



## **Pemberton Lake Accessible Trail Project**

### **Pinelands Commission Policy and Implementation Committee Meeting**

**June 26<sup>th</sup> 2026**



# Project Overview and Goals



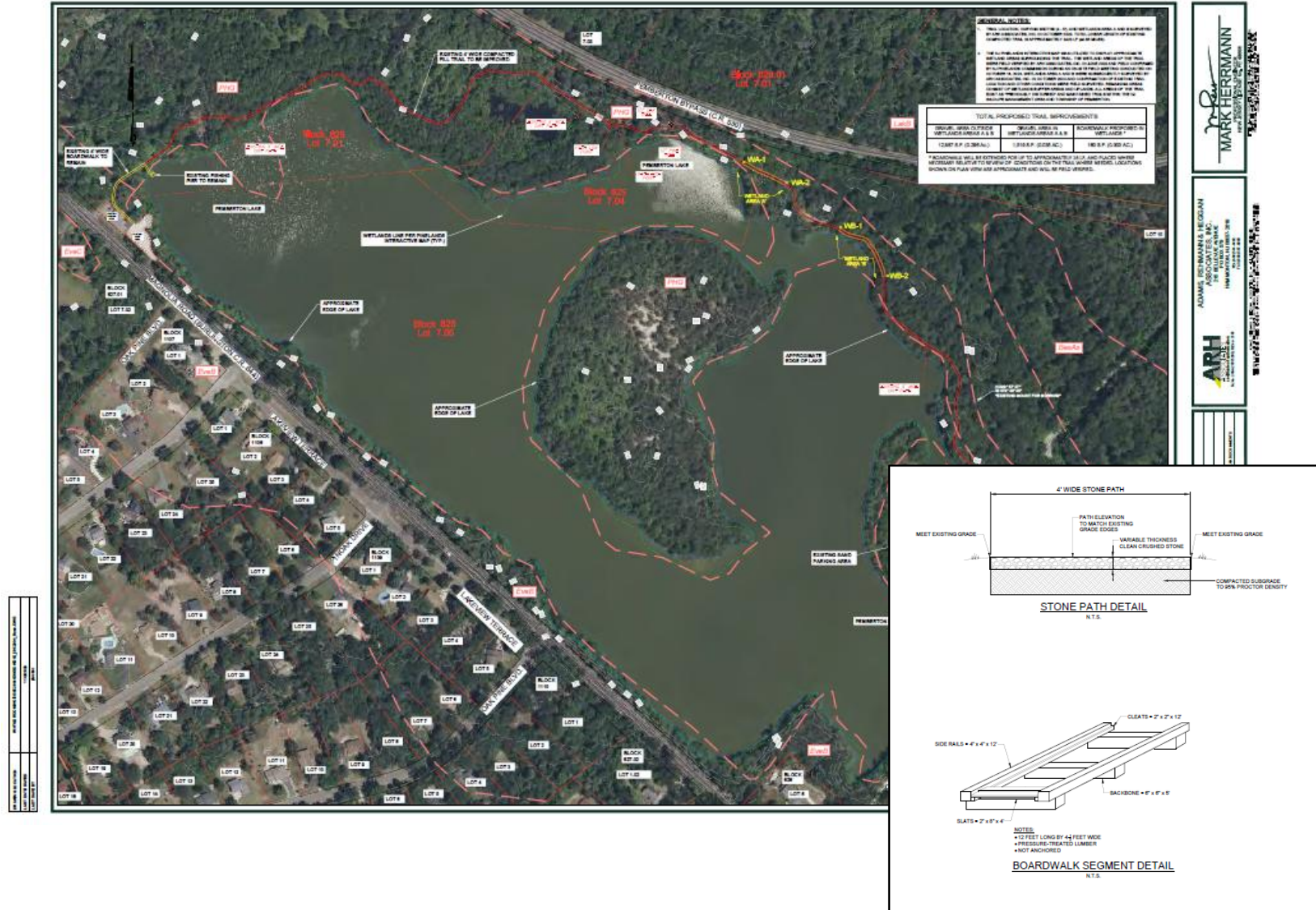
- Project Summary
- Partners
- Trail improvement work
- Handicap parking – Coleman's Bridge Rd. Entrance
- Offsets
  - Rain Garden
  - Magnolia Rd. Restoration
  - Coleman's Bridge Rd. Trailhead Restoration
  - Chicanes



# Project Summary



- Need for Accessible Trails – Access Nature
- Initial funding from IHC
- Additional funding from NFWF
- Partnerships
- MOA Process
  - Design standards
  - Wetlands
  - Offsets
  - Protections



# Partners/Roles



**Pinelands  
Alliance**



TOWNSHIP OF  
*Pemberton*  
Burlington County | New Jersey



Inclusive Healthy  
Communities  
NJ Division of Disability Services



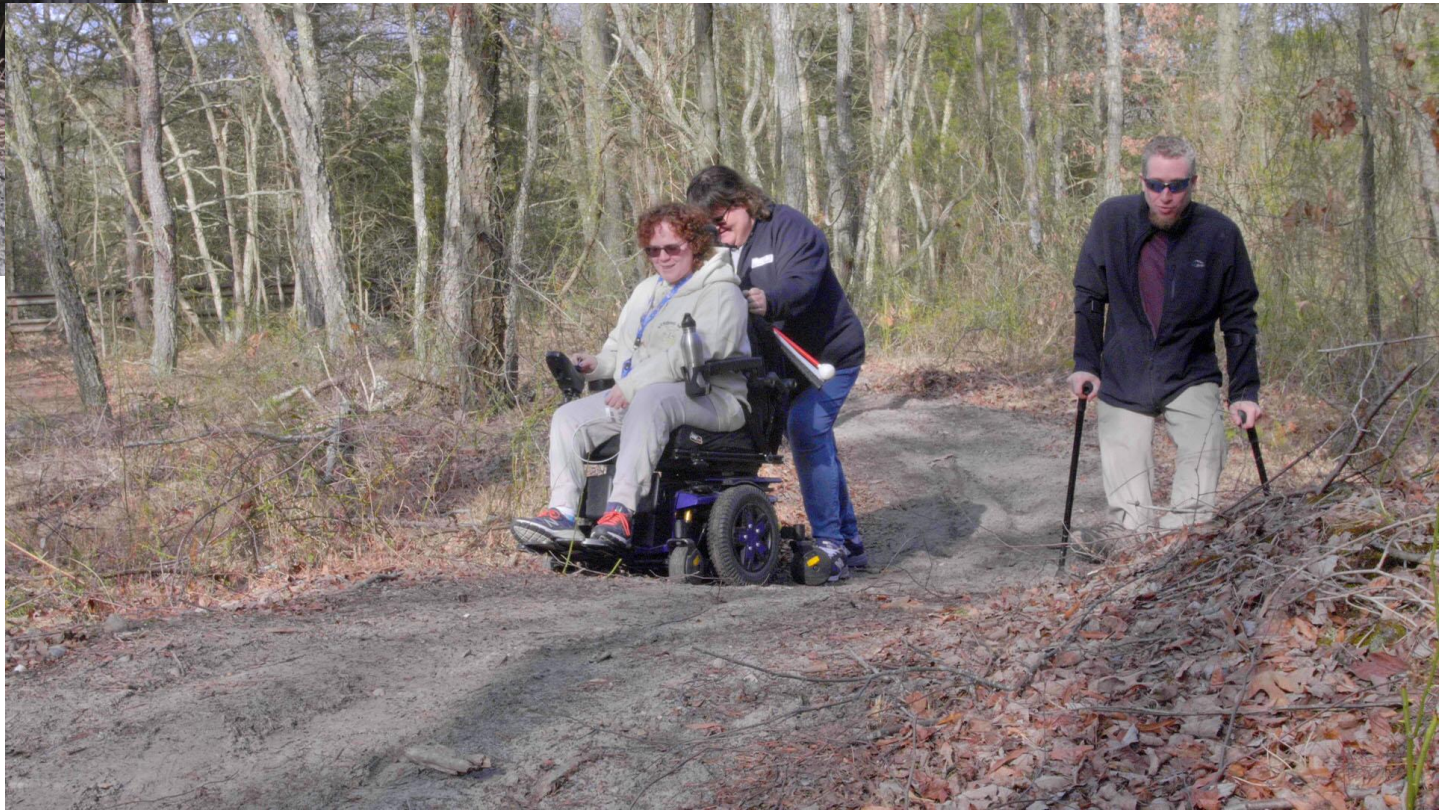
# Improving the Trail



Unstable surfaces  
Level, grade, reinforce

Steep gradients

Reduce running  
and cross slope



# Improving the Trail



- Even stable surface
- Minimal materials (clean stone aggregate and landscape fabric)
  - Low cost
  - Inert
  - Fill rather than cut

# Improving the Trail



- Boardwalks installed in areas along trail identified as wetlands or low-lying areas where washout or erosion may occur



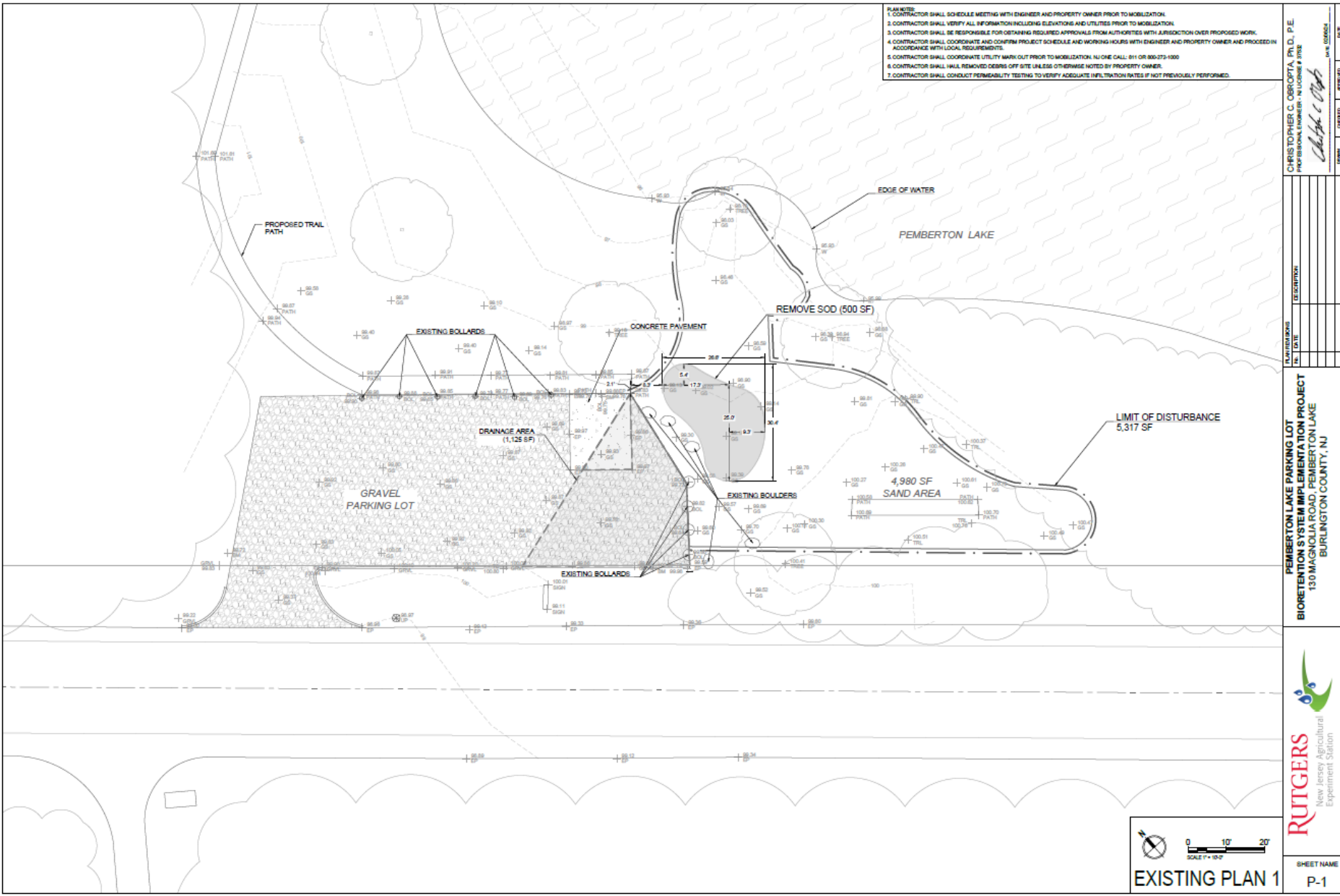
# Coleman's Bridge Rd. Parking



- Two handicap parking spaces added to parking area
- Remainder of parking area remains gravel
- Chicane installed at trailhead



# Magnolia Rd. Rain Garden

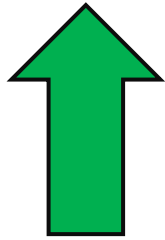
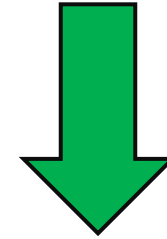


- Rain garden - 355 sqft
- Impervious drainage area managed – 1,125 sqft
- ~80 native plants (some substitutions due to availability and suitability)
- Adjustments to original fencing plan due to feasibility/type of fence

# Magnolia Rd. Rain Garden



Two days ago 6/24/2026



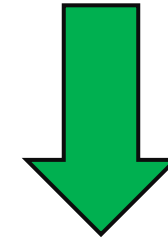
Immediately after planting 9/27/2025



# Magnolia Rd. Rain Garden



Two days ago 6/24/2026



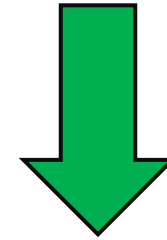
Immedi



# Magnolia Rd. Rain Garden



Two days ago 6/24/2026



Immedi



# Magnolia Road Restoration



- Township and contractors removed legacy concrete and asphalt
- Backfilled and graded surface
- Deer (and human) fence installed
- *Pinus rigida* saplings planted within fenced area



# Coleman's Bridge Trailhead Restoration



# Complete Restoration



## Fall 2026

- Plant ~96 *Pinus echinata* saplings within fenced areas
- Plant native grasses (as needed)
  - *Andropogon virginicus*, *Panicum virgatum*, *Schizachyrium scoparium*
- Plant larger trees outside of deer fence on Magnolia Rd. with temporary protective cages

## Long term maintenance

- Invasive removal
- Survey native colonization
- Plant replacement (as needed)
- Rain garden weeding/mulching



# Challenges – Moving Forward



- Process was based on the unsupported assumption that the trail improvement would cause "significant adverse impacts" to related wetlands and therefore violated the CMP.
  - Our evidence that the improvements would not cause significant adverse impacts – or any adverse impact at all – were simply ignored, and no case to the contrary was ever presented.
- The resulting process was extremely time-consuming and expensive, discouraging anyone from trying to do this kind of accessibility improvement in the Pinelands.
- We are seeing the same approach in Evesham for the same kind of trail improvement, and it may make that project untenable.



Black Run Preserve – near proposed accessible trail



*Nature:*  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
**FOR ALL**



Questions?