

New Jersey Pinelands Commission

Annual Report
2012

**Mission Statement
of the
New Jersey Pinelands Commission**

The mission of the New Jersey Pinelands Commission is to preserve, protect and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the Pinelands National Reserve, and to encourage compatible economic and other human activities consistent with that purpose.

Cover photo: The Pinelands is home to hundreds of old roads and trails, such as this one in Bass River State Forest.

Photo by Paul Leakan/New Jersey Pinelands Commission

New Jersey Pinelands Commission 2012

Gubernatorial Appointees

Mark S. Lohbauer, Chairman

Candace M. Ashmun
D'Arcy Rohan Green
Richard H. Prickett

Robert Jackson
Edward Lloyd
Gary Quinn

U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Appointee

Richard L. Harris (Jan. - July)
Joseph DiBello (December)

County Appointees

Atlantic County
Paul E. Galletta

Burlington County
Sean W. Earlen

Camden County
Edward McGlinchey

Cape May County
William J. Brown

Cumberland County
Leslie M. Ficcaglia

Gloucester County
Francis A. Witt

Ocean County
John A. Haas, Vice Chairman

Executive Director

Nancy Wittenberg

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Two new Commissioners join Pinelands panel

The New Jersey Pinelands Commission gained two new members in 2012, as Richard H. Prickett of Pemberton Township, N.J., and Joseph DiBello of Ardmore, Pa., were appointed to the panel.

Prickett, a retired science teacher, was appointed to fill one of seven gubernatorial seats on the Commission. He was sworn in on January 13th.

Prickett served a member of the Pemberton Township Council from 2002 to 2012. He served as Council President in 2002 and 2006 and was a member of the township's Planning Board from 2003-2005. Prickett retired in 2006 after teaching high school science in the Lakewood School District in Ocean County for 26 years. There, he taught advanced placement biology, environmental science, physical science and chemistry. Prickett was named the Lakewood Township Teacher of the Year in 2004, and he was recognized by the Pinelands Preservation Alliance as an outstanding Pinelands educator in 2005. Prickett has served as a Trustee on the Whitesbog Preservation Trust since 2003, and he is currently President of the Trust's Board.

Prickett holds a bachelor's degree in Life Sciences from Rutgers University and an associate's degree in Psychology from Burlington County College. He filled a seat on the Commission that had been vacant since former Chairperson Betty Wilson resigned in October 2008.

DiBello was sworn in as the new federal representative on the Commission on December 14th. He serves as the Superintendent of the National Park Service's Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail. Based in Philadelphia, DiBello guides the planning and management of this newly-authorized trail through nine states and Washington D.C. in partnership with National Park Service units, National Heritage Areas, federal agencies and many local and private organizations and sites. The groups commemorate and interpret the journey of the Continental and the French forces during the American Revolution.

DiBello began his career in the U.S. Department of the Interior as a planner in 1974 and joined the National Park Service in 1981 conducting special studies and planning projects. He then led the park and resource planning program for the Northeast Region of the National Park Service and a suite of cultural, natural and recreation assistance programs. He played a key role in establishing parks, heritage areas, national wild and scenic rivers and trails and community landscape conservation efforts. DiBello, and his teams, are noted for their collaborative work with numerous government agencies, communities, private organizations and landowners to create partnerships for preserving, conserving, interpreting and managing our nation's outstanding natural, cultural and recreation resources.

DiBello holds a bachelor's degree in social science from Drexel University and a master of business administration from Temple University. He replaced Richard L. Harris as the Secretary of the Interior's appointee. Harris, who served as the Associate Regional Director of Natural Resources and Science for the Northeast Region of the National Parks Ser-



Deputy Attorney General Kristen Heinzerling (left) administered the oath of office to Joseph DiBello.

Photo/Paul Leakan



Deputy Attorney General Helene Chudzik (left) administered the oath of office to Richard Prickett, who stands next to his wife, Denise Prickett.

Photo/Paul Leakan

vice (NPS), stepped down from the Commission in July 2012.

The Commission consists of 15 members: seven appointed by the Governor of New Jersey, one appointed by each of the seven Pinelands counties and one appointed by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. Members of the Commission serve staggered, three-year terms and do not receive compensation for their service.

Land Use & Planning

Commission launches review of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan

In May, the Commission formally launched an in-depth review of its Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), the rules that govern land-use, development and the protection of natural and cultural resources in the Pinelands.



The Commission launched an in-depth review of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan in May 2012.
Photo/Paul Leakan

A Plan Review Committee composed of five Commission members has been meeting each month since June 2012. The Committee gathered public comment on the Commission's implementation of the plan during four public meetings.

The Commission accepted written public comments from July 16 to September 28, 2012. A total of 106 groups or individuals provided comments. The comments fell into 23 categories, including the Pinelands Development Credit program, organized off-road vehicle events, forestry, administrative, wetlands, stream restoration, mining, herbicide use, outdoor advertising, agriculture, the study of the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer system, landfill closure, Memorandums of Agreement, Route 70 safety, the Black Run Watershed, the Pinelands Commission, threatened and endangered species, stormwater management, the public comment process, vegetation, planning, septic/wastewater and climate change. All of the comments have been posted on the Commission's

website (www.nj.gov/pinelands).

Throughout 2012, the Plan Review Committee worked to identify possible changes to the Plan that would improve the agency's efficiency and would be included in the first of two rule proposals.

The Commission has implemented the CMP since it took effect in 1981. This is the Commission's fourth review of the Plan.

As part of the CMP review, the Commission will produce a report that charts the agency's accomplishments and actions taken in support of the goals of the CMP since the last Plan Review. Three such reports have been issued to date, and they are available on the Commission's website. The report and its findings will help guide Commission members in their discussions of possible future amendments to the Plan.

Water Quality Management Planning

In April 2012, the Pinelands Commission reached an agreement with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to ensure that the NJDEP's Water Quality Management Planning process is consistent with the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan.

The Commission and the NJDEP developed a Memorandum of Understanding that ensures there are no changes to the existing Pinelands management area boundaries and Commission certified zoning plans as a result of water quality management planning. It also recognizes the Commission's jurisdiction over land use and development in the Pinelands Area. The agreement does not change or override any of the Pinelands rules, regulations or policies, nor does it allow for an increase in permitted density or development intensity. The agreement can be downloaded from the Commission's website at <http://www.nj.gov/pinelands/infor/moa>.

Assessment of Uncapped Landfills in the Pinelands Area

In 2012, the Commission entered into an agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to launch a new project that will evaluate the ecological and public health risks associated with uncapped landfills in the Pinelands Area.

The Commission identified 61 landfills that will be included in the analysis.

Upon completion, the study will provide information about the “threat level” each landfill poses to nearby wetlands, surface water bodies, streams, ponds and drinking water wells. The information will help the Commission review proposals for the closure and reuse of landfills.

The study will expand on a pilot project that Commission staff completed in 2010. Under that project, Commission staff reviewed the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection’s (NJDEP) files on select, uncapped landfills in the Pinelands. Staff also mapped landfills, collected landfill monitoring well data and compared detectable chemical constituent levels with NJDEP’s water quality standards.

The study is expected to be completed in late 2013.



The Commission is assessing uncapped landfills in the Pinelands, including one in Estell Manor City (above).

Photo/Nicholas Procopio

Alternate Permitting Program in Waterford Township

In February 2012, the Commission approved an alternate permitting program for a 110-acre area in Waterford Township, Camden County. The program establishes a modified application process for applicants seeking development approvals in the Township’s Haines Boulevard Environs Redevelopment Area, which is located in a Pinelands Regional Growth Area.

In recognition of the Township’s ongoing redevelopment efforts and the suitability of the Redevelopment Area for development, the Commission determined it would be appropriate to relieve applicants of certain submission requirements as a means of increasing the efficiency of the application process in this important area. Under the new program, applicants are permitted to apply directly to the Township and will no longer be required to submit wetlands delineations, cultural resource surveys, threatened and endangered species surveys or Certificates of Filing from the Commission, provided their proposed projects will be served by sewer and are consistent with the Redevelopment Plan and other environmental standards (such as stormwater management). Based on site inspections and a review of other information, the Commission determined that the submission of surveys for threatened or endangered species or cultural resources is unnecessary for proposed development in the 110-acre area.

Review of Municipal Ordinances

All municipalities in the Pinelands Area are required to revise their master plans and land use ordinances in order to implement the objectives of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan. To date, all seven counties and 52 of 53 municipalities with land in the state-designated Pinelands Area have had their master plans and land use ordinances certified by the Commission. Amendments to certified county and municipal master plans and land use ordinances must be submitted to, and approved by, the Commission.

During 2012, the Commission received and reviewed 104 ordinance and master plan amendments from 38 different municipalities.

Permanent Land Protection

Pinelands Conservation Fund

Two ecologically-valuable properties in the Pinelands Area were permanently preserved in 2012 with funds administered by the Pinelands Commission. These properties included a 200-acre parcel in Medford and Shamong townships and 2,750 acres in the City of Estell Manor.

The Commission transferred a total of \$436,563 from the Pinelands Conservation Fund to YMCA Camp Ockanickon Inc., which used the money toward its purchase of the 200-acre property, located adjacent to the camp on McKendimen Road in Shamong and Medford (**please see photo on right**).

YMCA Camp Ockanickon Inc. bought the parcel for \$1.1 million, using funds from the Pinelands Commission, Burlington County, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Green Acres Program and the Haines Family Foundation, Inc. of Chatsworth, NJ.

The land contains the headwaters of two large bodies of water that the camp uses for recreation and ecological studies. The forests, swamps and streams on the newly-preserved property will enhance and expand the camp's environmental education and recreation offerings. Approximately 100 schools throughout the state bring classes to the camp to complement their science curriculum by learning about the special ecosystem in the Pinelands.

In December, the Commission joined forces with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, the Nature Conservancy and Conservation Resources, Inc. to preserve 2,750 acres in Estell Manor. The Commission provided \$2.3 million toward the purchase.

The property provides habitat for numerous wildlife species, including the barred owl, northern pine snake, Pine Barrens tree frog, Cooper's hawk, timber rattlesnake, Cope's gray tree frog, bald eagle, red-headed woodpecker, black rail, osprey, black-crowned night heron and diamondback terrapin.

The newly acquired land is now called the Lenape Farms unit of the Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area, which is accessible to the public.

From 2007 to 2012, the Commission approved the allocation of \$9.5 million to 33 projects in the Pinelands Area. Twenty-nine of these 33 projects have been completed, resulting in the permanent protection of 6,670 acres.

The Pinelands Conservation Fund was created in 2004 as part of an agreement with the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities to permit the construction and upgrade of an electric transmission line through eastern portions of the Pinelands. Under the agreement, the special fund was established to further the Pinelands protection program and ensure a greater level of protection of the unique resources of the Pinelands Area. The utility that built the transmission lines, Atlantic City Electric (formerly Conectiv), provided \$13 million to establish the Fund. An additional \$3,415,000 was added to the Fund in 2009 as a result of an amendment to the Comprehensive Management Plan that authorized expansion of the Cape May landfill and through a 2008 Memorandum of Agreement with the New Jersey Turnpike Authority that authorized improvements to the Garden State Parkway.

The Fund is dedicated to three types of projects: permanent land protection; conservation planning and research



The Commission provided funds to preserve a 200-acre parcel (shown above) in Shamong and Medford townships.

Photo/Paul Leakan

projects and community planning and design initiatives.

Pinelands Development Credit Program

The Pinelands Development Credit Program is a regional transfer of development rights program that preserves important agricultural and ecological land. Pinelands Development Credits (PDCs) are allocated to landowners in Pinelands-designated Preservation, Agricultural and Special Agricultural Production Areas, which are the sending areas. These credits can be purchased by property owners and developers who are interested in developing land in Pinelands-designated Regional Growth Areas, which serve as the receiving areas, and can be used to increase the densities at which they build. Once those credits are “severed” from a sending area property, the property is permanently protected by a conservation or agricultural deed restriction and credits on the property can be sold. Credits are bought and sold in one-quarter credit units called “rights.”

The Pinelands Commission assumed responsibility for the operation and administration of the Pinelands Development Credit Bank in September 2011. Although the PDC Bank is now physically located at the Pinelands Commission office, it remains a separate entity.

During 2012, seven rights were severed, protecting 55 acres of land. A total of 5,982 rights were severed from 1982 to 2012, protecting 51,297 acres. In 2012, the mean sales price of PDCs was \$9,500 per right.



The Pinelands Development Credit Bank Board (shown above) met three times in 2012.

Photo/Paul Leakan

Science and Research Activities

Kirkwood-Cohansey Study

The Commission, in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP), Rutgers University, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and the United States Geological Survey (USGS), continued its study of the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer system. A description of the project and the project work plan are available on the Commission web page at <http://www.state.nj.us/pinelands/science/current/kc/>.

The Kirkwood-Cohansey work plan addresses two major research questions. First, what are the probable hydrologic effects of groundwater diversions from the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer on stream flows and wetland water levels? Second, what are the probable ecological effects of reduced stream-flow and groundwater-level changes on aquatic and wetland communities? In addition to managing and participating in studies conducted by the USGS, Rutgers University and USFWS, Commission scientists completed studies that examined the potential impact of groundwater withdrawals from the aquifer on *Helonias bullata* (swamp pink), forested wetlands, frog-larval development, intermittent-pond vegetation, and stream habitat. In previous years, the swamp pink study was published in *Journal of the Torrey Botanical Society*, the forested-wetland study was published in *Wetlands*, and the frog-larval development study was published in *Wetlands Ecology and Management*. Additionally, the intermittent-pond vegetation and stream-habitat studies were published in *Ecohydrology*.

In 2012, the Hydrologic Modeling and Evapotranspiration studies were published as Scientific Investigations Reports by the USGS. The Pinelands Commission internal policy team convened meetings on Kirkwood-Cohansey water-supply planning and regulation in the Pinelands. One of the meetings included a presentation on the development of water-supply policy in the Highlands.

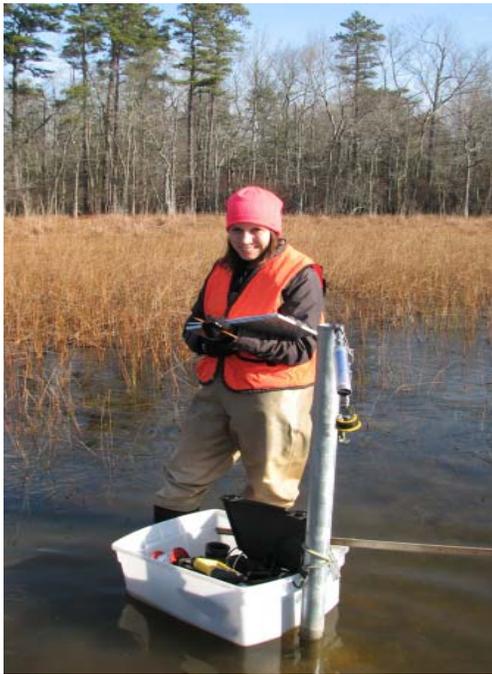
Pond-vulnerability Study

In 2012, Commission scientists launched a new study of Pinelands ponds to characterize their vulnerability to surrounding land uses. Scientists began the first phase of the project by using aerial photography to compile an inventory of Pinelands ponds.

Scientists will assess the ecological integrity of “intermittent” ponds throughout the Pinelands. These ponds are called “intermittent” because they are not connected to streams and occasionally dry out, creating fishless environments that serve as important breeding grounds for frogs and toads such as the rare Pine Barrens treefrog. Intermittent ponds also provide habitat for many rare plants.

During the course of the 4 1/2 year research project, Commission scientists will map the location of ponds, document off-road vehicle activity, monitor water quality and hydrology, survey plant and animal assemblages and quantify the impact of land use on these ponds.

The Commission will identify and prioritize ponds that need enhanced protection and may evaluate potential planning and regulatory measures to better protect these ponds.



Sarah Smith, a Commission Research Scientist, downloads data from a water-level recorder as part of the Commission's Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program. Photo/Kim Laidig

The study is being funded, in part, by a \$350,524 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Commission will supplement the EPA grant funding by contributing \$116,841 from its Pinelands Conservation Fund (**please see Pages 4-5 for more information about the Fund**).

Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program

In 2011, Commission scientists continued to carry out scientific surveys of Pinelands watersheds as part of its long-term environmental monitoring program.

Since the 1990s, the Commission has conducted surveys at hundreds of sites in the Pinelands in an effort to characterize the effect of existing land-use patterns on aquatic and wetland resources and to monitor long-term changes in these resources. Commission scientists monitor water quality, vegetation and fish in streams and impoundments, and frogs and toads in impoundments in the Mullica River, Rancocas Creek, Great Egg Harbor River, and Barnegat Bay watersheds. Staff has completed two rounds of surveys in the Mullica, Rancocas Creek, Great Egg Harbor River and Barnegat Bay watershed.

Since 2005, Commission scientists have measured water quality at 47 sites on a monthly basis, with a few exceptions. Scientists record water levels at 34 ponds and 35 forest plots in the Pinelands each month. The Commission has monitored calling frogs and toads at 20 ponds since

1996.

In 2012, Commission scientists collected bimonthly water samples from 47 long-term stream sites to be analyzed for the presence of various nutrients by scientists at the Rutgers University Division of Pinelands Research. Continuous water-level recorders, which automatically collect hourly water-level data, were installed in four ponds as part of the Commission monitoring program.

Data from the Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program helps to guide the Commission's decision-making.

Pinelands Research Series

The Pinelands Research Series was initiated in 2012 to provide a regular forum for scientists to present and dis-

cuss Pinelands-related research. Presentations this year covered a wide range of research topics, including the spatial ecology of Northern Pine Snakes and Timber Rattlesnakes, Eastern Fence Lizard physiology, the origins of Pinelands closed basins, changes in the flora of Stockton College campus, the effects of prescribed fire and soil disturbance on soil processes, the effects of invasive insects and fire on carbon and hydrologic cycling, the ecology of the southern pine beetle, detection of amphibian pathogens, plant diseases in cultivated and natural habitats, and the role of parasites in food webs.

A full listing of previous and upcoming presentations can be found at: <http://www.nj.gov/pinelands/science/pineries/>.



Commission scientists will launch a new study of created wetlands, including stormwater basins (above), in 2013.

Photo/Kim Laidig

New Study of Created Wetlands

In 2012, the Commission accepted a \$361,317 grant from the EPA to assess water-quality, hydrology, plants and animals, and the presence of pesticides and amphibian pathogens in two types of created wetlands commonly found in the Pinelands: excavated ponds and stormwater basins. As part of this four-year study, the functional equivalency of natural and created wetlands will be evaluated by comparing the above factors between excavated ponds, stormwater basins, and natural Pinelands ponds.

The Commission will supplement the EPA grant funding by contributing \$120,439 from the Pinelands Conservation Fund. The project will be launched in 2013.

Regulatory Activities

Permitting

The Commission's staff reviews municipal and county permitting decisions and development approvals to determine potential impacts on Pinelands natural resources. In cases where the local approval may be inconsistent with Pinelands regulations, the Commission's Executive Director has the authority to refer the approval to the Pinelands Commission, which can modify or overturn it. In 2012, the Commission's Project Review Office received 425 new applications. During the year, actions were taken on 1,534 applications. A total of 14 actions were taken on applications through the Local Review Officer Program, which expedites the approval process by having municipal officers review certain applications, without the need for the Commission's review first.

The Pinelands Commission approved 38 public development applications in 2012. Notable applications include the construction of a full interchange at the intersection of the Garden State Parkway and Jimmie Leeds Road and the widening of Jimmie Leeds Road, the New Jersey Department of Transportation's plan for road improvements to State Route 50 and the widening of approximately 2.8 miles of Route 530 in Burlington County.

The Commission also has the authority to issue Freshwater Wetland General Permits in the Pinelands Area on behalf of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. The Commission issued 11 such permits in 2012.

Suppression of Southern Pine Beetles

The state continued its efforts to combat Southern Pine Beetles in 2012, including heavily-infested areas of the Pinelands. Approximately the size of a grain of rice, Southern Pine Beetles attack and kill large stands of pine trees.

In June 2012, the Pinelands Commission authorized the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to cut up to 20 acres of dead and dying pine trees on state-owned land in the Pinelands. The Commission had authorized the NJDEP to cut up to 300 acres of pine beetle-infested trees in 2011.

The authorizations were permitted under a provision of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan that enables the Commission's Executive Director to authorize whatever action is minimally necessary to remedy or prevent danger to life, health and safety. The NJDEP determined that immediate suppression efforts were needed to prevent potential, wide-spread destruction of pine trees, and to help mitigate forest fire dangers posed by the dead and dying pine trees.

Robert Miller Airpark Improvements

In June 2012, the Commission approved an agreement that allows Ocean County to build a crosswind runway and undertake other improvements at the Robert Miller Airpark in Berkeley and Lacey townships.

The county deemed the crosswind runway and other upgrades as important safety improvements that will bring the 822-airpark into conformance with current Federal Aviation Administration standards. The Commission authorized the projects, which would not be fully consistent with Pinelands regulations, through the execution of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA).

The Commission determined that the MOA contains measures that will, at a minimum, afford an equivalent level of protection for the resources of the Pinelands as would be provided through a strict application of the land use and environmental standards contained within the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan.

Specifically, the County agreed to acquire and deed restrict against future development 485 acres of upland threatened or endangered species habitat located in the vicinity of airpark. These uplands will contain a minimum of 345 acres of suitable, characteristic Pine snake, Corn snake or Timber Rattlesnake habitat and 50 acres of suitable, characteristic Pine Barrens Tree Frog Habitat.

Additionally, the county will create an additional 20 acres of grassland bird habitat to offset the project's impact on such habitat onsite, and it will carry out numerous other measures, such as the construction of two reptile habitat management areas, monitoring by qualified environmental personnel, installation of snake exclusion fencing, the implementation of a grassland management and mowing plan and a plan for protecting the local population of sickle leaved golden asters.

Violations

The Pinelands Commission continues its efforts to provide assistance to municipalities in pursuing and resolving violations of the local land use ordinances and Pinelands regulations. A total of 77 violations were reported to the Commission in 2012.



A Southern Pine Beetle is shown above (to the right of the dime in tree sap).
Photo/Paul Leakan

Public Information, Participation & Education

Outreach and Education

The Commission's Communications and Public Programs Office staff handled 108 press inquiries and responded to 1,036 public inquiries regarding the Pinelands in 2012.

For the sixth year, the Commission sponsored an educational program called the Pinelands Speaker Series, which this year featured a presentation with live raptors, turtles and snakes. The presentation was held at the Richard J. Sullivan Center for Environmental Policy and Education, and attracted approximately 50 people.

Additionally, staff organized and carried out its sixth annual, Pinelands-themed World Water Monitoring Day event. Held at the historic Batsto Village, the event attracted more than 200 students and teachers who gauged Pinelands water quality and learned about the importance of protecting the region's unique natural and historic resources. The students measured the levels of pH or acidity in water, as well as water clarity, temperature and dissolved oxygen. Water in the Pinelands is generally undisturbed, has a low pH and low dissolved solids, enabling it to support uniquely adapted Pinelands

plants and animals. The students' findings were posted on the World Water Monitoring Day Web site (www.worldwatermonitoringday.org), where test results can be compared over time. In addition to assisting with the water tests, staff from the Pinelands Commission used nets to catch native Pinelands fish and demonstrated how the Commission protects wetlands and habitat for rare plants and animals (**please see photo above**).

Commission staff educated more than 800 students during in-class education programs and field trips in 2012.

Pinelands Short Course

The 23rd annual Pinelands Short Course, which was held at Burlington County College (BCC) on March 24th, drew more than 600 people. The event featured a total of 42 educational presentations, including 21 new programs.

The new courses included a discussion of dinosaurs and fossils on the fringes of the Pinelands, as well as presentations on black bears, timber rattlesnakes, turtles, research of northern pine snakes, southern pine beetles, ancient climate change and periglacial landscapes, forests, environmental and ecological research in Barnegat Bay, the grassroots of the Pinelands preservation movement, wild and scenic rivers in the Pinelands, Elias Wright (a teacher, military leader and surveyor), the Jersey Devil, planning an ecosystem garden, Piney agriculture, a photographic journey of the Pinelands and rarely seen, historic videos that document the old cranberry harvesting process and the lives of migrant workers at Double Trouble State Park.

The Pinelands Short Course is sponsored by the Commission, the Pinelands Institute for Environmental Studies (or P.I.N.E.S.) and Burlington County College, which has hosted the event at its Pemberton Township campus since 2004. The event is registered with the New Jersey Department of Education, and professional development credits are available to New Jersey teachers who attend.



John Bunnell, the Commission's Chief Scientist (center), describes the Batsto River watershed during the Commission's annual World Water Monitoring Day Event. Photo/Paul Leakan

Proposed Pinelands Exhibits

In July 2012, the Commission completed a project to design proposed, Pinelands-themed exhibits that would transform its headquarters into a Pinelands Visitor Center.

Throughout the year, the Commission worked closely with Content Design Collaborative LLC of Scituate, Mass., to design educational exhibits that would be housed as the Commission's Richard J. Sullivan Center (RJS Center) for Environmental Policy and Education in Pemberton Township, Burlington County. The Commission hired the firm using funds that were provided by the National Park Service.



The proposed exhibits shown above would feature sculptures and interactive displays that highlight the Pinelands' geology, uplands, wetlands and surface waters.

Illustration/Content Design Collaborative

The proposed exhibits would enhance the Commission's educational programs and raise awareness of the region's special resources, while highlighting recreational opportunities.

The design plan calls for relocating the existing receptionist/front desk in the lobby of the RJS Center to make room for a large map of recreation sites and other exhibits. The main exhibit room would be housed in the 320-square-foot technical center. There, visitors would be able to feel the grains of sand and gravel that make up the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer system. The "uplands" section of the room would detail the vital role of fire in shaping the Pinelands landscape, while exploring the dwarf pine and oak trees found in the Pine Plains, as well as the story of Elizabeth White and her efforts to cultivate the blueberry. The "wetlands" section would focus on rare plants and animals, such as the Pine Barrens treefrog, as well as cran-

berry agriculture. A large aquarium of native Pinelands fish would be featured in the "surface waters" section of the exhibit.

The Commission has begun to seek funding to build and install the exhibits.

Finances

Fiscal & Budget

The Commission's Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2013, which began July 1, 2012, totals \$4,352,100. Of this, \$3,782,300 or 87 percent, was budgeted for personnel expenses.

Budgeted revenue sources are projected to include \$394,500 in federal grants, a \$2.469 million State appropriation, \$687,000 in State grants and other State funding, \$425,000 in application fees and \$391,000 from the Commission's fund balance and reserves.

The 2013 budget for the Kirkwood-Cohansey Study, funded through legislation passed in 2001, is \$118,000. The budget for the Pinelands Conservation Fund is \$4,332,400.

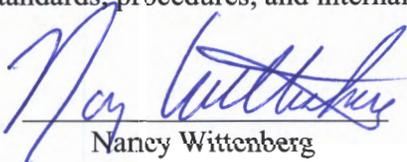
The Commission's Audit Report for Fiscal Year 2012, which ended June 30, 2012, can be found on the State Auditors web site at: www.njleg.state.nj.us/legislativepubs/auditreports_department.asp#PINE. The report is also available on the Pinelands Commission's web site: www.nj.gov/pinelands.

Pinelands Application Fees

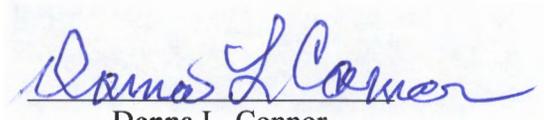
Since April 2004, the Pinelands Commission has received application fees to partially underwrite the direct costs associated with reviewing development applications in the Pinelands Area. During Fiscal Year 2012, application fee revenues totaled \$505,923 (\$65,118 more than Fiscal Year 2011). Due to the volatility of the real estate market, \$425,000 is anticipated in the Fiscal Year 2013 budget.

Certification

As required by State Executive Order #37, all State authorities are required to certify that during the preceding year the authority has, to the best of its knowledge, followed all of the authority's standards, procedures, and internal controls. I hereby certify to the best of my knowledge that, during the 2012 calendar year, all of the Commission's standards, procedures, and internal controls were followed.



Nancy Wittenberg
Executive Director



Donna L. Connor
Business Manager