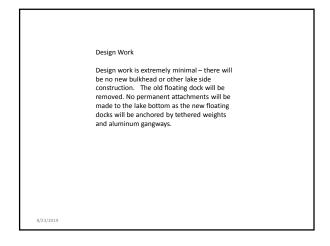












PROJECT PARTNERS:

The improvements will be designed, installed and maintained by the County, with work performed by a qualified private contractor retained in accordance with the Local Public Contracts Law. Prior to commencement of work, plans will be presented to the NJ Green Acres Porgram, under the rules governing Green Acres Open Space property. In addition, it is expected that a public hearing will be held regarding project funding.

8/23/2019

CONSULATION:

The County must consult with the NJ Green Acres program. In addition, the County has and will continue to consult with public school officials, as this project will benefit student users. The County has and also will continue to consult with its Parks and Environment Advisory Board, the Board of Chosen Freeholders, the Atlantic County Rowing Association (a non-profit organization that operates rowing activities on the lake), fishermen and other lake boaters, and the public at large.

8/23/2019

FINANCING:

The total estimated cost is approximately \$120,000 and will be funded by the County, through the Atlantic County Open Space Trust Fund.

8/23/2019

LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS:

The County believes that the corrective work will not trigger any new deviations from land use or development standards that are contemplated by the MOA. Any deviation is already addressed by the MOA. The County does not seek to remove any of the land restricted from development by the deed restriction.

8/23/2019

MEASURES TO BE TAKEN TO REDUCE NONCONFORMITY

the County is willing to further reduce any perceived impacts by giving up the right to develop a wood boar ramp that is currently permitted by MOA Section II.C.2.0, at a location referred to locally as "Danger Beach". Although approved in the MOA, operational concerns with the current dock configuration at the Boat House and Boat Ramp far outweigh the value of the additional dock at the Danger Beach site.

8/23/2019

PROJECT ALTERNATIVES:

Any other location would result in a significant deviation from the MOU and from the CMP standards that it was designed to address. It is critical to keep these improvements in the general vicinity of the boat house, to contain impacts to a næra where lake utilization has been developed under the MOA. A "do nothing" alternative is considered unacceptable, due to the potential risk of injury to persons and damage to property based on the current observations and reports or conflicts.

8/23/2019

Would an equivalent or better level of protection of the Pinelands be achieved if the CMP's standards were strictly followed ?

The County is not aware of any other CMP

development standards implicated by this

proposal

The County believes that a better level of protection of the Pinelands is provided by the MOA and that an amendment or supplement to allow the corrective dock work has no meaningful impact on the protections provided by the MOA.

3/23/2019

8/23/2019

8/23/2019

PROPOSED OFFSET:

As noted above, part of this proposal is a proposed offset of lands currently reserved for development under the MOA of a wooden boat ramp at "Danger Beach". Although the County is convinced that the "Danger Beach" area would serve as a prime location for an additional access point to the Lake, the necessity of alleviating the safety concerns and design issues at the existing boat ramp far outweigh the benefit of additional access.

8/23/2019

CONCLUSION

The County's Proposal includes two amendments to 1998 MOA:

Section II C 2 h - amend the description of the docks to remove the existing L shape and insert a description of the two proposed floating docks

Section II C 2. O remove permission to develop a canoe and wooden boat pier

The proposal is subject to approval of the revised MOA form, preparation and submission of final plans, public notice and public hearings under the Open Space Trust law, and approval of an amendment to the Deed restriction incorporating the MOA amendments



RESOLUTION OF THE NEW JERSEY PINELANDS COMMISSION

NO. PC4-19-____

TITLE: To Concur with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Conveyance of State-Owned Lands in Barnegat Township Acquired with Section 502 Funding to Ocean County

Commissioner _____ moves and Commissioner _____ seconds the motion that:

WHEREAS, Section 502 of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 (Pub. L. 95-625) authorizes the United States Secretary of the Interior to provide financial assistance to the State of New Jersey for planning and land acquisition activities in support of the Pinelands protection effort; and

WHEREAS, Section 502 of the 1978 National Parks and Recreation Act originally authorized a total of \$26 million in support of the Pinelands Commission's activities, including \$23 million for acquisition of lands in the Pinelands; and

WHEREAS, the federal government subsequently authorized an increase in funding for land acquisition in the Pinelands to a total of \$40 million, of which approximately \$32 million has been appropriated and expended to date; and

WHEREAS, in 1980, the Pinelands Commission, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the United States Department of the Interior executed a Memorandum of Agreement for purposes of implementing the provisions of Section 502 as they pertain to grants for both planning and land acquisition; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the 1980 Memorandum of Agreement:

The Department of Environmental Protection is responsible for overall administration of the Section 502 Land Acquisition Program, including submission of all applications for Section 502 funding, grant management and monitoring; and

The Pinelands Commission is required to evaluate all proposed land acquisitions for conformance with Section 502 and the Comprehensive Management Plan; and

The Secretary of the Interior is responsible for approving the expenditure of Section 502 funds after consultation with DEP and the Commission; and

WHEREAS, lands eligible for acquisition are those that have critical ecological values in danger of being adversely affected or destroyed, as well as acquisitions that are undertaken pursuant to the Comprehensive Management Plan and serve to further the preservation, conservation, recreation and/or cultural objectives of the Pinelands National Reserve; and

WHEREAS, to guide the State's acquisition efforts, the Pinelands Commission designated target areas throughout the Pinelands that met these criteria, based on their strategic ecological value related to watershed protection, wildlife corridors and contiguity with existing State-owned land; and

WHEREAS, in April 1980, the Department of Environmental Protection acquired 192 acres within the Bass River Section 502 target area using a combination of Green Acres Bond funds and Section 502 acquisition funds;

WHEREAS, the acquired lands (Block 45, Lot 1; Block 51, Lot 4.01; and Block 52, Lot 6.05) are located in the Pinelands Preservation Area District and Pinelands Forest Area of Barnegat Township and have been managed by the Division of Parks and Forestry as part of Bass River State Forest since their acquisition by the State; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Environmental Protection is now proposing to transfer ownership of these lands to Ocean County in exchange for approximately 269 acres of County-owned land that is also located in the Pinelands Preservation Area District and Pinelands Forest Area; and

WHEREAS, the 1980 Memorandum of Agreement specifies that changes in use or management of lands acquired using Section 502 funding require concurrence by the Pinelands Commission and approval by the United States Department of the Interior; and

WHEREAS, the exchange of lands will allow the County to expand its holdings around the historic Cedar Bridge Tavern site in Barnegat Township, thereby facilitating opportunities for public education and better stewardship of the area;

WHEREAS, the exchange of lands will also allow the Department of Environmental Protection to fill gaps in State ownership in Barnegat and Stafford townships, thus creating a larger contiguous parcel for administration as part of the State's park system; and

WHEREAS, all lands involved in the transfer will remain in public ownership and restricted to conservation and recreation, with all future development subject to approval by the Pinelands Commission in accordance with the Comprehensive Management Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Commission finds that the State's conveyance of Barnegat Township Block 45, Lot 1; Block 51, Lot 4.01; and Block 52, Lot 6.05 to Ocean County will further the preservation, conservation, creation and cultural objectives of the Pinelands National Reserve and is otherwise consistent with the Comprehensive Management Plan, Section 502 of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 and the 1980 Memorandum of Agreement; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 13:18A-5h, no action authorized by the Commission shall have force or effect until ten (10) days, Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays excepted, after a copy of the minutes of the meeting of the Commission has been delivered to the Governor for review, unless prior to expiration of the review period the Governor shall approve same, in which case the action shall become effective upon such approval.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Pinelands Commission hereby concurs with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's proposed conveyance of Barnegat Township Block 45, Lot 1; Block 51, Lot 4.01; and Block 52, Lot 6.05 to Ocean County and recommends that the United States Department of the Interior approve the change in ownership and management of these lands.

	AYE	NAY	NP	A/R*		AYE	NAY	NP	A/R*		AYE	NAY	NP	A/R*
Ashmun					Irick					Quinn				
Avery					Jannarone					Rohan Green				
Christy					Lloyd					Prickett				
Earlen					Lohbauer									
Howell					Pikolycky									

Record of Commission Votes

*A = Abstained / R = Recused

Adopted at a meeting of the Pinelands Commission

Date: _____



State of New Jersey

Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres Program Mail Code 501-01 P.O. Box 420 Trenton, New Jersey 08625 TEL: (609) 984-0500 FAX: (609) 984-0608

CATHERINE R. McCABE Commissioner

September 11, 2019

VIA EMAIL AND REGULAR U.S. MAIL

Nancy Wittenberg, Executive Director The Pinelands Commission P.O. Box 359 New Lisbon, New Jersey 08064

Re: Proposed Conveyance of Section 502-Funded Land from the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to the County of Ocean Block 45, Lot 1, Block 51, Lot 4.01 and Block 52, Lot 6.05 Township of Barnegat, Ocean County

Dear Ms. Wittenberg,

I am writing to seek your assistance in obtaining the concurrence of the Pinelands Commission with the proposed conveyance of the above-referenced parcels by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection to Ocean County as part of a land exchange. As explained in more detail below, the Commission's concurrence is needed because these properties were purchased in part with federal Pinelands preservation funds provided to NJDEP under Section 502 of the "National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978" (Pub. L. 95-625). Under Section 502 and the 1980 funding agreement between the NJDEP, the Commission and the U.S. Department of the Interior (acting through the National Park Service), the Commission's concurrence is needed before the NPS can approve the proposed land exchange.

Background

The pending proposal involves the exchange of approximately 269 acres of land owned by the County in Barnegat and Stafford Townships for approximately 192 acres of land owned by the NJDEP in Barnegat Township (hereafter, "the NJDEP Tract"). The County's

SHEILA Y. OLIVER Lt. Governor general objective for the proposed land exchange is to expand its holdings around the historic Cedar Bridge Tavern Site in Barnegat Township. The NJDEP's general objectives are to fill gaps in State ownership in Barnegat and Stafford Townships and create a larger contiguous parcel for administration as part of the State park system.

The NJDEP Tract was acquired by NJDEP from the New Jersey Conservation Foundation through the Green Acres program in April 1980 for \$84,000 using 1974 Green Acres Bond funds and federal Pinelands preservation funds provided to the NJDEP under Section 502 of the "National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978" (Pub. L. 95-625). Once acquired, the NJDEP Tract was assigned to the NJDEP's Division of Parks and Forestry for management as part of Bass River State Forest. There are no structures or developed recreational facilities on any portion of the NJDEP Tract.

Within the NJDEP Tract, approximately 156 acres of land are located within the Forest Area of the Pinelands (Block 51, Lot 4.01, and Block 52, Lot 6.05) and the remaining 36 acres are located within the Preservation Area of the Pinelands (Block 45, Lot 1) (as such areas are currently designated under the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan.) The parcels are zoned PA (Preservation Area) and PF (Preserved Forest Pinelands) by Barnegat Township.

Transfer of the NJDEP Tract to the County will enable the County to re-assemble most of the original Cedar Bridge Tavern historic site. Currently, the County owns the Tavern structure itself on a 5-acre parcel (Block 51 Lot 4.02), but not the surrounding acreage. The larger site will allow the Ocean County Parks Department to more fully educate the public about, and interpret the history of, the Cedar Bridge Tavern. For the past several years the County has received a special use permit from NJDEP for use of portions of Bass River State Forest, within the NJDEP Tract, adjacent to the Tavern. This permit has allowed for the use of 0.25-acre area for temporary parking, and has also authorized archaeological research and construction of interpretive walking trails. Transfer of the NJDEP Tract will allow the County to better serve the public and conduct stewardship activities on these properties. The County also plans to make the Cedar Bridge Tavern site a trail head for a regional trail network, while showcasing the history of the Pine Barrens. In addition, with a permanent presence at the Cedar Bridge Tavern site, the County will be able to more easily and regularly patrol the area that has been previously used as an illegal dump site and an illegal camp ground.

In May 2018, the NJDEP and the Ocean County conducted four public hearings on the proposed land exchange. The hearings were required under N.J.S.A. 13:1D-51 et seq. (known as the "Ogden Rooney" statute), N.J.S.A. 40A:12-1 (known as the Local Lands and Buildings Law) and N.J.S.A. 40A:12-15.4 (the statute authorizing the County to collect and expend open space taxes). The hearings were also intended to satisfy the

public hearing requirements for transfer of Green Acres encumbered properties by local government units (under N.J.S.A. 13:8C-34 and N.J.A.C. 7:36-25.5.) The Secretary of the State House Commission participated in one of the hearings as required by N.J.S.A. 52:31-1.1.

Prior to the hearings, as required by the Ogden Rooney statute and the Local Lands and Buildings Law, the NJDEP and the County prepared and released a report analyzing the proposed land exchange from an environmental, recreational and economic perspective. A copy of the report, its attachments, and transcripts of the two public hearings required by the Ogden Rooney statute may be found at:

https://www.state.nj.us/dep/greenacres/archive_hearings.html#2018 (scroll down to May 2018 entry).

After the required public hearings concluded with no adverse public comments being received, NJDEP Commissioner McCabe approved the proposed land exchange on August 30, 2018 and referred the proposal to the State House Commission. The State House Commission approved the proposed exchange on September 27, 2018. However, neither the NJDEP Commissioner nor the State House Commission have jurisdiction over the issue of whether the NJDEP Tract can be transferred to Ocean County under Section 502. We now seek the Pinelands Commission's concurrence in the proposed transfer so we can obtain final approval of the proposed transfer from the National Park Service.

Section 502 Requirements and Analysis

Section 11(a) of the 1980 funding agreement between NJDEP, the Commission and Interior/NPS provides in part:

(11) Retention and Use of Acquired Properties—It is the intention of Section 502 and of this agreement that acquisition funds mad available pursuant to Section 502 will be used to further the preservation, conservation, recreation and/or cultural objectives of the National Reserve and of the CMP. It is agreed that the National Reserve concept and the approved CMP may best be served by a program which utilizes acquisition funds in a creative and flexible manner, provided that the program is consistent with Section 502 and other applicable federal laws and the terms of this agreement.

(a) Changes in Use and Management—Properties acquired with Section 502 assistance shall be retained, used and managed in accord with the approved program of use and management. Proposed changes in such

program must serve the purpose of furthering preservation, conservation, recreation and/or cultural objectives of the Reserve.

It is agreed that the Interior Department shall allow changes in the use or management of properties so acquired if such proposed changes are in accord with the findings and recommendations of the CMP, Section 502 objectives, and the requirements of this agreement. *Pinelands Commission concurrence in such proposed changes will be required prior to Interior Department consideration of such requests. Changes in use or management may entail a change in the ownership, provided that such change of ownership will not be in conflict with Section 502 objectives and as provided herein.* [emphasis supplied]

The proposed land exchange between the NJDEP and Ocean County is an "apples to apples" swap of preserved lands in close proximity to each other, with the general objective of putting County properties on one side of the NJDEP/County ownership border and NJDEP properties on the other, thereby improving management of both sides. The Ogden Rooney report clearly stated the intention for all lands involved in the proposed exchange to remain preserved:

On both sides of the transaction, the lands proposed to be exchanged will remain as preserved open space after the exchange is completed. Any lands acquired by the NJDEP from the County will be preserved by statute (as replacement for lands originally purchased with Green Acres funds), and future conveyance of these lands will be governed by the Green Acres bond acts and the NJDEP property conveyance statute at N.J.S.A. 13:1D-51 through N.J.S.A. 13:1D-58. If the proposed land exchange is completed, the County has agreed to accept any lands acquired from the NJDEP with a deed clause limiting their future use to "recreation and conservation" purposes (as that term is defined in the Green Acres statutes and rules, including, but not limited to, *N.J.A.C.* 7:36-2.1.) Once acquired, these lands would then be listed on any future Recreation and Open Space Inventories (ROSIs) prepared by the County as part of future Green Acres funding applications.

While most attributes of the proposed exchange are substantially similar on both sides of the transaction, three issues that might bear upon the Commission's review were noted in the Ogden Rooney report:

- Atlantic White Cedar: The proposed land exchange will cause a net increase in acreage of Atlantic white-cedar wetlands under State ownership by the NJDEP by NJDEP conveying approximately 16 acres of white-cedar wetlands and accepting ownership of 82 acres of white-cedar wetlands. The areas to be gained by the NJDEP have had active cedar management ongoing for at least 80 years. The younger portions of the cedar wetlands on the County Tract appear to be in good condition. The older portions require some attention to remain as cedar due to recent hardwood encroachment. Overall, this action would be beneficial in enhancing the NJDEP's holdings of the Atlantic white-cedar resource, and would provide continuity with existing Atlantic white-cedar forest owned by the State.
- Forested Areas: The proposed land exchange would also result in a net increase in acres of non-cedar forest owned by the State. The State will give up 110 acres of non-cedar forest, while acquiring 182 acres.
- Historic and Cultural Resources: As part of the NJDEP's internal review of the proposed land exchange, the State Historic Preservation Office determined that the continued use of the State lands to be conveyed to Ocean County for recreation and conservation purposes will not adversely affect any historic or archeaological resources. However, the SHPO is opposed to any kind of future development altering the viewshed of the adjacent Cedar Bridge Tavern, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Since this structure is already owned by the County and is listed on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places, then any future alterations to it are already subject to New Jersey Register review by the SHPO application process under the at http://www.nj.gov/dep/hpo/2protection/njrrevew.htm. The SHPO has been involved with Ocean County's restoration of the Cedar Bridge Tavern and understands that the proposed land exchange will also allow the County to address Pinelands environmental issues with their restoration work. Overall, the SHPO favors the proposed land exchange because the parcels that would be conveyed to the State are archaeologically sensitive.

Based on the above, we do not see the proposed land exchange as altering, in any meaningful way, the preservation status or future management of the lands involved on either side of the transaction. Therefore, it is our hope that, consistent with Section 11(a) of the 1980 Agreement, the Commission can find that the proposed change in ownership does not conflict with the objectives of Section 502 and/or the CMP.

It is my understanding that for this request to be considered by the full Commission, it must first undergo review by the Commission's CMP Policy and Implementation

September 11, 2019 Page 6 of 6

Committee, which is scheduled to meet next on September 27th. If any additional information is needed to place this matter on the Committee's agenda, please have your staff contact Judeth Yeany, Chief of our Bureau of Legal Services and Stewardship, at (609) 984-0500 or <u>Judeth.Yeany@dep.nj.gov</u>. We appreciate your assistance with this request.

Sincerely,

Year Martha Sullivan Sapp, Director

cc: Mark Villinger, Ocean County Planning Department (via email only) Courtney Wald-Wittkop, Green Acres Program (via email only) Judeth Piccinini Yeany, Green Acres Program (via email only)

REPORT ON THE PROPOSED EXCHANGE OF VACANT PRESERVED PROPERTY BETWEEN THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND THE COUNTY OF OCEAN IN THE TOWNSHIPS OF BARNEGAT AND STAFFORD, COUNTY OF OCEAN

Block 45, Lot 1; Block 51, Lot 4.01; Block 52 Lot 6.05 Barnegat Township (currently owned by the NJDEP)

Block 50, Lots 5 and 9; Block 51, Lot 10 Barnegat Township; Block 2, Lot 6 Stafford Township (currently owned by Ocean County)

Prepared by: Ocean County Planning Department NJDEP Green Acres Program March 2018

STATUTORY REFERENCES

For the State Lands:

Under L. 1993, c. 38, codified at N.J.S.A. 13:1D-51 through N.J.S.A. 13:1D-58, no lands acquired or developed by the State with Green Acres funds, or developed by the State in any other manner and administered by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection ("NJDEP"), may be conveyed unless the NJDEP first prepares a report on the proposed conveyance in accordance with N.J.S.A. 13:1D-52a(1), transmits the report to the individuals listed at N.J.S.A. 13:1D-52a(2), makes the report available to the public in accordance with N.J.S.A 13:1D-52a(3) and conducts one or more public hearings as required by N.J.S.A. 13:1D-52a(4). Public notice requirements for the hearings are specified at N.J.S.A. 13:1D-53 and –54. A summary and/or transcript of the public hearing(s) is provided to the NJDEP Commissioner, the State House Commission and the public under N.J.S.A. 13:1D-55. The methodology for valuing lands to be conveyed and the terms of such conveyances are governed by N.J.S.A. 13:1D-56.

Section 13 of L. 1993, c. 38 also amended N.J.S.A. 52:31-1.1 [Sale, conveyance of State's interest; terms; conditions; public hearing; proceeds] to require the State House Commission to conduct a public hearing at least 90 days in advance of determining the terms and conditions of any sale or conveyance for which the NJDEP is required to follow the public notice and hearing process at N.J.S.A. 13:1D-51 through N.J.S.A. 13:1D-58. In addition to any other applicable requirements of law, rule, or regulation concerning notice for its public hearings, the State House Commission is required to provide notice of the public hearing at least 30 days in advance of the date of the hearing in the same manner and according to the same procedures prescribed for the NJDEP pursuant to N.J.S.A. 13:1D-53 and -54. At its November 13, 2017 meeting, the State House Commission adopted a procedural resolution for the implementation of N.J.S.A. 52:31-1.1. The resolution provides that the State House Commission Secretary will represent the Commission at the second required NJDEP hearing, that the second hearing will be a joint NJDEP/State House Commission hearing is intended to satisfy the requirements of N.J.S.A. 52:31-1.1.¹

Once these procedural requirements have been met, the conveyance proposed in this report requires the approval of the NJDEP Commissioner and the State House Commission. N.J.S.A. 13:1D-55; N.J.S.A. 13:8A-48; N.J.S.A. 13:8C-1 et seq.

¹ A copy of the resolution adopted by the Commission may be found at: <u>http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/statehouse-</u> <u>commission/pdf/9-20-2017update.pdf</u>

For the County Lands:

Under N.J.S.A 40A:12-16, the governing body of any county by resolution may exchange any lands owned by the county for other lands or rights or interests therein desired for public use. The public notice and hearing requirements for such exchanges are specified at N.J.S.A. 40A:12-13.5.

Under N.J.S.A. 40A:12-15.4, lands acquired with county open space trust funds may be conveyed or transferred, subject to the requirements therein, including the requirement to conduct one public hearing.

The proposed conveyance of County land is also subject to the procedural requirements for transfers of Green Acres encumbered parkland at N.J.S.A. 13:8C-34 and N.J.S.A. 7:36-25.5.

RATIONALE FOR CONVEYANCE

The County of Ocean ("County") and the NJDEP propose to exchange approximately 269 acres of land owned by the County for approximately 192 acres of land owned by the NJDEP. As detailed below, the County's general objective for the proposed land exchange is to expand its holdings around the historic Cedar Bridge Tavern Site in Barnegat Township. The NJDEP's general objectives are to fill gaps in State ownership in Barnegat and Stafford Townships and create a larger contiguous parcel for administration as part of the State park system.

The specific parcels proposed to be exchanged are as follows:

Р	Proposed Land Exchange Between the NJDEP and Ocean County							
Municipality	Block	Lot	Street Address	Current Owner	Proposed Owner	Acres to State	Acres to County	
Barnegat	50	5	50 Route 539	County	State	100.82		
Barnegat	50	9	109A Yellow Dam Road	County	State	5.14		
Barnegat	51	10	50 Route 539	County	State	147.91		
Stafford	2	6	Cedar Bridge Road at Route 539	County	State	15.62		
					Total	269.49		

Р	Proposed Land Exchange Between the NJDEP and Ocean County							
Municipality	Block	Lot	Street Address	Current Owner	Proposed Owner	Acres to State	Acres to County	
Barnegat	45	1	177 Old Halfway Road	State	County		2.98	
Barnegat	51	4.01	50 Warren Grove Road	State	County		119.38	
Barnegat	52	6.05	221 Old Cedar Bridge- Barnegat Road	State	County		70.50	
						Total	192.86	

A general location map of the properties proposed to be exchanged is attached as Figure 1. An aerial map of the properties proposed to be exchanged is attached as Figure 2.

On both sides of the transaction, the lands proposed to be exchanged will remain as preserved open space after the exchange is completed. Any lands acquired by the NJDEP from the County will be preserved by statute (as replacement for lands originally purchased with Green Acres funds), and future conveyance of these lands will be governed by the Green Acres bond acts and the NJDEP property conveyance statute at N.J.S.A. 13:1D-51 through N.J.S.A. 13:1D-58. If the proposed land exchange is completed, the County has agreed to accept any lands acquired from the NJDEP with a deed clause limiting their future use to "recreation and conservation" purposes (as that term is defined in the Green Acres statutes and rules, including, but not limited to, *N.J.A.C.* 7:36-2.1.) Once acquired, these lands would then be listed on any future Recreation and Open Space Inventories (ROSIs) prepared by the County as part of future Green Acres funding applications.

In addition, as required by N.J.S.A. 13:1D-56, the deed for the conveyance of the NJDEP Tract to the County will include statutory language requiring compensation to the State if the property is rezoned within 25 years of the purchase in a manner that increases the value of the lands.

Upon successful completion of the public hearing process, the proposed conveyance will require the approval of the NJDEP Commissioner and the State House Commission under *N.J.S.A.* 13:8A-48 and *N.J.S.A.* 13:8C-31. The NJDEP believes that the earliest it could obtain these approvals is September 2018.

Description of the NJDEP Tract

The NJDEP property proposed for conveyance to the County consists of 192.86+/- acres of vacant land located in Barnegat Township off both sides of Cedar Bridge Road (hereafter, the "NJDEP Tract."). This tract is comprised of three individual lots which form the north easterly limits of the Bass River State Forest. The lots are currently designated for tax purposes as Block 45, Lot 1, Block 51, Lot 4.01 and Block 52, Lot 6.05.

All three lots have paved or gravel road frontage, as follows:

Block 45, Lot 1	Old Halfway Road and Yellow Dam Road (727 feet)
Block 51, Lot 4.01	Old Cedar Bridge-Barnegat Road (2,280 feet)
Block 52, Lot 6.05	Old Cedar Bridge-Barnegat Road (3,100 feet)

The NJDEP Tract was acquired from the New Jersey Conservation Foundation through the Green Acres program in April 1980 for \$84,000 using 1974 Green Acres Bond funds and federal Pinelands preservation funds provided under Section 502 of the "National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978" (Pub. L. 95-625). Once acquired, the NJDEP Tract was assigned to the NJDEP's Division of Parks and Forestry for management as part of Bass River State Forest. There are no structures or developed recreational facilities on any portion of the NJDEP Tract.

Within the NJDEP Tract, approximately 156 acres of land are located within the Forest Area of the Pinelands (Block 51, Lot 4.01, and Block 52, Lot 6.05) and the remaining 36 acres are located within the Preservation Area of the Pinelands (Block 45, Lot 1) (as such areas are designated under the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan.) The parcels are zoned PA (Preservation Area) and PF (Preserved Forest Pinelands) by Barnegat Township. The PA and PF zones are intended to preserve and protect the valuable resources of the Pinelands.²

The NJDEP Tract is made up of gently rolling contours, low-lying wetlands and stream corridors (associated with the Oswego River and Yellow Dam Branch) and some uplands. GIS aerial imagery of the NJDEP Tract illustrates that a Forest Area Wetlands buffer impacts a considerable ratio of the upland acreage. [Figure 4]

Block 45, Lot 1 borders an unnamed artificial lake. The parcel is approximately 2.98 acres. As indicated on Figure 4, this parcel is entirely uplands. The parcel is a mixed forest, more than 50% of which is deciduous.

As indicated on Figure 4, both the Oswego River and Yellow Dam Branch, which have surface water classifications of PL (the general surface water classification applied to Pinelands waters), run through the remainder of the NJDEP Tract (Block 51, Lot 4.01 and Block 52, Lot 6.05.) Both parcels contain wetlands complexes associated with the stream corridors.

Block 52, Lot 6.05 is 70.50 acres and contains an unnamed artificial lake. The parcel is a mixed forest, more than 50% of which is coniferous. This lot is heavily populated with pitch pine forest, deciduous wooded wetlands and Atlantic White Cedar stands. The front of the parcel has 1.59 acres of coniferous wooded wetlands and 1.25 acres of mixed wooded wetlands. The northern part

² Further information on the zoning designations may be found at: http://clerkshq.com/default.ashx?clientsite=Barnegat-nj

of the parcel has small areas, less than one acre, of mixed scrub and shrub wetlands (mostly coniferous). Including the lake, this parcel is approximately 25-30% wetlands and another 25-30% Pinelands buffers.

Block 51, Lot 4.01 is 119.38 acres of mixed forest, more than 50% of which is deciduous. As indicated on Figure 4, the parcel is significantly wet, consisting of about 50-55% wetlands. The 300-foot regulatory buffers associated with those wetlands cover an additional 30% or more of the property. The wetlands on this parcel consist of the following: (1) a large 420-acre wetlands complex on the western edge of the property, consisting of approximately 24 acres of Atlantic White cedar wetlands,10 acres of deciduous scrub/shrub wetlands and 8 acres of deciduous wooded wetlands; (2) approximately 10 acres of mixed wooded wetlands along the frontage of Old Cedar Bridge-Barnegat Road and (3) approximately 3 acres of mixed wooded wetlands at the back (southern edge) of this parcel. The three acres of mixed wooded wetland on the southern edge of the lot are part of a larger 28-acre wetlands complex that extends onto a portion of the adjacent County Tract (Block 51, Lot 10).

The three lots in the NJDEP Tract surround a five-acre County-owned property containing the historic Cedar Bridge Tavern (Block 50, Lot 9.) The circa 1816 Cedar Bridge Tavern of Barnegat, New Jersey is on both the New Jersey and National (8-7-2014) Registers of Historic Places. The County purchased the tavern in December 2007. Under contract, Historic Buildings Architects (HBA) of Trenton completed the successful nomination to the Registers and a comprehensive preservation plan for Cedar Bridge Tavern (dated January 14, 2013.) Under a separate contract, HBA is currently completing construction documents and permitting for the renovation of the structure.

Description of the County Tract

The County property proposed for conveyance to the NJDEP consists of 269.49+/- acres located in Barnegat and Stafford Townships (hereafter, the "County Tract.") This tract is comprised of four individual lots: Block 50, Lots 5 and 9 in Barnegat Township; Block 51, Lot 10 in Barnegat Township and Block 2, Lot 6 in Stafford Township. The County Tract is known locally as the Wading River East Branch property.

Three of the four lots have paved or gravel road frontage, as follows:

Block 50, Lot 5	Route 539 (3,317 feet)
Block 50, Lot 9	No Road Frontage, off Yellow Dam Road
Block 51, Lot 10	Route 539 (3,643 feet)
	Cedar Bridge-Warren Grove Road (1,531 feet)
Block 2, Lot 6	Cedar Bridge-Warren Grove Road (747 feet)
	County Road 539 (335 feet)

The County Tract was purchased from Railroad Road, LLC, a private owner, in December 2014.³ The acquisition was made by the County through the Ocean County Natural Lands Trust Fund, a dedicated open space tax program. The purchase price for the County Tract was \$1,250,000 and

³ Railroad Road, LLC is a corporate affiliate of Scarborough Properties, Railroad, LLC and Route 539, LLC.

the entire purchase was funded solely through the Natural Lands Trust Fund. There are no structures or developed recreational facilities on any portion of the County Tract.

Prior to acquiring the County Tract in 2014, the County forwarded the owner's application and interest in sale of the property for review by the NJDEP. At that time, the NJDEP informed the County that it was interested in acquiring the property, but did not have funding available for the purchase. Based on the NJDEP's expression of interest, the County pursued acquisition with the understanding that this property could be transferred to the NJDEP at a future date. This intention was memorialized in the authorization for acquisition by the Ocean County Board of Chosen Freeholders on June 14, 2014. [Appendix 2.]

Within the County Tract, approximately 164 acres of land are located within the Forest Area of the Pinelands (Block 51, Lot 10, and Block 2, Lot 6) and the remaining 105 acres are located within the Preservation Area of the Pinelands (Block 50, Lots 5 and 9) (as such areas are designated under the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan.) The parcels are zoned PA (Preservation Area) and PF (Preserved Forest Pinelands) by Barnegat Township and Stafford Township. The PA and PF zones are intended to preserve and protect the valuable resources of the Pinelands.⁴

The County Tract is made up of gently rolling contours, low-lying wetlands and stream corridors (associated with the Oswego River and Yellow Dam Branch) and some uplands.

As indicated on Figure 4, both the Oswego River and Yellow Dam Branch, which have surface water classifications of PL (the general surface water classification applied to Pinelands waters), run through portions of County Tract (Block 50, Lot 5 and Block 51, Lot 10.) Both parcels contain wetlands complexes associated with the stream corridors.

Block 50, Lot 5 in Barnegat Township is approximately 100.82 acres. As indicated on Figure 4, this parcel is approximately 80% wetlands, and another 10% pineland buffers. The wetland portion of this parcel is made up of mostly Atlantic White Cedar wetlands, with some mixed wooded wetlands. The upland portion of this parcel is coniferous forest. This parcel is surrounded on three sides by NJDEP property (Bass River State Forest). The northeast side of Block 50, Lot 5 is adjacent to Block 50, Lots 2 and 3, a privately-owned property being actively used by Eastern Concrete Materials, Inc. for sand mining. Although the tax map boundary between Block 50, Lot 5 and Block 50, Lots 2 and 3 appears to show the quarry operation encroaching on Block 50, Lot 5, the survey prepared for the County as part of the proposed land exchange shows that there is no encroachment. [Figure 5]

Block 50, Lot 9 in Barnegat Township is 5.14 acres. The parcel is a made up of coniferous forest, coniferous wooded wetlands, and deciduous wooded wetlands. As indicated on Figure 4, this parcel is almost 100% wetlands. According to mapping on file with the NJDEP, this parcel is part of a larger 257-acre tract of potential vernal habitat area, with possibly 10 current vernal pool locations.⁵ This parcel is an isolated inholding in Bass River State Forest and is completely surrounded by property owned by the NJDEP. This parcel does not have frontage on a paved or gravel road.

⁴ Further information on the zoning designations may be found at:

http://clerkshq.com/default.ashx?clientsite=Barnegat-nj

⁵ http://www.nj.gov/dep/gis/geowebsplash.htm

Block 51, Lot 10 in Barnegat Township is approximately 147.91 acres. As indicated on Figure 4, the parcel is 15% wetlands and another 10 to 20% Pineland buffers. The wetlands are mostly made up of Atlantic White Cedar wetlands. The upland portion of this parcel consists of coniferous forest to the north and to the west, and deciduous forest to the south and to the east. This parcel is located to the southwest of the NJDEP Tract. Due to the presence of an area of questionable title between the County Tract and the NJDEP Tract, Block 51, Lot 10 is adjacent to, but not touching, a portion of the NJDEP Tract (Block 51, Lot 4.01), other NJDEP property (Block 51, Lot 3 in Barnegat Township) to the northern and the northeastern edges of the parcel. To the southwest, Block 51, Lot 10 is bordered by several privately-owned lots and another NJDEP parcel (Block 3, Lot 11 in Stafford Township.) To the west and the south, Block 51, Lot 10 borders other lots within the County Tract.

Block 2, Lot 6 in Stafford Township is approximately 15.62 acres of mixed forest, more than 50% of which is deciduous. As indicated on Figure 4, the parcel is less than 5% wetlands and another 10% wetlands buffers. The wetlands on this parcel consist of less than one acre of mixed coniferous wooded wetlands. This parcel is contiguous to Block 51, Lot 10 in Barnegat Township and is surrounded on three sides by either the remainder of the County Tract or land owned by the NJDEP.

A detailed description of the County Tract may be found in the appraisals included in this report as Appendices 4 and 5.

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES

For the NJDEP:

In exchange for the conveyance of the NJDEP Tract, which is not a contiguous part of Bass River State Forest, the NJDEP will acquire 269.49 acres currently owned by Ocean County. The proposed land exchange would fill gaps in State ownership and create a larger, contiguous parcel for management purposes, as well as consolidate passive recreational activities in that area of Bass River State Forest. The NJDEP Tract will remain permanently preserved for recreation and conservation purposes. The acreage being acquired by the NJDEP, adjacent to Bass River State Forest, will be more manageable for the State Division of Parks and Forestry than the area proposed to be transferred to the County.

In the past, the County has reported instances of illegal camping and illegal dumping in this area to the NJDEP. With a permanent presence at the Cedar Bridge Tavern site, the County will be able to more easily and regularly patrol this area, allowing the NJDEP to focus its limited enforcement resources on other portions of Bass River State Forest.

For the County:

Transfer of the NJDEP Tract to the County will enable the County to re-assemble most of the original Cedar Bridge Tavern Site. The larger site will allow the Ocean County Parks Department to more fully educate, interpret, and the history of the Cedar Bridge Tavern.

The Cedar Bridge Tavern is a historic treasure that offers a unique window into the European experience in the New Jersey Pinelands. From about 1740, a saw mill existed on the nearby branch of the Wading River and the town grew around the intersection of a major east/west thoroughfare and a southern route to reach Egg Harbor and Tuckerton. Eventually, two taverns in this hamlet served the travelers, hunters and rural region. Historic maps from about 1750 show Pettit's or Cedar Bridge as a named place on state and wider regional maps. A rich collection of traveler and academic references speak to the importance of this long-overlooked community.

On December 27, 1782, forces for the new republic led by Captains Richard Shreve and Edward Thomas were informed that notorious Loyalist John Bacon was in the vicinity of the tavern. They engaged Bacon and his Loyalist bandits (known now as "Refugees") at Cedar Bridge. A brief exchange of gunfire took place, and Bacon and his men were able to escape. One Patriot was killed, and four were wounded. Four Loyalists were also wounded, including Bacon. A ceremony commemorating this last documented land engagement of the American Revolution is held on the site each year on the Sunday closest to December 27.

For the past several years the County has received a special use permit with NJDEP for use of portions of Bass River State Forest, the NJDEP Tract, adjacent to the Tavern. This permit has allowed for the use of 0.25-acre area for temporary parking, and has also authorized archaeological research and construction of interpretive walking trails. Transfer of the NJDEP Tract will allow the County to better serve the public and the stewardship of these properties. The County also plans to make the Cedar Bridge Tavern site a trail head for a regional trail network, while showcasing the history of the Pine Barrens.

With a permanent presence at the Cedar Bridge Tavern site, the County will be able to more easily and regularly patrol the area that has been previously used as an illegal dump site and an illegal camp ground. There are no known disadvantages to this transfer from the County's perspective.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Assessment of Environmental Impact and Impact on Plants and Endangered and Non-Game Species

Due to their close proximity and shared boundary between the two Tracts, the environmental assessment contained herein pertains to both sides of this proposed transaction.

The proposed land exhange has undergone an internal review by the affected programs within the Department's Natural and Historic Resource Group, including the Nongame and Endangered Species Program, the State Historic Preservation Office ("SHPO"), the State Forest Service, the State Forest Fire Service and the Office of Natural Lands Management. This review did not raise any objections to the proposal.

The NJDEP is not aware of any specific reported sightings of threatened or endangered plant or animal species on the properties proposed for conveyance by the NJDEP to the County. However, the NJDEP's GeoWeb mapping indicates that there is a potential for multiple threatened and endangered species to exist on these parcels, specifically flora and fauna. [Figure 3] Much of the land lies proximate to Natural Heritage Priority Sites and Historic Sites, such as the West Plains Fireshed Macrosite, the Little Plains, and the East Plains Fireshed Macrosite. These parcels may also contain globally imperiled rare plants and animals, including Barred Owl, Cooper's Hawk, Timber Rattle Snake, Pine Barrens Treefrog, Northern Pine Snake, Brown Thrasher, Fowler's Toad, and Carpenter's Frog.

According to the NJDEP's GeoWeb mapping, the County Tract may contain several threatened and endangered species, including timber rattlesnke, northern pine snake, Pine Barrens tree frog, and barred owl.

The proposed land exchange will cause a net increase in acreage of Atlantic white-cedar wetlands under State ownership by the NJDEP conveying approximately 16 acres of white-cedar wetlands and accepting ownership of 82 acres of white-cedar wetlands. The areas gained by the NJDEP have had active cedar management ongoing for at least 80 years. The younger portions of the cedar wetlands on the County Tract appear to be in good condition. The older portions require some attention to persist as cedar due to recent hardwood encroachment.

The proposed land exchange would also result in a net increase in acres of non-cedar forest owned by the State. The State will give up 110 acres of non-cedar forest, while acquiring 182 acres. Overall, this action would be beneficial in enhancing the NJDEP's holdings of the Atlantic white-cedar resource, and would provide continuity with existing Atlantic white-cedar forest owned by the State.

As part of the NJDEP's internal review of the proposed land exchange, the SHPO determined that the continued use of the State lands to be conveyed to Ocean County for recreation and conservation purposes will not adversely affect any historic or archeaological resources. However, the SHPO is opposed to any kind of future development altering the viewshed of the adjacent Cedar Bridge Tavern, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Since this structure is already owned by the County and is listed on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places, then any future alterations to it are already subject to New Jersey Register review by the SHPO under the application process at <u>http://www.nj.gov/dep/hpo/2protection/njrrevew.htm</u>.

The SHPO has been involved with Ocean County's restoration of the Cedar Bridge Tavern and understands that the proposed land exchange will also allow the County to address Pinelands environmental issues with their restoration work. Overall, the SHPO favors the proposed land exchange because the parcels that would be conveyed to the State are archaeologically sensitive.

Assessment of Recreational Impact

The NJDEP does not anticipate that the proposed land exchange will have a negative recreational impact on either side of this transaction. As noted above, there are no recreational facilities on either the NJDEP Tract or the County Tract. All the properties involved in the proposed land exchange will remain permanently preserved for recreation and conservation purposes, will continue to be managed as parkland, and will remain available for public access and use.

Transfer of the NJDEP Tract to the County is expected to improve the recreational use of this area, both through interpretive programming to be offered at the re-assembled Cedar Bridge Tavern site and through the County's plans to improve the trail network in this area.

ECONOMIC ASSESSMENT

Under N.J.S.A. 13:1D-56a, any NJDEP property of more than one acre that is proposed to be conveyed in fee (for any purpose), must be valued as follows:

a. For the purpose of determining the amount of consideration to be paid or transferred to the State in exchange for conveying lands acquired or developed by the State with Green Acres funds, or acquired or developed by the State in any other manner and administered by the department, the value of such lands *shall be based upon their intended use upon conveyance or upon their highest and best use, whichever shall provide to the State the greatest value in return*. [emphasis supplied]

Ocean County commissioned two appraisals for each tract, using appraisers from the NJDEP's Green Acres Program's list of approved appraisers and a scope of appraisal reviewed and approved by the NJDEP. The appraisals, which were completed in August 2017, are attached as Appendices 4 and 5. The appraisals were then reviewed by the NJDEP's Green Acres Program. Based on that review, the NJDEP's review appraisers certified the market value for each property. [Appendix 3.]

Although the County has agreed to accept title to the NJDEP Tract with a deed clause limiting future use of the property to "recreation and conservation purposes," both appraisers valued both the NJDEP Tract and the County Tract as unrestricted properties.

Valuation of NJDEP Tract

The NJDEP Tract was purchased in April 1980 from the New Jersey Conservation Foundation for \$84,000. The NJDEP Tract has a certified market value of \$972,000 (or \$5062 per acre) as of August 2017. The basis for this determination is set forth in the Appraisal Review Memo at Appendix 3.

Valuation of County Tract

The County Tract was purchased in December 2014 from Railroad LLC for \$1,250,000. The County Tract has a certified market value of \$1,272,000 (or \$4729 per acre) as of August 2017. The basis for this determination is set forth in the Appraisal Review Memo at Appendix 3.

<u>Analysis</u>

The NJDEP review appraiser has reviewed and certified the values above and has determined that the proposed exchange is an equitable one for the State of New Jersey. While the market values associated with the proposed conveyance favor the NJDEP, the overall benefit to the County is substantial and equitable for the citizens of Ocean County.

As discussed above, on both sides of the transaction, the lands proposed to be exchanged will remain as preserved open space after the exchange is completed. Any lands acquired by the NJDEP from the County will be preserved by statute (as replacement for lands originally purchased with Green Acres funds), and future conveyance of these lands will be governed by the Green Acres bond acts and the NJDEP property conveyance statute at N.J.S.A. 13:1D-51 through N.J.S.A. 13:1D-58. If the proposed land exchange is completed, the County has agreed to accept any lands acquired from the NJDEP with a deed clause limiting their future use to "recreation and conservation" purposes (as that term is defined in the Green Acres statutes and rules, including, but not limited to, *N.J.A.C.* 7:36-2.1.) Once acquired, these lands would then be listed on any future Recreation and Open Space Inventories (ROSIs) prepared by the County as part of future Green Acres funding applications.

In addition, under *N.J.S.A.* 13:1D-56, the NJDEP is required to include in the deed for the conveyance of the NJDEP Tract to the County statutory language requiring compensation to the State if the property is rezoned within 25 years of the purchase in a manner that increases the value of the lands.

Based on the above, the NJDEP and the County believe the proposed land exchange represents an equitable transaction for the public from an economic perspective. Although the overall fair market value of the County Tract is higher than the NJDEP Tract, the per acre values of the properties are comparable. The County has elected to transfer more land to the NJDEP than it is receiving in order to achieve both its objectives for future management of the Cedar Bridge Tavern site and the NJDEP's management objectives for Bass River State Forest. Since all lands involved in the proposed land exchange with remain preserved and open to all State residents, none of the real estate value involved in this transaction is being transferred for a private benefit.

FIGURES AND APPENDICES

The Figures and Appendices listed below may be accessed at: <u>http://www.state.nj.us/dep/greenacres/notices.html</u>

Figure 1	General Location Map
Figure 2	Aerial Map of Proposed Conveyance and Replacement Land
Figure 3	Landscape Mapping for Proposed Conveyance and Replacement Land
Figure 4	Map of Wetlands and Surface Waters for Proposed Conveyance and Replacement Land
Figure 5	Survey of County Tract

Appendix 1	Public Hearing Notices (NJDEP and County)
Appendix 2	County Resolution Authorizing the Purchase of the County Tract
Appendix 3	Analysis of the "Diversion" and "Replacement/Compensation" Appraisal Reports submitted to NJDEP Green Acres, November 2017, prepared by Susanne M. Curran, MAI, AI-GRS, Review Appraiser and Anine Rusecky, Review Appraiser
Appendix 4	August 2017 Integra Realty Resources Appraisals
Appendix 5	August 2017 Hall Realty Consultants Appraisals

PUBLIC HEARINGS

In accordance with N.J.S.A. 13:1D-52a(4), N.J.S.A. 52:31-1.1 and N.J.S.A 40A:12-16, public hearings on the proposed conveyances are scheduled as follows:

A public hearing on the **proposed conveyance of the County Tract** will be held:

May 16, 2018 at 4:00 PM

Stafford Township Historical Society, Old Baptist Church 120 N. Route 9 Manahawkin, NJ 08050 (609) 597-2237

A public hearing on **the <u>proposed conveyance of both the NJDEP Tract and County Tract</u> will be held:**

May 16, 2018 at 7:00 PM

Cloverdale County Park, Education Center 34 Cloverdale Road Barnegat, NJ 08005 (609) 607-1861

[NOTE: The first May 16, 2018 public hearing will be conducted by the County in accordance with N.J.S.A 40A:12-16, but NJDEP representatives will be present to answer questions about the proposed land exchange. The second May 16, 2018 public hearing will be conducted jointly by the NJDEP and the County in compliance with the requirements of N.J.S.A. 13:1D-52a(4) (as to the NJDEP) and N.J.S.A 40A:12-16 (as to the County.)]

A public hearing on the **proposed conveyance of the County Tract** will be held:

May 30, 2018 at 4:00 PM

Cattus Island County Park Cooper Environmental Center 1170 Cattus Island Blvd Toms River, NJ 08753

[NOTE: The May 30, 2018 public hearing will be conducted by the County in accordance with N.J.S.A 40A:12-16, but NJDEP representatives will be present to answer questions about the proposed land exchange.]

A public hearing on the **proposed conveyance of the NJDEP Tract** will be held:

May 31, 2018 at 3:30 PM

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection 501 East State Street 4th Floor Large Conference Room Trenton, NJ 08625 (609) 984-0500

[NOTE: The May 31, 2018 public hearing will be conducted jointly by the NJDEP and the State House Commission in compliance with the requirements of N.J.S.A. 13:1D-52a(4) (as to the NJDEP) and N.J.S.A. 52:31-1.1 (as to the State House Commission.) Representatives of the County will be present to answer questions about the proposed land exchange.]

Please refer to the Public Hearing Notices, Appendix 1, for information about submitting written public comments on the proposed conveyances.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information, please contact:

For the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection:

Sean Moriarty, Esq., Regulatory Officer Bureau of Legal Services and Stewardship New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres Program Mail Code 501-01 P.O. Box 420 Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0420 (609) 984-0500 Sean.Moriarty@dep.nj.gov

For the County of Ocean:

Mark Villinger, Supervising Planner Ocean County Department of Planning PO Box 2191 Toms River, NJ 08754-2191 (732) 929-2054 mvillinger@co.ocean.nj.us

For the State House Commission:

Robert J. Shaughnessy, Jr., Secretary New Jersey State House Commission

c/o

State of New Jersey, Department of Treasury Division of Property Management & Construction Office of Real Property Acquisition & Disposition 33 West State Street, 9th floor P O Box 229 Trenton, NJ 08625-0229 (609) 984-7797 Robert.Shaughnessy@treas.nj.gov

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John Spodofora, Mayor, Township of Stafford Alan R. Smith, Council President, Township of Stafford Linda Martin, Clerk, Township of Stafford

Gerry P. Little, Director, Board of Chosen Freeholders, County of Ocean Carl W. Block, County Administrator, County of Ocean Scott M. Colabella, Clerk, County of Ocean Betty Vasil, Clerk, Board of Freeholders, County of Ocean

Hon. Paul A Sarlo, Chair, Senate Budget and Appropriations CommitteeHon. James Beach, Chair, Senate State Government CommitteeHon. Bob Smith, Chair, Senate Environment Committee

Hon. Bob Andrzejczak, Chair, Assembly Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
Hon. Nancy J. Pinkin, Chair, Assembly Environment and Solid Waste Committee
Hon. John J. Burzichelli, Chair, Assembly Appropriations Committee
Hon. Vincent Mazzeo, Chair, Assembly State Government Committee

Robert J. Shaughnessy, Jr., Secretary, State House Commission

FIGURE 1: GENERAL LOCATION MAP

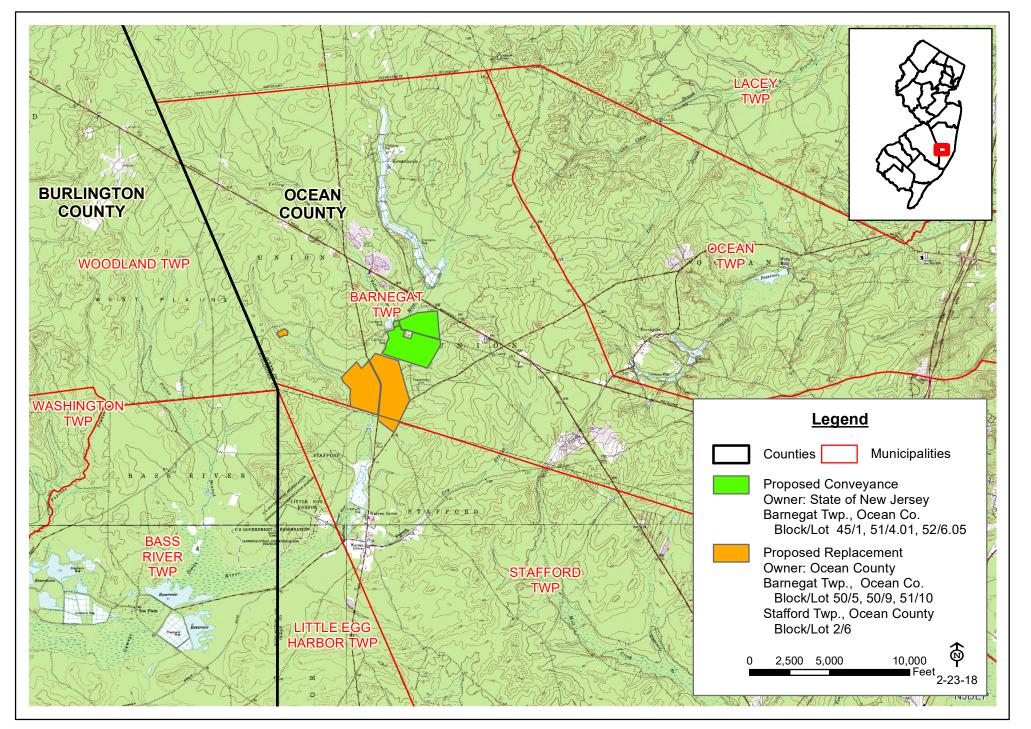


FIGURE 2: AERIAL MAP OF PROPOSED CONVEYANCE

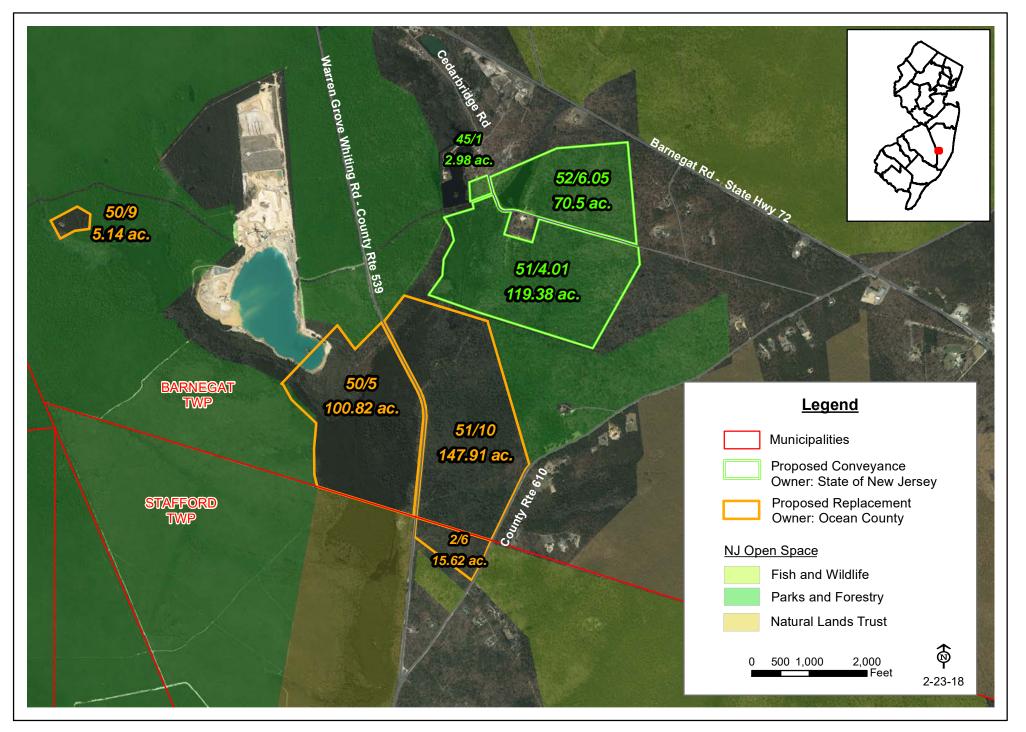


FIGURE 3: LANDSCAPE PROJECT MAPPING, VERSION 3.3

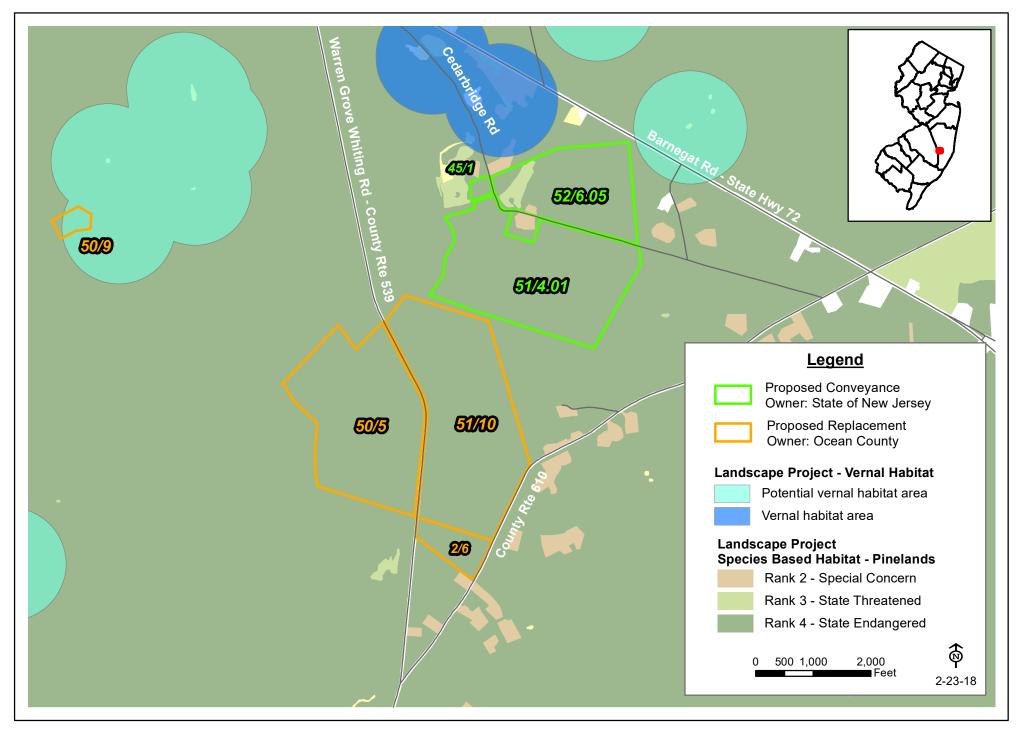


FIGURE 4: WETLANDS & SURFACE WATERS MAP

