

WRITTEN COMMENT #1

DONETTA WALDROP
P.O. BOX 373
NEW GRETN, NJ 08224

APP # 19900868.031
Doc Type 100

FEB 8 2019

Scanned _____

Pinelands Commission
P.O. Box 359
15 Springfield Road
New Lisbon, New Jersey 08064

RE: Application # 1990-0868.029
Public Development
Forest Management Activity
Adjacent Landowner Notification

To Whom It May Concern,

This correspondence is to advise you that I strongly disagree with the proposed silvicultural clearcutting, B/L: 48/1&2, 49/12, Bass River Township, Bass River State Forest.

A significant portion of the area to be clear cut borders my property. While I am concerned with and support active surveillance in detection and suppression of wildfires, I am equally concerned with the usable life of the fire tower itself. After completion of some research and studies, I have discovered that the fire tower is extremely close to the end of it's useful life. I cannot find any logic in spending funds to clear cut historic trees and then replenish with 11,000 new trees to accommodate a fire tower that will be useless in a few years. Studies have also shown that fire lookout towers are becoming obsolete. At one time, there were over 4,000 towers in use in this country, currently there are only 900 still in use as lookouts. These towers are being replaced through the use of cameras, sensors (such as those used for lightning detection), air observation, and other more sophisticated levels of technology. As a side note, many of the unused towers are being refurbished and are being rented for camping lodging.

The trees to be clear cut are of incredible beauty, they provide a home for local wildlife, and they are a significant attraction to visitors of the Bass River State Forest. It is my understanding that the trees to be planted in their place will take a considerable length of time to grow to their full height which is only a fraction of the ones to be removed.

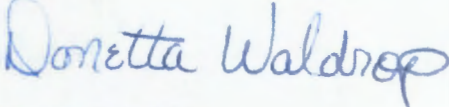
Please be advised that the notice I received is dated January 24, 2019. It was delivered by certified mail and signed for by my spouse on the 28th of January. I was out of town and

did not physically receive the notice until January 29. Therefore, I am complying with the allotted time period of 10 days.

I respectfully submit and request that the Pinelands Commission should take no action on the application by the New Jersey State Forest Fire Service until the Commission has heard from the concerned public.

Thank you for your attention to my concerns and I look forward to your response and proposed action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Donetta Waldrop". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "D" and a stylized "W".

Donetta Waldrop



FEB - 8 2019

State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

NATURAL & HISTORIC RESOURCES

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER

NEW JERSEY FOREST FIRE SERVICE

MAIL CODE 501-04

PO BOX 420

TRENTON, NJ 08625-0420

TEL: # 609-292-2977 FAX: # 609-984-0378

Public Development

Forest Management Activity

Adjacent Landowner Notification

PHILIP D. MURPHY

Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER

Lt. Governor

CATHERINE R. McCABE

Commissioner

New Jersey State Forest Fire Service
P.O. Box 420
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-2977

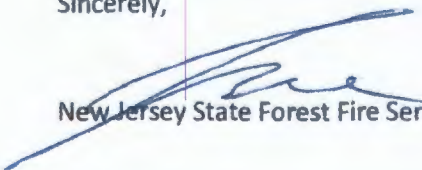
January 24, 2019

Re: Relief of high risk visibility issues from fire tower lines of sight to reduce public health and safety hazards in detection and suppression of wildfire through silvicultural clearcutting. B/L: 48/1&2, 49/12, Bass River Township, Bass River State Forest

To Whom It May Concern:

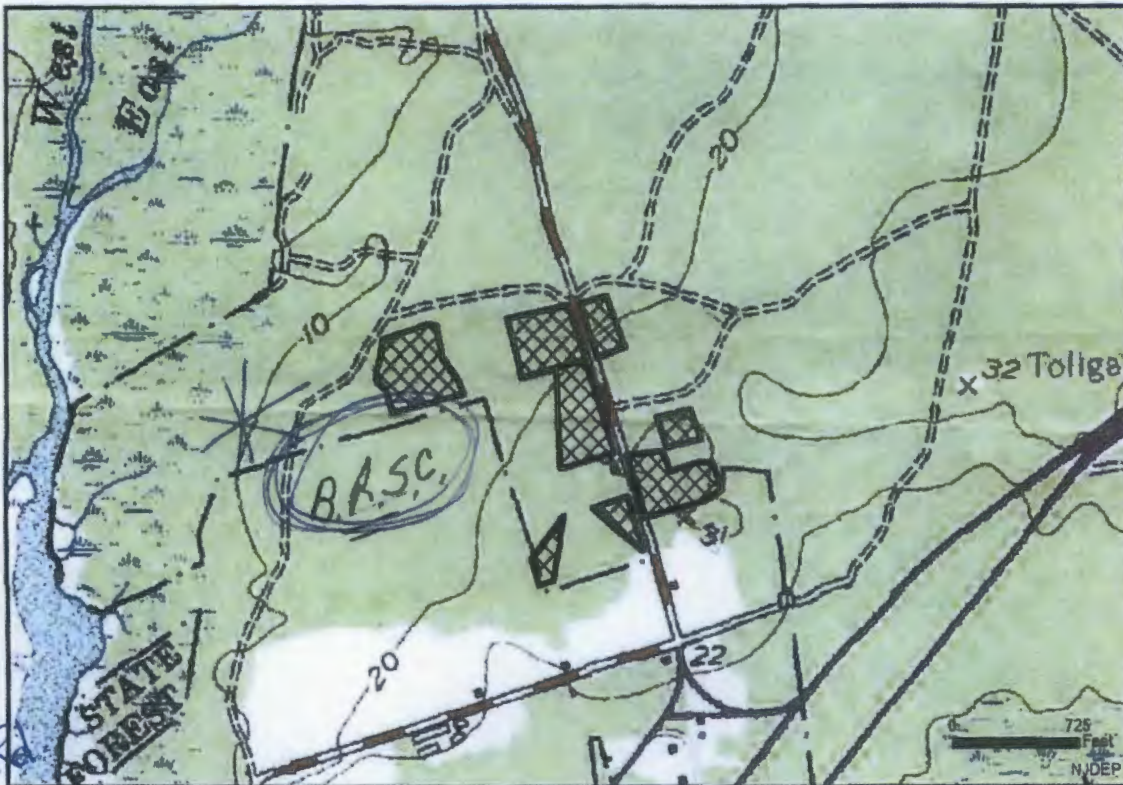
Please take notice that the New Jersey State Forest Fire Service has applied to the Pinelands Commission for approval of an application for Public Development (Forest Management Activity). The proposed Public Development (Forest Management Activity) located on seven sites, totaling 16 acres, in Bass River State Forest (see attached maps), is to relieve high risk visibility issues from the adjacent fire tower lines of sight to reduce public safety hazards in the detection and suppression of wildfire. The proposed activity includes seven separate but nearby sites totaling approximately 16 acres which will all be clearcut. The treatments will reestablish the seven plantation sites through clearcutting and regenerating the site with a mix of trees from the natural seedbank and the planting of native tree species. In the activity areas, the 16 acres will be replanted with approximately 11,000 trees. The application will be on file and available for inspection by appointment at the Pinelands Commission's office (Application # 1990-0868.029). Interested persons may comment to the Pinelands Commission within ten (10) days of the receipt of this notice. Comments should be sent to the Pinelands Commission, PO Box 359, 15 Springfield Road, New Lisbon, New Jersey 08064.

Sincerely,



New Jersey State Forest Fire Service

FEB - 8 2019



AGENCY: NJ State Forest Fire Service
DATE: 02/12/2018
PARK/FOREST: Bass River SF
STAND ID: Fire Tower Pine Plantations (Clearcut)
COUNTY: Burlington
TOWNSHIP: Bass River
BLOCK/LOT: B48/L1&2, B49/L12
ACREAGE: 16.4
SOILS: Downer Loamy Sand,
Woodstown Loamy Sand

RF SCALE: 1:9,600
SCALE: 1 Inch = 800 Feet
COUNTY: Burlington
USGS QUAD: New Gretna



 Treatment Area

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

This clearcut treatment activity is being proposed for the reduction of public health and safety hazards due to high risk visibility issues in detection and suppression of wildfire. Trees in excess of 90 feet in height are impairing the Bass River fire tower lines of sight, blocking communities such as Nugentown, the Village of New Gretna, Ocean Acres, Smithville, Tuckerton, and Warren Grove. Removal of these trees will restore fire tower visibility. After harvesting is complete, site preparation and planting activities will be implemented to ensure re-establishment of native and historic plantation species.



WRITTEN COMMENT #2

From: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/20/2019 3:37:40 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Forest Fire Service Application - Edited
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Wittenberg, Nancy
Sent: Monday, February 11, 2019 4:46 PM
To: AppInfo, PC
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Forest Fire Service Application

-----Original Message-----

From: Karl Swanseen [mailto:karl.swanseen@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, February 08, 2019 12:34 PM
To: Wittenberg, Nancy
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Forest Fire Service Application

Nancy,

After initial review of the application the following immediately pops out as questions I hope would be answered before the application is officially accepted.

The application is almost identical except for pointed subjective criticism of any technology solution, with no data to back this persons claims. I know he has not reached out to the vendor for any objective data nor I believe to the people in Oregon about how to use the system practically or for their documented results(I will followup with Oregon to see if they were contacted). For instance he beats on the zoom in function reducing the field of vision, but all that is needed is to zoom back out occasionally to get the big picture or mount two cameras. He is not looking for ways to make things work, just how to discredit the solution that data and experience shows works.

They still have not addressed what the cost of the clear cutting will be.

What is the long term plan for the remainder of the 86 acres and if the plan is to clear cut what is the cost and impact to our community. Will they Guarentee that they will not cut the remainder? Initially they said the towers were old and near end of life, now he claims they can serve indefinitely, with no engineer report to back it up.

In this document it says Pa. is constructing new towers, 16 at \$4,600,000 or \$287,500 each, but claim a replacement tower in NJ would cost over \$700,000. A lower tower at a better location away from the tall trees would make sense if a camera system is not an option and should be affordable if the need so critical.

He seems to be greatly over estimating the cost of a camera based solution to replace this tower and not considering the latest information regarding the effectiveness of the system from those who are effectively using it currently(Oregon Report). There is already a tower being constructed near by, the system is already bought so a new camera, communications, and software license is the bulk of the cost, ball park at \$30,000 according to the vendor.

Are there other towers already overlapping coverage in this area? I believe they are designed geographically to overlap for triangulation, making a camera system more feasible for this one location.

This is not my official comment, but thought these points should be fully vetted before accepting the application. No one want to see this get complicated like the last go round.

Like last time this application is submitted with no opportunity for public input directly to the Forest Fire Service, they hide behind the Pinelands Commission. If not for Pinelands we would just wake up one day with another natural treasure destroyed.

Please reject this application.

Thank you for your attention,

Karl Swanseen,
609-457-1378

WRITTEN COMMENT #3

From: Info, PC (info@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/4/2019 1:27:53 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: Bass River State Forest Fire Tower
Attachments: Bass River Fire Tower 2019.pdf

From: Arthur Abline [mailto:AAblin@manchestertwp.com]
Sent: Monday, March 04, 2019 9:29 AM
To: Info, PC
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bass River State Forest Fire Tower

Please see attached document in reference to being for removing the White pines that are non-native to NJ

Arthur Abline, NJ CEM
Manchester Township
Emergency Management Coordinator
Safety / RTK Coordinator
1 Colonial Drive
Manchester, NJ 08759
732-657-2009 ext 4604
732-657-8657 Fax



MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP

1 COLONIAL DRIVE • MANCHESTER, NJ 08759 • (732)657-2009 x 4604

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

ARTHUR ABLINE
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR

KENNETH T PALMER
MAYOR

March 4, 2019

Pinelands Commission
P.O. Box 359
New Lisbon, NJ 08064
info@pinelands.nj.gov

RE: Comments to the Proposed Public
Development Application No. 1990-0868.029
Tree removal to improve visibility from
The Bass River State Forest Fire Tower

NJ Pinelands Commission,

Please note the comments below pertaining to the propose *Development Application*
No. 1990-0868.029, tree removal to improve visibility from the Bass River State Forest Fire
Tower.

The Manchester Township Fire Safety Council a Township wide non-profit organization
dedicated to reducing the risk of wildfire to NJ residents and increasing community resiliency,
supports the harvesting of all trees needed to remove the obstruction from the Bass River State
Forest Fire Tower for the following reasons:

- The obvious health and safety advantages provided by an unobstructed fire observer seated in the Bass River State Park Fire Tower.
- The wildfire history of the region is tragic and includes 7 fatalities due to wildfire. Three (3) line of duty deaths in the 1937 fire and four (4) line of duty deaths in the 1977 fire.
- The White pines in question are non-native. The White pines planted by the CCC in the 1930's were all completed with the understanding that these trees would be harvested one day. In a terrible irony, the three (3) 1937 line of duty deaths may have been to workers who had planted these very trees. Would they have ever condoned future efforts to increase someone else's risk of dying in a wildfire?
- Early detection is the key to effective response and this is especially crucial in the Pinelands with a known fire history, increased fuel hazard and fire risk. The obstruction of the Bass River State Park Fire Tower by these White pines increases the detection time, fire risk to the residents and the NJ Forest Fire Service's response time.



MANCHESTER TOWNSHIP

1 COLONIAL DRIVE • MANCHESTER, NJ 08759 • (732)657-2009 x 4604

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

ARTHUR ABLINE
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR

KENNETH T PALMER
MAYOR

- Fire towers in NJ serve other vital functions in addition to wildfire detection. During a wildfire incident, tower observers act as a communication hub between fire fighters on the ground and command. They assist in coordinating resources and can relay crucial information to the firefighters on the ground about fire behavior and wind shifts from observing the smoke columns. Failure to remove these trees will increase the risk to residents and reduce firefighter safety.

In summary the Manchester Township Fire Safety council fully supports the removal of the planned non-native White pines from obstructing the view of the Bass River State Park Fire Tower in any way.

Should you have questions or require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Arthur Abline
Manchester Township
Emergency Management Coordinator
Fire Safety Council Chairman

WRITTEN COMMENT #4

March 2, 2019

Pinelands Commission
P.O. Box 359
New Lisbon, NJ 08064
info@pinelands.nj.gov

APP # 19900868.031
Doc Type 100

MAR 4 2019

Scanned _____

Re: Comments to the proposed Public Development
Application No. 1990-0868.029
Tree removal to improve visibility from Bass River State
Forest fire tower

NJ Pinelands Commission,

Please note the comments below pertaining to the proposed *Development Application No. 1990-0868.029*, tree removal to improve visibility from Bass River State Forest fire tower.

The New Jersey Fire Safety Council a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to reducing the risk of wildfire to NJ residents and increasing community resiliency, supports the harvesting of all trees needed to remove the obstruction from the Bass River State Park fire tower for the following reasons:

- The obvious health and safety advantages provided by an unobstructed fire observer seated in the Bass River State Park fire tower.
- The wildfire history of the region is tragic and includes 7 fatalities due to wildfire. Three line of duty deaths in the 1937 fire and four line of duty deaths in the 1977 fire.
- The White pines in question are non-native. The White pines planted by the CCC in the 1930's were all completed with the understanding that these trees would be harvested one day. In a terrible irony, the three 1937 line of duty deaths may have been to workers who had planted these very trees. Would they have ever condoned future efforts to increase someone else's risk of dying by wildfire?
- Early detection is the key to effective response and this is especially crucial in the Pinelands with a known fire history, increased fuel hazard and fire risk. The obstruction of the Bass River State Park fire tower by these White pines increases the detection time, fire risk to the residents and the NJ Forest Fire Service's response time.
- Climate change models indicate that US temperatures may increase in the future resulting in an increased risk of wildfires in NJ. Increased risk should result in increased vigilance to prevent tragedy. This is the lesson learned from California where nearly 100 people have died during the past 2 fire seasons. Why does it appear the Pinelands Commission is slow to comprehend this lesson?
- Fire towers in NJ serve other vital functions in addition to wildfire detection. During a wildfire incident, tower observers act as a communication hub between fire fighters on the ground and command. They help to coordinate resources and can relay crucial information to firefighters on the ground about fire behavior and wind shifts from observing the smoke columns. Failure to remove these trees will most certainly increase the risk to residents and reduce firefighter safety.

During my previous meeting testimony in June of 2018, I listened to multiple residents requesting an "alternative analysis" for tower replacement with new technologies using camera's or drones. This "alternative analysis" is beyond the scope of the Pinelands Commission in the review of this application. Does the application for tree removal by the NJ Forest Fire Service meet the requirements of the Pinelands Commission for approval? The project does meet the approval criteria and therefore, should be approved. An "alternative analysis" is not within the fiduciary duties of the Commission in the review of this application and should not be considered.

In summary the NJ Fire Safety Council fully supports the removal of the planted, non-native white pine from obstructing the view of the Bass River State Park fire tower in any way.

My wife and I reside in the Firewise Community of Country Walk of Lake Ridge, Whiting, Manchester Township, NJ. Manchester Township is a member of the Firewise Safety Council of New Jersey.²

Sincerely,

Edward C. Lynch Elizabeth A. Lynch

Edward C and Elizabeth A Lynch

WRITTEN COMMENT #5

From: Grogan, Susan (Susan.Grogan@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/5/2019 10:29:31 AM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: Bass River Tree Cutting Resolution - 1990-0868.031
Attachments: Scan0001.pdf

From: Amanda Somes [mailto:bassriverclerk@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 05, 2019 10:18 AM
To: Grogan, Susan
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Tree Cutting Resolution

Good Morning
Please see attached resolution opposing the tree cutting by the State Forest Fire Service.

Thank you

Amanda Somes, RMC
Township Clerk
Bass River Township
P.O. Box 307
New Gretna, NJ 08224
609-296-3337
fax: 609-296-3458

BASS RIVER TOWNSHIP NEW JERSEY

RESOLUTION NO. 2019- 28

**A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED STATE ACTION
TO CLEARCUT TREES AT THE FIRE TOWER LOCATED ON EAST
GREENBUSH ROAD IN THE TOWNSHIP OF BASS RIVER**

WHEREAS, the Township of Bass River Board of Commissioners has been notified by the State of New Jersey Forest Fire Service (NJFFS) that the State Department of Environmental protection will be resubmitting the application to the Pinelands Commission for the proposed clear-cutting of more than sixteen (16) acres of trees located at and near the fire tower on East Greenbush Road (known as clear cutting); and

WHEREAS, there are alternatives available to clear cutting the trees, by way of newer technology such as digital cameras, global positioning systems and drones; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners finds that this State action could result in significant administrative and undue safety burdens on the Township; and

WHEREAS, the proposed clear cutting could pose a risk to residents of Bass River Township and property and will result in an unsightly general appearance.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Bass River that the New Jersey Forest Fire Service is strongly urged to reject the proposed action to clear cut trees near the Fire tower located at East Greenbush Road, in the Township of Bass River.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the New Jersey Forest Fire Service for its records.

I certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted at a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the Township of Bass River held on the 4th day of March, 2019.

Dated:


AMANDA SOMES, RMC, CMR


DEBORAH BUZBY COPE, MAYOR

WRITTEN COMMENT #6

From: Info, PC (info@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/6/2019 10:33:46 AM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Application No. 1990-0868.029
Attachments: Bass River tree removal.pdf

From: Jason Hoger [mailto:hogerman22@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2019 10:13 AM
To: Info, PC
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Application No. 1990-0868.029

To whom it may concern,

Please accept this letter as support for the removal of trees to improve visibility from the Bass River State Forest Fire Tower.

Jason Hoger

WRITTEN COMMENT #7

From: Info, PC (info@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/6/2019 11:25:45 AM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Application No.: 1990-0868.029
Attachments: Application No. 1990-0868.029.docx

From: Robert B Reid [mailto:rbreid@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2019 11:18 AM
To: Info, PC
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Application No.: 1990-0868.029

Please see the comments on this application coming up on Friday, March8, 2019.

WRITTEN COMMENT #8

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/6/2019 1:59:33 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: Public Comment Submissions
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Todd M Tally [mailto:ccntt@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2019 10:31 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Todd M Tally (ccntt@comcast.net) on Wednesday, March 6, 2019 at 10:30:35

email: ccntt@comcast.net

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Todd M Tally

Affiliation: Bass River Township Resident

Mailing Address: 102 W Greenbush Rd

Phone Number: 6092964278

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: I adamantly oppose the approval of the application from the State Fire Service to clear cut the historic Civilian Conservation Corp white pine plantation.

This is a very unique area of the NJ Pine Barrens and its biodiversity is unique and should be preserved. This area is a place that I enjoy with my family typically several days a week. It is a typical walk from our home.

I would view it as a tragedy to have it clera cut in the short sighted plan to be able to have better viewing from a tower that is already past it's anticipated life expectancy from when it was erected. While I understand this may be the easiest solution to a problem, I would be very disappointed if it were approved as a sensible one.

There are numerous options that can offer a better solution without impacting such a historic, beautiful,unique place of which sophisticated imaging systems with multiple payloads are the most practical in my opinion.

As a resident whose property is very close to this land, and as a firefighter, I understand my responsibility to have defensible space for wildland fire interface and proper defense strategies in place and I know this can be achieved without this application being approved.

I appreciate your consideration to my comments.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #9

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/6/2019 3:27:40 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: Public Comment Submissions
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Robyn Firth [mailto:Rigelrose@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2019 2:05 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Robyn Firth (Rigelrose@yahoo.com) on Wednesday, March 6, 2019 at 14:04:52

email: Rigelrose@yahoo.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Robyn Firth

Affiliation: Application 1990-0868.031 NJ DEP Div.parks and Forestry

Mailing Address: 100 West greenbush Road Tuckerton, NJ 08087

Phone Number: 609-296-9707

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Neither of the above choices!

Application #1990-0868.031-NJ DEP Division of Parks and Forestry I am opposed to the clear cutting of 16 acres of bass river state forest, in order to preserve an agedt and outdated fire tower. I know there are better alternatives than destroying an area used for many people to hike, bike, walk, and enjoy.

Please make this part of the formal comments in opposition to this application. Thank you. Robyn Firth.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #10

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/6/2019 3:27:29 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: Public Comment Submissions
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Jeffrey Firth [mailto:Rigel7@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2019 2:18 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Jeffrey Firth (Rigel7@comcast.net) on Wednesday, March 6, 2019 at 14:17:45

email: Rigel7@comcast.net

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Jeffrey Firth

Affiliation: Application#1990-0868.031-NJ DEP Division of Parks and Fiorestry

Mailing Address: 100 West Greenbush Road Tuckerton nj 08087

Phone Number: 6092969707

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Neither of above drop down choices!

Application 1990-0868.031-NJ DEP Div of Parks and Forestry.

I oppose the clear cutting of 16 acres in Bass River State Forest to preserve a fire tower that is beyond its life expectancy. I feel alternative solutions are available and viable. I formally oppose application #1990-0868.031

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #11

From: Info, PC (info@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/7/2019 9:38:42 AM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Bass River white pine trees removal
Attachments: None

From: k larocca [mailto:krkpl@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 9:38 AM
To: Info, PC
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Bass River white pine trees removal

To: Pinelands Commission

Although beauty is important, I feel that the potential for saving lives and property is more vital. As residents who live in an area impacted by the lack of vision from the fire tower, my husband Joseph and I urge you to approve the removal of the white pines in order to achieve better visibility from the fire tower.

Thank you for your attention.

Katharine LaRocca
29 Quincy Terrace
Barnegat

WRITTEN COMMENT #12

From: Info, PC (info@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/7/2019 10:28:25 AM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: 1990-0868.031-NJDEP
Attachments: None

From: Eileen Brower [mailto:EBrower@eagleswoodtwpnj.us]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 10:17 AM
To: Info, PC
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 1990-0868.031-NJDEP

I strongly OPPOSE the planned tree cutting of 16 acres of the beautiful White Pines Forrest in Bass River Township. I am a resident of Bass River Township. My family and I relish our visits to this pristine area. We call it "Our Little Piece of Heaven". Get with the modern era and use other techniques to monitor the area as is done in many other states. Do what the actual residents want. People who don't live in the area should not be able to make decisions for us!

Yours Truly,
Eileen Brower
63 West Greenbush Rd.
Bass River Twp. NJ

WRITTEN COMMENT #13

From: Info, PC (info@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/8/2019 9:54:10 AM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Proposal 1990-0868.031- NJ DEP Division of Parks and Forestry
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Benjamin Brower [mailto:browbe01@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2019 9:29 AM
To: Info, PC
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Proposal 1990-0868.031- NJ DEP Division of Parks and Forestry

Dear Pinelands Commission,

My name is Benjamin Brower, a former resident of Bass River Township, and I'm writing against the latest proposal by the DEP to clear cut in Bass River State Forest.

Despite reducing the number of acres to be cut, the DEP did not listen to any of the feedback from residents, local leaders, or the rejection from the commission the first proposal that we do not want clear cutting. Any cutting along the CCC trail would be a scar upon an area called the cathedral in the woods. There are newer, more environmentally friendly means to monitor for forest fires than using an antiquated tower. The tower has been scheduled to be replaced for over 20 years. The lack of any public input for public land is appalling.

I would like for the DEP to actually look into alternate means of fire monitoring such as cameras and drones that would be less expensive, more environmentally friendly, and easier to monitor for fires than using the antiquated means of an obsolete structure that is over 80 years old. Thank you for your time and I hope you reject the proposal.

Sincerely,
Benjamin Brower

WRITTEN COMMENT #14

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:17:14 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Dianne Pett - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Dianne Pett [mailto:DiannePett@verizon.net]
Sent: Wednesday, March 06, 2019 9:27 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Dianne Pett (DiannePett@verizon.net) on Wednesday, March 6, 2019 at 21:26:37

email: DiannePett@verizon.net

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Dianne Pett

Affiliation: Resident of Bass River Twp

Mailing Address: 96 W Greenbush Rd, Tuckerton, NJ 08087

Phone Number: 6092964219

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: The trees of Bass River Forest are near and dear to me. I walk or bike out in area of interest almost daily and feel a clear cut of many acres of very old trees would be an eyesore and travesty. I hope the idea of cameras was seriously entertained by all respective agencies that are involved in finding a solution to the fire visibility problem!

Submit: Submit

From: Info, PC (info@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/8/2019 9:54:24 AM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] 1990-0868.031-NJ DEP Division of Parks and Forestry
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Dianne [mailto:dianneworthington@verizon.net]
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2019 9:00 AM
To: Info, PC
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 1990-0868.031-NJ DEP Division of Parks and Forestry

Dianne Pett
96 W Greenbush Rd
Tuckerton, NJ 08087

To whom it may concern,

In reference to clear cutting acres in Bass River State Park for fire visibility:

The integrity of these woods is near and dear to me. I live in proximity to the area in question and am out there with my dog or biking pretty much daily in all seasons. Many use this state park for the same...horse back riders included. The price tag of these trees cannot be calculated. I hope the idea of cameras is feasible and the ultimate decision of Pinelands Commission sways in that direction. Clear cutting is an irreparable action.

Thank you,
Dianne Pett

From: Info, PC (info@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/8/2019 9:54:41 AM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL] Application # 1990-0868.031 Division of Parks and Forestry
Attachments: None

From: ccntt [mailto:ccntt@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2019 6:44 AM
To: Info, PC
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Application # 1990-0868.031 Division of Parks and Forestry

I am writing to you in opposition of the approval to the application of clear cutting the pine plantation in Bass River township that was planted by the CCC. As a Bass River Township resident who lives very close to this unique tract of land and spends tremendous time enjoying the biodiversity of the area, I feel it would be a great disservice to our community to clear cut it for a observation tower that is past its expected service life and only manned a third of a day for a few months a year. This is a very shortsighted plan. There are better options available including multi payload platform machine vision systems that can be deployed to protect citizens in a much more efficient manner than a human sitting in an antiquated tower for a short time. A solution that can be more effective and efficient is not always the easiest.

As a firefighter, I understand the need for public safety, I also understand my responsibility to wildland fire interface as a homeowner and maintaining my property for defense.

Please do not approve the application to clear cut this unique and historical area of our town that we cherish and enjoy. Denying this application would be a step in working towards implementing a more meaningful solution that can better protect the citizens. This state should follow the lead of others by implementing technology based network monitoring systems for wildland fire detection and monitoring.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my comments.

Todd Tally
102 W Greenbush Rd
New Gretna NJ

WRITTEN COMMENT #16

From: Karl Swanseen (karl.swanseen@comcast.net)
Received: 3/8/2019 1:09:01 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Karl Swanseen additional public comment on bass River clear cut
Attachments: Forest_fire_presentation Karl.pptx

Please include this in public comments regarding the Bass River Fire Tower Clear Cut Application #1990-0868.031. Please confirm receipt by email.

Thank you,

Karl Swanseen
609-457-1378

SEE ATTACHED DOCUMENT #1

WRITTEN COMMENT #17

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:19:35 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Dana Austin - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Dana Austin [mailto:Danaleeaustin@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 1:28 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Dana Austin (Danaleeaustin@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 01:28:25

email: Danaleeaustin@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Dana Austin

Mailing Address: 139 longboat avenue beachwood nj 08722

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: If DEP is serious about saving property and life, the tower should be replaced with a taller one and the latest forest fire detection technology utilized in the Pinelands. NO DEFORESTATION OR CUTTING

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #18

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:20:12 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Amy Rasmussen - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Amy Rasmussen [mailto:Amocr3145@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 3:13 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Amy Rasmussen (Amocr3145@yahoo.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 03:12:34

email: Amocr3145@yahoo.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Amy Rasmussen

Mailing Address: 111 Main St. Helmetta NJ 08828

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: I urge the commission to rethink their decision to tear down the pines in Bass River State Park. I am incredibly saddened that this topic has even come up in discussion. We need these trees, we need to protect our lands or no one else will. Please think of the future generations of human and life if you refuse to think of your own during this time.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #19

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:20:42 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Maria Cody - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Maria Cody [mailto:Mammacody@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 5:31 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Maria Cody (Mammacody@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 05:30:36

email: Mammacody@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Maria Cody

Mailing Address: 2Lufberry Ave New Brunswick

Phone Number: 732 214 1563

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Do not pass

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #20

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:21:12 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Julie Berghoff - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Julie Berghoff [mailto:Julieann08831@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 6:22 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Julie Berghoff (Julieann08831@yahoo.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 06:22:10

email: Julieann08831@yahoo.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Julie Berghoff

Mailing Address: 12476 Northway Parkway Freeland MI 48623

Phone Number: 443-844-2417

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Against clear cutting the forest. New Jersey should be protecting green spaces not clearing them.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #21

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:21:39 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Ed Kanitra - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Ed Kanitra [mailto:Eskanitra@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 6:27 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Ed Kanitra (Eskanitra@aol.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 06:26:50

email: Eskanitra@aol.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Ed Kanitra

Mailing Address: 601 Sturwood, Lawrence, nj

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Enough with clearing our state's forested areas. We should be protecting them at every turn. These wooded areas add to quality of life

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #22

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:23:08 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Laura Rasmussen - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Laura [mailto:Laura.rasmussen22@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 6:37 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Laura (Laura.rasmussen22@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 06:37:18

email: Laura.rasmussen22@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Laura

Mailing Address: 266 Willow ave garwood, nj 07027

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Save Bass River. This camp ground is important to NJ history and wild life. I've been camping here for over 20 years. Do not clear the area.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #23

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:23:48 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Rocquel Barretto - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Rocquel [mailto:roql.barretto@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 6:49 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Rocquel (roql.barretto@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 06:48:39

email: roql.barretto@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Rocquel

Mailing Address: 400 Northampton Blvd

Phone Number: 7323229862

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: All the cutting down of trees is making new Jersey and ugly miserable place to live. The cost of living goes up while the quality goes down. The whole state will soon look like Newark. We have an obligation to protect these things, which cannot protect themselves from our destructive nature.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #24

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:24:10 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Sarah Foti - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Sarah Foti [mailto:Jns143always@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 6:51 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Sarah Foti (Jns143always@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 06:51:29

email: Jns143always@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Sarah Foti

Mailing Address: 39 poplar street Wilkes-barre pa 18702

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Bass river has been apart of my family for over 40 years. So many memories here.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #25

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:24:36 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Marcia Evans - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Marcia Evans [mailto:Meinthejt@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 6:58 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Marcia Evans (Meinthejt@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 06:57:39

email: Meinthejt@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Marcia Evans

Mailing Address: 6258 Brooksong Circle Blacklick, OH 43004

Phone Number: 6148649794

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: I am writing in regards to your plan to clearcut a forest that was planted to replace a forest that had been clearcut. This is insane! Besides affecting the humans who enjoy this beautiful pine forest, your plan will displace and affect many species of wildlife. The only reason not to immediately replace an old fire tower and improve fire technology is money. Someone is benefitting from the clearcutting of this land! This is an extremely shortsighted and harmful plan for your state. You will lose revenue by losing a lovely place for vacationers to visit, you will lose or relocate countless animals that depend on this forest and in the end, you will have to replace the existing fire station anyway. You are just making things worse while you put off the inevitable!

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #26

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:25:03 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Ronald Valentine - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Ronald Valentine [mailto:Birdsall2374@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 7:06 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Ronald Valentine (Birdsall2374@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 07:05:55

email: Birdsall2374@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Ronald Valentine

Mailing Address: 23 Birdsall St Waretown NJ 08758

Phone Number: 9088003703

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Trees are planted for future generations to enjoy and many including me have enjoyed this peaceful serene area! It's where I go and like many to get away from the stresses and crazyness of this world! Please leave these trees for more and more generations to enjoy!

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #27

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:25:30 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Karen Amon - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Karren AMON [mailto:karrenamon@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 7:09 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Karren AMON (karrenamon@hotmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 07:09:08

email: karrenamon@hotmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Karren AMON

Mailing Address: 13 Everready Rd Tuckerton NJ 08087

Phone Number: 609 335 8760

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: I oppose to cutting the pines. The fire tower is out dated and modern technologies can better provide fire safety. Destroying the forest defeats the purpose of forests itself.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #28

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:25:50 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Ted Paul - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Ted paul [mailto:clammer.ted@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 7:16 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Ted paul (clammer.ted@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 07:15:32

email: clammer.ted@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Ted paul

Affiliation: Local bay farmer

Mailing Address: 313 Delaware ave beach haven

Phone Number: 609 207 9353

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Please save this beautiful and magnificent forest it is a special place which harbors many birds and animals. It may have been planted by US but it has grown into a majestic beautiful vibrant eco system. Supporting all types of life..removal would be a disgusting attack on our nature ..trees are alive and contribute to the health of the environment and all inhabitants of the earth.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #29

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:30:12 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: James Casson - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: James Casson [mailto:casson.james4@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 7:18 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by James Casson (casson.james4@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 07:18:05

email: casson.james4@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: James Casson

Mailing Address: 316 Madison ave

Phone Number: 9738960235

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: I voice opposition to the destruction of a magnificent forest to improve the view from an 82 year old fire tower at the end of its service life. If DEP is serious about saving property and life, the tower should be replaced with a taller one and the latest forest fire detection technology utilized in the Pinelands.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #30

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:30:34 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Marlana Carlis - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Marlana G Carlis [mailto:mgcarlis@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 8:13 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Marlana G Carlis (mgcarlis@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 08:12:50

email: mgcarlis@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Marlana G Carlis

Mailing Address: 508 Woodhollow Drive

Phone Number: 6098416593

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: "Kindly allow this message to voice opposition to the destruction of a magnificent forest to improve the view from an 82 year old fire tower at the end of its service life. If DEP is serious about saving property and life, the tower should be replaced with a taller one and the latest forest fire detection technology utilized in the Pinelands."

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #31

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:30:56 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: John Steedle - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: JOHN STEEDLE [mailto:INURVZN@YAHOO.COM]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 8:16 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by JOHN STEEDLE (INURVZN@YAHOO.COM) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 08:16:07

email: INURVZN@YAHOO.COM

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: JOHN STEEDLE

Mailing Address: 504 DREXEL AVE, SHIP BOTTOM, NJ 08008

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: save the trees, smoke can be seen for miles, YOU DON'T HAVE TO CUT DOWN 80 YEAR OLD PINES IN THE 21ST CENTURY.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #32

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:31:21 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Paul Smikovecus - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Smikovecus [mailto:Krushk9@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 8:16 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Paul Smikovecus (Krushk9@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 08:16:13

email: Krushk9@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Paul Smikovecus

Affiliation: N/A

Mailing Address: 307 lighthouse drive Manahawkin NJ 08050

Phone Number: 6099781444

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Just want to preface this by saying I know you guys have a job that requires difficult decisions. Although I understand the original intention of the white pines, why harvest them now? What is the harvest going to mean to too the current habitat that exists therein? Imoact on the animals and plant life existing there? Has there been species or animal counts in the areas to be cut down? Additionally, many people including myself value the history of the white pine plantation. How do you intend to preserve this historical site without stripping all of the beauty away?

Would just like an educated explanation with intelligent dialogue that never gets inflamed before seeing their removal. I already understand that they are considered an invasive species...additionally I also understand the need for building repairs. Is there a better way or alternative source of trees that calm be used?

Thank you again for your time.

Paul

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #33

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:31:42 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Susan Hughes - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Susan Hughes [mailto:Susanhughes@cryopumper.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 8:38 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Susan Hughes (Susanhughes@cryopumper.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 08:37:51

email: Susanhughes@cryopumper.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Susan Hughes

Mailing Address: PO Box 527 Little Egg Harbor, NJ 08087

Phone Number: 6092763942

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Please do not cut down the beautiful trees just to improve the view of a fire tower that is at the end of its service life. A long term plan needs to be made, A new tower is needed, not clear cutting of the Forrest.

Thank you for your consideration.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #34

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:32:02 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Candace Fykes - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Candace Fykes [mailto:candace.fykes@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 8:41 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Candace Fykes (candace.fykes@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 08:40:45

email: candace.fykes@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Candace Fykes

Affiliation: 2/1/11

Mailing Address: 566 Morris Street, 2nd floor

Phone Number: 2019032454

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: DO NOT CUT DOWN THE TREES IN White Pine Plantation in Bass River State Forest.

Submit: Submit

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:32:25 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Randy DePasquale - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Randy DePasquale [mailto:rsdepasquale@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 8:49 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Randy DePasquale (rsdepasquale@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 08:48:43

email: rsdepasquale@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Randy DePasquale

Mailing Address: 6 N Locust Ave, Apt 68, Marlton, NJ 08053

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: I am in support of the effort to remove the non-native white pines that have blocked the view of the Bass River Fire Tower. They are non-native, were planted to be harvested in the first place, and they place an unnecessary hindrance on the Forest Fire Service from doing their jobs. Many people are claiming that the fire tower needs to be replaced soon, and if that's true the quick and affordable short-term solution is to remove these trees. Then a new tower can be paid for over the next few years, when the time for replacement comes.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #36

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:32:47 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Erica DiUlio - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Erica DiUlio [mailto:hazel4d3@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 9:29 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Erica DiUlio (hazel4d3@hotmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 09:29:25

email: hazel4d3@hotmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Erica DiUlio

Mailing Address: 23 Branch St Medford NJ 08055

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Do not cut down these trees!!!!!!

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #37

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:40:36 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Jamie Cromartie - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: William J. Cromartie [mailto:Jamie.cromartie@stockton.edu]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 11:03 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by William J. Cromartie (Jamie.cromartie@stockton.edu) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 11:03:05

email: Jamie.cromartie@stockton.edu

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: William J. Cromartie

Affiliation: Stockton University, Emeritus

Mailing Address: 221 S Vienna Ave EGG HARBOR CITY 08215

Phone Number: 609 965-2196

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Application# 1990-0868.031 - NJDEP, Division of Parks and Forestry

One thing the opponents of this cutting have right: conditions should be attached to improving the fire tower. But they shouldn't be to save the trees. The conditions ought to be to make a serious effort to get fire back into the Pine Barrens safely and not just the winter controlled burns that don't reduce the shrub cover. Lack of more intense fire is what's choking out rare forbs like Pickering's morning glory, grasses like Pine Barrens reed grass and dwarf shrubs like pixie moss. If the fire suppression succeeded to the level the Forest Service has tried in the past, the only biodiverse areas would be in power and gas line rights of way, airports and a few unmowed roadsides. There is now legislative authority to burn for ecological reasons. It needs to be used. We also need to devote resources to getting the ORVs out of the Pinelands, except on a few roads.

Forestry at the time these trees were planted misunderstood the Pinelands ecology and wanted to grow industrial forests. Industrial forestry destroyed the southern savannas and grasslands. Obsessing over saving every tree and extinguishing every fire is so misguided that it actually is what is causing the distinctive Pine

Barrens species to disappear. The dense pine and oak forests with shrub dominated understory, including pine lowlands need to be thinned and possibly have the shrubs mechanically removed. These methods are known to be successful in reducing risk of catastrophic fire and restoring rare plants. The Commission should be planning to subject the entire area to management approaches of the sort advocated by Bob Williams and others who want to open up the forest and get fire back in, so the rare plants and insects of the understory can thrive. One way to do this is to commit to a local variant of the Southeastern Grasslands Initiative. We are part of the North American Coastal Plain Biodiversity Hot Spot. We ought to be managing for real restoration.

As for this particular area of plantation, I support removing it and doing a demonstration of low stature savanna restoration. The site is currently a popular area for public use, but there is no reason those values can't be included in the restoration. The Forest Service can surely implement such a plan based on its resources and understanding of the ecosystem.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #38

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:40:59 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Alison Hall - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Alison Hall [mailto:toteradbrah@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 11:40 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Alison Hall (toteradbrah@aol.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 11:40:16

email: toteradbrah@aol.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Alison Hall

Mailing Address: 249 Lake Shore Drive, Brick, NJ 08723

Phone Number: 9084205716

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Save the Cathedral of the Pines.

Please and thank you.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #39

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:41:23 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Sharon Tuscano - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Sharon Tuscano [mailto:sharontuscano@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 12:40 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Sharon Tuscano (sharontuscano@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 12:40:22

email: sharontuscano@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Sharon Tuscano

Mailing Address: 315 Edgewood Avenue Delanco NJ 08075

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Please do NOT cut down those beautiful trees. It would be a great loss to the community. I hike in the pine barrens, the community of hikers is very large. Consider raising the fire tower, or completing installing a taller one as I understand the current one is over 80 years old!!! Common sense please!

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #40

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:41:43 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Bruce Roop - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Bruce Roop [mailto:Bruce.roop@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 4:48 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Bruce Roop (Bruce.roop@yahoo.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 16:48:05

email: Bruce.roop@yahoo.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Bruce Roop

Mailing Address: 24 w pine st Audubon nj

Phone Number: 8565716494

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Please don't cut the trees. It is an amazing sight that I am blown away every time i see it. It would be a tremendous crime they are removed. Thank you

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #41

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:42:05 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Michelle Fox - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Mfox228@aol.com [mailto:Mfox228@aol.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 5:14 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
(Mfox228@aol.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 17:14:17

email: Mfox228@aol.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Michelle

Mailing Address: 143 Port Monmouth Rd , Keansburg NJ 07734

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Save the trees! We need them more than open land! Its ludicrous to keep taking forests down,
doesn't anyone care about our environment anymore?

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #42

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:42:34 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Nicole Babcock - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Nicole Babcock [mailto:Nbabcock1473@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 6:27 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Nicole Babcock (Nbabcock1473@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 18:27:21

email: Nbabcock1473@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Nicole Babcock

Mailing Address: 156 Cox ave tuckerton 08087

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Living here all my life, this section of bass river state forest has been a popular attraction to locals and tourists for years. The real solution here is to build a new fire tower that has not been vandalized, and has been used for the MANY years of service. Please reconsider the thought to cut down YET ANOTHER forest! The example of different trees is an interesting feature to the forest that makes people wonder "why the trees are different". Seeing these trees gives the knowledge to the public about what happened here and why. Please choose the option that PROTECTS the environment. Cutting down the forest will ruin the natural biodiversity and curious beauty that is here. It will surely be missed from your mistake.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #43

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:43:02 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Lindsey Wasiuta - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Lindsey Wasiuta [mailto:Lerrickson@hotmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 7:13 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Lindsey Wasiuta (Lerrickson@hotmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 19:13:03

email: Lerrickson@hotmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Lindsey Wasiuta

Mailing Address: 8 S Lakeside Dr W Medford nj

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Please do not touch this area!

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #44

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:43:25 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Gale Labor - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Gale Labor [mailto:glfrecklesreds@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 7:24 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Gale Labor (glfrecklesreds@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 19:23:39

email: glfrecklesreds@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Gale Labor

Mailing Address: 155 North Rt 73 Berlin Twp NJ 08091

Phone Number: 856-270-0098

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Stop the destruction of the White Pines that helps to canopy the forest, and that have been there forever in order for a vintage Fire Tower to be able to look over the trees for fires. Build a taller firetower and stop destructing New Jersey Pine Barrens!!!!

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #45

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:44:08 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Robert Graffin - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Robert Graffin [mailto:Robertgraffin@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 7:48 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Robert Graffin (Robertgraffin@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 19:48:06

email: Robertgraffin@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Robert Graffin

Mailing Address: 120 McCutcheon Ave. Sayreville NJ 08872

Phone Number: 908-510-3016

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: I want to say that I am against the removal of vegetation from bass river state forest. Improving fire prevention and the functionality of fire towers needs to be accomplished but not at the expense of the forests they protect. Please find an alternative that preserves this precious natural resource.

Submit: Submit

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:45:06 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Lizabeth Carl - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Lizabrth [mailto:Lizabeth.carl@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 8:01 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Lizabrth (Lizabeth.carl@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 20:00:50

email: Lizabeth.carl@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Lizabrth

Mailing Address: 114 east park ave

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Clear cutting a section of forest that was planted as a healing exercise for that same area that had been clear cut in our history is dumb. Took many many years to repopulate this area with vegetation and to bring fresh wildlife back to the area. Clear cutting is detrimental to native life and a waste of all the hard work that the conservationists put in a hundred years ago. No more greed.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #47

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:45:28 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Jeremy Price - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Jeremy Price [mailto:Jsp.esq@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, March 07, 2019 8:08 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Jeremy Price (Jsp.esq@gmail.com) on Thursday, March 7, 2019 at 20:07:45

email: Jsp.esq@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Jeremy Price

Affiliation: None

Mailing Address: 6 Waters Edge Dr. Little egg harbor nj 08085

Phone Number: 6095132552

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: How is this even possible? This is one of the most beautiful sections of forest in the region. Why would you even consider this? I grew up in Bass river and walked these woods my entire life. I don't understand why our state continues to make the worst policies decisions. I heard this and thought it was a joke. How does it feel to know the people you serve consider your decisions to be joke-worthy? It's sad. Stop. Resign. Get out of government. You don't belong there. We do not want you having any decision making authority. You scare us and embarrass us. Just go. Please.

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #48

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:48:21 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Scott Wardenski #1 - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Scott Wardenski [mailto:swarden93@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2019 2:36 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Scott Wardenski (swarden93@gmail.com) on Friday, March 8, 2019 at 02:35:47

email: swarden93@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Scott Wardenski

Mailing Address: 52 Nelson Circle East Brunswick NJ 08816

Phone Number: 732-421-9452

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: I am voicing my opposition to the NJDEP application to clear cut the White Pine Plantation surrounding the fire tower at Bass River State Forest. Bass River became the first state forest in 1905 when the State Board of Forestry purchased a 597 acre tract, "to demonstrate the best methods of refreshing cut-over and denuded lands; of showing how to prevent injury by forest fires, and the general administering and care of woodlands in a way to make them self-creating and self-sustaining," according to the New York Times October 5, 1905 article, "Saving Jersey's Forests." Bass River's Experimental Plantation was developed in 1913 to restore the forest devastated by the practice of clear cutting and to showcase proper forest management and protection. In the Bass River State Forest brochure from 1936 it states that "the most interesting feature of this forest are the experimental plantations of 20 acres which have been established in the vicinity of the forest headquarters. These plantations are attractive and interesting and are viewed annually by a great many visitors." The brochure also indicates that the plantations represent 24 growing seasons with multiple species of pine including Jack Pine, Loblolly Pine, Scotch Pine, Red Pine, Austrian Pine, Douglas Fir, Norway Spruce & European Larch in addition to white pine. The experimental pine plantation was and continues to be one of the main attractions at Bass River State Forest.

There is a common misconception that this early silviculture operation began with the sole purpose of establishing timber reserves, but according to the October 2005 Edition of the Bass River Gazette, at the start of the 20th century, "with the lumber industry at low ebb, due to the inferior quality of standing timber across the State, Governor Edward Casper Stokes recognized the value of state forests in protecting watersheds and for use as game preserves, pleasure parks, camping grounds and picturesque retreats." It is the pristine environment, historically & culturally significant sites of the Pinelands National Reserve that draws visitors to the area to stay at Bass River State Forest and the many surrounding campgrounds the local economy depend on.

The Civilian Conservation Corp established in the midst of the Great Depression by FDR as part of the New Deal employed young men to plant trees, control soil erosion and practice good forest management in New Jersey parks. The CCC camp established in Bass River in 1933 built cabins, roads, hiking trails, a recreational lake and a fire tower. The 1936 Bass River State Forest Brochure states that "an observation tower has been constructed at the forest headquarters to assist in the protection of the area and also serves to give visitors an excellent view of the experimental plantations and the extent of the forest." It is appalling that now in 2019 the state resists modern technology and elects to destroy the historical Pinelands experimental forest to improve visibility from a fire tower that they acknowledge is well past its service life. If NJDEP is serious about protecting the environment, property and life, the fire tower should be raised or replaced with a taller one and the latest forest fire detection technology deployed throughout the Pinelands!

Submit: Submit

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:49:25 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Scott Wardenski #2 - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Save Jerseys Forests NYT October 1905.jpg, 1936 Bass River Brochure Page 1.jpg, 1936
Attachments: Bass River Brochure Page 2.jpg, 1936 Bass River Brochure Page 3.jpg, 1936 Bass River
Brochure Page 4.jpg, Bass River Gazette October 2005.pdf, Bass River White Pine
Plantation.jpg

From: Scott Wardenski [mailto:swarden93@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2019 2:36 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Scott Wardenski - Bass River Township Ordinance 2018-05

WRITTEN COMMENT #49

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:49:26 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Laura Phillips - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: laura phillips [mailto:laugik@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2019 7:13 AM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by laura phillips (laugik@gmail.com) on Friday, March 8, 2019 at 07:13:21

email: laugik@gmail.com

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: laura phillips

Mailing Address: 166 leektown rd

Phone Number: 6092963687

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: don't clear cut

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #50

From: Comments, PC (comments@pinelands.nj.gov)
Received: 3/11/2019 3:49:46 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Dawn Markoski - Public Comment on 1990-0868.031
Attachments: None

-----Original Message-----

From: Dawn Markoski [mailto:dlbmarkoski@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, March 08, 2019 7:25 PM
To: Comments, PC
Subject: Public Comment Submissions

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Dawn Markoski (dlbmarkoski@comcast.net) on Friday, March 8, 2019 at 19:25:13

email: dlbmarkoski@comcast.net

subject: Public Comment Submissions

Name: Dawn Markoski

Mailing Address: 6 W 15th St Long Beach Township, NJ 08008

Comment Topic: SELECTED=

Message: Please do not cut the pine trees!

Submit: Submit

WRITTEN COMMENT #51

RECEIVED
MAR 11 2019

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP NEW JERSEY

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-33

BY: _____

19900868 031

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE PROPOSED STATE ACTION TO
CLEARCUT TREES AT THE FIRE TOWER LOCATED ON EAST
GREENBUSH ROAD IN THE TOWNSHIP OF BASS RIVER

MAR 11 2019

Scanned _____

WHEREAS, the Township of Washington Township Committee has been notified by the State of New Jersey Forest Fire Service (NJFFS) that the State Department of Environmental protection will be submitting an application to the Pinelands Commission for the proposed clear-cutting of more than sixteen (16.4) acres of trees located at and near the fire tower on East Greenbush Road; and

WHEREAS, the fire tower is a critical component of the Forest Fire Service's ability to provide for protection of life and property from the devastating impacts of uncontrolled fire; and

WHEREAS, the Township Committee finds that this State action is necessary and prudent; and

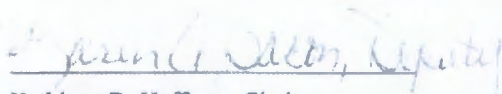
WHEREAS, this action will afford the Forest Fire Service an enhanced ability to detect and respond to fires; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Township Committee of the Township of Washington that the New Jersey Pinelands Commission is strongly urged to approve the proposed action to clear cut trees that are obstructing the view from the Bass River Fire Tower located at East Greenbush Road, in the Township of Bass River.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a certified copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the New Jersey Forest Fire Service for its records.

I certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly adopted at a regular meeting of the Township Committee of the Township of Washington held on the 5th day of March, 2019.

Dated:


Kathleen D. Hoffman, Clerk


Mayor Dudley H. Lewis

From: Ben Wurst (ben.wurst@yahoo.com)
Received: 3/8/2019 4:07:07 PM
To: AppInfo, PC (AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov)
CC:
Subject: Application and Development Submission or Questions
Attachments: None

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
Ben Wurst (ben.wurst@yahoo.com) on Friday, March 8, 2019 at 16:07:01

email: ben.wurst@yahoo.com

subject: Application and Development Submission or Questions

print_blank_fields: 1

Name: Ben Wurst

Mailing Address: 24 S. Maple Ave., Bass River Twp., NJ 08224

Contact Purpose: Application or Site-Specific

Subject Municipality: Bass River Township

Existing Application Number Prefix: 1990

Existing Application Number : 0868

Existing Application Number Suffix: 031

Block01: 48

Lot01: 1

Block02: 48

Lot02: 2

Block03: 49

Lot03: 12

Property address: Bass River State Forest

Message: As a resident of Bass River Township who has throughly enjoyed hiking and photographing the

"cathedral pines" from the CCC plantations inside Bass River State Forest, I'm writing to voice my opposition to the proposed clearcutting inside Bass River State Forest.

It is my understanding that the NJ Forest Fire Service has proposed to "Improve Visibility from Bass River Fire Tower" by clearcutting large stands of white and loblolly pine. According to the NJ Forest Fire Service, only 25% of NJ wildfires are spotted from lookouts in fire towers [https://www.nj.com/news/2012/07/eyes_in_the_sky_how_njs_remain.html]. While I am happy to see some forest management occur within the Pinelands, the goals of this activity are shortsighted and lack investment into future wildfire detection.

Clearcutting a couple stands of mature trees will not solve the underlying issue at hand - the age and height of the fire tower.

The Bass River Tower is 82 years old and will be used for the next 5-10 years, as stated by NJ Forest Fire Chief Greg McLaughlin [source]. What will happen after that? If the State cannot afford to install a new fire tower now, how will they be able to install one in 5-10 years?

"For decades, state and federal foresters have been phasing out lookout towers like this, relying instead on aircraft, satellites and 911 callers to find wildfires." According to the NJ Forest Fire Service, 25% of NJ wildfires are spotted from lookouts in fire towers [https://www.nj.com/news/2012/07/eyes_in_the_sky_how_njs_remain.html].

The state should use this situation to begin research and implementation of remote, network attached camera systems, which are currently used in many western states where wildfires are more common. They include Oregon, California, Minnesota, Canada, and more... Remote camera systems don't get fatigued like human spotters, and they can be monitored from any location throughout the entire world. They are connected and watching the skies, 24/7, 365 days a year. These cameras have exceptional optical zoom ranges and would be able to see past the 10 mile radius when mounted on a very tall structure, like the nearby 200' high radio tower at the NJ State Police Barracks. These cameras can be setup on "guard tours" to scan the horizon and look for movement.

Here are two companies who specialize in these systems: <http://www.firesafemarin.org/remote-fire-detection-cameras>, <http://evsusa.biz/productsservices/forestwatch/>

Clearcuts in the Pinelands region need to have countered edges. In the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan, section 7:50-6.46 Forestry Standards in Section 10, i (6) "The area of the parcel subject to the clearcut shall have contoured edges unless the boundary of the clearcut serves as a firebreak in which case straight edges may be used;" The clearcuts mapped in the plan by the NJ forest Service do not have contoured edges on any side of the parcels that are proposed to be clearcut.

Lastly, how will the NJ Forest Service stop the non-native trees from reseeding themselves again? According to Bass River Township's mayor, Deb Buzby-Cope, "20 years ago the state clear cut acres of trees that were blocking the view from the fire tower, which at the time was supposed to be a permanent fix."

To me, it sounds like we will be back in this same situation again in another 20 years since there is little knowledge of technological advances that can better help protect people, their property and the health of the local environment.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Submit: Submit

APP # 19900868.031
Doc Type 100
MAR 8 2019
Scanned

Bass River State Forest Clear Cutting



The Beauty of Bass River

- **Kathy Gardiner – 10 year Volunteer at Bass River State Forest**
 - Leads individuals on guided hikes through the many forest trails
- **Bass River is New Jersey's first state forest**
 - Founded in 1905
 - Third Largest State Forest in New Jersey
 - Over 20,000 acres



- **The Pine Barrens are home to many endangered & threatened species**
 - **Pine Barrens Frog- Threatened**
 - **Timber Rattlesnake- Endangered**
 - **Photo of snake was taken on the Orange Trail**
 - **Rare Wildlife Siting Report filed with New Jersey**
 - **Report #18849, July 2018**





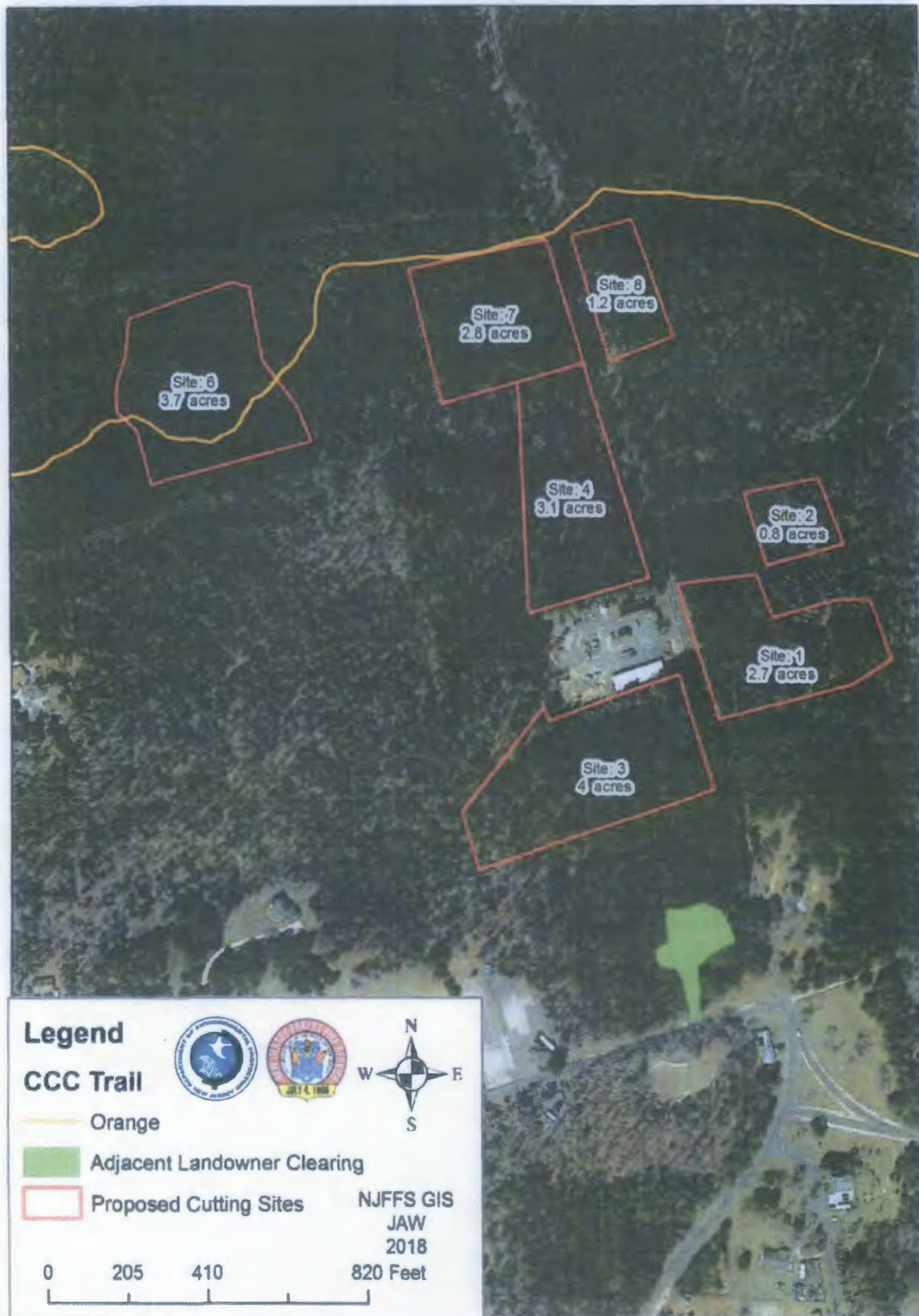
- **Bass River has thousands of visitors every year**
 - **The park offers hiking, biking, camping, horse back riding, fishing, kayaking and boating in Lake Absegami**
- **The Orange Trail, a park favorite, winds through the “Enchanted Forest”**
 - **White Pines are majestic**
 - **Surrounding environment is calming and breathtaking**



- **NJDEP's application for clearcutting would adversely impact areas 6,7, and 8**
 - **Approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile in the "Enchanted Forest" would be impacted (map next page)**



Bass River Fire Tower Proposed Cuts

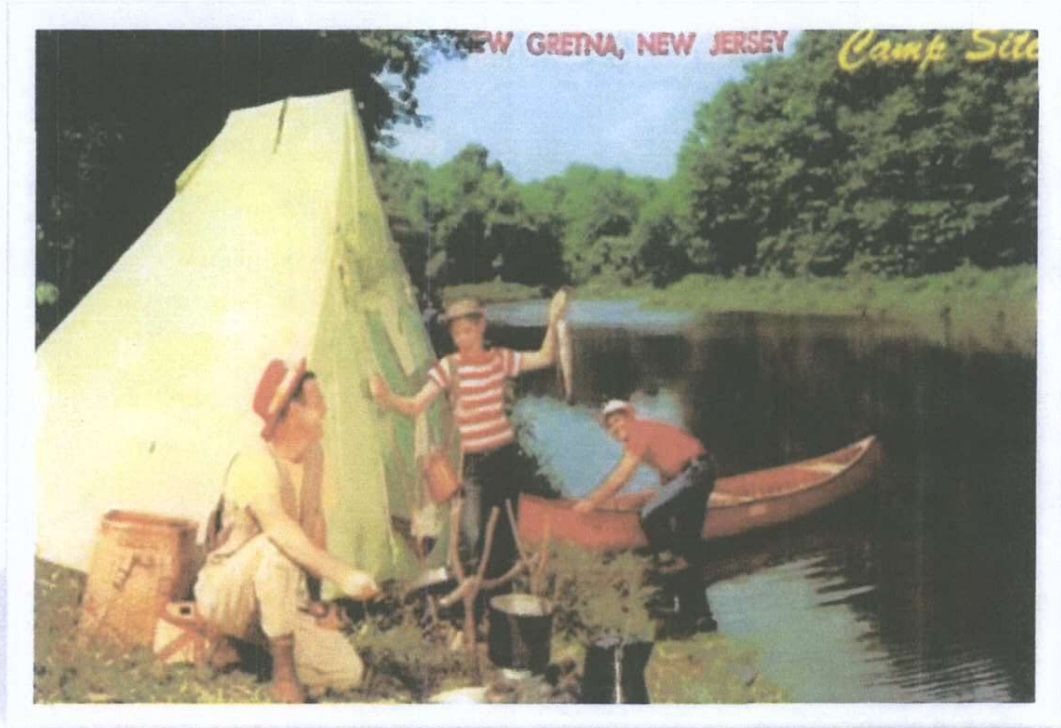


Habitat Fragmentation

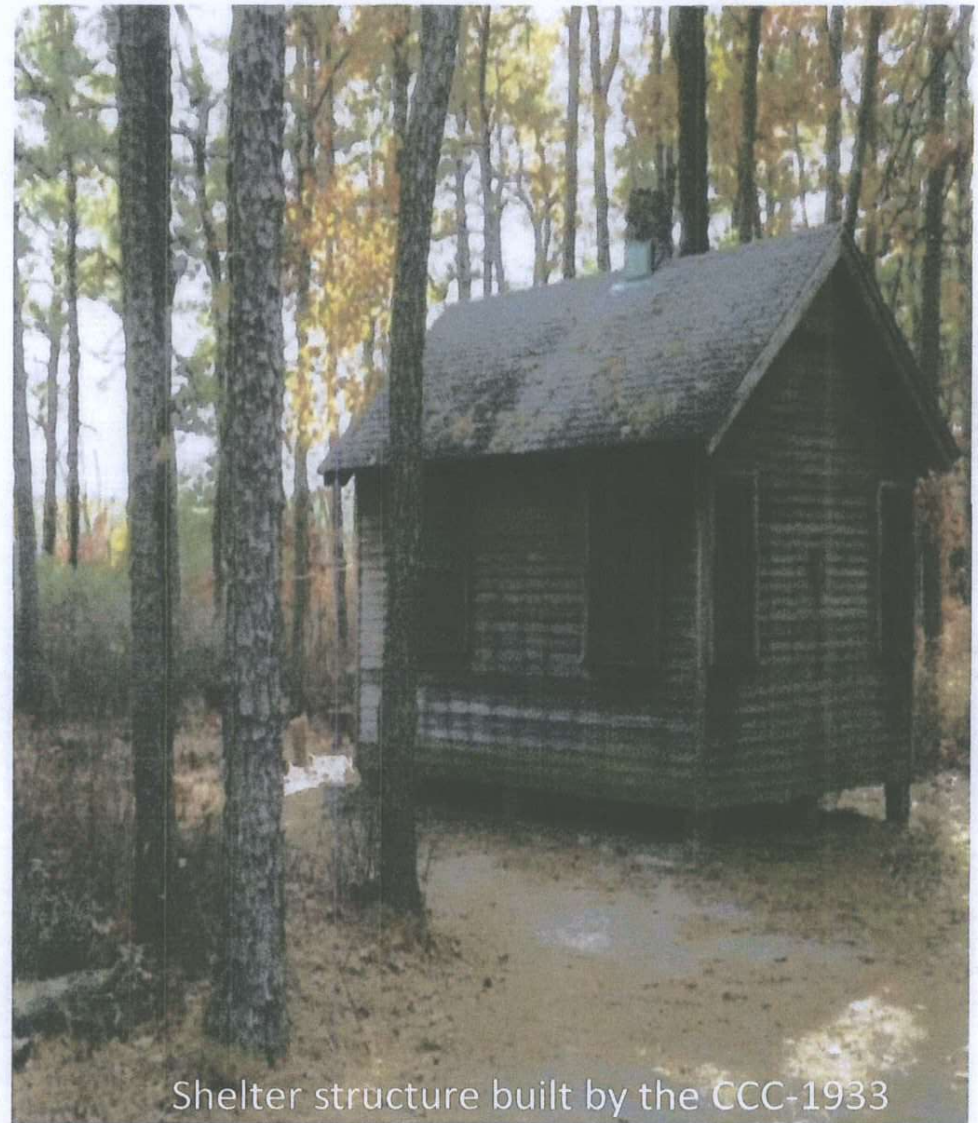
- Clear cutting in the proposed way produces habitat fragmentation
- Fragmentation of the physical environment causes ecosystem decay
- **Wildlife populations affected by fragmentation leads to species extinction**
- Changes breeding and migration patterns
- This alters species behavior



- Parkway exit would expose visitors to the clear area of drum cutting
- Not a good first impression
- May result in the reduction of visitors
- Financial loss to Bass River Township
- Loss of visitors to campgrounds could negatively impact revenue



- The CCC was founded in 1933 by Franklin D. Roosevelt to create conservation-minded jobs during the Depression.
- The CCC built all of the infrastructures, the lake, and planted thousands of trees to see what wildlife would adapt.
- These CCC plantings are the very trees the Forest Fire Service wants to cut.



Shelter structure built by the CCC-1933



DEP Quote

- A quote from the October 2005 of the Bass River Gazette Special
 - “I believe credit for the valuable recreational facility is due in part to the men of the CCC who took the first step in the beautification of a very rewarding project which is now the well maintained and well protected Bass River State Forest.” –Kevin Wright, *Resource Interpretive Specialist*
 - It would be a disgrace to those men to have their efforts so casually destroyed by the Forest Fire Service.





CCC White Pine

- CCC/ White Pine
- - This particular area of the park was acquired in 1905, the first of present State Park properties.
- - Experimental plantings conducted by The Civilian Conservation Corp, included Jack, Loblolly, Red, and White Pine.
- - Some White Pine plantations were established as early as 1913. The CCC members at Bass River were among the earliest CCC enrollees.
- - Bass River Company number #225 published a camp newspaper. Digital copies are online and downloadable through the National Archives in College Park.
- **A June 1933 publication describes that the variety and species of pine were chosen for their slower incendiary rates. The trees were intended to serve as a natural fire barrier between the forest and where the community would develop.**



CCC Forest

- - A 1936 report written by the then Department of Conservation and Development, Division of Forests and Parks, states the then Observation Tower, now Fire Tower, was constructed and placed there specifically in that location to assist in the protection of the plantings, as well serve as an excellent location for the public to view the trees.
- - A Fall 2008 "NJDEP Focus" Newsletter explained some of the efforts of the CCC and invites public to reflect on all the CCC has done to for New Jerseys natural environment.
<https://www.nj.gov/dep/focus/pdfs0808parks-ccc.pdf>
- - Contrary to beliefs, Trees were not intended to be harvested. (See 1936 Park Report)
- - 1990's Rutgers was invited into park by former park Superintendent Denis Fox to monitor health and success of plantings.





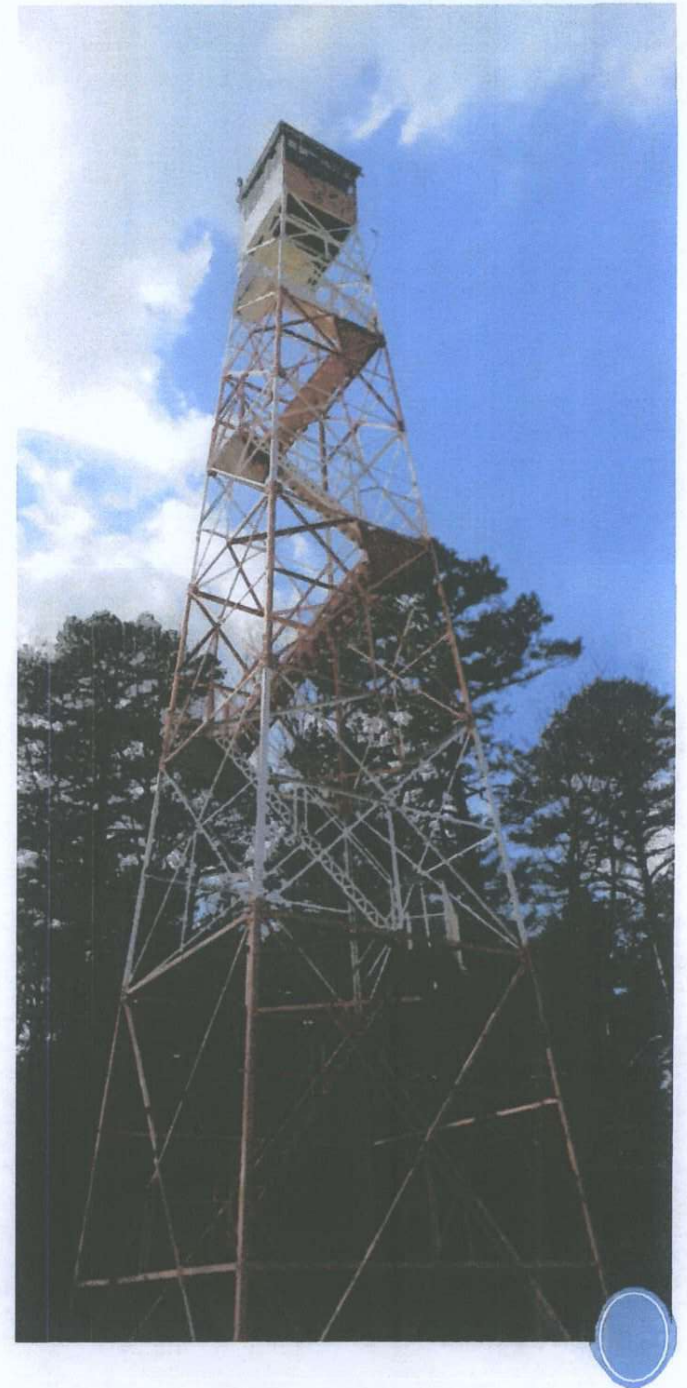
- CCC accomplishments in other areas of the country have been awarded historical designations. Their location on state park property removes them from these possible protections.
- Previous proposals by DEP to Clear cut have failed. In 1995, an Administrative Law Judge reduced a cutting to 4 acres from a larger proposal. ALJ acknowledged plantings were specimen stands. (Application #95-1455.01p 5/12/1995)
- Attempted reforestation with native pine varieties failed. Why?
- As stated by Ms. Ashrum when she voiced her opposition to the DEPs last application, the DEP was advised to develop new approaches then.
- Other stands of similar CCC plantings will also eventually exceed height of tower.
- Only 7 of the original 40 CCC plantings remain in the park.



2018: Bass River
Township Commission
passed a unanimous
resolution opposing the
clear cutting.

DEP is not an average
applicant. This is another
state agency and as such,
should have a greater
burden of evidentiary
findings.

Park professionals have
been discouraged in
opposing this clear
cutting. They essentially
work for the NJDEP.

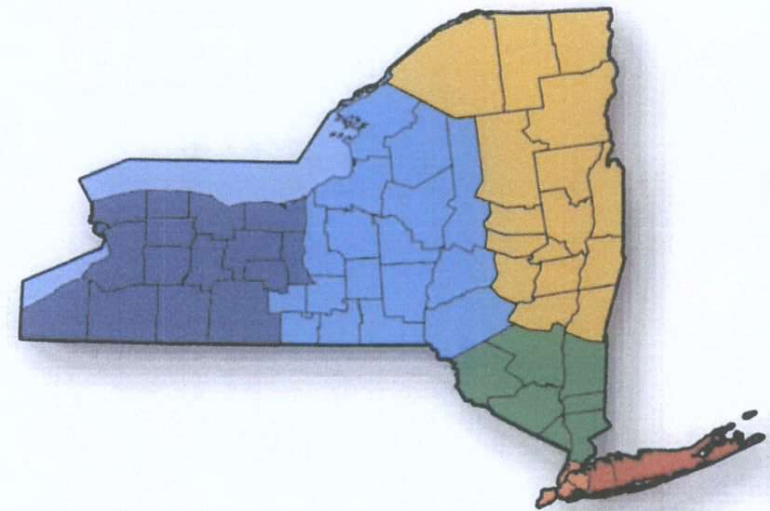


ANTIQUATED TOWERS

- "The Definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results." Albert Einstein
- Once again the NJDEP has submitted an application to clear cut many disjointed sections of trees adjacent to the Bass River Fire Tower.
- "The NJ Forest Fire Service is continually seeking safer more efficient ways to manage and mitigate wild fire risk."
- Fully functioning camera system used in Brick, and Monmouth county oddly brought offline when the idea of Camera technologies is brought to the Pinelands Commissions attention in June of 2018
- February 9th, 2018 the Press of Atlantic City reports NASA offers satellite technology to Pinelands Commission to monitor fire risk in the Pinelands.



- November 19th 2018 White House brings Forest Fire safety and Forest Management Techniques into focus.
- February 2010, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Division of Lands and Forest, conducts extensive fire tower study. What is to be done with obsolete fire towers?
- Contrary to the NJDEPs opinion, the engineering studies of similarly aged towers confirmed towers are structurally unsound and, as stated, "the towers were never meant to be permanent". In 1990 a total of 52 towers were removed that had deteriorated beyond repair, or tipped over.
- The study explains none of the existing Adirondack fire towers are manned today for the express purpose of fire detection. The Bass River tower was in fact an Adirondack tower.



- New Jersey is not embracing updated technology successfully implemented and used in other States. New Jersey is falling behind!
- Any Future forest fire devastation will have absolutely nothing to do with the 100+ year old White Pine that now stands near the fire tower. It will be a reflection of the unwillingness of the applicant to embrace updated technology available for use today!
- The Pinelands Commission must make Trenton aware that there is a pressing need for improved fire detection capabilities so that we may continue to protect the Pinelands from wildfire and arson.



Alternative Options

- **Facts presented in the new application**
 - Within 10 years of this proposed clear cut the Tower will again be visually obstructed by the remaining 81 acres of historic plantation. (page 7, first paragraph)
 - “The tower is currently in sound working condition and is expected to continue to provide service as long as it is maintained as needed.” The tower manufacturer says “if maintained, the tower should last forever” (page 7, second paragraph)
- **Questions asked by public and Pinelands and still not addressed.**
 - What is the cost of clear cutting and restoration?
 - Local Tree services, and online searches estimate \$3,000 to \$6000 per acre for clear cutting not including restoration or special wildlife considerations. It will cost to clear cut, how much?

Alternative Options

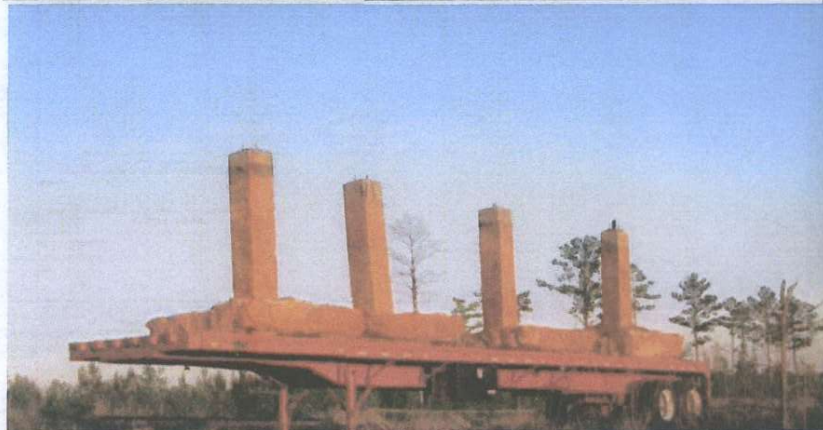
- **Facts**
 - **Sound Structure ???**
 - **80+ acre issue not 16**
 - **Clear cut is going to cost. But we don't know how much.**
 - **Plus restoration costs**
- **Can we do better?**

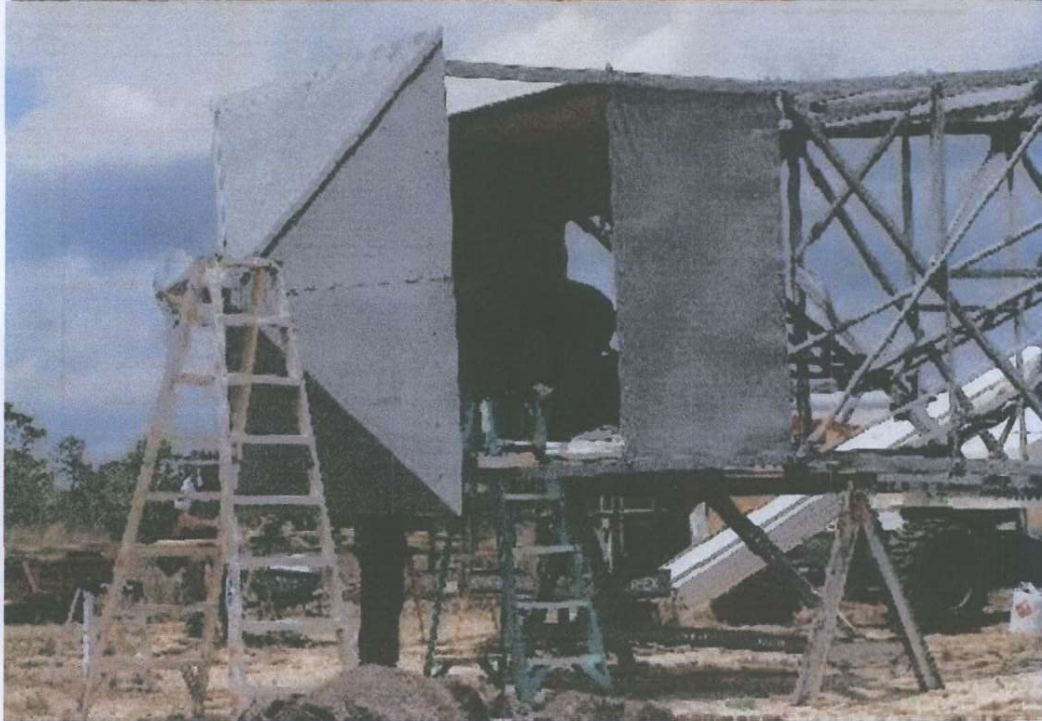


Alternative Options

Tower Relocation

- Tower was moved by a House/Structure mover.
- Full details at “Longleafcamp.com” including a video of the move, photo’s, and resources including the Contractor who did the move, the Forest Commissioner, the District Forester, and the Consulting Forester.
- A crane supported while the top 60’ of the tower was unbolted, the tower was then laid by the crane on a large flat bed truck. Even the foundations we excavated, lifted by the crane and placed on a flat bed truck. Then transported 40 miles, the foundations reset and the sections raised back into place.





Of 22 NJ Towers there were 13 raisings and moves

- Cedar Bridge Station 100' moved 3 times
- Batsto Station 60' raised to 100'
- Jamesberg Station moved
- Lakewood Station 80' moved 300'
- Bellplain Station 60' raised to 100'
- Blue Anchor Station 86' original tower moved
- Dias Creek Station 60' raised to 100'
- McKeetown Station 80' raised to 100'
- Millville Station 60' raised to 100'
- Mizpah Station 60' raised to 100' and moved a mile
- Data from "NJ Forest Fire Service" under "Wildfire Suppression" then click "Fire Towers" then see Division A(B,C) fire towers link bottom left. But hurry before it disappears.

What is the real condition of the Tower?

- Fire Tower Restoration Expert:
 - The new Jersey Towers I visited with a forester 4 years back were in need of work. **Towers ALL had significant corrosion of critical structural components.** The corrosion was covered by layers of paint. We checked this one through bottom to top. **It can be re-erected using all new bolts, nuts, fasteners, stair treads, and decking.**
- The current application:
 - “The tower is currently in **sound working condition** and is expected to continue to provide service as long as it is maintained as needed.” The tower manufacturer says “if maintained, the tower should last forever” (page 7, second paragraph)

What is the real condition of the Tower?

- So the tower is good if it is **dismantled and re-erected** using all new parts listed. Yea, you know normal “maintenance”
- Application alludes that this costs as much as a new Tower.(application page 8 paragraph c)
- Bottom line is they will need a new Tower or restoration, the only question is how soon.
- It will be less expensive to erect a new tower in a better location than “maintain” this one.

Alternative Options

New Tower New Location

- There are Sites with road access within 6 miles with elevation of 125' or more and low vegetation.
- A 40' tower here would be 165' elevation vs current 80' tower at 46' elevation being 126' total elevation.
- Cost of a tower is proportional to it's height.
 - \$728,000 for 120' so $(1/3)$ \$242,000 for 40' tower?
 - Pa. new 40' tower \$287,000.(Big Pocono State Park)
- New tower is a reasonable option.

Alternative Options Forest Watch System

- New Emergency Management Tower in Bass River is being constructed and is available for this use. This is the largest cost of a new camera location.
- Forest Watch ball parks the costs for a new location tying into the existing system at **\$30,000**, \$20,000 is a one time licensing fee..
- Existing Forest Watch system was paid for by American Water Company. (application page 5)

Alternative Option Forest Watch System

- Oregon Dept. Of Forestry's Southwest District
 - Decade long Forest Watch Client
 - 11 camera towers, 4,444 sq. miles
 - 2017 started staffing for detection, no manned towers
 - 2018 saw 69 initial detections, **double ever reported by manned towers.**
 - Report was provided to the Commission on January 18th, 2019.

Alternative Options

Conclusion

- “While the applicable provisions of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan do not require an alternative analysis for this application the Forest Fire service offers the following in an attempt to address...”(page 7)
- How well did they do at answering questions and earnestly looking for workable alternatives?

Alternative Options

Conclusion

- Did not address the cost of Clear cutting and Restoration
- Affirmed their commitment to clear cut all 80+ acres
- Increased the cost of a 120' tower from \$486k to \$728k
- Knowingly changed Fire Tower Status from 5 to 10 remaining life to Sound working condition “forever” to support cutting
- Moving not an option because not enough life left in the Tower without restoration
- Did not address new tower in new location at all
- Grossly exaggerated the cost of the Fire Watch System
- **Clearly there was no effort to find workable alternatives, rather it deliberately works to discredit all alternatives.**

Alternative Options

Conclusion

- How do we move forward?
 - Since the certified letters to property owners and the classified add in the press reference **the wrong Application number.** (see application)
 - This provides the Pinelands Commission the opportunity **not to vote, but to reject** the application in it's current state and to **let DEP now if they submit another application it should be of a cost effective alternative that does not include clear cutting.**
 - This then provides the DEP and FFS the opportunity to put **fresh minds with sincere intent**, and a passion for preserving the environment and our history to work to come up with a viable alternative to Clear Cutting 80+ acres of historic plantations.

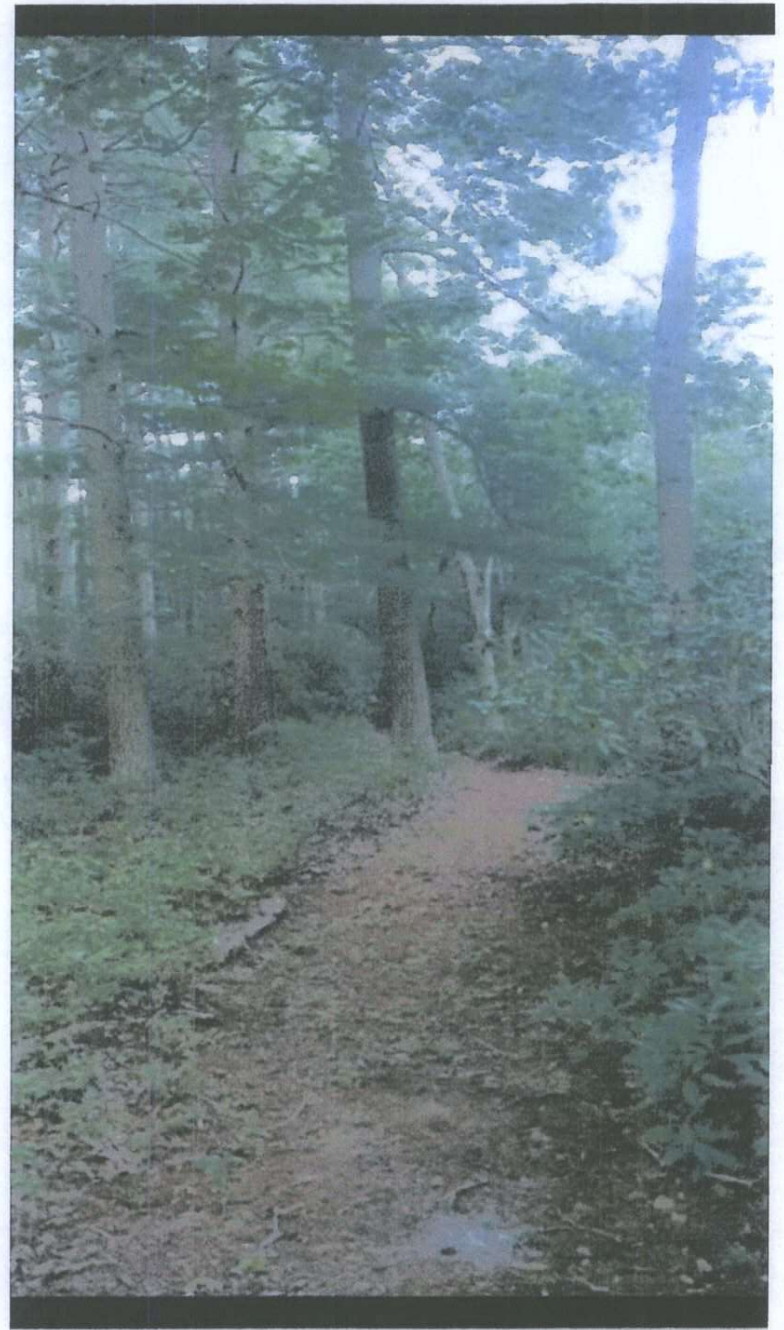
Alternative Options

Conclusion

- New Gretna has been blessed and cursed by being a Pinelands Village. Because the Garden State Parkway splits our town and our business district lies on the wrong side, we now have vacant or decaying lots and property where there once were a bakery, a bank, a luncheonette, the historic New Gretna House restaurant and the Rustic Tavern. Investors have tried and failed to clear Pinelands requirements so this area sits decaying. Our property taxes have doubled and financial support from the state drastically cut. On the other hand we have, for the time being a beautiful surrounding area. Harrisville lake, our local family swimming and picnic area has been decimated and made off limits. Please do not allow our Historic Plantations to go as well.

Summary

- Cutting of trees is just a temporary fix
 - White pines will continue to grow and more will need to be cut and removed if an alternative plan is not considered
 - 81 acres originally proposed
- We are now in 2019 instead of 1936
 - Technology today can do more things than we ever thought possible
 - Attention span of man is volatile – Alternatives under technology are more effective and efficient Look at Oregon's statistics – Double the amount of fires detected by cameras versus manned fire towers
 - States are beginning to look into making their fire towers into historic monuments



Summary

- **Safety is the number 1 priority for humans and wildlife**
 - **If human safety and concern for wildlife is the top concern than money should not be a consideration for this state. There is not an amount of money you can attach to a human life. Do what is best for Bass River Township for human safety and not what is the cheapest.**
- **Keep hearing from NJDEP and Forest Fire Service that cutting trees is the cheapest way to go and manned fire towers the way to go. Statistics are no longer supporting the above argument.**

- **NJDEP application does not include the cost of cutting the 16+ acres or the future 81 acres.**
- **How much will it cost?**
 - Cost of Cutting trees
 - Grinding tree stumps and branches into wood chips
 - Removal of wood chips
 - Drumming the area
 - Preparation of soil for transplants (Fertilizer and tree seedlings)
 - Planting the seedlings

Gov. Signs Bateman's \$9.7 Million CBT Appropriation for State Park Projects

Governor Phil Murphy has signed legislation sponsored by Senator Kip Bateman appropriating \$9.703 million from constitutionally-dedicated corporate business tax (CBT) revenue to the NJ DEP for State capital and park development, preservation, conservation, and recreation projects.

"New Jersey is blessed with some of the most beautiful parks in the country, but we cannot keep them that way without funding regular maintenance, let alone build new ones," Senator Bateman (R-16) said. "Using constitutionally dedicated CBT revenue is a voter-approved, fiscally responsible way to expand these preservation projects in every part of our state."

The appropriation authorized by A-4211/S-2729 is funded by the "Preserve New Jersey Act," which was made possible by the 2014 voter-approved constitutional amendment that created a long-term funding source for open space preservation.

In June of 2016 Governor Christie signed the "Preserve New Jersey Act" which implemented, for Fiscal Years 2017-2019, constitutionally dedicated CBT revenues for open space, farmland, and historic preservation. Voters overwhelmingly approved dedicating CBT revenues for open space, historic and farmland preservation by voting yes on a public question that appeared on the ballot in November of 2014.

The 2016 "Preserve New Jersey Act" and the 2014 constitutional amendment were also sponsored by Senator Bateman, who has fought to secure funding for open space, park and farmland, and historic preservation in every subsequent state budget.

The projects funded by Senator Bateman's S-2729 include bridge repairs, restoration of historical structures, natural habitat improvements, and improving access to certain boating and fishing recreational centers.

"As a lifelong supporter of our State, county, and local parks and a staunch advocate for environmental protection, I will always fight to preserve the green acres, landmarks and natural habitats that make New Jersey the Garden State," Senator Bateman added. "We must safeguard a cleaner, greener future for our children and grandchildren. Funding parkland preservation and upkeep is critical to achieving that goal."

Summary

- **Alternatives**

- **Technology**

- **Camera Systems** - estimate \$30,000 - \$100,000 including maintenance and updates for approx. 10 years
 - **NASA Communications** has already approach Pinelands Commission
 - Satellites orbiting the Earth will soon help determine where the biggest forest fire risks are
 - **Aerial Surveillance** – States are using helicopters because they consider fire towers outdated and obsolete

- **Antiquated Systems**

- **New Tower** – estimate \$500,000 - \$700,000
 - **Movement of Tower** – estimate \$30,000 - \$40,000 (**not feasible with the condition of the Bass River tower**)
 - **Cutting of Trees** - estimate \$240,000 to \$810,000

Summary

- Does the New Jersey Forest Fire Service and the NJDEP want to stay with the antiquated tower systems for the detection of forest fires or do they choose to move into the future with alternative systems that will provide better detection of forest fires that will help save humans, wildlife and our environment?



Research and testimony compiled by:

Carol Bitzberger

Kathy Gardiner

Riki Losiewicz

Rose Sweeney

Karl Swanseen

PLEASE VOTE NO!

PowerPoint designed by: Dina Graziano



BASS RIVER State Forest



TRAILS of Bass River State Forest

TRAILS OF BASS RIVER STATE FOREST

Bass River State Forest offers over 23 miles of official, blazed trails. There are 13 marked trails within the forest: 10 trails in and around the Lake Absegami Day Use Area and 3 trails around the Ballanger Creek area. Many trails are multi-use (hiking, biking, horseback riding), but trails close to the day use area are hiking only. Look for permitted uses on the signs.

Absegami Trail

Silver • 0.4 miles • Hiking
Easy • Nature trail near forest office

Trailhead Road to group campground.

Absegami Trail is a short interpretive trail that traverses the Absegami Natural Area through typical pine barrens landscape, including a pine-oak forest and an Atlantic white cedar swamp. The trail is along a wide gravel path and elevated wooden boardwalk as it explores these landscapes.

Batona Trail

Pink • 7 miles (in Bass River) • Hiking
Moderate • Long distance hiking trail

Trailhead At Dan's Bridge Road or 1.1 miles west of the forest entrance on the north side of Stage Road. At 53 miles, **Batona Trail** is a long-distance trail that begins in Brendan T. Byrne State Forest. The Batona (**Back-TO-Nature**) Trail connects three state forests in the heart of the New Jersey Pinelands. The last 7 miles of the Batona Trail are in Bass River State Forest.

CCC Trail

Orange • 4 miles • Multi-use
Easy to moderate • Winding sandy paths

Trailhead Trail kiosk, south end of day use area parking lot. Named for the Civilian Conservation Corps, **CCC Trail** follows a network of sand roads and sandy paths as it winds through pine and scrub oak and skirts a large marsh along the Bass River. As it nears E. Greenbush Road (CR 654), the trail passes a series of stone foundations from the 1930s Civilian Conservation Corps camp, then leads to the Bass River State Forest Firefighters Memorial.

Bass River State Forest
762 Stage Road
Tuckerton, NJ 08087

This brochure was funded by the NJDEP and the FHWA Recreational Trails Program.

Trail Markings Official trails are marked with colored blazes on posts and trees. For habitat protection and your safety, please stay on the trails and don't alter trail markings or create new trails.

Preparations Consider bringing water, snacks, sunscreen, insect repellent, and a hat. Dress for the weather. Tell someone where you plan to go and when you will return.

Hunting Sections are open to hunting. Bright orange clothing is recommended during hunting season.

Pets All pets must be on a leash (maximum 6') and under the physical control of the owner at all times. Please clean up after your pets.

Carry-in/Carry-out Help keep the park clean and beautiful by carrying out your trash.

Tick Protection Bring insect repellent, wear light-colored clothing, tuck pants into socks, stay on trails, check yourself thoroughly, shower, and launder clothes immediately.

Report Trail Issues (609) 296-1114

Emergency Numbers 1-877-WARN-DEP (1-877-927-6337) or 911

TRAIL SENSE AND SAFETY

Forest (Loop) Trail
Green dot • 0.6 miles • Hiking
Easy • Loop trail through pine and oak woodland

Trailhead From the Creek Trail after crossing to east side of Ballanger Creek. **Forest Trail** is a short loop that follows a six- to eight-foot-wide grassy road through a section of woods.

Connector Trail

Light brown • 0.5 miles • Hiking and biking
Easy • Flat sand road

Trailhead Off group campground road and turns left (northwest). **Connector Trail** follows a four- to six-foot-wide straight, sand trail. It rejoins the North Shore Campground road and serves as an alternate to taking the road to North Shore Campground.



Falkinburg Trail

Purple • 3 miles • Multi-use
Easy • Trail around east side of forest

Trailhead Trail kiosk, south end of day use area parking lot. **Falkinburg Trail** crosses Stage Road then splits with Nisky Trail. Falkinburg Trail then heads northeast adjacent to the Garden State Parkway and the forest boundary to join with the far end of Poppy Allen Trail. The trail traverses a small pine plantation that was planted in the 1920s.

Joe's Trail

Letters "JT" on white • 0.65 miles • Hiking
Easy • Follows lake edge

Trailhead Across the road from forest office. **Joe's Trail** is a two- to three-foot-wide sand path that follows the south shore of the lake and ends at a large historic picnic pavilion at the South Shore Campground.

Nisky Trail

Green • 1.7 miles • Multi-use
Easy • Trail on sand roads

Trailhead Trail kiosk, south end of day use area parking lot. **Nisky Trail** crosses Stage Road then follows a network of sand roads through pine forests. This trail is named for John Nisky who was a member of the CCC Camp, Co. 225.

Explore Trail Tracker
The Interactive Trails
Map of NJ State Parks

spstrailtracker.nj.gov
TRAIL
Tracker

Creek (Loop) Trail
Red dot • 1 mile • Hiking
Moderate • Loop trail along Ballanger Creek

Trailhead At the signed parking area on south side of Route 9. **Creek Trail** follows both sides of Ballanger Creek and marsh. This loop trail roughly follows the waters edge and crosses a series of short boardwalks.



Field (Loop) Trail
Yellow dot • 0.4 miles • Hiking
Easy • Loop trail through restored meadow

Trailhead At the signed parking area on south side of Route 9. **Field Trail** is a short loop through a meadow in the middle of a restoration process. A combination of prescribed burns, replanting, and wildflower enhancement is bringing this field back into a natural state.

The Ballanger Creek area of Bass River State Forest is a natural area that includes forested habitat, saltwater marsh, and freshwater wetlands. Once cranberry bogs, the site has been the focus of intensive conservation efforts, including habitat restoration, debris removal, and replanting.

Ballanger Creek Trails

North Shore Trail

Blue • 0.6 miles • Hiking
Easy • Connects day use area to North Shore Campground

Trailhead North of day use area parking lot. **North Shore Trail** is a two- to four-foot-wide pine needle covered sand path that joins with the North Shore Campground road as it nears the campground. This road and the northern section of North Shore Trail are closed in winter.

Poppy Allen Trail

Yellow • 3.1 miles • Multi-use
Easy • Trail through oak and pine forest

Trailhead North of day use area parking lot. **Poppy Allen Trail** follows four- to five-foot-wide, flat, pine needle covered paths and some short sections of sand roads. The trail makes a large open loop, winding through mature pine-oak forest. At the far end, it connects with Falkinburg Trail and leads back to the south end of the group campground road. This trail is open to multi-use outside the day use area. "Poppy" Allen was the first caretaker of Bass River State Forest in 1905.



South Shore Trail

Red • 0.6 miles • Hiking
Easy • Main trail from day use area to South Shore Campground

Trailhead Trail kiosk, south end of day use area parking lot. **South Shore Trail** connects the day use parking area with the south shore camping area. This trail runs from the parking area to the forest office and then parallels the south side of the South Shore Campground road.



NEW YORK STATE

Department of Environmental Conservation

DIVISION OF LANDS & FORESTS

Fire Tower Study

for the

Adirondack Park

DAVID A. PATERSON

Governor

ALEXANDER B. GRANNIS

Commissioner

NOTE: THE "FIRE TOWER STUDY FOR THE ADIRONDAK PARK"

CONTAINS 390+ PAGES. THE FULL REPORT CAN BE CAN VIEWED

AT: https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/lands_forests_pdf/ftowerstudy.pdf

For Further Information Contact:

Robert K. Davies, State Forester
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
625 Broadway, 5th Floor
Albany, NY 12233-4254
Phone: (518) 402-9405
lfadk@gw.dec.state.ny.us

February 2010

DOCUMENT #3

Burlington County Times

APP #

19900868-031

Type

100

MAR 8 2019

Opinion

Scanned

Guest Opinion: Bass River fire tower: Seeing the entire forest ✓

By Ray Bukowski

Posted Aug 10, 2018 at 4:27 AM

The July 18 Burlington County Times editorial, "Look out, obsolete fire towers," asserts that it's pointless to remove trees to improve the line of sight from the Bass River State Forest fire tower because it will become obsolete when drones or cameras become go-to methods for detecting wildfires.

But like the view from atop the tower, this opinion is woefully short-sighted.

The 80-foot-tall Bass River fire tower, operated by the New Jersey Forest Fire Service in the Pinelands of eastern Burlington County, is a critical observation point for protecting the lives and properties of 50,000 people.

On a clear day and with normal sightlines, a fire tower observer can spot smoke about 10 miles away, greatly enhancing the ability of the Forest Fire Service to react. But at the Bass River fire tower, a stand of trees nearly as high as the tower itself limits the line-of-sight views to the north, south and east to less than 400 feet.

The consequences of being unable to detect fire quickly in these directions could prove costly, even deadly.

This past April, the observer at the Cedar Bridge tower in Lacey Township first detected a fire in Penn State Forest, known as the Breeches Branch Fire, that was quickly confirmed by the Batsto and Apple Pie Hill towers to the west. But the observer at the Bass River fire tower did not see the smoke until the fire was a conflagration.

During this fire, a sudden sea breeze shifted the direction of the fire — a change that could have proven dangerous for firefighters on the ground. Fortunately, a fire tower observer recognized the wind shift and relayed this information

instantly to firefighters, who immediately changed operational tactics.

If a camera system had been used instead of a tower observer, any delay in video processing may have put firefighters' lives in danger because of the sudden shift in the wildfire's flaming front.

To improve the sightlines from the Bass River tower, the Department of Environmental Protection has proposed cutting about 16 acres of non-native trees planted in the early 20th century that were intended for harvesting. The trees will be replaced with native species that will not grow as tall as the current stand of trees.

This is essential because current fire-detecting technologies just aren't up to par with the reliability of observers. Cameras have a loss in depth-of-field, delays in data transmission and high maintenance costs. New Jersey is testing fire-detection cameras but to date the results show little value, largely because of software glitches and connectivity issues.

Unlike fire observers, cameras can focus in on only one specific area at a time. A trained observer, on the other hand, works in three dimensions, quickly and accurately reviewing coordinates to pinpoint the fire's location, dispatching teams to begin suppression efforts and relaying crucial information to firefighters on the ground.

Concerns that the Bass River fire tower and others across New Jersey are past their useful lifespans are unfounded. New Jersey's 21 fire towers are actively maintained and are routinely painted, repaired and upgraded to keep them functional. While new fire towers would be beneficial, one new tower would cost about \$750,000.

A wildfire in the Pinelands has the potential to be devastating because many of the tree and shrub species in the region are highly flammable. The Forest Fire Service is acutely aware of the danger: seven firefighters have lost their lives battling wildfires in New Jersey since 1936.

Since 1999, wildfires in the area around the Bass River fire tower have consumed 30,000 acres. During the 2010 Dan's Bridge Fire that burned 677 acres in Bass River State Forest, firefighters reported flame lengths of more than 100 feet. This was one of two fires in the area that day caused by lightning strikes. Both were initially detected by observers in fire towers other than the Bass River tower. Fortunately, only one grew into a conflagration.

The Forest Fire Service will continue to consider and review technological advancements to aid in fire detection. However, at this time we are absolutely not confident in or comfortable with the current technology available.

Until technology can outperform the human eye, we will rely on the tried-and-true method of fire observers in towers to protect the lives of firefighters as well as New Jersey's residents, homes, and businesses. No technology can spot a wildfire in the Pinelands and react as quickly to changing conditions better than the highly trained fire tower observers of the Forest Fire Service.

They need to see the entire forest, not just the trees.

— *Ray Bukowski is the Assistant Commissioner for Natural and Historic Resources in the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.*



New Jersey Fire Safety Council

5 Wildwood Way
Freehold, NJ 07728
P: 732.890.0725
E: Bill@wildfiresafetycouncil.org
WEB: njfiresafetycouncil.org

APP # 19900868.031
Doc Type 100
MAR 8 2019
Scanned _____



Board of Trustees

Bill Brash, *President*

John Cowie, *Trustee*
(1957-2018)

Maris Gabliks, *Trustee*

Greg McLaughlin
Technical Advisor

Pinelands Commission
P.O. Box 359
New Lisbon, NJ 08064
info@pinelands.nj.gov

March 8, 2019
Testimony

Re: Comments to the proposed Public Development
Application No. 1990-0868.029
Tree removal to improve visibility from Bass River State
Forest fire tower

NJ Pinelands Commission,

Please note the comments below pertaining to the proposed *Development Application No. 1990-0868.029*, tree removal to improve visibility from Bass River State Forest fire tower.

The New Jersey Fire Safety Council a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to reducing the risk of wildfire to NJ residents and increasing community resiliency, supports the harvesting of all trees needed to remove the obstruction from the Bass River State Park fire tower for the following reasons:

- The obvious health and safety advantages provided by an unobstructed fire observer seated in the Bass River State Park fire tower.
- The wildfire history of the region is tragic and includes 7 fatalities due to wildfire. Three line of duty deaths in the 1937 fire and four line of duty deaths in the 1977 fire.
- The White pines in question are non-native. The White pines planted by the CCC in the 1930's were all completed with the understanding that these trees would be harvested one day. In a terrible irony, the three 1937 line of duty deaths may have been to workers who had planted these very trees. Would they have ever condoned future efforts to increase someone else's risk of dying by wildfire?
- Early detection is the key to effective response and this is especially crucial in the Pinelands with a known fire history, increased fuel hazard and fire risk. The obstruction of the Bass River State Park fire tower by these White pines increases the detection time, fire risk to the residents and the NJ Forest Fire Service's response time.
- Climate change models indicate that US temperatures may increase in the future resulting in an increased risk of wildfires in NJ. Increased risk should result in increased vigilance to prevent tragedy. This is the lesson learned from California where nearly 100 people have died during the past 2 fire seasons. Why does it appear the Pinelands Commission is slow to comprehend this lesson?

- Fire towers in NJ serve other vital functions in addition to wildfire detection. During a wildfire incident, tower observers act as a communication hub between fire fighters on the ground and command. They help to coordinate resources and can relay crucial information to firefighters on the ground about fire behavior and wind shifts from observing the smoke columns. Failure to remove these trees will most certainly increase the risk to residents and reduce firefighter safety.

During my previous meeting testimony in June of 2018, I listened to multiple residents requesting an "alternative analysis" for tower replacement with new technologies using camera's or drones. This "alternative analysis" is beyond the scope of the Pinelands Commission in the review of this application. Does the application for tree removal by the NJ Forest Fire Service meet the requirements of the Pinelands Commission for approval? The project does meet the approval criteria and therefore, should be approved. An "alternative analysis" is not within the fiduciary duties of the Commission in the review of this application and should not be considered.

In summary the NJ Fire Safety Council fully supports the removal of the planted, non-native white pine from obstructing the view of the Bass River State Park fire tower in any way.

Should you have any questions or require any additional information do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William F. Brash Jr.", with a stylized, cursive script.

William F. Brash Jr.
President

**Bass River Township
Acreage of All Fires (1927-2010)**

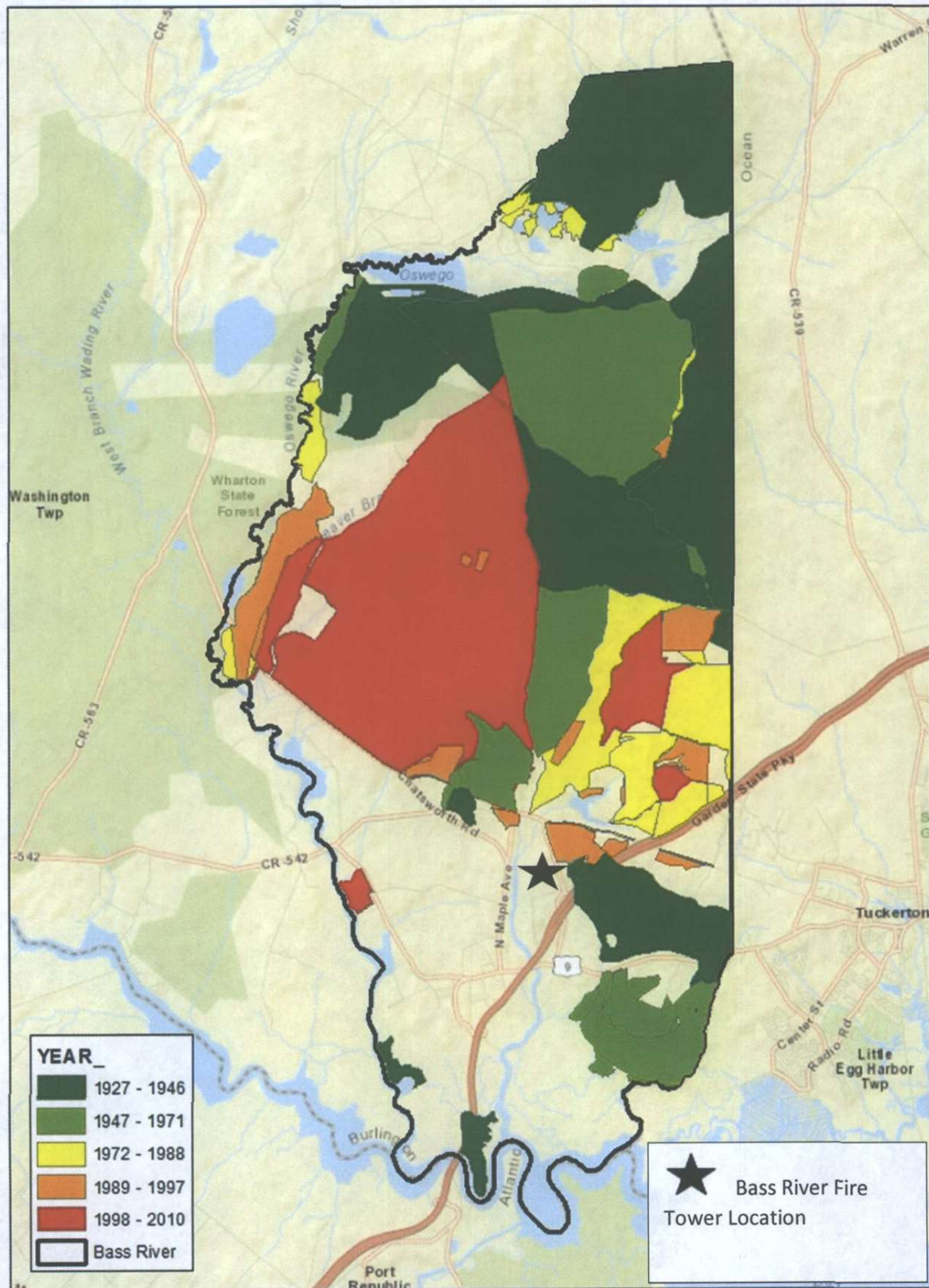
YEAR	ACRES	START DATE	CAUSE
1927	1524.412266	4/14/1927	Unknown
1928	91.35085489	4/7/1928	Burning debris
1929	2429.806652	6/1/1929	Unknown
1930	100.2255818	2/27/1930	Unknown
1934	204.1263929	5/6/1934	Incendiary
1934	277.2658183	7/23/1934	Unknown
1936	47374.73462	5/24/1936	
1939	1594.285364	5/19/1939	Smoker_prob
1943	12525.95178	4/5/1943	Incendiary_prob
1946	15935.49559	4/20/1946	Smoker_prob
1951	85.57691809	4/22/1951	Incendiary_prob
1954	3292.780482	3/12/1954	Gov
1959	5038.491809	5/6/1959	Incendiary_prob
1959	1245.600814	4/17/1959	Incendiary_prob
1959	169.7100947	8/17/1959	Gov
1959	905.5880122	4/17/1959	Blow Over
1959	956.5679194	4/17/1959	Incendiary_prob
1963	1349.844693	5/16/1963	Smoker_prob
1963	69077.15219	4/20/1963	Burning debris
1965	161.0537794	6/21/1965	Equipment
1968	476.8317183	3/31/1968	Recrea
1971	3187.531416	3/31/1971	Gov
1971	544.2214269	3/31/1971	Smoker_prob
1971	2534.435109	4/22/1971	Incendiary_prob
1977	2119.83505	7/22/1977	Incendiary
1980	2514.428994	5/15/1980	None listed
1981	2384.178159	5/21/1981	Trash
1981	3423.659894	4/18/1981	Incendiary
1982	4158.298678	4/22/1982	None listed
1983	1523.348351	7/30/1983	Gov
1984	212.3961575	6/27/1984	Equipment
1985	729.59838	12:00:00 AM	
1985	8.368312223	3/11/1985	
1985	111.7784944	3/11/1985	
1986	212.7741109	6/22/1986	Incendiary
1986	739.9024229	12:00:00 AM	
1986	28.08060949	12:00:00 AM	
1986	9.381414987	12:00:00 AM	
1986	14.18084728	12:00:00 AM	
1986	5.032969259	12:00:00 AM	
1986	727.9746088	1/7/1986	
1988	408.3609392	12:00:00 AM	
1988	65.26743252	12:00:00 AM	

1988	112.0522163	12:00:00 AM		
1989	220.687773	12:00:00 AM		
1989	47.44449928	12:00:00 AM		
1989	74.80033629	12:00:00 AM		
1989	18.5796822	12:00:00 AM		
1989	3629.647893	3/17/1989		Burning debris
1990	48.65413979	12:00:00 AM		
1990	42.05935657	12:00:00 AM		
1990	221.709264	12:00:00 AM		
1990	50.96073464	12:00:00 AM		
1990	73.74699655	12:00:00 AM		
1990	158.0340711	12:00:00 AM		
1990	9.285359693	12:00:00 AM		
1990	66.67997545	12:00:00 AM		
1990	10.73271085	12:00:00 AM		
1990	614.2877022	12:00:00 AM		
1991	121.8765145	12:00:00 AM		
1991	920.2232909	12:00:00 AM		
1991	239.9948262	12:00:00 AM		
1991	18.5796822	12:00:00 AM		
1991	12.09809192	12:00:00 AM		
1992	72.55419536	12:00:00 AM		
1992	70.69318452	12:00:00 AM		
1992	13.68815333	12:00:00 AM		
1993	75.90663084	12:00:00 AM		
1993	21.91219666	12:00:00 AM		
1994	104.2225383	12:00:00 AM		
1994	25.97848597	12:00:00 AM		
1994	493.3377589	12:00:00 AM		
1994	50.96073464	12:00:00 AM		
1994	73.74699655	12:00:00 AM		
1995	75.245174	12:00:00 AM		
1995	14.88553284	12:00:00 AM		
1995	140.1797018	12:00:00 AM		
1995	387.837584	12:00:00 AM		
1995	90.4614588	12:00:00 AM		
1995	40.26167368	12:00:00 AM		
1995	266.5924681	12:00:00 AM		
1995	4.001523516	12:00:00 AM		
1997	454.4126377	12:00:00 AM		
1997	149.7614037	12:00:00 AM		
1997	144.1741503	12:00:00 AM		
1997	55.02653342	2/20/1997		
1998	773.5539617	12:00:00 AM		

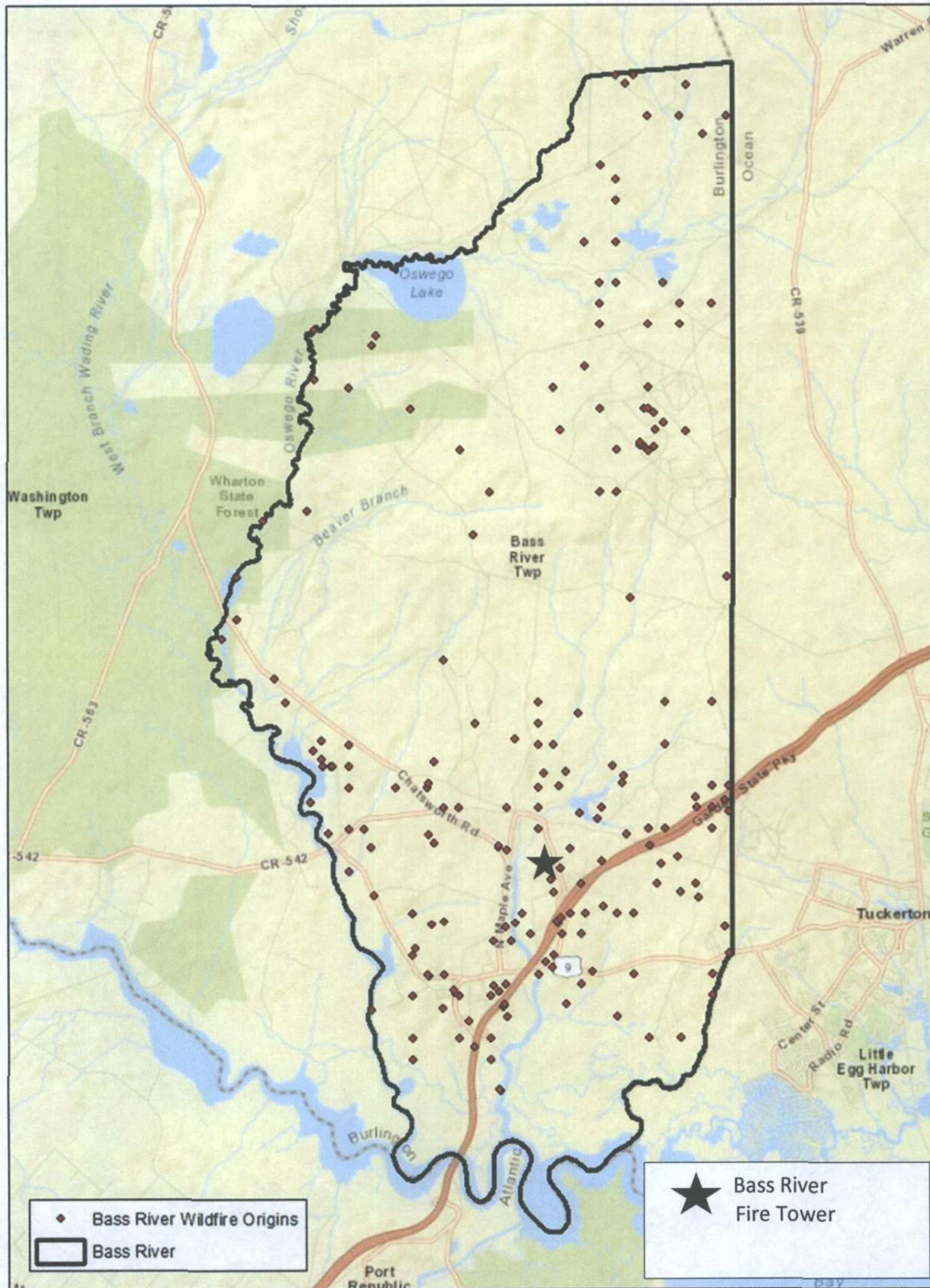
1999	11813.19669	4/30/1999		None listed
1999	748.4911637	12:00:00 AM		
2000	942.9038153	12:00:00 AM		
2001	1614.723941	6/10/2001		Gov
2001	436.5162052	12:00:00 AM		
2002	109.9776489	12:00:00 AM		
2002	19.11607756	12:00:00 AM		
2002	25.26792968	12:00:00 AM		
2004	1124.94252			
2005	773.5539617	12:00:00 AM		
2006	149.7614037	12:00:00 AM		
2006	140.1797018	12:00:00 AM		
2006	108.7788633	12:00:00 AM		
2006	511.9350222	12:00:00 AM		
2006	116.3145425	12:00:00 AM		
2007	15549.50824	5/15/2007		Gov
2010	678.1789081	7/25/2010		Lightning
TOTAL ACREAGE All FIRES	235,654.8			
NUMBER OF FIRES	104			

1. Bass River Township is 72 square miles or 46,080 acres. Since 1927, Bass River Township has burned over 235,654 acres or more than 5 times the total acreage of the entire Township.
2. Wildfires in Bass River Township have resulted in 7 fatalities over the past 80 years.
3. Bass River Township includes 1,443 residents according to the 2010 census.
4. Bass River Township has a past history of frequent and deadly wildfires.

WILDFIRE OCCURRENCES



WILDFIRE ORIGINS





Major Wildfires Little Egg Harbor Township Ocean County, NJ

Year	Acres	Start Date	Cause
1927	1,524	4/14/1927	Unknown
1929	2,430	6/1/1929	Unknown
1931	313	4/15/1931	Railroad
1934	277	7/23/1934	Unknown
1935	316	4/19/1935	Burning debris
1936	47,375	5/24/1936	Unknown
1937	208	5/17/1937	Burning debris
1942	121	3/24/1942	Incendiary
1942	1,397	5/5/1942	Incendiary
1943	12,526	4/5/1943	Incendiary
1946	1,118	4/18/1946	Incendiary
1948	280	5/2/1948	Smoker
1950	128	3/9/1950	Incendiary
1959	1,246	4/17/1959	Incendiary
1959	906	4/17/1959	Blow Over
1959	957	4/17/1959	Incendiary
1963	69,077	4/20/1963	Burning debris
1963	1,380	5/16/1963	Smoker
1963	619	11/17/1963	Equipment
1968	475	4/26/1968	Gov
1971	3,188	3/31/1971	Gov
1971	15,966	4/18/1971	Smoker
1971	2,534	4/22/1971	Incendiary
1981	3,424	4/18/1981	Incendiary
1981	2,384	5/21/1981	Trash
1982	944	4/22/1982	Incendiary
1982	1,113	4/22/1982	Incendiary
1983	1,523	7/30/1983	Gov
1995	173	8/24/1995	Unknown
2001	1,615	6/10/2001	Gov
2007	15,550	5/15/2007	Gov
2010	889	6/26/2010	Lightning

Major Wildfires
Little Egg Harbor Township

Note: Not all wildfires have been shown
(Major wildfires: > 100 Acres)

0 1 2 4
Miles

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
Division of Parks and Forestry
Forest Fire Service
October, 2011

1. Little Egg Harbor is 73 square miles in total or 46,720 acres. Of that total 30,080 acres is land. Since 1927, 194,031 acres have burned in Little Egg Harbor Township. Little Egg Harbor's total acreage of land area has burned over nearly 6 times since 1927.
2. With the prevailing winds out of the west, many of these fires originated in Bass River Township.
3. Little Egg Harbor Township includes 20,065 residents according to the 2010 census

Major Wildfires Eagleswood Twp. Ocean County, NJ

Year	Acres	Start Date	Cause
1925	660	5/7/1925	Resident
1935	316	4/19/1935	Burning debris
1936	1,237	5/17/1936	Unknown
1936	47,375	5/24/1936	Unknown
1942	121	3/24/1942	Incendiary
1946	1,118	4/18/1946	Incendiary
1950	128	3/9/1950	Incendiary
1971	15,986	4/18/1971	Smoker
1982	944	4/22/1982	Incendiary
1995	173	8/24/1995	Unknown
2007	15,550	5/15/2007	Gov

 Major Wildfires
 Eagleswood Twp.

0 0.5 1 2
Miles

*Note: Not all wildfires have been shown.
(Major Wildfires: >100 Acres)*

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
 Division of Parks and Forestry
 Forest Fire Service
 October, 2011

1. Eagleswood Township has a total of 18.8 square miles of which 16.1 square miles or 10,304 acres is land.
2. Between 1925 and 2007 there were 83,608 acres of wildfires in Eagleswood Township. Eagleswood Township has burned over more than 8 times it's total land area since 1925.
3. With the prevailing winds out of the west, many of these fires may have originated in Bass River Township.
4. Eagleswood Township includes 1603 residents according to the 2010 census.

ROLLING STONE REPORTS

Apocalypse in the Garden State

APP # 19900868031
Doc Type 166

MAR 8 2019

Scanned

Odds are good that the worst wildfire disaster in U.S. history might not happen in the West – but in New Jersey

BY KYLE DICKMAN

EVERY FEW DAYS THIS SPRING, ANOTHER SMALL WILDFIRE breaks out in the Pinelands, a 1.1-million-acre tract in southern New Jersey that spans seven counties and is home to some 500,000 people. So far this year, firefighters have doused the flames before they caused any significant, or at least widespread, damage. One fire turned four mobile homes to ash. Another closed the Garden State Parkway for a few hours. But Jersey won't always be so lucky. ¶ If the conditions are right, experts predict that on a dry morning in late April or May – the height of wildfire season in the reserve – the dense forest between Philadelphia and Atlantic City could explode into an inferno that moves as fast as any out West. In a worst-case scenario, the fire might start

just east of, say, the 7,000-person town of Tabernacle. Flames fueled by pine needles and 40-mile-an-hour winds will crawl within minutes from the forest floor to the crowns, growing from 20 to 30 to 70 feet tall as they leap between trees and over sandy roads. Between Tabernacle and the Atlantic Ocean are 30 miles of thick woodlands interspersed with a dozen retirement communities, a military base and a nuclear generator. If it is Memorial Day, there will also be thousands of vacationers. When Shawn Viscardi, the heavyset volunteer fire chief for Chatsworth – an 800-person village in the reserve – hears the first smoke report on the radio, he'll pray the fire isn't already too far gone.

"Anything that comes outta the west with a good head of steam on it, we're not going to stop it," Viscardi tells me in his fire-station office, staring at a map of the Pinelands. "We just can't."

Viscardi might think of the hikers on the 50-mile Batona Trail that cuts between Chatsworth and Tabernacle, but he'll dis-

miss the thought. They can't be helped. Instead, he'll warn the residents of Panama Road, a 100-home subdivision sunk deep into the Pines, to evacuate immediately. With only one road in and out, firefighters will almost certainly be unable to protect them or many other Pinelands homes. Two hours after ignition, gusts will loft embers two miles ahead of the main blaze, lighting pines where they land. Should they blow east toward Chatsworth's Ocean Spray cranberry warehouse, they will incinerate the 50,000 wooden crates stacked outside the building, generating enough heat and embers to combust a block of homes across the street. Over the next few days, if the winds keep blowing, flames could kill hundreds and lay waste to several billion dollars in property.

Although wildfires in the American West dominate headlines, the single most destructive fire in U.S. history could occur in the Northeast. New Jersey's Pinelands (also known as the Pine Barrens) is the lone island of contiguous forest in the 45-million-

person megacity that comprises the Eastern Seaboard from Richmond, Virginia, to Boston – the densest population cluster in the country. Whereas regular fires used to thin out the Pinelands, large swaths have remained relatively untouched for decades due to strict preservation laws. The result is a giant tinderbox of untended woods that's surrounded by 100,000-person suburbs. A Wildfire Risk Assessment published by New Jersey compared the Pinelands to "an inch of gasoline covering all of south and central New Jersey."

The last bad Pinelands blaze was in 1963. On a day now known as Black Saturday, an estimated 37 human-sparked fires ran through some 190,000 acres from Long Beach Island to Atlantic City, killing seven and destroying 400 buildings. (Humans are the cause behind 99 percent of blazes in Jersey.) In John McPhee's *The Pine Barrens*, the author said about the 1963 fire, "The damage to buildings was light, but only because there were so few buildings to damage." Since then, the population in the Pinelands has tripled while the forest has become even thicker. If a series of blazes starts on the right dry and windy day, it could take out a large chunk of the Jersey coastline. Yet despite the increasing danger, state officials can't do much to counter it. One significant fire, let alone 37, could tap out their current response capabilities.

Four hours after starting, 4,000 acres of the Pinelands will be ablaze. As the fire gathers momentum, most of New Jersey's 1,200 part- and full-time firefighters will race toward the smoke from across the state; so will volunteers from the neighboring counties. But the gale-force winds that give rise to the fire will also ground the state's single-engine air tankers and 60-year-old helicopters. Some units will try to protect the houses they can reach; others are likely to make a stand on Route 72 and attack the main blaze by lighting backfires – intentionally burning the forest to rob the fire of fuel. Their efforts may steer the flames away from the mental-health facilities at New Lisbon Developmental Cen-



ter to the north or spare the community of Presidential Lakes, but not everybody will be saved. Six hours after the fire starts, the houses packed into the forest on Panama Road will likely be ash in the mile-wide head of flames that will have leapfrogged nine miles to the east. Residents in Keswick Grove will evacuate. So will the retirees at Pine Ridge and the staff at Ocean County Airport. Emergency managers will shut down the Garden State Parkway.

Fire behavior is difficult to predict, but if a blaze of Black Saturday's intensity struck today, it's hard to imagine the state escaping with only a small number of deaths and minor property damage. In 2016, a catastrophic wildfire like the 1963 inferno could have exponentially more severe consequences. "Sooner or later, southern New Jersey will know the fire equivalent of Hurricane Sandy," said Stephen Pyne, a fire-ecology professor at Arizona State University. "The cost could be in the billions. The loss of life could be unthinkable."

IN MY EARLY TWENTIES, I FOUGHT wildfires for five seasons throughout the West, barely registering that the East was even flammable. But last year, I heard Pyne – the world's foremost fire expert – talk about the potential disaster in the Pinelands. Nothing, he said, would wake the public like a megafire so close to Manhattan that the smoke would sting

NEW JERSEY BURNING A massive fire started accidentally by a military test near Stafford in May 2007, causing 2,500 homes to be evacuated before it was eventually doused by a 90-minute rainstorm.

New Yorkers' eyes. The claim sounded outrageous. In fact, I remained skeptical until I recently saw the Pinelands for myself.

In the West, fire season gets rolling in Arizona and New Mexico in late May. Over the summer, it often extends north through Colorado and Montana and west through Oregon, Washington and California before ending with a flash when the Santa Ana winds rake flames over San Diego and L.A. in the fall. Fire season tends to begin earlier each year, and large parts of the West are now two degrees warmer than in 1895 and are predicted to get another four to six degrees hotter by century's end. Warmer temps are one reason Western firefighters quip that their once-seasonal job is now year-round. Thicker forests are another.

In wildland firefighting, success does not breed success. Stopping fires in their infancy allows forests to grow thicker and more at risk of bad blazes. Before the Forest Service started fighting fires, around 1910, lightning strikes and native peoples used to burn around 50 million Western acres each year. Today, some 30,000 wildland firefighters and their equipment – smokejumpers, fire engines, air tankers –

check that number at around 11 million. If that sounds impressive, it's worth noting that 50 years ago about a third as many firefighters kept the annual acreage burned to roughly half what it is today. The flames have become that much harder to control. In 2011, one blaze outside Los Alamos, New Mexico, laid waste to roughly an acre of giant pine trees per second for the first 13 hours. The flames were several hundred feet tall – I watched them from my home in Santa Fe. With more than 140 million Americans living in places that could burn like it, and 840,000 more moving westward each year, it was also a terrifying reminder of what could happen if a megafire hit a town or a city.

A fire's cost and destructiveness are measured by the amount of infrastructure it threatens to burn. If half a million acres turn to charcoal in the Alaskan wilderness, few care. But lately, fires have been creeping closer to homes as cities sprawl. San Antonio has \$7 billion in property threatened by wildfires; Denver has \$10 billion, and San Diego and L.A. are close behind. Back in the Eighties, when the West was more sparsely populated, the federal government spent about \$200 million battling wildfires each fire season. Since 2000, the average is closer to \$1.3 billion. In 2015, one of the most destructive fire seasons to date, the feds doled out nearly twice that amount.

ROLLING STONE REPORTS

Wildfire damage to a city can be astronomical. America's worst contemporary wildfire hit Oakland in 1991. It killed 25, destroyed 3,300 homes and 2,000 vehicles, and cost \$2.67 billion in losses. A New Jersey megafire could dwarf that record. In the Pinelands, half a million people and billions in property abut woods that Pyne called "the biotic equivalent of a munitions depot...among the most flammable landscapes in America."

Yet the risk is overlooked. CoreLogic, an analytics firm that studies natural disasters for insurance companies, doesn't investigate fires in New Jersey because "the need's not there for our clients." According to Tom Jeffery, the firm's senior scientist, they focus their work on the states "responsible for 80 to 90 percent of total wildfire activity." In other words, destructive wildfires aren't annual events in Jersey—they don't meet the rubric.

Over the past century, roughly 100,000 wildfires have burned in the Pinelands. According to a smaller state catalog of significant wildfires since 1905, firefighters or weather stopped all but 19 before they reached 1,000 acres, and only 10 grew beyond 10,000 acres. Just two became biblical blazes that torched more than 150,000 acres each. The last struck about 30 years before CoreLogic even existed.

In Jersey, fire season peaks in spring, during those few dry weeks before the oaks sprout leaves, which create shade and effectively trap moisture in the forest. Sometimes, the winds never arrive, which is why bad fires in the Garden State seem rare. "All these different sine waves, perfectly in phase, need to line up," says Joseph Charney, a research meteorologist for the Forest Service who studies fire and weather in the Northeast. In 1963, New Jersey was in a historic drought when a weather system that originated in the West funneled 40-mph winds over the state, the front cutting off much-needed moisture from the Gulf of Mexico. For a repeat of that event, it has to be a drought year. There needs to be a series of days with low relative humidity, a great big windstorm must move in, and firefighters must fail to catch the fire immediately.

This spring, Jersey saw normal rainfall, so the state is unlikely to see a blaze of Black Saturday's intensity—fires over 10,000 acres occur only every few decades. So far this year, just a few Jersey fires have burned much more than the average parking lot. One raced through 350 acres before firefighters put it out; another blackened 30 acres and closed down the roads for a bit.

But that doesn't mean the state is out of the woods. Bad conditions align often enough that New Jersey has twice applied for FEMA's Fire Management Assistance Declaration since 2000, both for Pinelands wildfires. One, in 2007, burned about 15,000 acres and forced people from 2,500 homes before 1,000 firefighters and a 90-minute burst of heavy rain helped douse the flames. And every year that passes, the forest grows thicker, only increasing the risk of a worse blaze. In the 50 years prior to 1963, just two days had conditions perfect for disaster. None have occurred since. Charney thinks all that's needed is a severe drought.

'MOST PEOPLE DON'T BELIEVE me that the big one's coming," says Bob Williams, his accent thick with Jersey. "But when the conditions are right, this place is going to burn, burn, burn."

Williams, a lifelong Pinelands resident and forester, is driving through the reserve in his Ford F-150. It's a cool day in December and fog hangs low over the ground. Yuengling signs and Wawa stations fly by, replaced by retirement communities surrounded by densely packed pines. "There's so many subdivisions built into this drum-tight forest," he says. "It's a deathtrap."

Just talking about "the big one" whips Williams into a froth, a mode he's in too often. At 65, he's a lean six feet six with a full head of gray hair and a thin face. A year ago, he survived a heart attack, caused, perhaps in part, by the stress of his job. As a Pinelands forester, he makes his money using chain saws, backhoes and intentionally set fires to reduce the risk of fire danger and, he says, return the forest to historic conditions on about 100,000 acres of privately owned land in and around the Pinelands. For decades, he's been warning politicians and the public that the Pinelands could soon host America's worst fire. They've mostly ignored him.

Earlier, Williams had spread out a map of the Pinelands for me. Philadelphia, Atlantic City and the Garden State Parkway hemmed the woods. In 1978, Congress and the state government created the Pinelands National Reserve to protect 22 percent of the state from development. In the largest section, there's limited logging, no Wal-Marts, no international airports, but the 56 towns already existing within the Pinelands were allowed to remain and grow inside their determined municipal boundaries. Though new development was subject to some fire standards, the

houses were tightly packed into the forest. To Williams, they were constructed as if to "maximize the potential for catastrophic fire."

Not everybody thinks the situation is dire. Williams and the views he espouses are so polarizing in the small world of Jersey forestry that the state's forestry office stopped returning my calls after I mentioned I'd interviewed him. He's been called a troublemaker, always stirring things up for the benefit of his business. But the science is supportive of Williams' claims. The Forest Service classifies the Pinelands as being just as flammable as the brush that torches Los Angeles suburbs each fall. "If your house didn't burn in California one summer, somebody else's probably did," says Nick Skrownski, a Forest Service researcher. "In New Jersey, you can go 10 to 20 years without that happening. It's a decay of memory."

The Forest Service studies the reserve but doesn't manage it. That's left to the state and the 15 members of the governor-appointed Pinelands Commission. But when Congress created the reserve, logging and thinning were regulated nearly to extinction on much of it. As the woodlands grew, the New Jersey Forest Fire Service—which had already started suppressing every blaze in the 1940s—became exceptional at its work.

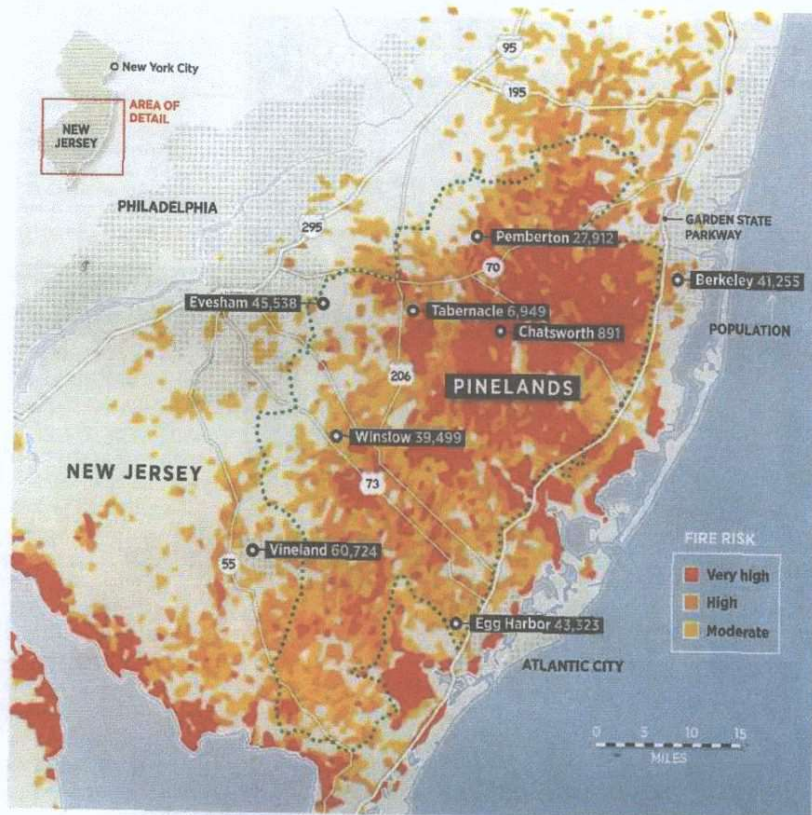
"We catch most fires when they're just a quarter or a half acre," says Richard Boornazian, an assistant commissioner of the state's Department of Environmental Protection, which oversees the Forest Fire Service and the state's firefighters. He says his guys are so good at stopping wildfires, even some employees in his own department aren't aware so many—about 700—burn in the Pinelands each year. Since the 1930s, the average annual acreage blackened has dropped from 100,000 to just 2,000.

Ken Clark, a research forester with the Forest Service, says the Pinelands are a looming danger. "You could kill more people out here than in any fire out West," he says with a shake of his head. "And there's not a lot the Forest Fire Service can do to stop it. It's not like they can call their firefighter friends from the Forest Service or the next state over to help, like out West. They're just not here."

STEPHEN LEE, A FIFTH-GENERATION cranberry farmer, knocks the mud from his boots. He's standing outside a shop on his 1,800-acre farm near Chatsworth, "the heart of the Pines." Compact, with crisp blue eyes, Lee oversees his cranberry farm. Annually, it

Where the Big Blaze Will Hit

Fires in Pinelands' 1.1 million acres could kill hundreds and cost billions



generates 4 million pounds of berries from 135 acres of bogs. He attributes his success to the health of the woods that comprise the rest of his land. "We jealously protect them," he says, nodding at the tree line.

Cranberries are farmed in water, and in the Pinelands, their productivity relies on the purity of the 17.7-trillion-gallon aquifer that underlies the forest. Lee, who is a client of Williams', says his managed forest helps purify the water his cranberries need to grow. For Lee, the threat of wildfire is never far from his mind. He takes me to the place he could have died fighting a 1985 blaze on his land. "You've got to picture these were 70-foot trees," he says, holding his hands up like goal posts in a tree plantation flanked by pines not much taller than his truck. A volunteer firefighter at the time the fire hit, Lee and his crew narrowly escaped 100-foot flames, fishtailing his truck around on a road too narrow to U-turn. The fire eventually died when the winds quit blowing. "My knees were

shaking," he says. "The only other time I've shaken like that is when the engine of my single-engine airplane cut out."

Hundreds of thousands of trees flank us, many of them replanted by Lee. In some places in the reserve, fire's heat can cause pitch pine cones to open, a phenomenon that can release so many seeds at once it sounds like rain falling against broad leaves. Such dense forest is a familiar sight around the Pinelands. But Lee's trees, being younger than most, are about 60 feet shorter than the average pine in the reserve. "That fire hit just 11 years after another had burned the area," Lee says, pointing out how quickly the pines regenerate. "Now, some of the land around here hasn't seen a fire in 35 years or more."

To mimic the natural fire cycles and reduce the risk of flames destroying his farm, Lee intentionally burns about 1,000 acres each year. "I'm willing to take the risk of a controlled fire," Lee says, "in order to prevent wildfire." Under Gov. Chris

Christie's administration, New Jersey's Forest Fire Service has tried to do the same. A rough 10-year plan is in the works to light prescribed fires on acres managed by the state. Complicating matters, however, is that the EPA rightly considers wood smoke to be a health hazard. "If these guys get smoke into Camden or Philadelphia, the EPA gets pissed," Clark says. "It's a mess." Though the EPA is considering making an exception for prescribed fire smoke, the agency's ruling has yet to be made. For Williams, the forester, only around 15 days a year are suitable to light prescribed fires. Jersey's Forest Fire Service still manages to burn about 10,600 acres each year, which is roughly the equivalent of fireproofing a few squares on a chessboard.

MOST EXPERTS SAY THE RISK of a bad wildfire can be tamed for only so long. The phrase I heard most often was, "It's not if, but when." Only Boornazian dismisses the potential of a bad New Jersey fire as outright hyperbole. "I just don't think alarms need to be raised," he says. "That was a perfect storm. We work very hard every day trying to prevent another '63 from happening."

Despite this, no other source I spoke to considers these mitigation efforts enough; nor do any fault the Forest Fire Service for the problem. Most, like Chatsworth's Viscardi, simply feel a bad Pinelands blaze is inevitable. "I'm a firm believer that history repeats itself," he says.

So what can be done to prepare for a catastrophic Pinelands fire? Several scientists I spoke to suggest building moats of firebreaks around the Pinelands' border and each town inside it, effectively bottling flames in the woods. Williams thinks the state should manage its way out of the crisis. He wants to see a landscape-wide plan created that allows for more logging, more thinning, more burning, and all of it more regularly. "I am not suggesting we are going to be able to thin all the forest or return fire to all the Pinelands," Williams says. "But we can begin to manage the forest and fire in a way that allows us some control over uncontrollable events and dramatically reduces risk to life and property."

Doing the work will take decades and cost tens of millions of dollars. But the alternative, as Williams sees it, is grim. "If somebody doesn't stand the hell up and do something about this," he says, "a fire's gonna scrape this place down to a parking lot."

MAR 8 2019

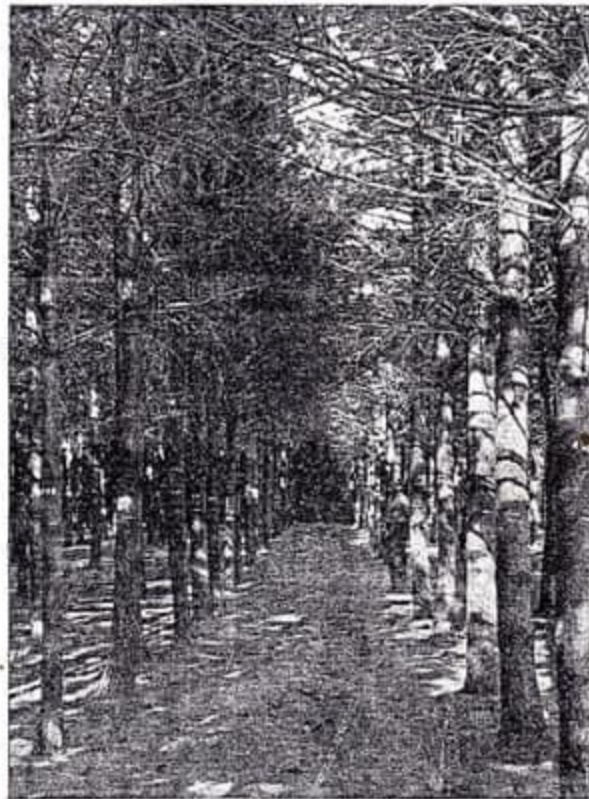


BASS RIVER STATE FOREST FIRE TOWER 2019

✓



BASS RIVER STATE FOREST 1936



*Prevent Forest Fires
and Help to
Protect the Natural Beauty*

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF
CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
DIVISION OF FORESTS AND PARKS

BASS RIVER STATE FOREST

This property, as all other State Forests in South Jersey, is located in the Coastal Plain region and consists of 8,849 acres in the southern portion of Burlington and Ocean Counties. Acquisition was started in November, 1905. It was the first acquisition of the present State Forest properties. This is the third largest State Forest and is one of eight State Forests being managed for the benefit and enjoyment of the public in addition to timber production, water conservation, and the protection of wild life.

The forest is located twenty miles north of Atlantic City and is situated just north of New Gretna and west of Tuckerton. The area is easily accessible to the public, as State Highway Route No. 4, commonly known as the shore road, passes directly through the southern portion of the forest.

The policy of the department is to develop the forest with a system of roads so that the area will be accessible for public use and to aid in the proper administration and protection of the forest. Fire lines or safety strips are constructed along the roads and boundaries and every other provision is being made for the prevention and control of forest fires, the greatest enemy of the woods and wild life.

The most interesting features of this forest are the experimental plantations of twenty acres which have been established in the vicinity of the forest headquarters. These plantations are attractive and interesting and are viewed annually by a great many visitors.

These plantations were established in 1913 and represent twenty-four growing seasons. Loblolly pine has made the best growth, the larger trees ranging from ten to sixteen inches in diameter, and fifty feet in height. White pine has also made excellent growth on this type of soil and the larger trees are ten inches in diameter and forty feet in height.

A diagram showing the location of the various plots and the species of trees planted has been included in this folder for the information of the visitor. The plantations are open for inspection at all times and visitors are requested to be very careful with matches and tobacco, as one careless smoker may destroy the work of many years.



Historic Stage Road Used in Colonial Days to Traverse the Forest



Safety Strip Maintained Along Roads to Aid in Protection of the Forest from Fires

These plantations are very valuable for the reason that they demonstrate the possibilities of the reclamation of waste land, and what can be done with unproductive areas of State Forest lands under proper forest management and protection.

An observation tower has been constructed at the forest headquarters to assist in the protection of the area and also serves to give visitors an excellent view of the experimental plantations and the extent of the forest.

Visitors will note that in some cases, natural reproduction has been established in some of the plots. In the White pine plot the trees are numbered with white paint for research purposes, and accurate measurements are recorded for each individual tree.

While these experimental plantations are the most important and interesting, there are numerous other forest plantings which have been established and which are visible by following the roads about the area. Full information in regard to the silvicultural operations being conducted on the forest can be obtained from the Forester in charge.

Camp site and picnic site facilities have not been developed and are not available. Camp fires are not permitted. Visitors are cautioned that a written permit is required by law for the building of any fire.

The policy of the department does not permit the leasing of any land upon which cabins or other structures may be erected.

Fishing and hunting are permitted subject only to the State Fish and Game laws. Deer are plentiful and many fine trophies are secured each year. Located in the southern portion of the forest, along Ballinger's Creek, are 600 acres of marsh land, where during the migratory bird season much fine sport may be had by duck hunters. The area is accessible but very well isolated to provide good sport.

The public is invited to enjoy the beauties of the forest, but no flowers, shrubs, trees or other plants may be picked, dug up, or damaged. Visitors are reminded that they are only a few of many, and their cooperation is requested in leaving the area as attractive as they find it. Be careful with fire at all times, so that the area may be enjoyed by others.

ADMINISTRATION

The forest is in charge of James C. MacDonald, Forest Supervisor, whose post-office address is New Gretna, office telephone is Tuckerton 126-R-2, and residence telephone is Tuckerton 38-R-14. The forest headquarters is located on the forest, three miles from New Gretna and two miles north along the Greenbush road leading from State Highway Route 4. The headquarters is surrounded by the experimental plantations.

The Penn State Forest, consisting of 2,958 acres situated ten miles to the northeast, and the Green Bank State Forest, consisting of 1,833 acres situated ten miles to the west, are also in charge of Mr. MacDonald. Any arrangements in regard to the use of these three State Forests are made direct through the Forester in charge, locally, and not through the Trenton office of the Department.

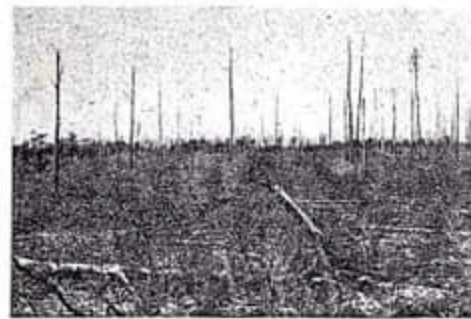
GREEN BANK STATE FOREST

This forest, consisting of 1,833 acres located in the vicinity of the town of Green Bank and Lower Bank, along the Mullica River, is situated in Burlington and Atlantic Counties. With the exception of the area adjoining the town of Green Bank, the greater portion of the forest consists of cedar swamp and is not available for recreational use.

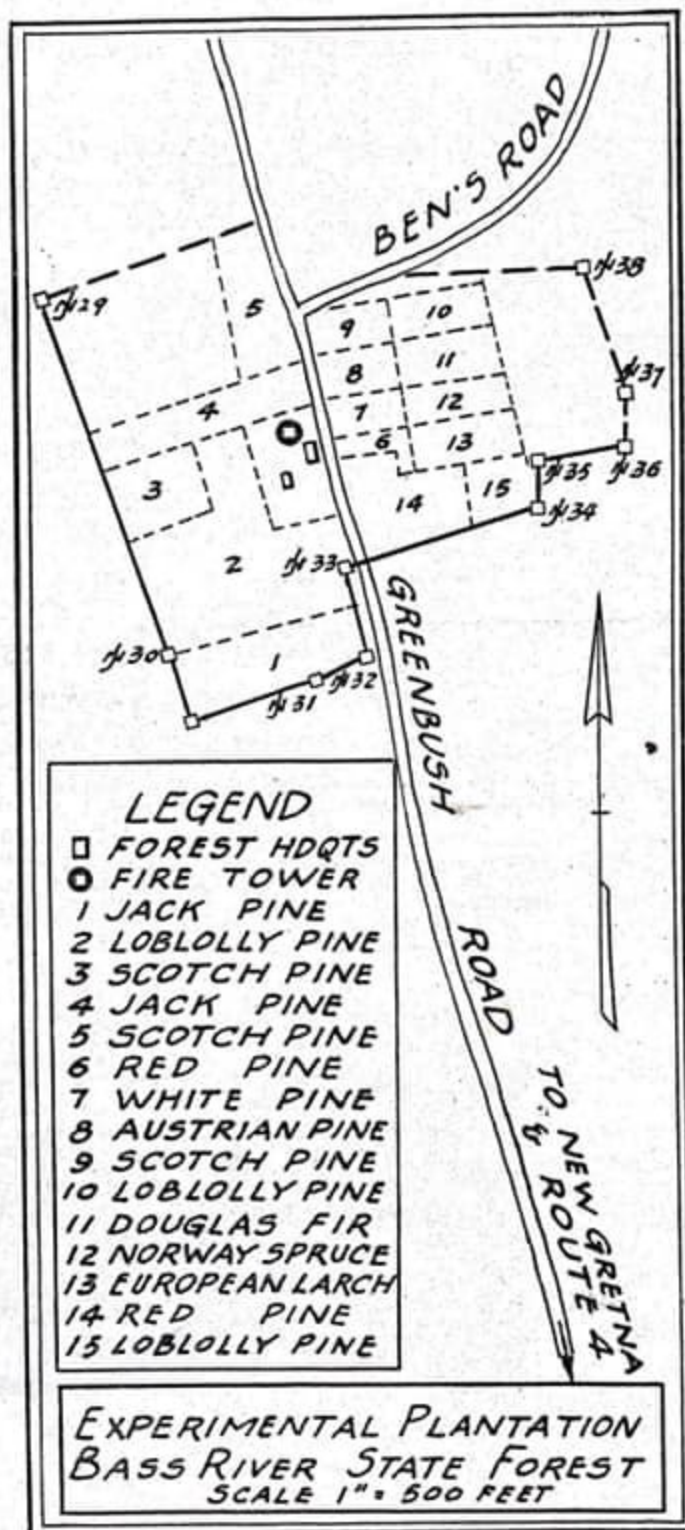
Just south of Green Bank, along the Mullica River, there has been developed a bathing beach for the use and enjoyment of visitors. Adequate parking space, a shelter, drinking water and sanitary facilities have been provided. There are no life guards provided, but bathing is permitted at your own risk.

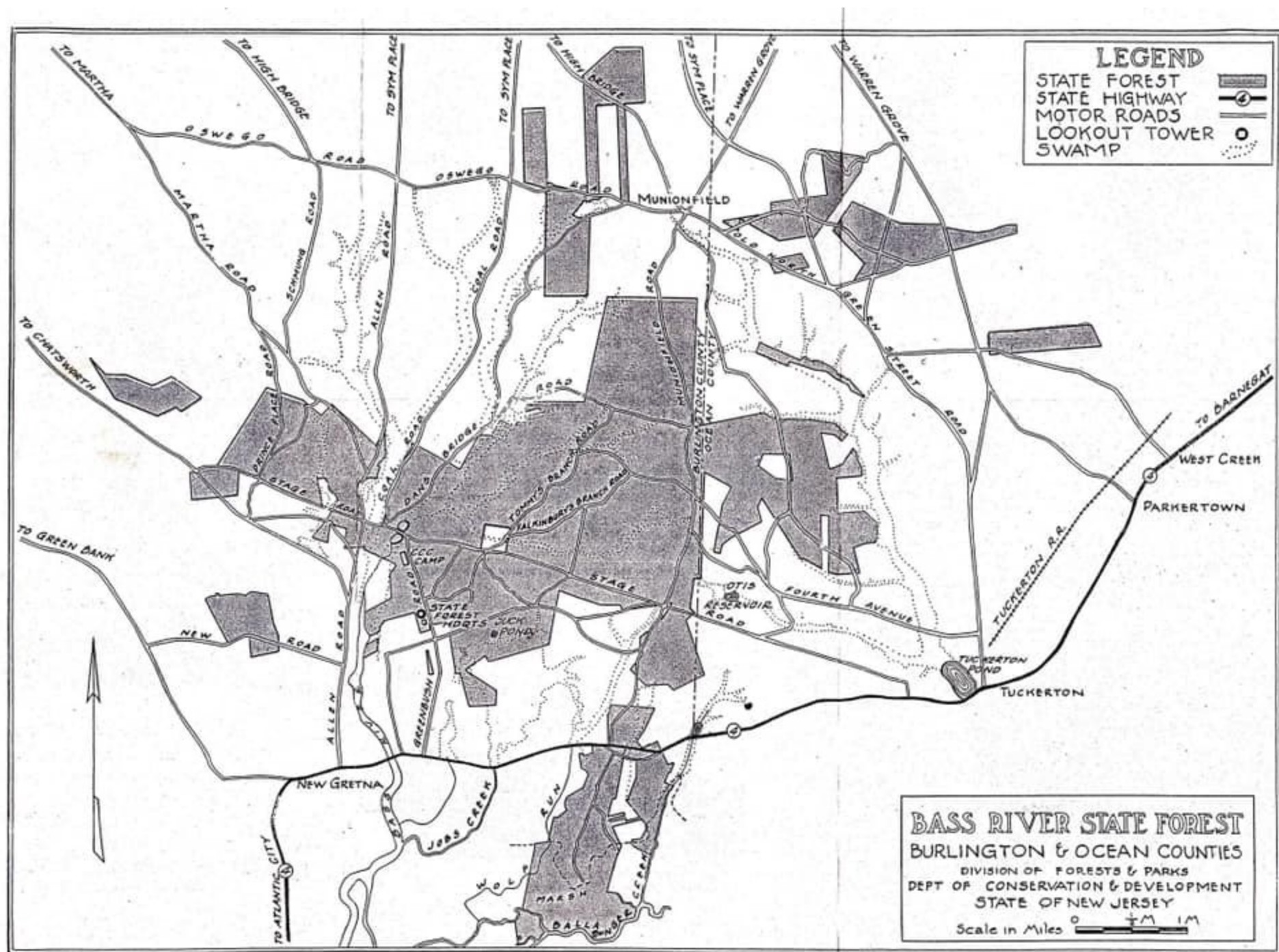
One of the State Forest Nurseries, which produces seedlings for planting in South Jersey, is located in the vicinity of the Mullica River Beach area.

Camping facilities are not available and camp fires are not permitted.



Result of Fire. Improvements on State Forests Are Designed to Make Forests Green and Productive





BASS RIVER GAZETTE

A newsletter from the Bass River Community Library History Committee and the Great John Mathis Foundation
SPECIAL BASS RIVER STATE FOREST CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION EDITION

• Issue No. 19: Special October, 2005 Edition (Next issue due December, 2005) • donations appreciated •

BASS RIVER - NEW JERSEY'S FIRST STATE FOREST

by Kevin Wright

Resource Interpretive Specialist, Northern Region Office

Creation of New Jersey's Forest Park Reservations

Following the Legislature's instructions, the State Geological Survey employed Gifford Pinchot in May 1894 to conduct a botanical survey of New Jersey's forests. In response to Pinchot's study of the devastating consequences of forest fires in South Jersey, the State Geologist recommended in 1898 the creation of a State Forest Fire Service and the acquisition of State Forest Parks to protect the supply of potable water.

In May 1901, the Geological Survey proposed a great scheme to preserve and protect a vast forest range in New Jersey through a system of State Forest Reservations, similar to those in Germany. They recommended the employment of an expert forester to make an annual estimate of the loss and damages caused by forest fires.

With the lumber industry at low ebb, due to the inferior quality of standing timber across the State, Governor Edward Casper Stokes recognized the value of state forests in protecting water-sheds and for use as game preserves, pleasure parks, camping grounds and picturesque retreats. He recommended the purchase of forest reserves in his inaugural address of January 17, 1905. This was the turning point for State forests in New Jersey.

As a result of the Governor's advocacy, a bill for the appointment of a State Board of Forest Park Reservation Commissioners was enacted on March 22, 1905 creating the Forest Park Reservations. It entrusted the care, management and preservation of forest parks to a five-member State Board of Forest Park Reservation Commissioners. They were to "observe, keep in view, and, so far as it can, put in operation the best method to reforest cut-over and denuded lands, to forest waste and other lands, to prevent injury of forests by fire, the administering and care of forests on forestry principles, the encouragement of private owners in preserving and growing timber for commercial and manufacturing purposes, and the general conservation of forest tracts around the headwaters and on the water-sheds of all the water courses of the state ..." They adopted the Salem Oak as the State Forest emblem at their first meeting on June 27, 1905.

The First Forest Parks

On October 4, 1905, the first step was taken toward putting the new forestry preserve plan in operation, with the acquisition of 970.59 acres of woodland: (1) 373.59 acres of recently burned woodland about one and a half miles south of Mays Landing in Weymouth Township, Atlantic County, and (2) **597 acres in Bass River Township, Burlington County**. These tracts were "to demonstrate the best methods of refreshing cut-over and denuded lands; of showing how to prevent injury by forest fires, and the general administering and care of woodlands in a way to make them self-creating and self-sustaining." According to the New York Times, "the movement is regarded as of much importance in New Jersey, where forest fires and want of skill in care and cutting are fast wiping out the forests."

The Bass River Reserve

The Forest Park Commission accepted Charles W. Mathis' offer



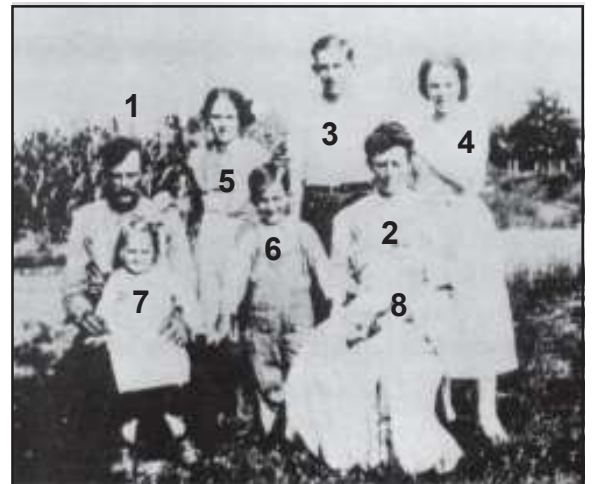
An early Bass River State Forest white pine plantation after pruning. Many of the trees grown in the State Forest can be found throughout New Gretna, as seedlings from these plantations found their way into many local yards. (Photo from the Forest Resource Education Center, NJ Forest Service archives.)

to sell 597 acres in Bass River Township, Burlington County. At \$150 per acre, this land had little value, but, as was duly noted, "It is such land as this, however, that the State should acquire and develop. The Commission believes that it can be made a profitable investment, and perhaps make the nucleus of a large reservation."

The State of New Jersey added 1,100 acres to the Bass River Forest Reserve in June 1906, purchasing several tracts from W. W. Pharo, of Philadelphia, including 400 acres of swamp and upland, located on the East and West Branches of Bass River; 254 acres of swamp and upland bordering the Falkinburg Branch, the Townings Branch and the Main East Branch of Bass River, for \$1,350; and 189 acres of upland, located one and a half miles to the west, for \$500. The Board also purchased a dwelling house on 9.5 acres, known locally as the old French farm, situated along the east side of the Bass River, from W. C. Irons, of New Gretna, for \$325, together with 180 acres of cedar swamp and woodland on the Merrygold Branch of the Wading River for \$405.

On December 3, 1906, Samuel Budd Allen was employed as caretaker and warden of the Bass River Forest Reserve for \$35 per month. The old French farm had been acquired for a reserve headquarters and residence for the forest warden, but Warden Samuel Budd Allen preferred to reside at his home in New Gretna. Between November 1, 1906, and November 1, 1907, another 1,043 acres (including buildings) were added to the Bass River Reserve, bringing its total area to 1,633 acres. By 1908, upwards of seven miles of fire lines, varying in width from 8 to 30 feet, were constructed.

The Bass River Forest Reserve originally con-
 (Cont. page 2)



Samuel Budd Allen chose to live with his family in their North Maple Avenue home in New Gretna rather than accept housing on State Forest land. 1- Sam; 2- Lida Mae, wife; 3- Everett; 4- Elizabeth; 5- Ada; 6- Grove; 7- Ida; and 8- baby Margaret. (Photo courtesy of Jean Allen Lainhart, Samuel's granddaughter.)

BASS RIVER - NEW JERSEY'S FIRST STATE FOREST

(Continued from page 1)

sisted of young pitch pine, oak sprouts, cedar swamp, and scrub oak; all of which, with the exception of some of the swamp, had been badly burned over at various times in the past. It was acquired with the intention of demonstrating "the possibility of maintaining commercial forests on our poorest sands, and the means by which that end is to be attained."

Work began on the Bass River Reserve in April 1907 with the establishment of a small nursery, containing eighteen beds each 4 by 20 feet, occupying about one-sixteenth of an acre, enclosed by wire fence. By September 1907, the nursery contained 24,300 seedlings of Jack Pine, Western Yellow Pine, Scotch Pine and Locust. The Western Yellow Pine failed, while the Jack Pine prospered. A new nursery was established in another part of the Bass River Reserve in the spring of 1908, consisting of thirty-six beds, each 4 by 24 feet, on a tract of loamy sand. After one year, the nursery beds nourished 15,000 Loblolly Pine, 2,000 Scotch Pine and 900 Douglas Fir. Attempts at broadcasting the seed of Loblolly Pine on ten sample plots proved disappointing.



One of the early nurseries at Bass River State Forest. Thousands of seedlings were grown and transplanted throughout the area. (Photo from the Forest Resource Education Center, NJ Forest Service archives.)

On February 8, 1908, the Forest Park Reserve Commissioners authorized Professor John B. Smith, the State Entomologist, to cut white oak sprouts on the Bass River Reserve as part of a "necessary experiment" in silkworm culture.

In his report for 1914, State Forester Alfred Gaskill described the Bass River Forest Reserve as follows:

Bass River Reserve

1,633 Acres. Warden, S. B. Allen; P. O. New Gretna.

This reserve, six miles from Tuckerton, and only two miles from the shore boulevard at New Gretna, is typical of what is commonly known as the Pine Barrens. It is also demonstrating the value of South Jersey soils for the production of pine, oak, and cedar timber with no other help than the control of fires, from which it has been immune since it came into the possession of the State in 1906. A small quantity of timber is now salable and probably will be utilized during the coming winter. A number of experimental plantations are yielding valuable data.

Early in the fall a proposition was made to divert the traffic on the shore boulevard over a road through the reserve while the bridge across Bass River was under construction. A perfectly amicable arrangement was made with the County Freeholders by which the road has been reconstructed and is being maintained in such a way that the risk of fire is minimized.

A private one-mile extension to furnish telephone service to Bass River State Forest was completed in 1921 and a small forest nursery for loblolly pine was started in the spring of 1922. The old house on the French Farm in Bass River State Forest, previously leased, was renovated in 1922 to make a suitable residence for the forest ranger

and a helper.

A prolonged drought, commencing in the latter half of June 1921, triggered an exceptionally destructive season of forest fires. A fire that extended over nearly 35,000 acres burned 400 acres of young timber in Bass River State Forest. Another forest fire swept 200 acres of oak and pine at Bass River in April and May 1922.

Recreational development began with the creation of the State Park Service in 1923. A considerable amount of maintenance equipment, including wagons, plows, shovels, spray tanks and other tools were purchased, and a picnic ground was built at Bass River.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)

From 1932 to 1941, twenty-two Civilian Conservation Corps camps in New Jersey engaged in making improvements in seven State Parks and eight State Forests, covering 51,374 acres. Specifically, the CCC operated seven camps within five State Forests, as well as camps within two State Parks. Several other CCC camps were shared jointly by the State Parks and other public agencies. The program spent 226,897 man-days on State Forest work alone in 1939. At that time, the average annual cost of operating a camp, including materials purchased for work projects, amounted to \$180,000. In 1941, its final season, the Civilian Conservation Corps provided 178,193 man days of enrolled labor to the State Forest properties, consisting of 168,167 man days on the State Forests and 10,026 man days for the Forest Fire Service on fire control projects on private lands. By that time, camps were not operating at fully authorized enrollment due to the shortage of enrollees.

The CCC enrolled unmarried and unemployed citizens, 17 to 24 years of age, in six-month programs and up to two years of job training. Enrollments were received in April and October, allowing farm boys to sign up for the winter months and return home for spring planting. Workers earned approximately \$30 per month. After camps had their full quota, several hundred additional enrollees were sent to the Ninth Corps area in the far West, to New York State and to Delaware.

Enrollees engaged in erosion control, nursery work and reforestation. They constructed park roads, trails, bridle paths, vehicular bridges, ponds for fish and waterfowl, lookout towers, observatory shelters, picnic, fireplaces, campgrounds, recreational lakes, and landscaping.

The Civilian Conservation Corps continued to operate seven camps on five State Forests in 1939, spending 226,897 man-days on forest work and park improvements. The average annual operating cost per camp, including materials purchased for work projects, amounted to \$180,000.

The Civilian Conservation Corps terminated its activities on June 30, 1942.

CCC Accomplishments at Bass River State Forest

Workers from the CCC Camp S-55, Company 225, at Bass River, constructed a new recreational area, including construction of an 800-



The first fire tower in Bass River State Forest was located on East Greenbush Road next to the old French Farm house. (Photo from the Forest Resource Education Center, NJ Forest Service archives.)

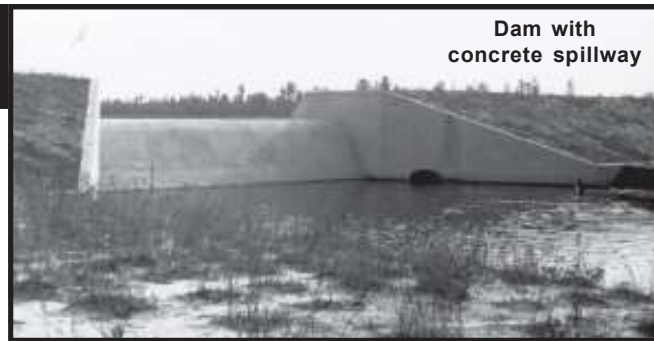
(Continued on page 3)

BASS RIVER - NEW JERSEY'S FIRST STATE FOREST

(Continued from page 2)

foot earthen dam with clay core and concrete spillway for a new 67-acre Lake Absegami with sand bathing beach and diving platform at Bass River between 1939 and 1941. Construction of a contact station, latrines, five camp shelters, three overnight cabins, began in 1940. Six cabins with fireplaces were built alongside the lake. Managed intensively under forestry principles, Bass River offered many forestry demonstrations to visitors and township residents.

Shortly after the Civilian Conservation Corps was terminated in June, 1942, a unit of the 731st Military Police Battalion occupied the CCC Camp at Bass River until February 1, 1944.



Dam with
concrete spillway

(The preceding article is an edited and condensed version previously published by the State of New Jersey. We thank the author, Kevin Wright, for allowing us to adapt it and add photos for this newsletter.)

BASS RIVER CCC CAMP, COMPANY 225, CAMP S 55 - May, 1935



Photo of the officers and men at the Bass River CCC Camp, Company 225, Camp S-55, shows the headquarters building on the right with the barracks buildings in the background. Horace Somes, Sr., a forester, later from Wading River, is seated in the front row, 10th from the right. (Photo courtesy of Horace Somes, Jr.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR - THE BASS RIVER CCC CAMP

6 January 2005

I read Almira Steele's story about the CCC camp in New Gretna [Gazette Issue #16] with interest. I visited there myself in 1942 with the Tuckerton Boy Scout Troop. A large group of us, under the direction of our Scoutmaster Howard Smith, hiked along the then gravel Stage Road to the Camp near the East Greenbush Road. The camp was then inhabited by Veterans of World War I, and they had invited us to dinner. They showed us around the camp and then we all sat down to a meal of hot dogs cooked in baked beans. I thought this was unusual and made an excellent meal. When I got home to Tuckerton I described it to my mother who decided it was an easy dinner to prepare and added it to her dinner menus. My brother and I glommed it down with gusto and frequently fought over the leftovers in the fridge at night. I had a plate full of this mix pushed in my face more than once, but still like the dish.

We learned that the CCC's had built Lake Absegami and its beach and bath-house and then later rode our bikes up the stage road to swim there. It was free in those days and it had a beach. Tuckerton



The dam, completed in 1941 by the CCC, restricted the water flow of the West Branch of the Bass River, creating Lake Absegami. (Photo courtesy of Bass River State Forest photo archives.)

Lake had no beach then, and we swam there by the mill dam, but it seemed more adventuresome to ride to Absegami. I don't know how Howard Smith got the invitation to take us to dinner at the CCC camp, but that was just one of the many opportunities he provided for us boys. We spent a great deal of time in his basement and learned a great deal which we often forget where we learned. I never understood how he and his wife Mamie stood us.

Murray T. Harris

January 2005

I was very much impressed with the amount of information which you collected for the article on the Bass River CCC Camp in the January-June 2004 issue of the Gazette.

I was too young to have much awareness of the existence of the Camp when the CCC young men were there, except to know that my uncle, Walter Mathis, worked there during the day doing plumbing and came home to New Gretna at night. However, when the World War I veterans were in residence, we got to know some of them personally. Mr. Wille, who played the violin, and Mr. Morris, who had a beautiful bass voice, would come to our house occasionally for a musical evening. My mother, Minnie Mathis Shropshire, would play the piano and, more importantly from our point of view, make a lemon meringue or chocolate cream pie.

Later, when sugar became scarce, I went with a group up to the Camp to register the men for sugar rationing. We were invited to stay for lunch — we also had baked beans and hot dogs.

Jean Shropshire Harris

HAPPY 100th YEAR CELEBRATION !



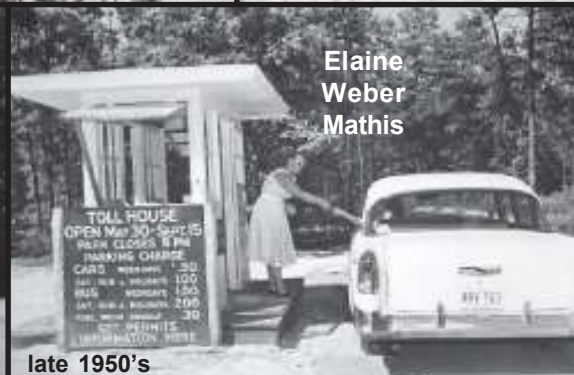
Horace
Somes



c 1938



New Gretna
girls



Elaine
Weber
Mathis

late 1950's

SOME BASS RIVER STATE FOREST SUPERINTENDENTS



Samuel Budd Allen (1861-1946) from New Gretna was the first caretaker and warden at Bass River State Forest. (Photo courtesy of Jean Allen Lainhart, Samuel's granddaughter.)



Jim MacDonald (1906-1974) was Superintendent for many years and is fondly remembered by many people in the area today. (Photo courtesy of the Bass River State Forest archives.)



Cynthia L. Coritz is the current Superintendent, carrying on the tradition of maintaining Forest services and encouraging community involvement in Forest activities.

The Bass River CCC Camp

(Continued from page 6)



Owen and Helen Sears Carty in 1941. Owen came to the Bass River CCC camp from Pleasantville, N.J. and settled in the New Gretna area with his local bride. He became an asset to the community as did other CCC men who chose to stay in the area with their local brides. (Photo courtesy of Helen Sears Carty.)

Allen. They moved to Lakewood, N.J., Raymond's home town. **Ed Greene married Helen Mathis** who lived with her parents, Daniel and Mary Patterson Mathis, on the east corner of Amasas Landing Road and Route 9 where the Becker family now lives.

Ambrose Pitts married Leila Mathis. They had two daughters, Jean and Barbara, and made their home in Arkansas and, later, Memphis, Tenn. Leila frequently visited her parents, Clarence and Helen Gerew Mathis, family, and friends. We were always happy to see her when she came back home. **Sheldon Campbell married Charlotte Cramer**, daughter of Gid and Mabel Jones Cramer who lived in the Squab Hill section of North Maple Avenue in the present residence of the Sellner family. **Jim MacDonald married Julia Archer.** They had one son, James, Jr., and made their home in Tuckerton for a while.

Horace Somes married Mary Cramer. Sadly, Mary was killed in an automobile accident soon after their marriage. **Horace later married Dorothea McAnney from Wading River.** They had two sons, Horace and Frank who still live in Wading River with their families. They continue the family tradition of operating the Wading River Christmas Tree Farm on Turtle Creek Road.

Some of the local men who joined the Civilian Conservation Corps were Bud Allen, Harry Allen and his sons Ben and Leon, Bob Adams, Elton Carr, Renard Wiseman, Tom Watson of pistol shooting fame, Gene Sears, Lou Hedeveary, and Ralph Loveland. Most of them lived at home and reported for work at the CCC camp each week day. Ben Allen says that the dollar a day that they earned helped the family through some pretty rough times.

Eventually, with the start of WW II, the economy improved, jobs were opening up, and the men were able to find work and support their families. The CCC camps were no longer needed and became a part of history. The Bass River CCC barracks were then used to house World War I Veterans who had no place to live. That lasted until the WW I vets dwindled down to a precious few, and then the camp closed for good. Today, all the buildings of the CCC camp west of East Greenbush Road have been torn down, and the site is just a memory of days gone by. Only a stone monument remains, just a stone's throw from the CCC camp barracks site, honoring the men of the CCC and their work in the area and reminding us of the camp's existence.

We have thousands of visitors every year going to Lake Absegami with its sandy beach surrounded by cabins, shelters, and campsites.

Many of the officers and workers stationed at the Bass River CCC camp were lucky enough to have won the hearts of several of the local girls. To name a few – **Owen Carty married Helen Sears**, the daughter of Eugene and Vera Allen Sears. Owen went in the army shortly after their marriage, and they lived in Pleasantville for three years before coming back to New Gretna. In 1955, they moved to the house built by Helen's uncle, Washy Allen, and had a daughter, Joyce. Helen still lives in the family house on Rt. 9 across the street from the New Gretna House.

Raymond Clayton married Marie Allen, daughter of Everett and Elsie Elbertson



The CCC memorial at the upper end of East Greenbush Road has a series of plaques and an adjacent photo display recognizing the achievements of the Bass River CCC camp. One of the bronze plaques on display is a memorial to CCC men Stanley Carr, Edward Sullivan, and John LaSalle who lost their lives, on 5/25/1936, fighting a forest fire in the area. (7/22/04 photo)

I believe credit for this valuable recreational facility is due, in part, to the men of the Civilian Conservation Corps who took the first steps in the beautification of a very rewarding project which is now the well maintained and well protected Bass River State Forest.

This story is reprinted from the January-June, 2004 (Issue #16) edition of the Bass River Gazette.

The Bass River CCC Camp an original poem by Almira Cramer Steele

The CCC Camps were a project
Created to help those who had lost
So much of their life-long savings
That the Great Depression had cost.

Bass River was one site selected
Because the potential was there
To provide all the space that was needed
For the men and the work they would share.

The barracks were built rather quickly
By some of our local men,
Overlooking the Fir Bridge section
Where the head of Bass River begins.

The camp men worked in the forest
Cutting brush, building bridges, making roads,
While disturbing many woodland creatures
Like snakes and turtles and toads.

Their efforts were the very beginning,
As they worked from day light till dark
Preparing a way in the making
For our beautiful Bass River State Park.

October, 2005

Gazette Subscriptions

A yearly subscription (2 issues) of the Gazette is available for anyone who sends 2 business size, 4" x 9 1/2", stamped, self addressed envelopes to Gazette Subscriptions c/o Bass River Township Community Library, P.O. Box 256, New Gretna, NJ 08224. There is no charge for the subscription; however, donations are appreciated. The subscription will start with the next issue unless otherwise specified and will expire after the 2 envelopes are used. It may then be renewed by sending 2 or more additional envelopes. Don't fret if your copy is a month or two late. We seem to always be busy on some history project and can't seem to get to the Gazette in a timely fashion.

ANOTHER THING I REMEMBER

by Almira Cramer Steele

The Bass River CCC Camp

After the great depression in 1929 when the banks closed their doors causing many people to lose their life savings was a very hard time for an awful lot of families. People were standing in bread lines in order to get something to eat, especially in the cities. Living around here, in the Bass River area, was a little bit different, however, as far as food was concerned. There was always plenty of seafood available, like fish, clams, oysters, crabs, eels, mussels, and scallops.

In the summer every family had a little vegetable garden which provided fresh vegetables all summer long and canned vegetables for the winter months as well. It was not uncommon to see a chicken pen in the back yards where eggs were gathered and chickens were waiting to supply the families with a good Sunday dinner. During hunting season, game was brought home by the hunters such as duck, pheasant, quail, rabbit and deer. So, really, we were well supplied with a variety of things to eat, but very little else.

When Franklin Roosevelt became President in the 1930's, one of the many programs he started to assist people during the Depression was the Civilian Conservation Corp, also known as the CCC. It was a work program for those who needed help and were willing to work for it. These camps were scattered throughout the United States, and Bass River was one of the locations chosen for the project. The Bass River camp was situated at the head of the Bass River in the Fir Bridge section of town, just off East Greenbush Road. There were also nearby camps in Port Republic and Green Bank.

Food, lodging, and clothing were provided for everyone in the program plus wages of \$1.00 a day. Lots of times there was more than one family member in the program and most of those wages were sent back home to help their families survive.

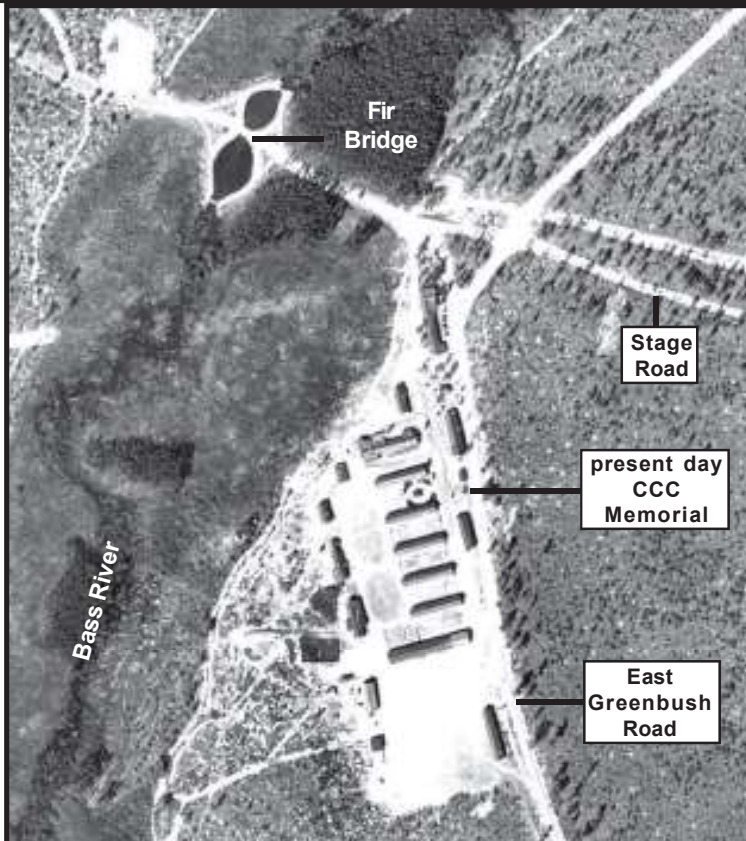
Many of Bass River's local citizens touched the lives of those in the CCC camp. Ben Broome and Russell Adams who owned and operated a sawmill in town prepared the lumber and built several of the buildings used by the CCC in the Bass River camp. Mrs. Rebecca Mathis, who lived not far from the camp, was often asked by the men to alter some of the donated clothing so that the clothes would fit a little better. She always accommodated them, and on payday, they showed their appreciation.



Miss Margaret who taught school at Bass River for 40 years helped many of the CCC men with their reading skills. (Photo courtesy of Naomi Maurer.)

Unfortunately, there were a few of the men in the CCC Camp that had very little education. Miss Margaret Adams who was my primary, first and second grade teacher volunteered her services a couple of evenings each week in order to teach those who needed help to learn to read and write. I am sure there were other local people who also shared their time and talent in different ways, helping those young men to feel at home away from home in whatever way they could.

The jobs of the CCC Camp employees were mostly developing and protecting the forest. They built and repaired roads, cut brush, planted trees, fought forest fires, and helped build a ball field and small addition at our local school. They did whatever needed to be done to improve the surrounding forest. Officers were appointed to oversee the work and the workers. I believe that this work program was the



A 1940 aerial photo of the Bass River CCC camp shows the location of the barracks and other buildings in relation to Fir Bridge and Stage & East Greenbush roads. (Photo courtesy of NJDEP, Bureau of Tidelands Management.)

beginning of what is now our beautiful Bass River State Forest as it exists today.

Even though the CCC camp men worked hard, they also had time to relax. Entertainment was provided for all those who wanted to take advantage of it. Pool tables and card tables were set up where the men could compete in the game of their choice. Movies were shown several times a week and, on special occasions, a band was scheduled for an evening of fun. Several of the locals joined in on these events and had a great time. The camp also published a camp newsletter called "Mosquito Bites" which is available in the New Jersey History section of our Bass River Community Library.

Once in a while there was a little excitement in the ranks to make things a little more interesting, I guess. Lights out in the barracks was at 10 PM. Tom Watson, a Bass River resident who worked and slept at the CCC Camp, was a pretty good shot with a revolver. He had worked very hard that day and had gone to bed just before 10 PM. Ten o'clock came and went and the lights were still on. He called three times for the lights to be turned out, but no one answered his call. Tom calmly took out his pistol and shot out every light bulb in the building. That took care of that! I hope everyone got a good night's sleep after all that commotion.



Tom Watson who worked for a time at the Bass River CCC camp sits with his granddaughter Marge. Tom was a crack shot with a pistol. (Photo courtesy of Bob & Marge Sutton.)

SAVING JERSEY'S FORESTS.

**State Buys Two Tracts of Land for
Timber Experiments.**

Special to The New York Times.

TRENTON, Oct. 5.—In the purchase yesterday from Dr. John Glfford of Princeton, former Forester at Cornell University, of 300 acres of woodland at May's Landing, and of a 600-acre tract at Tuckerton, Ocean County, the State Board of Forestry took the first step toward putting the new forestry preserve plan in operation. The Tuckerton tract is only a fraction of a large reservation, covered with considerable second growth timber, that is to be acquired there.

With these tracts as a basis, the purpose of the board is to demonstrate the best methods of refreshing cut-over and denuded lands; of showing how to prevent injury by forest fires, and the general administering and care of woodlands in a way to make them self-creating and self-sustaining.

The movement is regarded as of much importance in New Jersey, where forest fires and want of skill in care and cutting are fast wiping out the forests.