



# **NEW JERSEY PINELANDS COMMISSION**

## **MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT**



A 1,128-acre cranberry farm that was permanently preserved through the severance of Pinelands Development Credits in December 2021, as photographed in August

**AUGUST 2022**

# 1 EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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## 1.1 ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### 1.1A COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- **Personnel & Budget (P&B) Committee:** The Committee met on August 23, 2022 and reviewed the check register, electronic disbursements and application fees received for June 2022. Staff presented the draft budgets for Fiscal Year 2023, along with a description of the ongoing work and initiatives that will be pursued during the year. The Committee voted to recommend adoption of the Fiscal Year 2023 budgets by the full Commission.
- **Pinelands Climate Committee:** The Committee did not meet in August.
- **Policy & Implementation (P&I) Committee:** The Committee met on August 26, 2022 and received an update on the most recent round of Pinelands Conservation Fund land acquisition grants. Staff made a presentation on the Commission's Secondary Impacts Agreement with Atlantic County related to Garden State Parkway Interchange 44, after which the Committee voted to recommend that the Commission approve the County's request for additional time to complete its remaining land preservation obligation. The Committee then continued its discussion of forestry policy proposals to submit to the NJ Forest Stewardship Task Force for state-owned lands in the Pinelands Area. Finally, staff made a presentation on Pemberton Township's Regional Growth Area and Lakehurst Road Redevelopment Plan, focusing on residential zoning capacity and the accommodation of Pinelands Development Credit opportunities.

### 1.1B RULEMAKING

- **Stormwater Management:** Staff members continue to work on a draft model stormwater ordinance to be distributed to Pinelands municipalities for adoption. Completion of the ordinance has been delayed pending the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) adoption of emergency rules that may need to be incorporated in the Pinelands model stormwater ordinance.
- **Water Management (Kirkwood-Cohansey):** The rule proposal was filed with the New Jersey Office of Administrative Law on August 2, 2022 for publication in the New Jersey Register on September 6, 2022.
- **Electric Transmission Right of Way (ROW) Maintenance Pilot Program:** Staff continues to work on new rules to permanently implement the requirements of the ROW Maintenance Pilot Program. In addition to continuing to require that spans contained within the 2009 Vegetation Management Plan follow the span specific vegetation management prescription contained within that Plan, the amendments will provide vegetation management prescriptions for ROW spans located in the Pinelands Area, but not included in the 2009 Plan.

### **1.1C OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT**

- A total of 8 Open Public Records Act (OPRA) requests were received in August. Six were provided responsive material, one was advised that there was no responsive material, and one was advised to schedule a file review.

### **1.1D PINELANDS MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**

- The Pinelands Municipal Council did not meet in August.

### **1.1E OTHER**

- On August 10, 2022, Burlington County named Douglas Wallner from Evesham Township, NJ, as its new appointee to the Commission. Mr. Wallner will be sworn in at the Commission's September 2022 meeting.

## **1.2 LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

### **1.2A LEGISLATION**

- The legislature remains on summer recess.

### **1.2B STATE RULEMAKING**

- No updates in August.

### **1.2C INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS**

- **Atlantic County Secondary Impacts Agreement for Interchange 44:** By letter dated August 15, 2022, the County advised that it had acquired 342 of the 356 acres for which it was required to obviate secondary impacts associated with the completion of Interchange 44 of the Garden State Parkway. Additionally, the County requested an additional 12 months to complete acquisition of the remaining 14 acres. A previous extension granted by the Commission on May 8, 2020 had expired on January 7, 2022. The letter also delineated the steps taken by the County since December 2020 to acquire the remaining acreage. Specifically, the County identified 110 privately held lots totaling approximately 95 acres for potential acquisition; sent letters of interest to the assessed owners of these lots; obtained an appraisal for the overall parcel; and commenced title research on these lots. The County also executed agreements of sale with five property owners, including the owner of a 10-acre lot. Commission staff presented the County's extension request and recommended the granting of an additional 20-month extension to the Policy and Implementation Committee at its August 26, 2022 meeting. The Committee agreed with the recommendation and referred the matter to the full Commission for consideration at its September 9, 2022 meeting.

- **Atlantic County Lake Lenape Memorandum of Agreement (MOA):** By letter dated July 28, 2022, Atlantic County requested that efforts to amend the 1998 MOA resume so that the old floating dock at Lake Lenape could be replaced with a new floating dock. The County previously discussed its request with the Policy and Implementation Committee in August 2019. For the proposed dock replacement project to move forward, the Commission and the County must agree to an amendment of the 1998 MOA that authorized various development activities within the Western Lake Shore of Lake Lenape Park and required the preservation of lands at the Park through the filing of a Deed of Conservation Restriction.

### **1.3 HUMAN RESOURCES**

- **Return to Office:** In accordance with the Pinelands Commission Return to the Office plan, all staff began reporting to work at the office on a full-time basis starting January 31, 2022, with weekly COVID-19 testing of unvaccinated employees beginning on April 1st. On August 15, 2022, the Governor’s office notified the Commission that as of September 1<sup>st</sup>, weekly testing would no longer be required.
- **Telework Pilot Program:** In coordination with the Civil Service Commission, the State established a pilot telework program for state employees on April 6, 2022. The pilot program began on July 1, 2022 and will be in effect for one year. Commission staff are successfully continuing to work remotely two days each week in accordance with the pilot program guidelines.
- **Recruitment/Promotions:** Recruitment continues for a Research Scientist. Resumes have been narrowed down, and the next step is to commence the interview process.
- **Evaluations:** The 2021-2022 Final Evaluations were due to Human Resources by July 7, 2022. Objectives for the 2022-23 year were also due.
- **Employee Benefits:** Preparation for Open Enrollment in September has begun. Open enrollment begins October 1, 2022.

## **2 INTERAGENCY COORDINATION**

- **Interagency Council on Climate Change (IAC):** The July and August IAC meetings were canceled. Staff participated in the IAC’s Communications Working Group on August 31, 2022 and will attend the September 20, 2022 IAC meeting.
- **NJDEP Outdoor Recreation Advisory Committee:** On August 29, 2022, the NJDEP Community Investment and Economic Revitalization office notified the Commission that a member of the Planning staff was appointed to the Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to advise

NJDEP on recreation needs, funding policies and priorities, and public outreach in developing the NJDEP statewide outdoor recreation plan, “Outside, Together! A Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan for New Jersey.” Meetings and other tasks associated with the creation of the plan are expected. The NJDEP intends to finalize the outdoor recreation plan by the fall of 2023.

- Rutgers Cooperative Extension:** Throughout August, Commission staff members weeded, watered, and maintained the 340-square-foot rain garden that was installed in front of the Richard J. Sullivan (RJS) Center for Environmental Policy & Education on June 28-30, 2022. All 79 plants are alive, despite the hot weather and drought conditions. In August, staff purchased and have installed plant identification markers in the rain garden.



**Above:** Staff purchased and have installed plant identification markers in the Commission’s rain garden.

### 3 PLANNING

#### 3.1 CONFORMANCE ACTIVITY

	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
<b>Master Plans/Ordinances Received</b>		
Adopted	29	77
Drafted or Introduced	6	65
Total <sup>1</sup>	30	105
Substantial Issue Finding <sup>2</sup>	0	6
No Substantial Issue Finding	6	32
No Issue Finding	2	12
Total	8	50
<b>Finding Letters Issued<sup>3</sup></b>	7	37

<sup>1</sup>The total accounts for unique master plans and ordinances received (i.e., it does not double count drafted, introduced, or adopted submissions for the same ordinance).

<sup>2</sup> Ordinances and Master Plans that are found to raise substantial issues with respect to the standards of the CMP require formal review and approval by the full Commission.

<sup>3</sup> A single finding letter can pertain to multiple master plans/ordinances from the same municipality.

### 3.2 CULTURAL RESOURCE ACTIVITY

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Applications Reviewed	14	83
Surveys Required	1	7
Surveys Reviewed	1	5
Certificates of Appropriateness Required	0	2

#### Notable Activity

- During the August 12, 2022, Commission meeting, cultural resource staff delivered a presentation outlining the history of the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century Brotherton Lenape Reservation in present-day Shamong Township, and detailing recent archaeological excavations conducted by staff at a portion of the original site. The historic context for the establishment of the community was discussed, and the presence of intact archaeological features encountered during trenching efforts was interpreted by staff.



**Above:** Buried remains of a structural feature containing charcoal flecking and small brick fragments.

### 3.3 PINELANDS DEVELOPMENT CREDIT (PDC) PROGRAM

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
PDCs Allocated	2.33	9.69
PDCs Severed	0	16.0
Acres Protected	0	345.39
PDCs Extinguished	0	0.50
Acres Protected	0	15.82
PDCs Sold	20.00	44.00
Average Sales Price per PDC	\$68,650	\$75,205
Average Sales Price per right	\$17,163	\$18,801
PDCs Redeemed	0.50	6.25

#### Notable Activity:

- PDC Allocations:** Two Letters of Interpretation were issued in August. 2.25 PDCs (9 rights) were allocated to a 91.1 acre parcel in the Agricultural Production Area in Monroe Township. In addition, 0.08 PDCs (0 rights) were allocated to a 4.15-acre parcel in the Preservation Area District in Washington Township.
- PDC Sales:** A total of 20.00 PDCs (80 rights) were sold. Two large transactions occurred, one involving 39 rights for \$17,000 per right and the other involving 40 rights for \$17,150 per right. One other sale was completed at a price of \$24,000 for 0.25 PDCs (1 right).
- Redemptions:** 0.50 PDCs were redeemed for the development of single-family dwellings, one in Lacey Township and one in Monroe Township.
- The PDC Bank Board met on August 24, 2022 and readopted the Bank's rules without change. Staff subsequently filed the readoption notice with the Office of Administrative Law for publication in the New Jersey Register in mid-September.
- The PDC Bank issued its Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2022 on August 25, 2022. The report was a joint effort of the Planning,



**Above:** The cover of the PDC Bank's Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2022.

Communications and IS offices. It has been widely distributed and posted on the Bank's webpage. To access the report, please click [here](#).

### 3.4 SPECIAL PROJECTS

- **Pinelands Infrastructure Trust Fund (PITF):** Two meetings were held with staff from the New Jersey Infrastructure Bank (I-Bank) and the NJDEP Municipal Finance office. For the first meeting, Galloway Township requested a meeting to discuss moving forward with financing for the sewer project proposed to serve the Pinehurst section of the municipality. The sewer project was one of five infrastructure projects prioritized for funding through the PITF in a 2019 amendment to the Pinelands Infrastructure Master Plan adopted by the Pinelands Commission. Township representatives, I-Bank staff, NJDEP Municipal Finance staff, and Commission staff met and discussed the financing application process and funding structure. For the second meeting, staff met with I-Bank and NJDEP staff separately to discuss the Pemberton Township water infrastructure project. Pemberton Township has applied to the I-Bank for funding but has only included a portion of the project originally included in the priority list of the 2019 Pinelands Infrastructure Master Plan amendment. Additional meetings with NJDEP and the I-Bank are planned as several of the PITF priority projects seem to be moving forward at this time. In addition, the water infrastructure projects may require a rule waiver from NJDEP to allow funding and all agencies intend to keep on top of any issues that may arise. It should be noted that all infrastructure projects prioritized in the Infrastructure Master Plan must also apply to the Pinelands Commission for public development application approval.
- **Stockton University 2020 Facilities Master Plan:** Staff continued to work with Stockton on the development of a map that clarifies the extent of the conservation area on its Galloway campus, while addressing existing infrastructure needs and replacing any areas that will need to be removed from the Deed of Conservation Restriction as a result. Additionally, staff requested a letter from Stockton identifying how and when it will address outstanding violations that occurred on the campus as a result of the College's infrastructure needs. Upon receipt of that information, staff will determine whether any pending development applications can be deemed complete and presented to the Commission for its consideration.

## 4 REGULATORY PROGRAMS

### 4.1 APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Pre-Application Conferences	9	79
Certificates of Filing	20	132
Public Development Reports	7	23
Forestry Certificates of Filing	0	3
PDC Letters of Interpretation	2	10
Non-PDC Letters of Interpretation	0	1
MOA Consistency Determinations	3	39
Review of Agency Determinations	51	476

### 4.2 NOTABLE APPLICATIONS

- **Forest Stewardship Plan, Stockton University, Galloway Township** (App. No. 1981-1833.092): On August 22, 2022, the Commission staff issued a letter indicating the information that must be submitted to complete an application for proposed forestry on the 1,852-acre Stockton University parcel.
- **Southampton Cranberry Company, Southampton Township** (App. No 2004-0048.001): On August 25, 2022, the Commission staff met with the property owner, a representative of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation and a representative of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance to discuss subdividing off two existing dwellings from the 230-acre parcel. The purpose of the subdivision is to facilitate acquisition of the balance of the property by the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, with participation by the Pinelands Preservation Alliance.
- **Cell Tower, Pemberton Township** (App. No. 2006-0440.001): This application proposes to build a 150-foot-tall local communications facility (cell tower) at the Presidential Lakes Fire and Rescue Building on a 3.5-acre parcel. The proposed development is located in a Pinelands Forest Area. The proposed cell tower is only a permitted land use in a Pinelands Forest Area if it is included in a Commission approved cell tower master plan. The proposed cell tower is included in a Commission approved cell tower master plan. On July 26, 2022, the Township Administrator expressed dissatisfaction with the Commission staff review of the application. The Township Administrator indicated that the Commission staff has delayed the development of the proposed cell tower for over one year due to the staff's lack of knowledge regarding the

regulations contained in the CMP. The application is on the Commission's September 9, 2022 agenda for action. The Commission staff has recommended approval of the application.

- **Ocean County Vocational/Technical High School Addition, Jackson Township** (App. No. 1981-0390.003): This application proposes a 19,256 square foot addition to the existing school. The proposed development is located in proximity to the Ridgeway Branch of the Toms River. The Township land use ordinance and the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan prohibit most development in wetlands and require a buffer of up to 300 feet to wetlands. In addition, in accordance with the Commission approved Toms River Corridor Plan, the Jackson Township land use ordinance requires an additional uplands buffer of 300 feet (totaling a 600-foot buffer) along the main stem of the Toms River and the Ridgeway Branch. The applicant is required to field identify those wetlands within 600 feet of the parcel that are associated with the main stem of the Ridgeway Branch and any other wetlands located within 300 feet of the parcel that are not associated with the main stem of the Ridgeway Branch. The applicant's consultant has posed a number of questions regarding the 600-foot buffer requirement, including what constitutes a wetland associated with the main stem of the Ridgeway Branch and whether the Township can grant a variance to the 600-foot buffer requirement. The Commission staff is providing guidance to the applicant's consultant.
- **Landfill Capping and Solar Energy Facility, Pemberton Township** (App. No. 2021-0112.003): Information was provided to the staff regarding the known presence of an endangered animal species on the parcel. During a telephone conference, the staff provided guidance to the applicant regarding the extent of threatened and endangered (T&E) species survey information that must be provided to address the consistency of the proposed landfill capping and solar energy facility with the T&E species protection standard. On March 3, 2022, an application was filed with the Commission proposing approximately 2.5 acres of clearing on the 27-acre landfill parcel to conduct investigative work to delineate the limits of the landfill. On May 6, 2022, the Commission staff issued a letter indicating that it had not been demonstrated that the proposed clearing of approximately 2.5 acres associated with the investigation work was consistent with the T&E species protection standards. On June 22, 2022, the applicant submitted additional information to address the inconsistency with the T&E species protection standard. At the applicant's request, Commission staff met with the applicant's representatives on August 10, 2022 and suggested revisions to the application that may demonstrate consistency with the T&E species protection standards. On August 30, 2022, the applicant submitted additional information in an effort to address the issue raised with the T&E species protection standard. That information is under review.
- **Cannabis Cultivation and Processing Facility, Winslow Township** (App. No. 1989-0707.004): On August 10, 2021, the Commission staff issued a Certificate of Filing for a proposed 215,000 square foot addition to an existing 36,700 square foot office/warehouse building in a Pinelands Rural Development Area. The existing and proposed development will be serviced by an onsite septic system(s). The Certificate of Filing noted that the proposed development was inconsistent with CMP stormwater management standards. Upon receipt of Township site plan approval, the Commission staff issued a letter scheduling the application for a Commission staff public hearing. The public hearing was necessitated because the proposed development is inconsistent with CMP stormwater management and groundwater quality (septic dilution) standards. The applicant is currently attempting to resolve the inconsistencies. On August 1, 2022, the Commission staff discussed with the Township Planning Board attorney dividing the proposed

development project into two phases. Phase one of the development project would meet the groundwater quality (septic dilution) standard. On August 2, 2022, the Commission staff received a draft revised Township Planning Board Resolution dividing the project into two development phases. That information is currently under review.

- **Residential Development, Jackson Township** (App. No. 1983-5386.002): This application proposes 457 dwelling units and a 24,500 square foot private school. The Pinelands Commission issued a Certificate of Filing for the proposed development on April 5, 2019. Thereafter, the proposed development was approved by a Consent Order issued by the United States District Court, District of New Jersey. After review of the court ordered development approval, the Commission staff issued a letter on May 16, 2022, scheduling a public hearing to review the “substantial issues” raised by the proposed development with the stormwater management standard and the 200-foot-wide perimeter forest fire fuel break standard. The Commission staff letter also indicated that the proposed development raised a substantial issue with the residential density standard because the 27.5 Pinelands Development Credits required by the proposed residential development have not been submitted to the Pinelands Commission. On July 8, 2022, the applicant submitted additional information to address the stormwater management standards. On July 25, 2022, the applicant submitted additional information to address the 200-foot-wide perimeter forest fire fuel break standard. The Township has concurred with the applicant that a 200-foot-wide perimeter forest fire fuel break is not required for the proposed development. The applicant has also substantively resolved the stormwater management issue. The only remaining issue is redemption of the 27.5 PDCs required for the development of the project. The applicant is discussing the phased redemption of the PDCs with the Commission staff.
- **West End Park, Pemberton Township** (App. No. 1982-3514.004): On January 8, 2021, the Commission approved the development of certain recreational facilities at the Township’s West End Park. Due to the presence of wetlands, the staff could not recommend approval of proposed soccer fields in wetlands or an 8-foot-wide paved walking trail through wetlands. The concerned wetlands are a fallow farm field. By email dated July 14, 2022, the Township Administrator expressed his displeasure with the “unfair, unreasonable and prejudicial” decision of the Commission staff relative to the proposed soccer fields and walking trail that were proposed in wetlands. By letter dated July 26, 2022, the Commission staff responded to the Township by providing background information on the application and the Commission’s wetlands regulations. The July 26<sup>th</sup> letter also indicated that the staff appropriately and consistently administers the CMP’s wetlands protection standards and encouraged Township representatives to attend a Commission meeting to express their concerns if they believed this was not the case. By email dated July 29, 2022, the Township Administrator again expressed dissatisfaction with the staff’s determination regarding the Township’s proposed development in wetlands. At the August 12, 2022 Commission meeting, the Township Administrator expressed his concerns regarding the effect of the Commission’s regulations on Pemberton Township.
- **Solar Energy Facility, Tabernacle Township** (App. No. 1985-0653.006) This application proposes an approximately 11-acre solar energy facility on a 62.9-acre parcel. The solar energy facility is proposed to be located within an area on the parcel that was previously subject to resource extraction (sand mining). A Certificate of Filing for the proposed development was issued on August 11, 2022. The Certificate of Filing noted that the proposed development was inconsistent

with the stormwater management standards and inconsistent with a CMP solar facility siting standard because development was proposed on the parcel within an area that was required to be restored/revegetated as part of a prior resource extraction operation (sand mining) on the parcel.

- **Single Family Dwelling, Lacey Township** (App. No. 2021-0038.001): This application proposes the development of one single family dwelling on a 1.75-acre lot. A T&E animal species survey was completed and submitted to the Commission on August 10, 2022. The survey identified the presence of a threatened animal species on the lot. The Commission staff is reviewing the submitted survey.
- **Bus Parking Loop and Driveway, Milanese Elementary School, Buena Vista Township** (App. No. 1991-1291.002): This application proposes a school bus parking area and a loop driveway. The Commission staff is working with applicant to resolve a required buffer to wetlands issue raised by the proposed development. On August 23, 2022, the staff advised the applicant's engineer of a potential approach to resolve the wetlands buffer issue.

#### 4.3 OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

- **New Jersey Forest Task Force:** In August 2022, the Commission staff continued to attend monthly meetings of the two working groups that were established by the New Jersey Forest Task Force: the Forestry Climate Work Group and the Forestry Ecological Health Work Group. The two working groups are developing recommended forestry policies for State-owned lands in New Jersey. The Commission staff prepared draft forestry policy proposals for State-owned lands in the Pinelands Area. The draft forestry policies were introduced at the July 29, 2022 Policy and Implementation Committee meeting and further discussed at the Policy and Implementation Committee's August 26, 2022 meeting. The forestry policy proposal will be further considered at the Commission's September 9, 2022 monthly meeting. Thereafter, depending on the consensus of the Commission, the forestry policy proposals may be forwarded to the New Jersey Forestry Task Force for discussion and consideration.
- **New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Landfill Meeting:** On August 16, 2022, the Commission staff met with representatives of NJDEP to more fully understand NJDEP impermeable capping/earthen cover requirements for landfills in New Jersey. This question is being raised by the multiple applications before the Pinelands Commission for impermeable capping/earthen cover of closed landfills and the subsequent development of solar energy facilities on the capped/earthen covered landfills.

## 5 SCIENCE

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### 5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

- **Water Level Monitoring:** In August, Communications staff measured water levels at forest plots and ponds in the Commission network of long-term monitoring sites. This work is completed each month with assistance from the Communications Office.
- **Water Quality Monitoring:** Science staff sampled pH and specific conductance at the 47 Pinelands-wide stream sites. This sampling occurs in April, June, August, and October of each year to monitor long-term changes in these two parameters.

### 5.2 LONG TERM STUDIES

- **King Snake Study:** In August, Science and Herpetological Associates (HA) staff continued to track 23 king snakes in several different study areas. Four gravid female king snakes found in the spring laid eggs in the laboratory in June and July. Eggs from one of these clutches has hatched. All hatchlings from these four clutches will be weighed, measured, PIT tagged, and released at the nest area where the female king snake was originally found.



**Above:** An eastern king snake hatchling “tasting” fresh air for the first time.

Science staff have initiated the process of applying to the Environmental Protection Agency for additional funding to help complete the King Snake Study. It is possible that some funding may be available at the start of the next federal fiscal year in October.

- **Joint Corn Snake Study:** Science and HA staff continued to monitor the nest area drift fence array for animals found under the wood and metal cover and in box traps established along the drift fence. During the hot dry days of August, by far the most abundant animal found at the drift fence array was the Fowler’s toad.

Six gravid female corn snakes found around the drift fence array in the spring laid eggs in the laboratory in June and July. Some of these eggs have started to hatch. All hatchlings will be weighed, measured, PIT tagged, and released at the nest area. The six females are now being radio tracked as part of the Rare Snake Monitoring Program (below) to locate their winter dens.

- **Rare Snake Monitoring:** Science staff continued to radio track snakes as part of this monitoring project. At the end of August, 18 corn snakes (including the 6 mentioned above in the Joint Corn Snake Study), 10 pine snakes, and 2 hognose snakes were being tracked. The primary goal for the remainder of the year is to locate shedding areas and the winter hibernacula for each snake. Thirteen gravid corn snakes and one gravid hognose snake laid eggs in the laboratory. A pine snake nest was found at a study area and the eggs were excavated and brought back to the laboratory. The hatchlings will be pit tagged and released at the nest sites for future population monitoring.



**Above:** A pine snake nest excavated as part of the Rare Snake Monitoring Project. Female pine snakes dig a long tunnel and deposit their eggs in an underground cavity.

- **Box Turtle Study:** Science staff captured three new box turtles in August and outfitted them with radio transmitters. Staff removed the transmitter from one turtle and released it because it spent all its time on private property and the landowner would not grant permission to access the property.

### 5.3 OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

- Science staff continued to assist NJDEP staff in deploying devices to sample diatoms in several ponds and stormwater basins. Diatoms are microalgae with a specialized cell wall made of ornate silica.



**Above:** A new radio tracked male box turtle captured a few days ago.

- Science staff finalized the research proposal and applied to the NJDEP Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP) for the 2022 scientific collecting permit for snakes.
- Science staff helped train Regulatory Programs staff in the identification of common plants used in the delineation of Pinelands wetlands.

## 6 COMMUNICATIONS

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### 6.1 COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- **Website:** The Pinelands Commission’s website was viewed 14,651 times in August 2022. Communications Office staff provided website editing training for two new employees in August. Additionally, staff started to discuss plans to create a new Cultural Resources webpage on the Commission’s website.



**Above:** A WPVI-TV Action News reporter/cameraperson interviewed a Commission staffer about the Jersey Devil on August 11, 2022.

- **Inquiries/Correspondence:** The Communications Office received and responded to 63 inquiries from the public in August, including phone calls, e-mails, and media inquiries. A cameraperson from WPVI-TV Action News of Philadelphia visited the Commission’s headquarters on August 11, 2022 to interview a Communications Office staff member for an upcoming segment about the Jersey Devil. The piece will feature extensive footage of the Jersey Devil sculpture in the educational exhibits at the Commission’s headquarters. The story will air sometime around Halloween, and it will likely raise awareness about the Commission’s exhibits, while increasing visitation.

### 6.2 EVENTS, OUTREACH & INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

- **Science Office Assistance:** A member of the Communications Office assisted the Science Office by measuring water levels on August 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- **Pinelands Summer Short Course:** Staff has started to plan the 33<sup>rd</sup> annual Pinelands Short Course, which will be held on March 11, 2023.
- **Pinelands-themed World Water Monitoring Challenge:** Staff has started to plan the fall version of the daylong, educational event, which will be held at Batsto Lake on October 21, 2022.

- **Barnegat Bay:** A member of the Communications Office participated in a Barnegat Bay Partnership Communications and Education meeting on August 24, 2022.
- **Social Media Enhancements:** In August, staff shared 58 photos on the Commission’s Instagram site (as of August 30<sup>th</sup>) and 33 tweets on Twitter. Facebook locked the Commission out of its account in late May, but staff has contacted the social media site to contest the lockout. The Commission continued to add content to its YouTube Channel, including a new video slideshow of photos taken by staff during the month of August. The Commission’s YouTube Channel currently has 991 subscribers and has generated a total of 86,963 views.
- **Public Education Programs:** A member of the Communications Office delivered a presentation on Pinelands Flora and Fauna at Bass River State Forest on August 6, 2022.
- **Pinelands Speaker Series Webinars:** The Commission hosted a presentation entitled “Close Encounters of the Bird Kind” in the Richard J. Sullivan Center (RJS Center) on August 17, 2022. The presentation was also livestreamed on YouTube.



**Above:** Staff shared 58 photos on Instagram in August, including this photo of a cut sunflower that was grown by Pinelands Commissioner Jerry Irick.

Staff also organized a Moth Night that will be held at the Commission’s headquarters from 7 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. on October 5, 2022. The evening will begin with an indoor presentation that will be delivered by Ann-Marie Woods, who is a photographer, naturalist, and moth expert. After the presentation and as darkness falls, attendees will go outside. Screens and powerful lamps will be set up in various locations to draw moth species in for attendees to photograph and record. Ms. Woods will circulate through the screened areas, providing information about moths, natural resources, and relating her experiences and stories. The moths will be identified, and a list of the species observed will be available after the event.

## **7 INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

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- **Pinelands Commission Information System Upgrades:** The Pinelands Commission Information System (PCIS) is the internal system of record for all applications to the Pinelands and associated transactions. Staff provided desktop support, implemented enhancements and bug fixes. Staff

created a new management report for quantifying drafted documents. A new interface was developed for the Local Conformance System (LCS) and is being evaluated by the Planning office.

- **Cybersecurity:** Vigilance to protect the internal networks, hardware, and data of the Pinelands Commission is critical in today's networked world. The Information Systems office participated in the monthly call hosted by the New Jersey Cybersecurity & Communications Integration Cell (NJCCIC). Staff applied NJCCIC compliant password policies to 90% of user accounts and will complete the project next month. Staff coordinated with New Jersey Office of Information Technology (NJ OIT) to configure firewall access for the cloud hosted version of Edmunds accounting software.
- **Permanent Land Protection (PLP) Data System:** The PLP system manages the data related to all the preserved land in the Pinelands National Reserve. Staff supported the Planning Office in maintaining PLP records.
- **Ad Hoc Reporting:** Staff assist the Pinelands Commission by generating reports to provide insight into relevant topics of interest. A report was created to monitor usage of the SQL Server Report Server and the frequency of report generation.
- **Pinelands Development Credit Bank:** The Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) Bank utilizes custom software to manage all operations including tracking data and issuing certificates. IS Staff is currently developing a report related to PDC demand and has released a draft version for review.
- **Technology Enhancements:** Staff members continually evaluate emerging technologies for how they can impact or enhance the office environment. Staff configured and distributed the new laptops for the NJ Telework Pilot Program. Staff installed and began preparing training materials for BlueBeam Revu software, which should assist all departments with internal document handling and sharing. Staff participated in ongoing systems redesign meetings with necessary stakeholders for all internal information systems. The meetings held so far focused on the following systems: OPRA, Zoning, Conformance Tracking, and the Alternate Septic system.

## 8 BUSINESS OFFICE

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### 8.1 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- **Application Fees:** August 2022, Net Total: \$104,356.25; Fiscal Year to Date Total: \$169,217.10
- Staff met with staff from the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) to discuss the State's Energy Savings Improvement (ESIP) Program and any grants available to state agencies. NJBPU advised the staff that the Commission does not qualify for the ESIP program and that state agencies wishing to incorporate energy efficiency upgrades in their buildings must send their budget requests to the Treasury Department's Office of

Management and Budget. The staff was also advised to send a letter outlining the Commission's energy efficiency plans to the NJBPU's Director of State Energy Services.

## **8.2 FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**

- The State of New Jersey appropriated \$500,000 to the Commission in the Fiscal Year 2023 budget for the preservation of Fenwick Manor. The Commission plans to solicit the services of a structural engineer in the near future.