

The PINELANDER

NEWSLETTER OF THE NEW JERSEY PINELANDS COMMISSION • WINTER 2008

Pinelands Commission approves nearly \$4 million expenditure to preserve more than 3,200 acres in Atlantic, Burlington and Ocean counties

The New Jersey Pinelands Commission's Permanent Land Protection Committee has agreed to dedicate nearly \$4 million to preserve more than 3,200 acres in Atlantic, Burlington and Ocean counties in the Pinelands. On September 28, the Committee approved the expenditure from the Pinelands Conservation Fund to preserve the land in partnership with local governments and nonprofit organizations.

"More than 53 percent of the Pinelands has been permanently protected, and we are pleased to work with local governmental and nonprofit organizations to protect an

additional 3,200 acres of ecologically valuable land," said John C. Stokes, Executive Director of the Commission. "Permanent land protection is clearly one of the most critical aspects of preserving the Pinelands environment, and the Commission is committed to protecting important natural, cultural, historic and agricultural land in perpetuity."

The Permanent Land Protection Committee approved funding for the preservation of 12 properties in numerous areas that it has deemed to have significant environmental resources. The funding is contingent upon the execution of the contract,

supported by a certification of fair market value, within 120 days. These areas include:

■ **The Toms River Corridor in Jackson Township, Ocean County** (four projects totaling 225 acres, up to \$1 million allocated to the Ocean County Natural Lands Trust);

■ **The Medford and Evesham Sub-regional Planning Area in Burlington County** (two projects totaling 27 acres, up to \$245,200 allocated to the Rancocas Conservancy);

■ **The Elwood Corridor in Mullica**

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Daniel M. Kennedy joins Pinelands Commission as Burlington County's new representative

Daniel M. Kennedy of Bordentown City has joined the Pinelands Commission as Burlington County's new representative on the panel.

Kennedy has served as the Coordinator of Burlington County's Farmland Preservation Program since 2004. He attended his first meeting as a Commission member on Oct. 12.

"The decisions of the Commission greatly impact the residents of Burlington County, and



Kennedy

I am honored that the Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders had the faith in me to appoint me to this position," Kennedy said.

Kennedy currently manages all facets of Burlington County's agriculture retention programs, including easement and fee simple transactions, as well as monitoring and promoting transfer-of-development rights programs and participation in the Pinelands Development Credit program. He holds a master's degree in City and Regional Planning from Rutgers University and a bachelor's degree in

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20 new presentations to highlight Pinelands Short Course

19th annual event to be held on March 1, 2008 at Burlington County College

The 19th annual Pinelands Short Course will feature a record total of 30 presentations, including 20 new programs and numerous popular topics from the past.

New topics for 2008 include Pinelands storytelling; the Eastern Coyote of New Jersey; disturbance, fire effects and rare species: lessons from the Warren Grove Gunnery Range; Pinelands forestry; Pinelands orchids and wildflowers, maritime forest; birding, botany and canoeing in Atlantic County; the first temporary housing at Whitesbog Village; an archaeological reconstruction of a rediscovered village called Florence; the earliest years of the blueberry industry; basketry; seasonal occupations; Lenape living in the Pinelands; hiking; creating backyard habitat for butterflies, hummingbirds and other wildlife; two presentations with live snakes; forest fire safety; and two programs with live Pinelands music.

Among other activities, participants in these new programs will have an oppor-

tunity to hold or observe several species of live snakes, build miniature houses as found in the historic Whitesbog Village, and learn tips on how to use materials found in the Pinelands to create baskets.

The two new music programs will feature live performances by Valerie Vaughn, a musician and educator from Tuckerton, and Jim Murphy, who is the first and only New Jersey artist to be inducted into America's Old-time Country Music Hall of Fame.

The presentation on Pinelands curriculum will help science and social studies teachers use Pinelands settings and themes to teach broader topics in biology, ecology, chemistry, earth science, history and social studies.

In addition to the new programs, popular presentations from the past will be offered during this year's Short Course. These include the Pinelands overview,

native Pinelands fish, frogs and toads, a look at the Central Railroad that ran through the Pinelands, long-distance migratory songbirds, the Cedar Bridge Tavern, Pinelands curriculum, and two guided field trips. The two field trips -- one at Whitesbog Village in Pemberton Township and the other at the 9,400-acre Franklin Parker Preserve in nearby Woodland Township -- will enable participants to tour two natural and historic jewels

in the Pinelands. Participants in the two field trips are encouraged to wear sturdy shoes and to be prepared for hiking outdoors.

The Pinelands Short Course is sponsored by the New Jersey Pinelands Commission and Burlington County College (BCC), which has hosted the event for the past four years. To be held at BCC's Pemberton Township campus on March 1, the program is open to all who are interested in learning about the Pinelands.

Last year's event featured 26 programs, including 15 new presentations. It drew a record crowd of 450 people.

The Pinelands Short Course is registered with the New Jersey Department of Education, and professional development credits will be available to New Jersey teachers who attend.

Discounted registration fees are offered to senior citizens and students.

The Short Course brochure includes complete, detailed descriptions of every program and presenter.

To request a brochure/registration form or for more information, please contact the Pinelands Commission at (609) 894-7300, ext. 125. The brochure and registration form can also be printed from the Commission's Web site. The address is: www.nj.gov/pinelands.

Participants are encouraged to register early to help ensure that they receive their first course selections. An early registration discount of \$5 is in effect until Feb. 1, 2008.

For a list of course titles and presenters, please see Page 8



Chris Jage of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, left center, led a tour of the 9,400-acre Franklin Parker Preserve during the 2007 Pinelands Short Course. The field trip will be offered again during the 2008 Short Course. Photo/Paul Leakan





Pinelands Commission approves nearly \$4 million expenditure to preserve more than 3,200 acres in Atlantic, Burlington and Ocean counties

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Township, Atlantic County (one project totaling 593 acres, up to \$300,000 allocated to the New Jersey Conservation Foundation);

■ **The Rural Development Area in Hamilton Township, Atlantic County** (one project totaling 700 acres, up to \$300,000 allocated to Atlantic County);

■ **The Forked River Mountains in Lacey and Ocean townships, Ocean County** (three projects totaling 1,591 acres, up to \$2,027,473 allocated to the New Jersey Conservation Foundation and the Ocean County Natural Lands Trust); and

■ **The South River in Buena Vista Township, Atlantic County** (one project totaling 70 acres, up to \$10,000 allocated to Buena Vista Township).

Including the nearly \$4 million allocation from the Pinelands

Conservation Fund and the cost-share funding from local governmental and nonprofit organizations, a total of nearly \$20 million worth of properties may be preserved.

Specific details regarding each property will be released upon completion of contract negotiations.

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.

The Fund is dedicated to three

types of projects: \$6 million for permanent land protection; \$3.5 million for conservation planning and research projects; and \$3.5 million to support community planning and design initiatives.

In 2006, the Commission hired a program facilitator, Conservation Resources Inc. of Chester, N.J., to assist in the development of a land acquisition program and to identify land preservation projects.

“In choosing areas for acquisition, ecological factors are paramount. However, the presence of prehistoric and historic resources increase their value,” said Pinelands Commissioner Candace McKee Ashmun, who chairs the Permanent Land Protection Committee. “The properties under consideration all meet these criteria. Permanent protection through acquisition will help us meet the goals of the state and federal Pinelands protection statutes.”



Kennedy joins Pinelands Commission as Burlington County’s representative

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Environmental Science from the University of Delaware. Kennedy is a member of the American Planning Association and is a candidate for a New Jersey Professional Planners license and an American Institute of Certified Planners license.

The Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders appointed Kennedy to a three-year term on the Pinelands Commission during the

board’s meeting on September 26.

The position was previously held by Patrick Slavin, a lecturer in biology at Burlington County College who had served as Burlington County’s representative on the Commission since March 2004.

“Pat was an outstanding member of the Commission whose thoughtfulness, effectiveness and dedication to furthering and strengthening the Pinelands protection program were very much appreciated,” said John C. Stokes, Executive Director of the

Pinelands Commission.

The Pinelands 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 are uncompensated for their service.





Commission, Wharton State Forest and local students test water quality, learn about Pinelands resource protection during World Water Monitoring Day

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP, N.J. – Dozens of students got a hands-on lesson in gauging Pinelands water quality and learned about the importance of protecting the region’s unique natural and cultural resources by participating in World Water Monitoring Day on Oct. 18.

Held at the historic Batsto Village here, the event attracted approximately 120 students who conducted water quality tests while interacting with, and receiving guidance from, staff with the New Jersey Pinelands Commission and the Wharton State Forest.

“In the shuffle of everyday life, it’s easy to overlook the natural resources located in our communities and backyards, but World Water Monitoring Day opens that window and provides students with the opportunity to experience these resources firsthand,” said Joel Mott, a Public Programs Specialist at the Pinelands Commission. “By doing so, students gain a better appreciation and understanding of why these resources are so important to protect.”

Students from Pinelands Regional Middle School in Ocean County, Sterling High School in Camden County and Haddon Township High School in Camden County obtained and tested water samples from Batsto Lake, which is located in the heart of the Pinelands. 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 will be posted on the World Water Monitoring Day Web site, 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, demonstrated how archaeology is used to protect cultural resources and how the region’s vast and critical water supplies, wetlands and habitat for rare plants and animals are safeguarded.

The 1.1-million-acre Pinelands National Reserve covers portions of seven counties in South Jersey, and is home to 850 species of plants and nearly 500 species of animals,



Jennifer Ciralo, a Research Technician with the Commission, pictured left, helped students search for fish during World Water Monitoring Day. Photo/Paul Leakan

including dozens that are classified as threatened or endangered.

Staff from the Wharton State Forest fired up Batsto’s historic sawmill to demonstrate the vital role of water resources in traditional Pinelands industries, such as forestry. They also discussed the region’s natural attributes at Batsto’s Nature Center.

World Water Monitoring Day is an annual, global event coordinated by the Water Environment Federation and the International Water Association. From September 18 to October 18, 2007, people around the globe monitor the quality of their local watersheds and enter their results into an international database. A major goal of this effort is to create an awareness of the importance of protecting the resources upon which our lives depend.



Students used nets and an aquascope to search for, and catch, native Pinelands fish from Batsto Lake during World Water Monitoring Day. Photo/Paul Leakan





Commission approves agreement to permit sewerage at Ancora, eliminate failing wastewater treatment system onsite

The Pinelands Commission has approved an agreement that permits the extension of public sanitary sewer service to the Ancora Psychiatric Hospital in Winslow Township, Camden County, enabling the facility to decommission a failing wastewater treatment plant onsite.

The Memorandum of Agreement was authorized by the Commission on Nov. 9, and was reached between the Commission, the New Jersey Department of Human Services, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority.

“This agreement enables Ancora to decommission its aging and failing wastewater treatment plant, which, in turn, will head off a future public health problem,” said John C. Stokes, Executive Director of the Commission. “While allowing Ancora to accommodate future wastewater flows, the agreement will also permanently protect open space, decrease demand on Pinelands water supplies and remove a significant source of pollution from a Pinelands watershed.”

The New Jersey Department of Human Services (NJ DHS) operates the Ancora Psychiatric Hospital, which is located on 202 Spring Garden Road in a Pinelands-designated Rural Development Area. The facility’s wastewater treatment plant and the associated wastewater infiltration lagoons are in failure. Moreover, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has concluded that regional geologic conditions preclude the reliable recharge of treated wastewater onsite.

To remedy the situation, the NJ DHS will decommission the existing waste-

water treatment facilities and convey the wastewater via a proposed sewage force main from Ancora Psychiatric Hospital to existing sewerage infrastructure in Winslow Township to the Camden County Municipal Utilities Authority (CCMUA). The wastewater generated by Ancora will be treated at the CCMUA Water Pollution Control Facility in Camden City and discharged into the Delaware River.

The Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) permits the development of new wastewater conveyance infrastructure within a Pinelands Rural Development Area or Agricultural Production Area to address an identified public health problem and designed commensurate with existing development. However, the NJ DHS has indicated that Ancora must have the flexibility to accommodate future wastewater flows, such as flows resulting from judicially mandated increases in patient and inmate populations. The Commission determined that the unique circumstances at Ancora – namely the fact that existing and future wastewater disposal needs from the facility cannot be met onsite – supports a deviation from the requirements of the CMP.

Under a strict application of the CMP, construction of the proposed infrastructure within the Pinelands Rural Development Area or Agricultural Production Area, designed to accommodate both existing and future wastewater flows from the parcel, would be inconsistent with Pinelands regulations. However, the Commission found that the agreement includes measures that will, at a minimum, afford an equivalent level of protection of Pinelands resources as would be provided through

strict application of the land use and environmental standards contained in the CMP.

The measures include the following:

■ Indirect discharges of treated wastewater from the Ancora Psychiatric Hospital facility to the Blue Anchor Brook watershed will cease, thereby removing a significant source of pollutant loading to the watershed;

■ More than 50 percent of the available land on the parcel will be permanently deed restricted as open space, approximately 350 acres. Existing surface improvements such as buildings, pavement or other structures not used in the connection to the CCMUA sewer system in the designated open space area will be removed; and

■ All water withdrawals at Ancora from Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer supply wells, with a limited exception to address emergency situations that endanger human life, health or safety, will cease. Decreasing the water demand on the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer is expected to enhance streamflow conditions within the Blue Anchor Brook, thereby decreasing ecological impacts.

If the future sewerage of Elmtowne or the Village of Elm becomes necessary due to public health problems, and is authorized by the Commission, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and the CCMUA, the NJ DHS has agreed to consider an easement for the sewer area on the Ancora parcel. The easement would be subject to Winslow Township’s payment of any reasonable user fees or other costs. It would permit Winslow to install sewage infrastructure to connect Elmtowne and/or the Village of Elm to the CCMUA’s wastewater treatment plant.



Protecting Pinelands water is vital for the region's future

Commentary by John C. Stokes, Executive Director of the New Jersey Pinelands Commission

It is an essential ingredient for sustaining all forms of life, a resource whose availability has enabled the most complex civilizations throughout history to flourish.

Indeed, water is the lifeblood of our planet.

Residents of New Jersey can take pride in knowing that their state is home to one of the largest supplies of clean drinking water in the eastern U.S. Located in the Pinelands area of Southern New Jersey, the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer contains an estimated 17 trillion gallons of pure water. That's equal to nearly half of all the water consumed each year nationwide.

Clean water is vital for the region's sustainability.

More than one million people get their drinking water from the Kirkwood-Cohansey. The aquifer also feeds our rivers, streams and coastal estuaries and is a critical component of a unique Pinelands ecosystem that provides refuge for dozens of rare plant and animal species.

Many residents who rely on this tremendous resource may not realize that the region's sandy soil makes the aquifer particularly vulnerable to pollutants. That's because water passes quickly through the porous soil before reaching the water table, and can carry along pollutants from sources such as septic tanks and landfills.

Fortunately, the standards being implemented through the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan have protected large, undeveloped tracts of land, enabling water to absorb and recharge the aquifer while greatly limiting the negative effects of devel-



Forest vegetation is reflected on the Wading River in Woodland Township, Burlington County, in the Pinelands. Photo/Paul Leakan

opment on water quality. The Plan has allowed for growth in certain areas with infrastructure such as sewer and public water.

The Commission is ever mindful of the need to protect water supplies.

Commission scientists are now past the midway point of a six-year study that will help gain a better understanding of the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer and how current and future water-supply needs in the Pinelands can be met while avoiding adverse impacts on the environment it supports.

Next year, the Commission will complete its first comprehensive re-examination of the Pinelands' land-use boundaries in 27 years. These land-use designations help to prevent development in parts of the Pinelands valued for their ecological and water resource values. The designations will be revised to ensure that valuable areas

are afforded the best possible protection.

Since May, the Commission has been implementing new stormwater management regulations devised to significantly reduce the effects of "non-point" pollution. These regulations are among the most protective in the nation.

Additionally, the Commission is testing new septic system technologies that can remove 60 percent or more of the pollution generated by standard septic systems.

Last but not least, the Commission recently completed two comprehensive, sub-regional planning initiatives that will better protect water supplies. The first initiative, undertaken in the Toms River watershed in Ocean County, protects 73 percent of a 17,000-acre area through strict conser-

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Commission adopts five amendments to the Pinelands Plan

On Sept. 15, the Pinelands Commission adopted five amendments to the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), the rules that govern land-use, development and natural resource protection in the Pinelands.

“These changes address a wide-range of important regulatory matters in the Pinelands and will further strengthen the Pinelands protection program,” said John C. Stokes, Executive Director of the Pinelands Commission.

The regulatory amendments pertain to nonconforming uses, accessory recycling centers, the pilot program for alternate septic design wastewater treatment systems, escrows and the withdrawal of applications for development.

The amendments are available for review on the Commission’s Web site. The direct address to the site is: www.nj.gov/pinelands/cmp/amend.

The CMP has guided land-use and development in the state-designated Pinelands Area since it took effect on January 14, 1981.



Commission details link between septic systems and clean water during series of public meetings

The Pinelands Commission conducted a series of meetings in municipalities throughout the Pinelands Area in November and December to discuss the impact that septic systems have on water quality.

Ed Wengrowski, the Commission’s Wastewater Management Coordinator, was on-hand during the meetings to answer questions related to septic systems and discussed how septic systems can affect public health, water quality, and property values.

“Approximately one-third of the homes in the Pinelands have septic systems, but most people know very little about how these systems work,” Wengrowski said. “Improper or inadequate maintenance of these systems can have an adverse impact on water supplies, can pose health risks, and can result in very costly repair bills.”

The informative meetings were held in

Galloway, Maurice River, Upper, Buena Vista, Barnegat, Franklin, Tabernacle, Winslow, Pemberton and Jackson townships.

The meetings are part of an ongoing effort by the Commission to develop programs for the management of sep-

tic systems in the Pinelands.

Discussion topics included system maintenance, resale inspections, repair options and ways in which proper operation of systems can be achieved through local management programs. The Commission is seeking input from the public on all of

these issues.

At the conclusion of the project, the Commission plans to release a septic system Best Management Practices manual to help Pinelands Area municipalities comply with proposed New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection septic system management requirements.



Ed Wengrowski, the Commission’s Wastewater Management Coordinator, delivers a presentation in Winslow Township, Camden County.

Photo/Paul Leakan

Protecting Pinelands water is vital for the region’s future

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vation zoning requirements, reduces wastewater by 600,000 gallons per day, reduces other pollutants from development by 700,000 gallons per day and establishes protective buffers of 600 feet on each side of high value

streams. The second initiative, undertaken in Medford and Evesham in Burlington County, includes plans for a “development transfer” program that will likely avoid all development within a valuable watershed area.

Aside from the Commission’s efforts, residents can do their part to protect water supplies. By planting native grass-

es and plants that are already adapted to the region’s unique environment, people can reduce water consumption and avoid using chemical fertilizers and pesticides. They can also help by regularly maintaining their septic systems.

Working together, and with continued vigilance, we will successfully safeguard a resource upon which we all depend.



List of Course Titles and Presenters ~ 19th Annual Pinelands Short Course

- **Orchids and Wildflowers of the New Jersey Pinelands (NEW):** Dr. Catherine Folio.
- **Pinelands Frogs and Toads; Pinelands Fish:** John Bunnell, Research Scientist, Pinelands Commission
- **Pinelands Overview:** William Dunscombe, chairman of the Department of Biology at Union County College
- **Storytelling in the Pines (NEW):** Angus Gillespie, Ph.D., Rutgers University
- **Maritime Forest (NEW):** Terry O'Leary, Education Coordinator, New Jersey Forest Service
- **The Eastern Coyote in New Jersey (NEW):** Anthony McBride, biologist with the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife
- **Birding, Botany and Canoeing in Atlantic County (NEW):** Michael Hogan, nature photographer
- **Jersey Devil Railroad:** Al Stokley, member of the Ocean County Historical Society
- **Disturbance, fire effects and rare species: Lessons from the Warren Grove GUNNERY RANGE (NEW):** Walter F. Bien, Ph.D., Drexel University
- **Forestry and the Pinelands Forests: A Historical and Conservation Perspective (NEW):** Robert A. Williams, certified forester
- **The Lost Village Immigrant Italian Workers Called Rome (NEW); The Rediscovered Village Called Florence (NEW):** Rick Prickett, teacher
- **Pine Barrens to Tropical Forest:** Long Distance Migratory Songbirds: Emile DeVito, Ph.D.
- **Tour of the Franklin Parker Preserve (Field Trip):** New Jersey Conservation Foundation
- **The Earliest Years of the Blueberry Industry (NEW):** Nancy O'Mallon, Aboutblueberries.com
- **Pinelands Basketry (NEW):** Mary V. Carty, Pinelands Folk and Basketry Center
- **Cedar Bridge Tavern: The Path to Preservation:** Tim Hart, Stafford Township Historical Society
- **Working the Cycle (NEW):** Jaelyn Stewart, Director, Jersey Shore Folk Center
- **Tour of the Historic Whitesbog Village (Field Trip):** Dr. Mark Ehlenfeldt, President, Whitesbog Preservation Trust
- **Lenape Living in the Pines (NEW):** Pinelands Institute of Nature and Environmental Science
- **Tunes and Tales of the Pinelands (NEW):** Valerie Vaughn
- **Go New Jersey: Original music of the Jersey Pines in the bluegrass style (NEW):** Jim Murphy, the Pine Baron
- **Snakes Alive (NEW):** George E. Young, teacher
- **The Pine Barrens: Up Close & Natural Curriculum:** Pinelands Preservation Alliance
- **Creating Backyard Habitat in the Pinelands (NEW); How to Create Butterfly & Hummingbird Garden Habitat (NEW):** Pat Sutton, naturalist
- **Hiking in the Pinelands (NEW):** Tom Neigel, Outdoor Club of South Jersey
- **Threatened and Endangered Snakes of the Pine Barrens:** Matt McCort, Herpetologist
- **Wildfire Safety Program:** Maris Gabliks, State Firewarden, Greg McLaughlin, Division Firewarden



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