

CMP POLICY & IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE MEETING

This meeting was conducted both remotely and in-person
The public could view/comment through Pinelands Commission YouTube link:

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Richard J. Sullivan Center
15C Springfield Rd
New Lisbon, New Jersey 08064
July 31, 2026 – 9:30 a.m.

MINUTES

Members in Attendance: Chair Laura E. Matos, Mark S. Lohbauer, Jessica Rittler Sanchez

Members in Attendance (Zoom): Alan W. Avery, Deborah Buzby-Cope

Members Absent: Jerome H. Irick, Theresa Lettman, Gaetano Matro, Douglas Wallner

Staff Present: Gina Berg, John Bunnell, April Field, Lori Friddell, Susan R. Grogan, Brad Lanute, Paul Leakan, Stacey P. Roth

Also in attendance: Azeem Chaudry with the Governor's Authorities Unit (Zoom)

1. Call to Order

Chair Matos called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

2. Adoption of minutes from the June 26, 2026 CMP Policy & Implementation Committee Meeting

Commissioner Buzby-Cope moved the adoption of the June 26, 2026 meeting minutes. Commissioner Lohbauer seconded the motion. All Ayes. The motion passed.

3. Presentation by the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority on a proposed Memorandum of Agreement with the Commission

Attachment A to these minutes and posted on the Commission's website. Please click [here](#).

Executive Director (ED) Susan R. Grogan said the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority (CMCMUA) proposed project involving a leachate transmission line in a Pinelands Forest Area and Rural Development Area has been in discussion for many years with the understanding that a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Commission would be required. She said today's presentation offers a project summary, and the Committee will not be voting to approve or deny an agreement, but on whether to recommend the proposed MOA to the full Commission for discussion.

Joseph Rizzuto, Executive Director of the CMCMUA, presented an overview of the proposed Shared Conveyance System Project. He identified the Borough of Woodbine and the New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJ DHS), which owns and operates the Woodbine

Developmental Center (WDC), as additional stakeholders. Mr. Rizzuto said that as the lead agency, the CMCMUA anticipates entering into an MOA with the Pinelands Commission to undertake development. Mr. Rizzuto said the sewer force main project will serve the 457-acre landfill site located between Upper Township and the Borough of Woodbine. The landfill site is within a Pinelands Town and a Pinelands Forest Area. He noted that the Borough of Woodbine is almost entirely within a Pinelands Town management area.

Mr. Rizzuto reviewed the objectives and goals of all three stakeholders. He said the CMCMUA seeks to economically, environmentally and civically automate the leachate hauling process, the Borough of Woodbine intends to promote municipal growth and develop a centralized wastewater collection system to eliminate use of cesspools and septic, and the NJDHS desires to connect into the proposed Woodbine centralized wastewater collection system and eliminate its current treatment facility.

Mr. Rizzuto reviewed the project history. He said the CMCMUA received a USDA grant to evaluate and seek beneficial alternatives for their leachate management. Mr. Rizzuto said that in 2014, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was agreed upon between the CMCMUA, Borough of Woodbine and Pinelands Commission. The purpose of the MOU was to consider a feasibility study of the alternatives for leachate transport and treatment and to eliminate existing and future septic systems in Woodbine Borough's Pinelands Town Management Area and to consider future wastewater treatment needs. He said Pinelands Commission staff reviewed the study and provided comments. He said both the CMCMUA and Pinelands Commission contributed funding to meet the grant's local match requirement. He noted the feasibility study was completed in November of 2014.

Mr. Rizzuto reviewed the base conditions of Woodbine Borough, the NJDHS school, and the CMCMUA. He discussed the CMCMUA's management of the daily hauling averages from the landfill property to their Seven-Mile Beach/Middle Wastewater Treatment Facility. He noted the environmental impact on energy consumption, CO2 emissions and in the difficulty of hiring CDL Class A drivers. He presented the current truck hauling route maps that use both county and state roads through the Pinelands Area to transport leachate. He said the Borough of Woodbine currently has no centralized wastewater system and faces failing cesspools and septic systems, often on less than a quarter acre lot. He said that the wastewater treatment plant at the Woodbine airport has never been used. He said the NJDHS Woodbine Developmental Center produces 70,000 gallons of discharge per day through its independent groundwater treatment facility.

He said the feasibility study looked at cost effectiveness and environmental impact over thirty years and identified six alternatives. Mr. Rizzuto presented the proposed alternatives. He said alternatives no. 1 and no. 2 were rejected by stakeholders because they did not meet their objectives. He said alternatives nos. 4 to 6 were rejected since they proposed continued use of the existing Woodbine treatment facility. He discussed how reconfiguring the existing Woodbine water treatment facility was not economically or environmentally beneficial. He said alternative no. 3 provides for conveyance of leachate from the landfill site and wastewater from the Borough of Woodbine, including the WDC, to the CMCMUA's existing Seven-Mile Beach facility via a newly constructed 6-inch leachate force main and a 10-inch common force main. He said this alternative was found to be most advantageous for all stakeholders.

Mr. Rizzuto shared the technical scope of the three-part shared conveyance system to include a new leachate pump station building at the landfill site and placement of high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe for the force main and shared conveyance system. All construction would be located within the Pinelands. Mr. Rizzuto said the intended alignment falls within existing paved roadways to minimize disturbances. Mr. Rizzuto said alternative routes were considered. The first route, extending along County Road 550 to the Garden State Parkway, was quickly rejected by the NJ Turnpike Authority for not meeting easement policy restrictions. A second option, extending along County Road 550 to US Route 9, was also considered but rejected because it increased the length of the proposed system and would be difficult to excavate due to the concrete roadbed below the roadway.

Steve Morey, Senior Project Manager at Mott MacDonald, gave an overview of the preliminary environmental assessment along the shared conveyance system route. The shared conveyance system is the term describing the proposed 10-inch force main that would transmit wastewater from Woodbine Borough, the NJDHS school, and the CMCMUA landfill. Mr. Morey discussed design measures intended to reduce conflict with CMP standards. He said a significant length of the force main would run through wooded wetland areas. He said the design decision was made to align within existing paved roadways to reduce impacts to wetlands and to threatened and endangered species habitat. Mr. Morey addressed concerns about potential development and secondary impacts resulting from the sewer extension. He said additional sewer extensions and hook ups would not be permitted under a Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA) sewer line conservation restriction. He said no feasible alternative exists, the pavement alignment is within existing paved roadway, strict covenants exist to prohibit future sewer connections and the future wastewater management plan amendments would prohibit any connection to the shared conveyance system outside of the designed Pinelands Town.

Mr. Rizzuto summarized the environmental benefits and regulatory compliance measures of the proposed project, including greenhouse gas reduction, groundwater quality improvement with cesspool and septic removal and wetland protection through design alignment. He added that the project complies with the CMP standard prohibiting export of water more than ten miles outside the Pinelands Area. He provided project financial and funding commitments. He acknowledged the engineering and Pinelands management complexities of the project stating the CMCMUA believes in the long term economic, environmental and civic benefits of the project.

Chair Matos thanked the CMCMUA for their presentation and opened the floor to questions from the Committee.

Commissioner Lohbauer inquired why the NJ Turnpike Authority denied the secondary route along the Garden State Parkway. Mr. Rizzuto said they would not grant an easement and quickly rejected the proposal without explanation. Commission Lohbauer remarked that their refusal to consider an easement forces the Pinelands Commission to make concessions to consider the route through the Forest Area (FA). Mr. Rizzuto said the location of the landfill is remote. ED Grogan added that the Cape May Landfill is unique in being the only operating landfill in the Pinelands Area and that the CMP was previously amended to allow its continuing operation. She said that the length of the force main extending from the landfill to the Shared Conveyance

would be in the Forest Area regardless of whether the Garden State Parkway alignment was allowed.

Commissioner Lohbauer questioned if the shared conveyance system is designed for leachate alone. Mr. Rizzuto explained that the northerly segment extending from the landfill to the 10-inch shared conveyance line is leachate only. The remainder would pick up the Woodbine and NJDHS shared conveyance system wastewater flow. Mr. Lohbauer confirmed that it is this additional domestic wastewater flow section that would lead to the ability to eliminate cesspools in the Borough.

ED Grogan inquired whether the Borough of Woodbine has grant funding in place for the construction of their collection system. Mr. Rizzuto said the Borough has secured a USDA grant for that portion of the project. ED Grogan inquired and Mr. Rizzuto confirmed that construction of the Woodbine collection system would be a separate project requiring Commission approval and not a subject of this MOA.

Commissioner Rittler Sanchez inquired if the Woodbine funding is for planning purposes only. She questioned whether funding was in place to address mandatory sewer connections if the collection system is constructed. ED Grogan said the Commission will need to gather more information when the Borough applies for construction of the centralized collection system.

Commissioner Rittler Sanchez inquired what the volume of sewer flow will be from the Borough at full build-out. Mr. Rizzuto said the entire Borough is on cesspool or septic. ED Grogan said the current Borough zoning anticipates future sewer service.

Commissioner Rittler Sanchez asked if the treatment facility at the NJDHS school discharges to groundwater only. She expressed concerns about the impact on groundwater supply from the loss of recharge from septic systems in Woodbine and from the abandonment of the treatment plant at the school. Mr. Rizzuto said they have not researched loss of groundwater recharge at this point in their study. ED Grogan said it is a concern to be further investigated and addressed in the MOA. Ms. Grogan said issues do exist that will require offsetting measures.

Commissioner Rittler Sanchez inquired about the possible toxic chemical character of the leachate and what contaminants it carries beyond total dissolved solids. Mr. Rizzuto said the landfill does not accept hazardous materials. He said that the biological oxygen demand is five times stronger and the ammonia is 10 times stronger than domestic wastewater.

Commissioner Lohbauer questioned how the pipe installation would be completed and if horizontal direction drilling (HDD) is planned. Mark Montesano, Senior Project Engineer at Mott MacDonald, said trenching was planned along the paved shoulder of the roadway and there will be no HDD.

Commissioner Lohbauer asked if the alternatives research considered the use of autonomous electric vehicles, meaning tanker trucks to haul the leachate from the landfill. Mr. Rizzuto said

electric vehicles were researched but not autonomous vehicles. They found it increases the weight of the truck and decreases transport volume, therefore reducing overall efficiency.

Commissioner Avery inquired if Woodbine Borough has an independent water department for potable water delivery and if so, what was its water source and use volume. Mr. Rizzuto said the Borough has a water department, and he would defer to the Borough's representatives for answers to those questions at a later date.

Commissioner Avery asked if Woodbine Borough is an Environmental Justice Community. Mr. Rizzuto confirmed it is.

Commissioner Avery inquired on the average depth for the forcemain trench and if it would be boxed. Mark Montesano, Senior Project Manager with Mott MacDonald, anticipated a four-to-five-foot depth with no trench box.

Commissioner Avery inquired if the Woodbine Developmental Center was meeting all permit standards to operate its own treatment facility and what level of treatment it provides. Mr. Rizzuto said the Center's treatment facility discharges to retention ponds and has groundwater monitoring wells. Mr. Rizzuto said that he has no information on permit compliance.

Commissioner Avery inquired on the project time frame. Mr. Montesano anticipated six months to completion of the pump station and overall project completion in two years. Commissioner Avery asked where wastewater flow to the Seven-Mile Beach facility was discharged and if it provides secondary treatment. Mr. Montesano said it does provide secondary treatment and discharges to the Atlantic Ocean.

Commissioner Rittler Sanchez inquired about the expected life of the landfill. Mr. Rizzuto said with efficiency measures in place, the landfill is expected to have 100-year life, but that leachate treatment is required for an additional 30 years after the landfill is closed. Commissioner Rittler Sanchez further inquired on the average depth to groundwater along the project route and if more than one pump station was needed. Mr. Rizzuto did not have an estimate for average depth to groundwater for the length of the force main. He said there will be a pump station at the landfill, continuing operation of the 39th Street pump station in Avalon and the Woodbine Borough's pump station.

Chair Matos thanked the CMCMUA representatives for their presentation and closed comments.

Commissioner Lohbauer motioned to take the proposed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to the full Commission for discussion and a determination as to whether to authorize staff to begin gathering information and drafting the MOA. Commissioner Avery seconded the motion. All Ayes. The motion passed.

4. Policy & Implementation Committee Fiscal Year 2026 Accomplishments and Fiscal Year 2027 Initiatives

Attachment B to these minutes and posted on the Commission's website. Please click [here](#) for the accomplishments and [here](#) for the initiatives.

Executive Director Grogan (ED) presented Fiscal Year 2026 accomplishments through the lens of the Policy and Implementation Committee. She highlighted ongoing implementation of amendments to the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP). She reviewed the Kirkwood-Cohansey rules, including coordination with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and the recent successful litigation decision in favor of the Commission. She said the Black Run watershed rule package became effective in January and is in full implementation mode. She mentioned other CMP amendments planned and in various stages of draft, including the ROW Transmission Line Pilot Program, accessible trails and wetlands protection and the gap approval process. She said some future amendment items are not yet drafted but appear on the work plan for 2027, including standardizing application fee payments, escrow payments and procedures and legal advertising requirements.

She gave an update on the status of two MOAs for which the Commission had authorized staff to begin gathering information and drafting the MOA. She said that the Evesham Accessible Trail MOA is awaiting threatened and endangered (T&E) species survey results from the Township. She said the Township has initiated some preliminary work on trail maintenance and closure. She then discussed the South Jersey Transportation Authority Airport MOA for the northwest quadrant redevelopment project. She said quarterly meetings are being held, and T&E survey work has begun, however SJTA is not ready to come to the Committee with their full proposal.

ED Grogan said a presentation on the need for updates to old MOAs in place with NJDEP with respect to potential impacts from the Resilient Environmental and Landscapes (REAL) rules was completed at the May P&I Committee meeting.

Regarding the National Park Service Economic Monitoring projects, ED Grogan reported that the Local Conformance Zoning System has been launched to staff and the public facing version is in early development. She said the new Pinelands Application Information System (PAIS) is engaging staff in several offices. The new PAIS will eventually replace the current PCIS system with long term benefits to all involved in the application process.

ED Grogan said all of the available permanent land acquisition monies from the Pinelands Conservation Funds (PCF) were awarded to the New Jersey Conservation Foundation to acquire and preserve 835 acres of land in the Black Run headwaters. She said the Permanent Land Protection summit was not held since there were no critical issues for discussion. ED Grogan reported the completion of the PCF stewardship monitoring report, and the Permanent Land Protection annual report to the Commission.

With municipal conformance work, she said staff has been busy reviewing many updated affordable housing plans and noted the dedication of additional staff time for Jackson Township's plans and ordinances.

ED Grogan said that staff evaluated the progress on infrastructure projects awarded funding in 2019 from the Pinelands Infrastructure Trust Fund. As a result of the lack of progress on three out of five of those projects, staff is now focusing on a new funding round to reallocate remaining funds. She said the Septic Pilot Program report was completed, and the AT&T cellular

plan amendment was approved in March. She commented that the CMCMUA landfill five-year waste flow report was received.

She outlined Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) Bank-related activities. She said attention is being given to PDC supply and demand estimation methods. She added that legislative changes to the PDC Bank will require amendments to the CMP addressing those changes.

ED Grogan reviewed climate resiliency initiatives undertaken in 2026 and ongoing into next year's work plan. Those include drafting CMP solar facility siting standards, participating in the Board of Public Utilities Dual Use Solar Pilot Program and continuing to attend Interagency Climate Council meetings.

She noted the expansion of the CMP's T&E plant list and development of a data sharing agreement with NJDEP are difficult projects to implement due to lack of resources. She added that artificial turf discussions and NJDEP presentations were held in the past year.

ED Grogan said there were many unanticipated projects in 2026, including an influx of municipal ordinances regarding data centers, the impacts changes to the NJDEP stormwater best management practices manual, proposals for large trail networks from Burlington County and the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization, and a number of landfill closure applications to support possible solar projects.

ED Grogan presented the proposed Fiscal Year 2027 projects, highlighting ongoing work on CMP amendment implementation, as well as future amendment research and drafting. She said that future CMP amendments are being considered for Forest Area and Rural Development Area clustering standards, for requiring digital submission of application materials, and for stormwater standards dependent on the implementation of NJDEP REAL rules.

She listed ongoing and future MOA work and added the CMCMUA, Woodbine, DHS landfill leachate and sewer line to the list of proposed MOAs. Ms. Grogan said staff will continue to review NJDEP MOAs for updating or termination.

She discussed National Park Service Economic Monitoring Projects, including the installation of a Lenape artifact display at the Commission's visitors center. Gina Berg, Director of Land Use Programs, said the Commission received a donation of a mortar and pestle, which will be displayed on a pedestal in the front lobby, along with an informational exhibit panel.

ED Grogan shared additional projects for the 2027 work plan. She anticipates completion of a grant agreement for the Black Run property. She noted the approaching deadline for completion of the Garden State Parkway Interchange 44 land preservation obligation and ongoing coordination with the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) on woodland easements.

She provided a status on the Pinelands Infrastructure Trust Fund Master Plan amendment and upcoming project solicitation. Ms. Berg explained that a public hearing and comment period was held on the Infrastructure Master plan amendment for ranking criteria and funding structure. She

said one written comment was received, and no oral testimony occurred at the public hearing. The written comment was from Hamilton Township and the comments generally agreed with proposed changes. ED Grogan said a resolution will be on the August full Commission meeting agenda for approval of the PITF Master Plan amendment. A request for project proposals would be the next step after the ranking criteria and funding structure amendment is approved by the full Commission.

ED Grogan explained the rationale of the proposed suspension of the Local Review Officer Program. She summarized the regular work of the PDC Bank and maintaining PDC supply and demand as well as potential legislative changes.

ED Grogan presented three new Science Office projects, including two that are contingent on grant funding. She said one would evaluate the overall effectiveness of current T&E plant protection management and inform future decisions. Discussion followed on the Commission's recently submitted Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund and EPA grant proposals.

She concluded with a reminder of ongoing work on municipal conformance, stormwater model ordinances, and affordable housing plans. She noted coordination with the Office of Planning Advocacy (State Planning Commission), as they work with municipalities in the Pinelands National Reserve outside the Pinelands Area.

Chair Matos thanked Executive Director Grogan for the presentation and staff for their work, and she opened the floor for comments.

Commissioner Lohbauer said he was impressed and proud of the list of accomplishments. He proposed that the Commission staff should draft a model ordinance for Pinelands municipalities regarding data centers. ED Grogan said the Pinelands Alliance has prepared and distributed a model ordinance to towns. Commissioner Lohbauer also suggested a draft amendment to the CMP to allow the Commission to consider climate change impacts in reviewing development applications in the Pinelands.

5. Public Comment

Heidi Yeh from the Pinelands Alliance congratulated the Commission on its recent legal victory regarding Kirkwood-Cohansey rules and said the Pinelands Alliance stands with the Commission in its protection of the aquifer. She said the Pinelands Alliance Instagram account posted support and explanation of the importance of the legal victory. She congratulated staff on the progress of the Black Run and commended staff for their unanticipated work on data centers. She suggested the Commission's work plan include a presentation by sports field managers on use of artificial turf. Regarding the T&E plant list, Ms. Yeh suggested using the word update, rather than expand, as some species would be removed and others added, all with an emphasis on plant protections. She further recommended a no net loss policy for tree preservation within the Pinelands or a policy for better enforcement of clearing limitations. She thanked the Commission for their work on accessible trails and advocated attention to the road salt impacts. Ms. Yeh also supported Commissioner Lohbauer's suggestion for a CMP amendment to address climate change.

6. Adjournment

There being no other business, Commissioner Lohbauer moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Buzby-Cope seconded the motion. All Ayes. The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.

Certified as true and correct:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori A. Friddell". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Lori Friddell
Land Use Programs Technical Assistant

Date: August 10, 2026