



NEW JERSEY PINELANDS COMMISSION

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT



A reflection of vegetation in a swamp in Brendan T. Byrne Forest in the Pinelands in November

NOVEMBER 2022

1 EXECUTIVE OFFICE

1.1 ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1.1A COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- **Personnel & Budget (P&B) Committee:** The Committee did not meet in November.
- **Pinelands Climate Committee:** The Committee met on November 30, 2022 and discussed its meeting schedule for 2023. Staff made a presentation on the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) upcoming inland flood protection rule proposal, noting that the revised NJDEP standards will automatically be incorporated in the Comprehensive Management Plan's (CMP) stormwater regulations. The Committee then discussed possible CMP amendments and identified two initial priorities: revisions to current CMP solar energy facility rules and an analysis of Pinelands management area boundaries with the goal of identifying vulnerable lands within areas designated for growth (Regional Growth Areas, Pinelands Towns and Pinelands Villages).
- **Policy & Implementation (P&I) Committee:** The Committee met on November 30, 2022. Staff presented its recommended revisions to the proposed Kirkwood-Cohansey water management CMP amendments, largely to recognize nonconsumptive water use by the resource extraction industry. Committee members requested greater specificity in the proposed definition and exemption for nonconsumptive use. A full re-proposal will be drafted, submitted to the Governor's office for review and placed on the Commission's January 2023 agenda for consideration, at which time the re-proposal could be referred back to the P&I Committee if additional discussion proves necessary. The Committee also reviewed a draft amendment to the Commission's Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Atlantic County concerning development at Lake Lenape Park and authorized the staff to move forward with the formal MOA process. Finally, the staff made a presentation on proposed clarifications and corrections to Stockton University's Deed of Conservation Restriction (DCR). The Committee indicated its support for the revised DCR, which will require approval by the NJDEP. Staff will prepare a report and recommendation on the University's 2020 Facilities Master Plan for Committee review in early 2023.

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 NJDEP's proposal of amendments to its stormwater management rules that may need to be incorporated in the Pinelands model stormwater ordinance. NJDEP recently announced that its proposed inland flooding rules will be published in the New Jersey Register in early December.
- **Water Management (Kirkwood-Cohansey):** The public comment period on the proposed CMP amendments closed on November 5, 2022. Staff reviewed all comments received and recommended a revised re-proposal to incorporate changes to the amendments in response to

concerns raised by the resource extraction industry. The revised rule for re-proposal was reviewed and discussed by the P&I Committee on November 30, 2022, as described above. Staff plans to finalize the re-proposal language, submit it to the Governor's office for review and approval and present the re-proposal to the full Commission in January to obtain authorization to proceed with rulemaking.

- **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 12 Open Public Records Act (OPRA) requests were received in November. Eight were provided responsive material, two were advised that there was no responsive material, one was advised to schedule a file review and one was advised their request was too broad.

1.1D PINELANDS MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

- The Pinelands Municipal Council's November 29, 2022 meeting was canceled.

1.1E OTHER

- **Fenwick Manor Preservation Plan:** A contract was executed on November 28, 2022 with Connolly & Hickey to prepare a Preservation Plan for Fenwick Manor, using the \$31,387 Historic Site Management grant provided by the New Jersey Historic Trust. The Preservation Plan will assess and prioritize future rehabilitation projects related to Fenwick, including engineering and structural needs as well as painting, repairs, and scheduled upkeep in the form of a comprehensive, cyclical maintenance plan. Staff met with the consultants and provided a tour of Fenwick Manor on November 28, 2022.
- The New Jersey Senate approved the Governor's nomination of Mark Mauriello to the Pinelands Commission at its November 21, 2022 meeting. Mark replaces Gary Quinn, who served on the Commission for over 11 years.

1.2 LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

1.2A LEGISLATION

- **S3283/A4650 - Amends lists of environmental infrastructure projects approved for long-term funding by NJDEP; makes various changes to FY2023 environmental infrastructure funding program:** This bill would amend P.L.2022, c.99 to amend the lists of environmental

infrastructure projects for which the Legislature has appropriated funds to the NJDEP for State fiscal year 2023 (FY2023) to include new projects, remove projects, modify the priority of certain projects, and modify the loan amounts for certain projects. Projects funded under the Pinelands Infrastructure Trust Fund are included under one of the lists in this bill. The bill would appropriate up to \$2.19 billion to the NJDEP, and any unexpended balances from previous authorizations, to provide loans to project sponsors for a total of 225 eligible environmental infrastructure projects for FY2023. Some of this funding has been allocated to Pinelands municipalities and municipal utility authorities located in the Pinelands Area or that service portions of the Pinelands Area.

- **S3338/A4867 – Requires NJDEP to prioritize funding for certain projects for acquisition of lands for recreation and conservation purposes and certain environmental infrastructure projects that include, or allow for, flood mitigation projects:** This bill would direct the NJDEP to provide additional priority points to certain applicants seeking funding for Blue Acres projects and for wastewater and drinking water infrastructure projects. Specifically, under the bill, projects that include, or allow for, a flood mitigation project to occur onsite would receive additional priority points in the ranking for funding pursuant to the respective program. The NJDEP would factor these additional points into its calculations when establishing: (1) the list of projects eligible to receive “Blue Acres funding”; (2) the “clean water project priority list,” pursuant to section 20 of P.L.1985, c.334 (C.58:11B-20); and (3) the “drinking water project priority list,” pursuant to section 24 of P.L.1997, c.224 (C.58:11B-20.1)

1.2B INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS

- **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 of a different configuration. The County previously discussed its request with the P&I 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. Staff briefed the P&I Committee at its November 30, 2022 meeting. A public hearing to elicit comments on the proposed amendment to the 1998 MOA will be scheduled for January 4, 2022. A report and recommendation on the MOA Amendment is expected to be on the P&I Committee’s January 2023 agenda.

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 1st, weekly testing would no longer be required. COVID leave guidance remains the same for the month of November.

- **Recruitment/Promotions:** Recruitment continued throughout November for a new Cultural Resources Planner-Archaeologist to replace Tony McNichol, who resigned from the Commission effective November 18, 2022. Recruitment also began to fill the Information Specialist 3 vacancy. In addition, staff drafted a revised job announcement to be posted in early December, seeking to fill a vacancy in the Science Office.
- **NJ Employees Charitable Campaign (NJECC):** The 2022/2023 NJECC virtual kickoff was held September 13, 2022. This year's campaign will run from September 2022 – December 2022.
- **Training:** Staff attended GoToWebinar - Completing Certifications and Quiet Quitting and the Connection to Psychological Safety & Overall Wellbeing.
- **NJ Well:** The NJ Well kickoff began November 1, 2022. NJWELL is focused on helping employees to achieve optimal health by participating in healthy activities throughout the year (11/1/2022 - 10/31/2023).

2 INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

- **Interagency Council on Climate Change (IAC):** The IAC's November 9, 2022 meeting was cancelled due to conflicting conferences and holidays. The IAC announced that a special meeting will be held on December 13, 2022, and it will include the leaders of all participating agencies.
- **NJDEP Outdoor Recreation Advisory Committee:** The Planning Office continued its participation in this Committee in November. The meeting held in November focused on the principle of furthering equity and environmental justice. In a separate meeting, staff discussed the overlap of the Commission's long-term economic monitoring program to evaluate the economy of parks and open space and potential data sources, especially as that data may be available through development of the outdoor recreation plan.
- **Water Supply Advisory Council:** Planning staff attended the November Council meeting. NJDEP presented information on planned updates to the Statewide Water Supply Plan. The particular updates discussed involved the parameters for setting stream low flow margin. Notably for the planned update, the baseflow depletion factor will continue to be 90%, the plan will continue to use HUC-11 watersheds, and the acceptable margin of use from the low flow margin will be 25%. There will be an adjustment to the reported peak use that will be based on a three-year rolling average rather than a single year of peak use.

3 PLANNING

3.1 CONFORMANCE ACTIVITY

	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Master Plans/Ordinances Received		
Adopted	9	97
Drafted or Introduced	6	80
Total ¹	10	128
Substantial Issue Finding ²	1	6
No Substantial Issue Finding	5	52
No Issue Finding	0	15
Total	6	74
Finding Letters Issued³	4	49

3.2 CULTURAL RESOURCE ACTIVITY

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Applications Reviewed	7	106
Surveys Required	0	9
Surveys Reviewed	0	6
Certificates of Appropriateness Required	0	4

¹The 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).

² 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.

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

Notable Activity

Approximately 60 people attended the Commission’s second Archaeology and Anthropology Symposium on November 18, 2022. The daylong event was held in the Richard J. Sullivan Center for Environmental Policy & Education, and it featured seven presentations.

The event was livestreamed, recorded and is available for viewing on the Commission’s YouTube Channel.



Above: Approximately 60 people attended the Commission’s Archaeology and Anthropology Symposium on November 18, 2022.

3.3 PINELANDS DEVELOPMENT CREDIT (PDC) PROGRAM

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
PDCs Allocated	4.25	14.19
PDCs Severed	0	16.0
Acres Protected	0	345.39
PDCs Extinguished	0	0.50
Acres Protected	0	15.82
PDCs Sold	0	44.25
Average Sales Price per PDC	n/a	\$75,232
Average Sales Price per right	n/a	\$18,808
PDCs Redeemed	0.25	9.25

Notable Activity:

- **PDC Allocations:** PDCs were allocated to a six-acre parcel in the Agricultural Production Area in the Town of Hammonton and to an 80-acre parcel in the Agricultural Production Area in Galloway Township.
- **PDC Redemptions:** 0.25 PDCs were redeemed for a three-lot subdivision, development of a commercial building and the expansion of an existing storage yard in Weymouth Township.

3.4 SPECIAL PROJECTS

- **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 (DCR) 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 the College’s infrastructure needs. Staff presented the map that clarifies the areas on the Galloway campus that are subject to the terms of the 2014 DCR at the November 30, 2022 P&I Committee meeting. Going forward, staff will assist Stockton in working with NJDEP to amend the DCR and will schedule a public hearing and proceed with review of the 2020 Facilities Master Plan in early 2023.
- **In-house Landfill Assessment Training:** A member of the Planning Office conducted an in-house training session for staff of the Planning and the Regulatory Programs Offices on the development and assessment of conceptual site models and hydrogeologic framework models of legacy landfill sites in the Pinelands Area and the process by which groundwater data acquired from landfill monitoring wells is compared to published ecological screening values to determine if an uncapped landfill poses a significant ecological risk to nearby wetlands.

4 REGULATORY PROGRAMS

4.1 APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Pre-Application Conferences	3	91
Certificates of Filing	15	186
Public Development Reports	1	30
Forestry Certificates of Filing	2	7
PDC Letters of Interpretation	2	13
Non-PDC Letters of Interpretation	0	3

MOA Consistency Determinations	1	42
Review of Agency Determinations	34	626

4.2 NOTABLE APPLICATIONS

- Single Family Dwelling, Estell Manor (App. No 1985-0577.001):** On January 16, 1987, the Commission approved a Waiver of Strict Compliance to develop a dwelling on a 4.64-acre lot. Based upon the presence of wetlands, the Waiver included a condition that all development must be located within 100 feet of Maple Avenue. By email dated October 14, 2022, an attorney representing the property owner requested a meeting to discuss relief from that condition of the Waiver. The applicant’s attorney indicated that Estell Manor City was concerned regarding the setback of the proposed dwelling within 100 feet of Maple Avenue. By email dated October 31, 2022, the Commission staff advised that the staff cannot grant relief from the conditions of a Waiver because they were imposed by a vote of the Commissioners. The Commission staff email indicated that if the applicant could not otherwise resolve the issue, an amended Waiver application must be completed with the Commission. The email further advised that a Commission Waiver can only provide the minimum relief necessary from the wetland protection standard. On November 23, 2022, the Commission staff met with the applicant’s attorney and the Estell Manor Planning/Zoning Board attorney to discuss the application. It is anticipated that an amended application for a Waiver will be filed with the Commission.
- Landfill Soil Cap and Solar Energy Facility, Berkeley Township (App. No. 1986-0127.001 & App. No. 1986-0127.015)** Two threatened and endangered (T&E) animal species were identified on or in the immediate vicinity of the approximately 40 acres of forest proposed to be cleared for the proposed landfill soil cap. By letter dated September 30, 2022, the Commission staff advised that, as currently designed, both the landfill soil cap and the solar energy facility projects were inconsistent with CMP T&E species protection standards. The Commission staff letter provided guidance regarding how the two proposed projects could be revised to maintain consistency with the T&E species protection standards. On November 9, 2022, the Commission issued a Certificate of Filing for an approximately 60-acre solar energy facility at the site of the now closed Berkeley Township landfill. The Certificate of Filing indicated that the proposed solar energy facility was inconsistent with the T&E species protection standards. It is anticipated that the proposed development will be modified to address the inconsistency with the T&E animal species protection standard. An application for the proposed soil capping of Berkeley Township’s closed landfill will be subject to final public comment at the Commission’s December 9, 2022 monthly meeting. The application may be considered for approval at the Commission’s January 13, 2023 monthly meeting. The proposed solar energy facility will be located on the proposed landfill soil cap.
- 115 Residential Dwelling Units, Hamilton Township (App. No. 1989-0546.017):** This application proposes the redevelopment of an existing three-story textile manufacturing building on a 5.2-acre parcel in the Regional Growth Area. The application proposes a three-story addition to the existing manufacturing building. The existing building is commonly referred to as the “Cotton

Mill.” By letter dated November 10, 2022, the Commission staff advised of the information necessary to complete the application.

- **Cannabis 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 the Rural Development Area. The existing and proposed development will be serviced by an onsite septic system(s). 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. On August 1, 2022, the Commission staff discussed with the Township Zoning Board of Adjustment attorney the feasibility of dividing the proposed development project into two phases. Phase one of the development would be limited to the use of an existing 36,750 square foot commercial building. Phase one of the project could meet the stormwater management and groundwater quality (septic dilution) standards. On August 2, 2022, the Commission staff received a draft revised Township Zoning Board of Adjustment Resolution dividing the project into two development phases. On November 16, 2022, the Commission staff provided comments on the revised Township Zoning Board of Adjustment Resolution. Thereafter, the applicant apparently advised the Township that they were abandoning the second phase of the proposed development. Instead, the applicant was proposing to develop certain site improvements on the parcel that were previously approved by the Township and the Commission as part of a separate application for a commercial construction materials storage facility on the parcel. On November 22, 2022, the attorney for the Zoning Board of Adjustment provided a draft copy of a further revised resolution indicating that the applicant was abandoning the second phase of the development and proposing to develop certain previously approved site improvements on the parcel. That draft resolution is currently under review.
- **Cannabis Facility, Galloway Township (App. No. 1989-0009.006);** On November 28, 2022, a pre-application meeting was held with a property owner and representatives of the cannabis developer. The proposal seeks to establish an outdoor cannabis grow facility on a 40-acre parcel in the Agricultural Production Area. The proposal includes product processing buildings, a parking lot and a possible visitors/education center. At the pre-application meeting, the Commission staff reviewed the applicable regulations of the Township land use ordinance and the CMP. Those standards included wetlands protection, groundwater quality (septic dilution) and stormwater management. Based upon the Commission’s regulations, the growing of the cannabis is considered an agricultural activity and does not require application to the Commission. The proposed agricultural product processing buildings, visitors/education center and associated site improvements on the parcel require application to the Commission.
- **Commercial Development, Berkeley Township (App. No. 2015-0083.001):** Approximately one acre of forest was cleared and graded for the expansion of an existing commercial use on a 3.4-acre parcel. This area is currently being utilized for commercial storage purposes. The clearing, grading and utilization of the area for commercial storage purposes occurred without application to the Township or the Commission. There are documented northern pine snake sightings (a threatened animal species) in the immediate vicinity of the parcel. As part of this application, it must be demonstrated that the proposed development, including the clearing and grading of the one acre that already occurred, is consistent with the T&E animal species

protection standard. Our letters regarding the application have consistently raised the question of whether and how it can be demonstrated that the proposed development is consistent with the T&E animal species protection standard considering that one acre has already been cleared and developed. By letter dated February 25, 2022, the Commission staff identified alternative approaches to address the issue with the T&E animal species protection standard raised by this application. To date, the applicant has not pursued the alternative approaches identified in that letter. A September 22, 2022 letter from the applicant's consultant summarized the T&E information previously submitted to the Commission and referenced additional T&E survey work that has been completed, but not as of yet, submitted to the Commission. By letter dated November 23, 2022, the Commission staff indicated that in the absence of new information, it has not been demonstrated that the proposed development meets the T&E animal species protection standard.

- **657 Residential Dwelling Units, Egg Harbor Township (App. No. 1985-1320.004):** On June 14, 2006, the Commission staff issued a Certificate of Filing for the development of 657 dwelling units on a 273.6-acre parcel in the Township's Regional Growth Area. On October 8, 2009, the Commission staff issued a letter indicating that a 2007 Township Planning Board final approval for the proposed development of 657 dwelling units could take effect. The project did not proceed, and no further information was submitted to the Commission regarding the proposed development until a general inquiry was received in July of 2022. By letter dated October 14, 2022, the Commission staff was advised that the Township Planning Board had granted a third extension of the 2007 Township Planning Board final approval. The resolution approving the third extension cites the New Jersey Permit Extension Act. Subsequently, the Commission staff received copied of the first and second extensions granted by the Township Planning Board. At the time of the final municipal subdivision approval in 2007, the proposed residential development was located in the Township's RG-5 zoning district. At that time, the proposed residential density of the development did not trigger the need for the purchase of PDCs. In 2018, the Commission certified an amendment to the Township land use ordinance requiring that proposed residential development in the Township's RG-5 zoning district redeem PDCs for 25% of all proposed market rate dwelling units. All 657 proposed dwelling units are market rate. The Commission staff is currently reviewing the three Township Planning Board extensions to determine the need for the proposed development to purchase PDCs. By emails and letters dated November 2, 2022, November 3, 2022, November 8, 2022, November 27, 2022 and November 29, 2022, the applicant's attorney submitted legal arguments addressing why the proposed development should not be subject to a 25% PDC requirement. The staff is currently reviewing the submitted information.
- **Change in Use, Manchester Township (App. No. 2003-0047.002):** On May 5, 2022, the Commission staff issued an inconsistent Certificate of Filing for a proposed change in use of a portion of an existing restaurant to a retail commercial use and a food bank. The existing and proposed development on the 1.9-acre parcel will be serviced by an existing onsite conventional septic system. The Certificate of Filing indicated that the proposed development was inconsistent with the CMP's 2 parts per million (ppm) nitrogen groundwater quality (septic dilution) standard. The issue is resolvable by either servicing the existing building with public sanitary sewer or replacing the existing onsite conventional septic system with an onsite wastewater treatment system. On August 9, 2022, the Commission staff issued a letter scheduling a public hearing for November 9, 2022 to review the substantial issue raised by a Township site plan approval granted on June 6, 2022 for the proposed change of use. By email

dated October 21, 2022, the applicant proposed to deed restrict contiguous acreage to enable the proposed change in use to meet the groundwater quality (septic dilution) standard. By letter dated October 28, 2022, the Commission staff confirmed that deed restricting 3.52 contiguous acres would enable the proposed change in use to meet the groundwater quality (septic dilution) standard. The scheduled November 9, 2022 public hearing was opened and, at the applicant's request, continued until November 29, 2022. The applicant requested the continuance to pursue the deed restriction of contiguous acreage to address the inconsistency with the groundwater quality (septic dilution) standard. On November 28, 2022, the applicant submitted additional information indicating that they were pursuing the deed restriction of a different contiguous parcel. The November 29, 2022 public hearing was again opened and, at the applicant's request, continued until December 21, 2022 while the applicant pursues the deed restriction of contiguous acreage to address the inconsistency with the groundwater quality (septic dilution) standard.

- **Recreation Trails, Pemberton Township (App. No. 1982-3181.008):** A site inspection of the proposed trails was conducted by Commission staff and representatives of the applicant on January 14, 2022. The trails are proposed to be located partially in wetlands, but primarily in the required buffer to wetlands. The Commission staff advised that the surfacing of existing sand trails with crushed stone raised an issue with the wetlands protection standards of the Township land use ordinance and the CMP. On June 10, 2022, the Commission received information addressing how the proposed trails could be constructed consistent with the Commission's wetlands protection standards. By letter dated September 13, 2022, the Commission staff advised that the proposed stone surfacing of existing trails located in the required buffer to wetlands was not consistent with wetland protection standards. On September 23, 2022, the Commission staff met with the Township Administrator and a representative of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance to further discuss the issue. The proposed stone surfacing of trails to allow for wheelchair access was extensively discussed. A follow-up meeting was held on October 28, 2022 to further discuss the issue. On November 14, 2022, the Commission staff met with representatives of the applicant. At that meeting, the Commission staff indicated that the proposed stone surfacing of existing trails located in the required buffer to wetlands was not consistent with CMP wetland protection standards and indicated that the Township may wish to consider pursuing an MOA with the Commission for the proposed development. The applicant indicated an interest in pursuing the MOA and will be submitting certain background information to the Commission addressing a proposed MOA. Upon submission of that MOA information, it will be reviewed by the Commission's P&I Committee.
- **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 threatened 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. After completion of that review, on September 12, 2022, the Commission staff issued a letter indicating that the proposed development was inconsistent with the T&E species protection standard. The letter further indicated that the proposed development would require a Waiver of Strict Compliance from the T&E species protection standard. At the request of the applicant, on September 26, 2022, the Commission staff issued an Inconsistent Certificate of Filing for the proposed development. The Certificate of Filing indicated that receipt of any county or municipal permits or approvals for the proposed dwelling would probably result in the Commission staff scheduling a public hearing to review the consistency of the proposed development with the

T&E species protection standard. On September 22, 2022, the applicant submitted additional T&E species information. Upon review of that information, the Commission staff issued a letter on October 26, 2022 indicating that it remained the Commission staff's opinion that it had not been demonstrated that the proposed development was consistent with the T&E animal species protection standard. On November 18, 2022, the Commission staff received notice from the Ocean County Health Department of its intent to issue a septic permit for the proposed dwelling. The Commission staff advised the County Health Department of the issue raised by the proposed development. The Commission staff anticipates scheduling a public hearing on the application. The applicant has advised of their intent to attend the public hearing.

4.3 OFF-ROAD VEHICLE EVENT APPROVALS

- **Application # 1988-0757.069**
Tri-County Sportsmen Motorcycle Club, Inc.
Approval Issued: 11/1/2022
Event Name: 2022 Hammer Run Dual Sport
Event Date: November 5, 2022
Municipality: Corbin City, Dennis Township, Estell Manor City, Maurice River Township, Upper Township, Woodbine Borough
Lands Utilized: Belleplain State Forest
Route Length: 78 miles

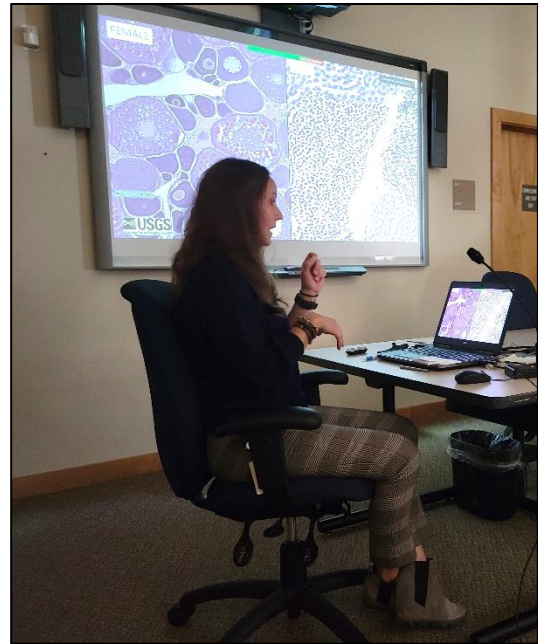
SCIENCE

5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

- **Water Level Monitoring:** In November, 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. Automatic water-level recorders are installed in seven other ponds and one forest plot to monitor water levels continuously. The recorders stopped working in two of the ponds. Replacement recorders were ordered but are not expected to arrive until late winter because of supply issues.
- **Rare Snake Monitoring:** Science staff continued to radio track pine snakes, corn snakes, and hognose snakes as part of this monitoring project. Most snakes are at or inside their winter dens, but staff will continue to check throughout late fall and winter to record any movements or den switching that may occur. New dens discovered that are out of view will be corralled during the winter and monitored in subsequent years as part of the Rare Snake Monitoring Program. Artificial cover will be placed at shed, nest, and hibernation sites to help recapture tagged snakes as well as new snakes in the future.

5.2 LONG TERM STUDIES

- **Endocrine Disruption Study:** U.S. Geological Survey researchers who collaborated on this study with Commission scientists presented the results of the study to the Commission during its November meeting. The journal publication that resulted from the study was sent to the Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University as a deliverable for the Commission receiving the grant funding.
- **King Snake Study:** In November, Science and Herpetological Associates (HA) staff continued to track king snakes in several different study areas. All king snakes are inside their winter dens. King snake tracking data from 2022 is being entered into the king snake database and staff continue to work to provide the NJDEP data to satisfy permit requirements.
- **Joint Corn Snake Study:** In November, Science staff continued to check cover placed near and inside the snake den corrals associated with the nest area to capture snakes coming in to hibernate for the winter.
- **Box Turtle Study:** Science staff continued to radio track box turtles in November. All turtles are currently hibernating underground, and the geographic coordinates were collected for all turtle hibernation spots.
- **Adenovirus Study:** Science staff are collaborating with Rutgers University researchers to determine if snakes are infected with adenoviruses. Science staff are swabbing the snakes encountered during their studies and the Rutgers researchers are using PCR (polymerase chain reaction) to amplify virus DNA for possible detection. Science staff collected swab samples from almost all the snakes found coming into their dens for the winter.



Above: A U.S. Geological Survey scientist presented the results of the Endocrine Disruption Study at the November Commission meeting.



Above: Here is a hole left by a box turtle after it emerged from hibernation in the spring.

6 COMMUNICATIONS

6.1 COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- **Website:** In November, staff continued to work on plans to create a new Cultural Resources webpage on the Commission's website.
- **Inquiries/Correspondence:** The Communications Office received and responded to 51 inquiries from the public in November, including phone calls, e-mails, and media inquiries.
- **Pinelands National Reserve Wall Calendar:** In November, Commission staff finalized the photo selections and researched, wrote, and edited 38 photo captions that will be featured in the 2023 calendar. Approximately 800 copies of the calendar will be printed and picked up in early December. The calendars will be distributed free-of-charge at six locations, including Bass River State Forest, the Batsto Visitor Center, Belleplain State Forest, Brendan T. Byrne State Forest, the Richard J. Sullivan Center, and the General Store at Whitesbog Village.



Above: The front cover of the 2023 Pinelands National Reserve wall calendar features a photo of a hiking trail at Double Trouble State Park in the Pinelands.

6.2 EVENTS, OUTREACH & INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

- **Pinelands Short Course:** Staff continues to plan the 34th annual Pinelands Short Course, which will be held at Stockton University's main campus in Galloway Township on March 11, 2023. More than 25 presentations have been confirmed thus far.

- Pinelands Speaker Series Webinars:**
 Staff hosted a Pinelands Speaker Series presentation entitled “Invasive Species Threats, Identification and Control” at the Commission’s headquarters on November 10, 2022. Presenter Michael Van Clef, Ph.D., and Program Director of the New Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team, discussed the Strike Team’s work to eradicate invasive species for the protection and conservation of rare species, including plants and wildlife. He also detailed the problems that invasives cause in the ecosystem and their impacts in natural areas, while also providing information on how to identify and control invasive species. The presentation was also livestreamed, recorded and is available for viewing on the Commission’s YouTube Channel.



Above: Presenter Michael Van Clef, the Program Director of the New Jersey Invasive Species Strike Team, delivered a presentation at the Commission’s headquarters on November 10, 2022.

- Education Programs:**
 A member of the Communications Office delivered a presentation on Pinelands Flora and Fauna for two 7th grade classes at the Assumption Regional Catholic School in Galloway Township on November 21, 2022.



Above: The Commission shared 71 photos on Instagram in November, including this photo of fall foliage at Brendan T. Byrne State Forest.

- Social Media Enhancements:** In November, staff shared 71 photos on the Commission’s Instagram site and 22 tweets on Twitter.

7 INFORMATION SYSTEMS

- 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. A tool

was created to streamline the process of packet creation for monthly Commission meetings. Additional features were added to the Local Conformance System (LCS) system. Staff created a new searchable database and interface for the Pinelands Commission's Open Public Records Act (OPRA) information to make tracking and searching requests much simpler. Staff developed a new draft report to highlight Waiver Approval information.

- **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 configured and brought one new server onto the network to replace outdated hardware. Staff started planning for the transition to decommission the older hardware. Staff worked with representatives of NJCCIC and Splunk to deploy monitoring agents on Pinelands hardware to improve monitoring and reporting.
- **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.
- **Pinelands Development Credit Bank:** The Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) Bank utilizes custom software to manage all operations including tracking data and issuing certificates. Staff supports the PDC Bank in utilizing the system.
- **Technology Enhancements:** Staff members continually evaluate emerging technologies for how they can impact or enhance the office environment. A new Network Attached Storage (NAS) server was purchased and received from Dell and mounted in the Pinelands server rack. Final configuration will be completed next month with the assistance of Dell representatives. The CommVault backup system clients were installed on all server hardware and a default backup schedule was configured with the Office of Information Technology (OIT). Cloud-based backups were started on all servers.

8 BUSINESS OFFICE

8.1 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- **Application Fees:** November 2022, Net Total: \$123,771.41; Fiscal Year to Date Total: \$525,330.35. This represents 80% of the anticipated budget total for Fiscal Year 2023.