



RESOLUTION OF THE NEW JERSEY PINELANDS COMMISSION

NO. PC4-20-_____

TITLE: To Establish the Objectives of the Pinelands Commission Relative to Climate Change in the Pinelands Area and the Responsibilities of the Commission's Land Use, Climate Impacts and Sustainability Committee

Commissioner _____ moves and Commissioner _____
seconds the motion that:

WHEREAS, the Pinelands Protection Act of 1979 recognized the Pinelands Area as an area comprised of significant and unique natural, ecological, agricultural, scenic, cultural and recreational resources, among them pine-oak forests, cedar swamps and extensive surface and ground water resources of high quality that provide unique habitat for a wide diversity of rare plant and animal species; and

WHEREAS, to ensure protection of the Pinelands Area from the threat posed by development pressure, the Pinelands Protection Act directed the Pinelands Commission to adopt a comprehensive management plan designed to protect, preserve and enhance the significant values of the resources of the Pinelands Area; and

WHEREAS, since its adoption by the Commission in 1981, the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) has encouraged appropriate patterns of growth as a means of protecting the overall Pinelands environment from the individual and cumulative impacts of scattered and piecemeal development; and

WHEREAS, through its implementation of the CMP, the Pinelands Commission has successfully safeguarded the core of the Pinelands Area while channeling growth toward designated areas with the infrastructure needed to support it; and

WHEREAS, collaborative efforts among the Commission, state, local, county and nonprofit organizations have preserved more than 50 percent (479,000 acres) of the land in the Pinelands Area to date; and

WHEREAS, these measures have not only protected the Pinelands ecosystem but have significantly benefited air and water quality, while protecting agricultural lands and vast forests that serve to sequester carbon in the entire region; and

WHEREAS, wetlands comprise approximately 35 percent of the Pinelands, and they play a critical role in filtering sediments, pollutants and nutrients from water, while also capturing and storing carbon, providing a buffer against sea level rise, and reducing the impacts of flooding and droughts; and

WHEREAS, the Pinelands Commission acknowledges there is ample scientific evidence documenting that climate change poses a new and severe threat to the Pinelands environment; and

WHEREAS, the Pinelands Commission endeavors to serve as an example for others as to how homeowners, businesses and local governments in the Pinelands Area should operate in order to mitigate and adapt to the significant challenges posed by climate change; and

WHEREAS, the Pinelands Commission is committed to building on the success of the CMP and the Pinelands protection program by reforming the CMP so that climate change considerations may be incorporated in the Commission's future planning and permitting decisions; and

WHEREAS, to that end, the Chairman of the Commission established the Land Use, Climate Impacts and Sustainability (LUCIS) Committee in December 2018; and

WHEREAS, in order to ensure that the policies, practices, regulations and actions of the Pinelands Commission serve to mitigate, not exacerbate, the impacts of climate change, it is now appropriate to detail the responsibilities and objectives of the LUCIS Committee and the Commission as a whole; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that

1. The Pinelands Commission acknowledges the scientific consensus that human influence on the climate system is clear, recent anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases are the highest in history and recent climate changes have had widespread adverse impacts on human and natural systems.
2. The Pinelands Commission acknowledges the scientific consensus that the continued emission of greenhouse gases will cause further warming and long-lasting changes in all components of the climate system, increasing the likelihood of severe, pervasive and irreversible adverse impacts on people and ecosystems, including the Pinelands.
3. The Pinelands Commission further acknowledges that substantial and sustained reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are required, together with adaptation measures, to limit the risks of climate change.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that

4. The Executive Director, in consultation with the Commission’s Personnel & Budget Committee, shall examine all of the Commission’s facilities, day-to-day operations and management practices and shall present to the Commission for its consideration recommended changes that would mitigate greenhouse gas emissions to the greatest extent feasible.
5. The Pinelands Commission shall evaluate all proposed CMP amendments in terms of their potential impacts on greenhouse gas emissions and shall seek to include measures that will mitigate adverse impacts on the Pinelands environment.
6. The LUCIS Committee shall coordinate with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the Board of Public Utilities and other state agencies and departments on their efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change in New Jersey.
7. The LUCIS Committee shall examine all Commission policies, including but not limited to the Pinelands Conservation Fund, to determine those that may have an effect on climate change, those that serve to mitigate climate change and those that may be strengthened or otherwise amended to have such a mitigating effect, and shall recommend such changes to the Commission for its consideration.
8. The LUCIS Committee shall identify existing CMP standards that may be strengthened and new CMP standards that may be adopted to mitigate the effects of climate change on the Pinelands environment and shall recommend such standards to the Commission’s CMP Policy & Implementation Committee for consideration as proposed amendments to the CMP. Such amendments may include the incorporation of language into the CMP that emphasizes the importance of mitigating the effects of climate change on Pinelands resources, in keeping with the goals set forth in the Pinelands Protection Act.

Record of Commission Votes

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

*A = Abstained / R = Recused

Adopted at a meeting of the Pinelands Commission

Date: _____

Nancy Wittenberg
Executive Director

Richard Prickett
Chairman