

2024 Annual Report



March 14, 2025

2024 Annual Report

- Required by the Pinelands Protection Act and Executive Order.
- The 33-page report highlights the Commission's work during the 2024 calendar year.



2024 Annual Report

New Jersey Pinelands Commission



2024 Planning Activities

The Pinelands Commission began implementing new rules in 2024 that strengthen protections of the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer, a freshwater reservoir that underlies the Pinelands and contains an estimated 17 trillion gallons of water.



2024 Planning Activities

Climate Resilience

The Commission's Climate Committee met three times in 2024, focusing its discussion on the potential impact and applicability of other state agency rulemaking in the Pinelands Area.

The Committee reviewed and discussed the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities' dual use solar pilot program, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) 2024 Statewide Water Supply Plan and NJDEP's proposed Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) amendments.

The Committee also completed a comprehensive review of Pinelands management area boundaries to identify areas designated for growth that are vulnerable to climate change.

2024 Planning Activities

Accessible Trails

In 2024, the Commission executed memoranda of agreement (MOA) with Pemberton Township, Burlington County, and Stafford Township, Ocean County, to facilitate surfacing of existing trails on public lands, in the Pinelands Area.

The goal was to provide a stable surface for those with ambulatory challenges and recognize the grant funding that has been provided by other state departments for such projects. The trails are located in wetlands and/or required wetlands buffer areas; therefore, a deviation from the Commission's rules needed to be approved in order for the proposed surfacing (paving) to be permitted.



Forecastle Lake

2024 Planning Activities

In July 2024, the Commission issued its 2022 Long Term Economic Monitoring Report, which provides economic data and describes key trends in the areas of population, real estate, economic growth, and municipal finance.

The 2022 Report includes data from 2018-2022 applicable to the Pinelands Area and surrounding communities in South Jersey.

The report shows that Pinelands municipalities have recovered well from the COVID-19 pandemic, in terms of unemployment and wage rates, and are faring similarly to other parts of New Jersey in several economic indicators.

New Jersey Pinelands Commission

Long Term Economic Monitoring Program

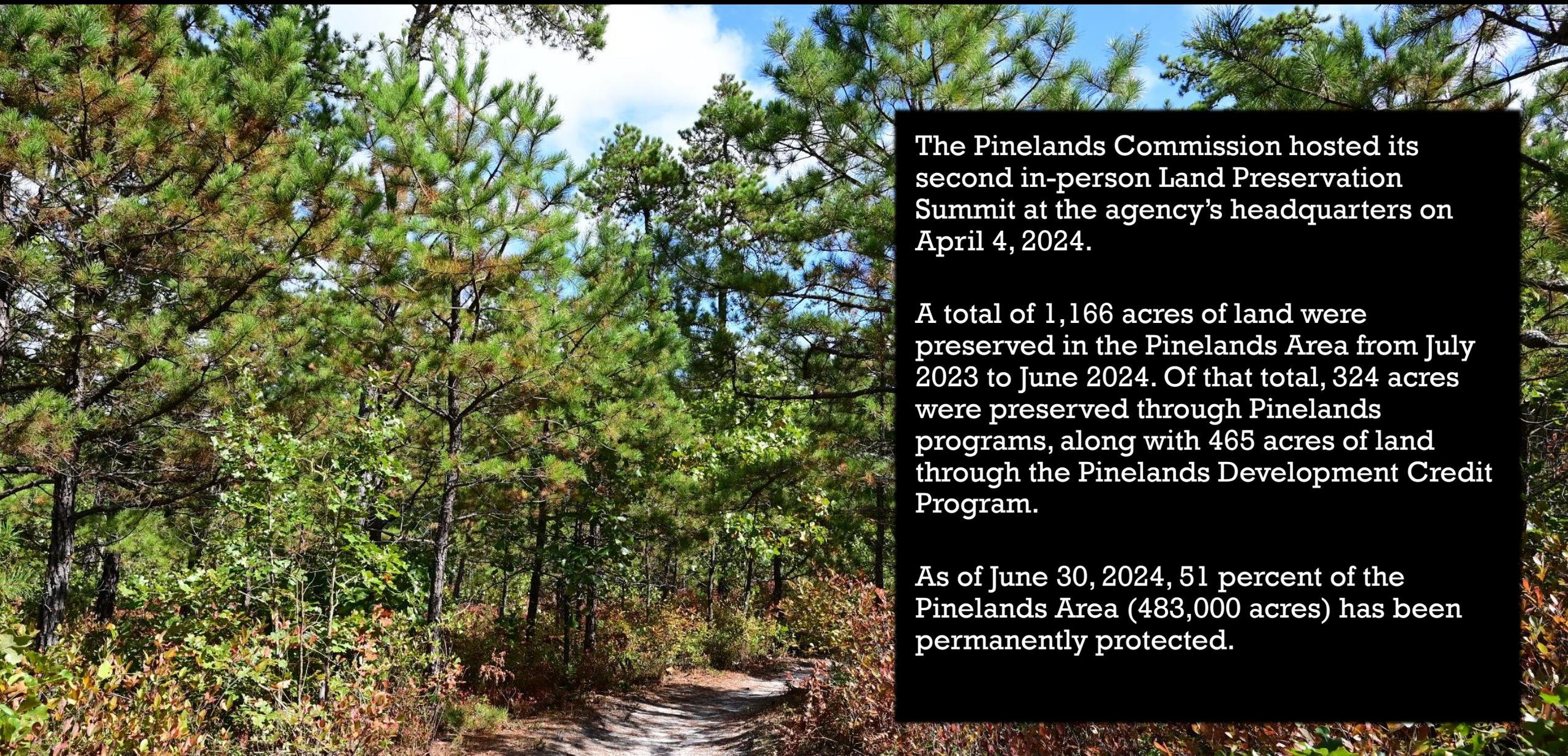


2018-2022 Report

Laura E. Matos, Chair

Susan R. Grogan, Executive Director

Permanent Land Protection



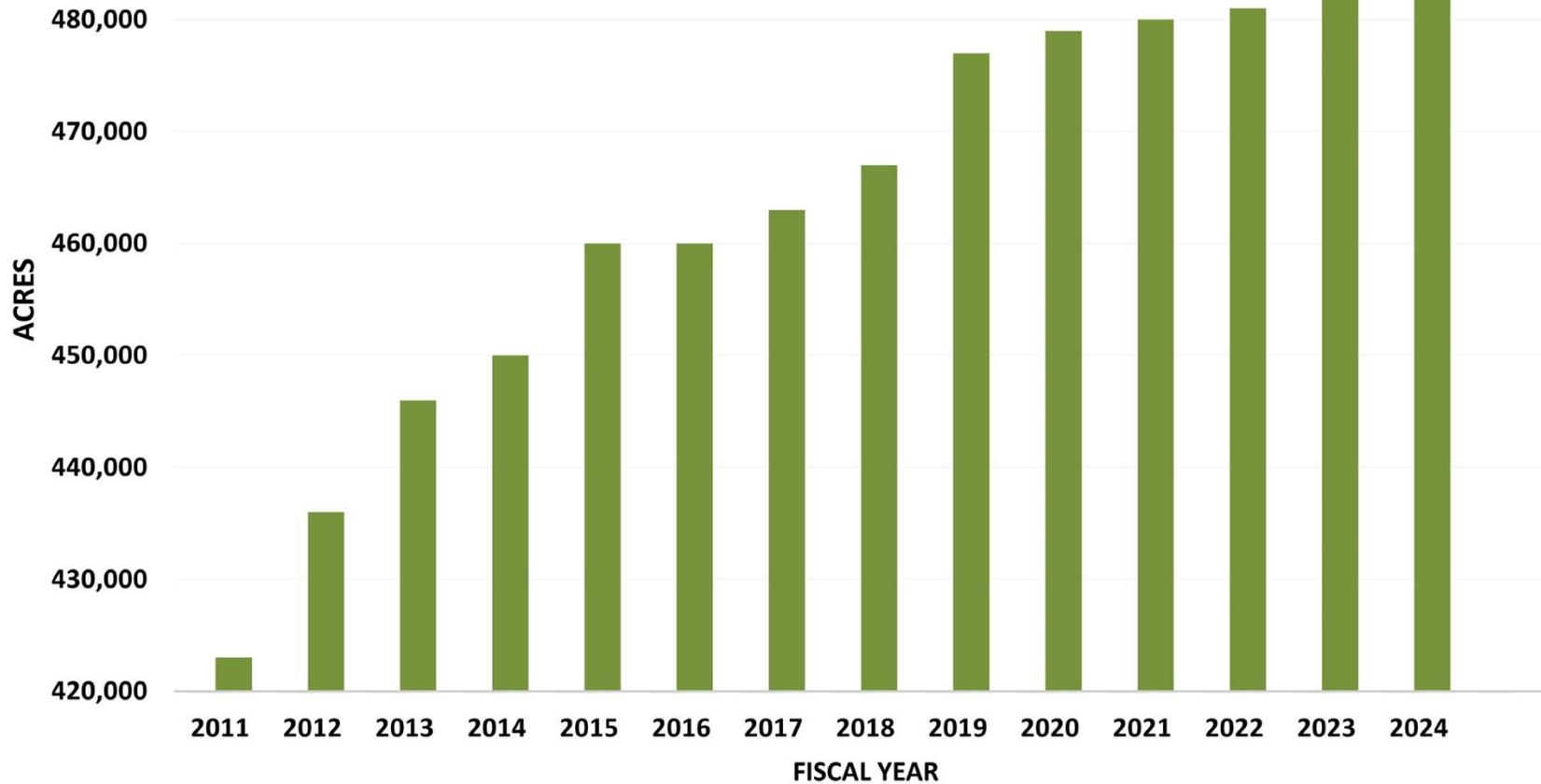
The Pinelands Commission hosted its second in-person Land Preservation Summit at the agency's headquarters on April 4, 2024.

A total of 1,166 acres of land were preserved in the Pinelands Area from July 2023 to June 2024. Of that total, 324 acres were preserved through Pinelands programs, along with 465 acres of land through the Pinelands Development Credit Program.

As of June 30, 2024, 51 percent of the Pinelands Area (483,000 acres) has been permanently protected.

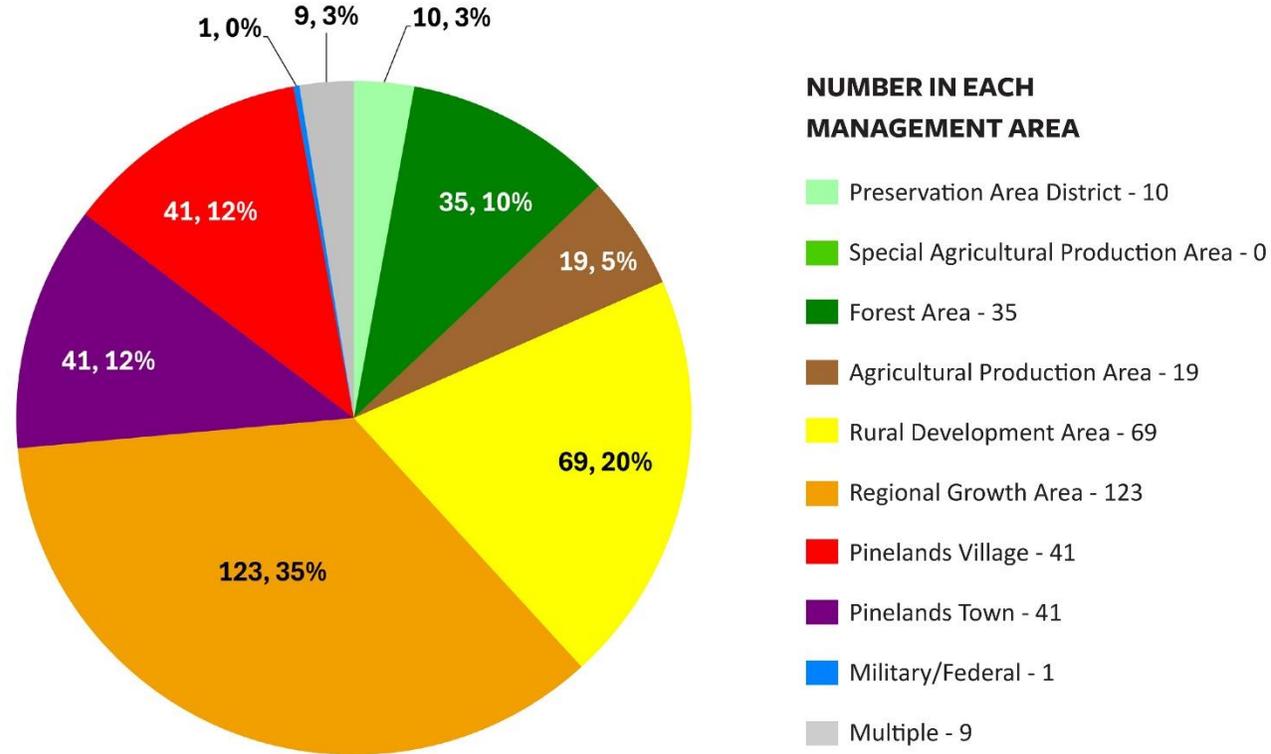
Permanent Land Protection

Acres Preserved in the Pinelands Area
(Rounded to the nearest thousand)



2024 Regulatory Activities

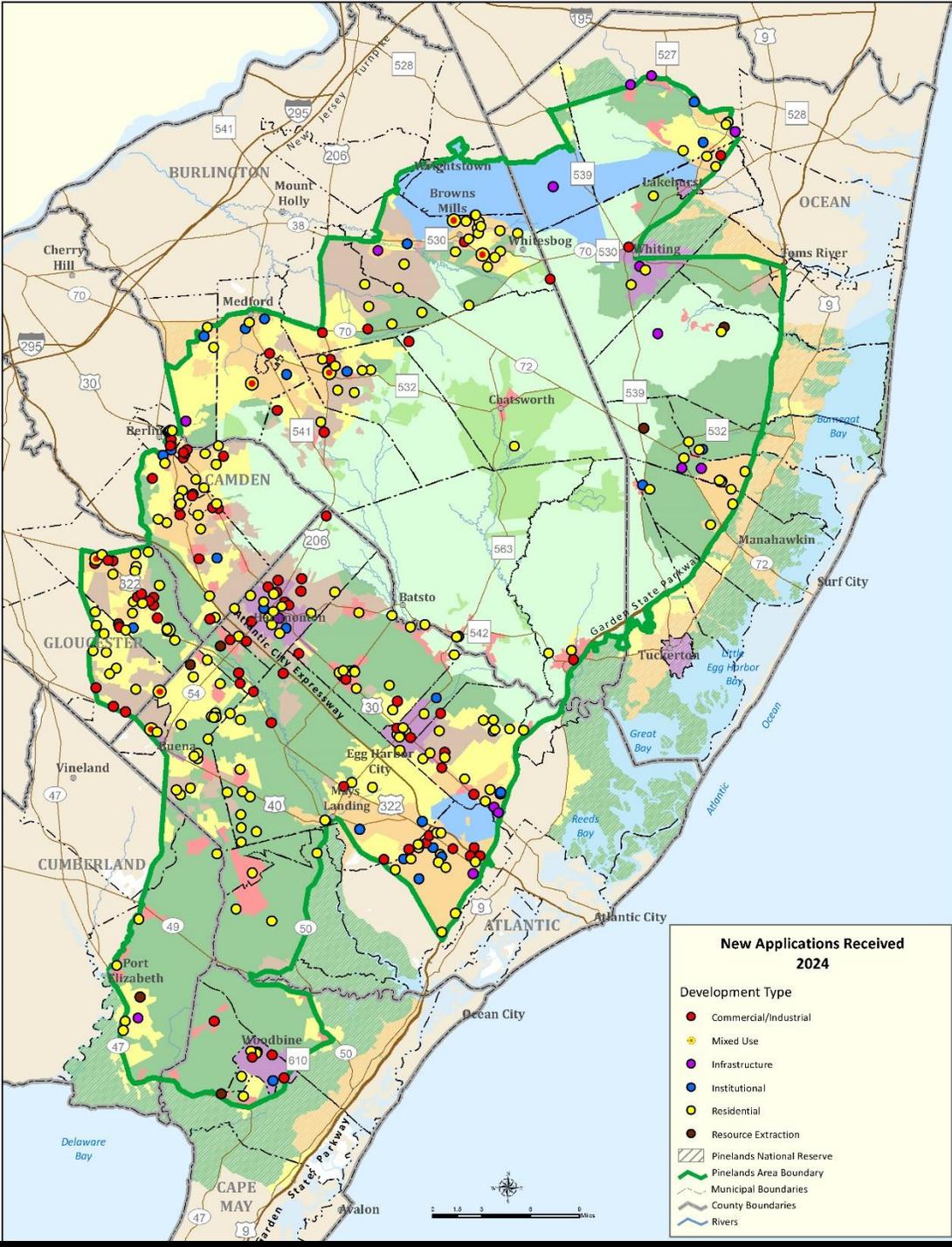
Development Applications Received in 2024 by Management Area



- The Commission received a total of 348 new applications for development in 2024, with the highest percentage of the applications (35%) proposing new development in Pinelands Regional Growth Areas (or RGAs).

2024 Regulatory Activities

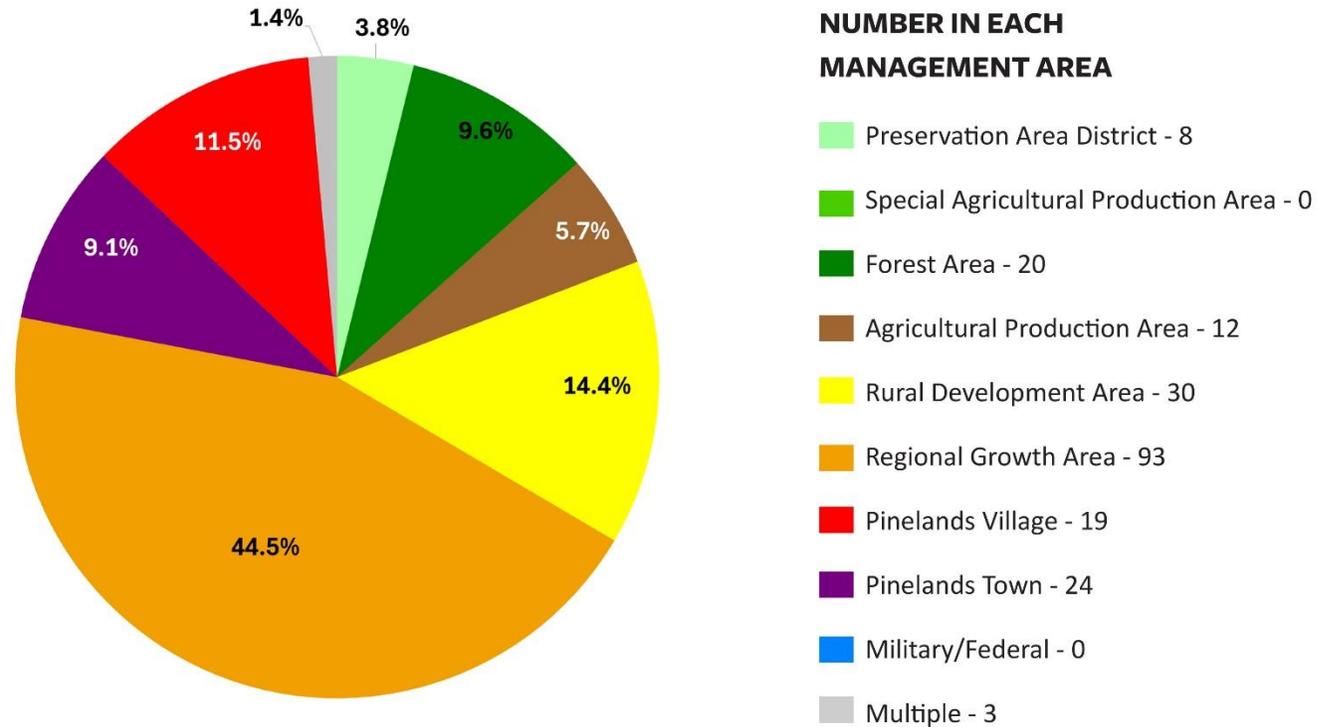
Development Applications Received in 2024 by Development Type	
Development Type	Total
Residential	205
Commercial/Industrial	79
Institutional	30
Infrastructure	18
Mixed Use	9
Resource Extraction	7
Total	348



New Applications Received in 2024

2024 Regulatory Activities

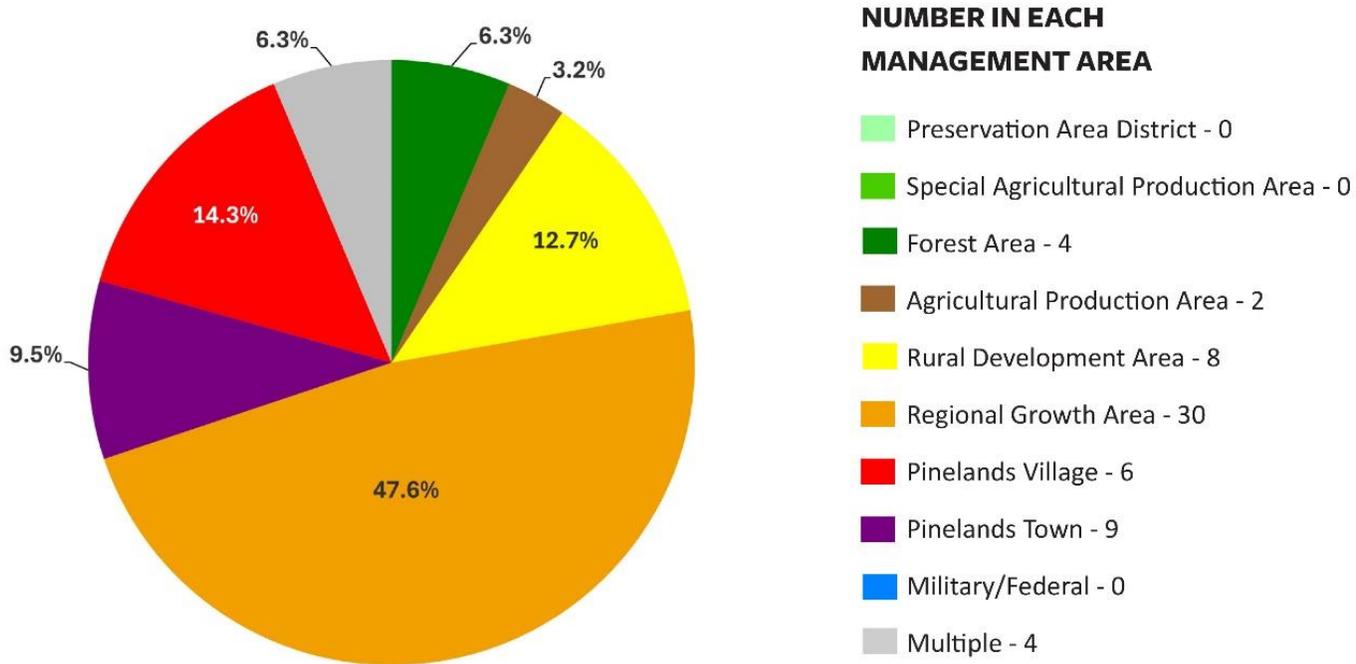
Completeness Documents Issued in 2024 by Management Area



- A total of 209 Completeness Documents were issued in 2024, including Certificates of Filing, Preliminary Zoning Permits and Notices of Filing. Most Completeness Documents issued in 2024 (93 or 44.5%) were for proposed development in RGAs, with another 21% in Pinelands Towns and Villages.

2024 Regulatory Activities

Final Municipal Site Plan/Subdivision Approvals Allowed to Take Effect in 2024 by Management Area



Final Municipal Site Plan/Subdivision Approvals Allowed to Take Effect in 2024 By Development Type

Development Type	Total
Commercial/Industrial	30
Residential	29
Mixed Use	1
Infrastructure	2
Institutional	1
Total	63

2024 Regulatory Activities

- The Commission approved a total of 16 applications for public development in 2024.
- No waivers were approved by the Commission in 2024, which marks the first year in the Commission's history that no such approvals were issued.
- The Commission's staff provided an in-depth, hybrid training for 70 municipal officials on May 15, 2024.



2024 Science & Research Activities



The Commission advanced numerous research projects, including work on:

Rare Snake Population Monitoring

Snake Fungal Disease

Adenovirus Monitoring

Joint Corn Snake Radio-tracking and Drift Fence Study

Eastern Kingsnake Study

Eastern Box Turtle Study

Long-term Environmental Monitoring (surveys of frogs and toads and water quality and water levels)

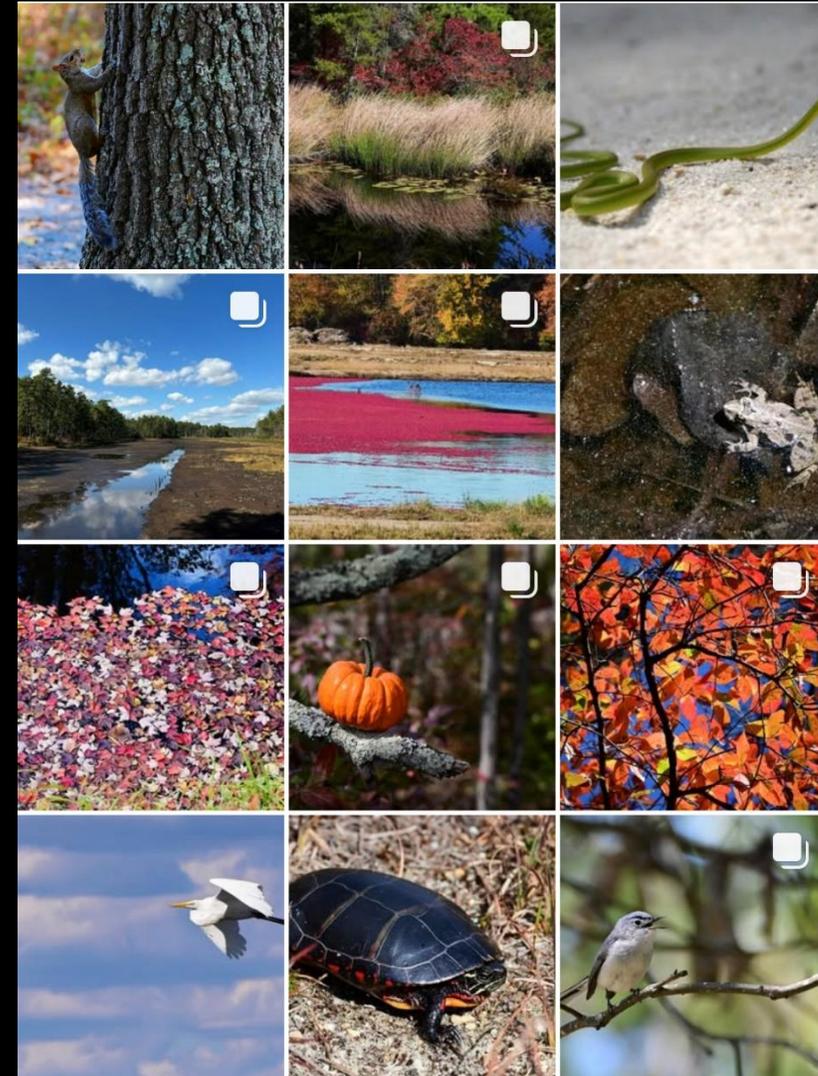


Public Information, Education & Outreach 2024 Activity

- Responded to nearly 1,000 public inquiries;
- Organized two Short Course events and the Pinelands-themed World Water Monitoring Challenge event, which educated a total of more than 700 people;
- Organized three Pinelands Speaker Series talks. The presentations educated approx. 100 people;

Public Information, Education & Outreach 2024 Activity

- Shared 55 videos and 2,307 photographs on the agency's Instagram site and shared 804 Tweets on X. SJ Magazine recognized our Instagram site in its 2024 Best of SJ Awards.
- Uploaded/archived 35 videos that on the Commission's YouTube Channel, garnering 123 new subscribers, 437 shares and 22,300 views for the year; and
- Produced and distributed 1,200 copies of the 2025 Pinelands National Wall Calendar.





2024 Finances

- During 2024, the State Auditor completed the Commission's Audit Report for Fiscal Year 2021 and began work on the Audit Report for Fiscal Year 2022.
- During Fiscal Year 2024, unaudited application fee revenues actually collected totaled \$1,085,112.12 (\$69,573.82 less) than Fiscal Year 2023.
- The Commission netted \$2,189.40 in sales of Pinelands merchandise (mugs, tote bags and note cards) in 2024, while processing a total of 68 transactions. All proceeds go toward a fund for native plants.

Questions?

