



PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Paul Leakan, New Jersey Pinelands Commission, at (609) 894-7300 or info@njpines.state.nj.us
Mike Hunninghake, Pinelands Preservation Alliance, at (609) 859-8860 x24 or mikeh@pinelandsalliance.org

Conference and Banquet to Highlight Regional Planning and Celebrate the 25th Anniversary of Pinelands Protection

As population and development pressures threaten to overwhelm our green infrastructure and rural landscapes in the crowded mid-Atlantic and Northeast region, regional approaches to managing development and conserving natural resources are coming to the fore at the national, regional and local levels.

Nowhere is the ongoing discussion of balancing development with preserving and protecting natural resources more important than in New Jersey, the most densely populated state in the nation. This discussion began 25 years ago in the Pinelands, and it continues today as existing regional planning efforts mature and new initiatives emerge.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan, the rules that govern land use, development and natural resource protection in the Pinelands National Reserve, a region of 1.1 million acres designated by the United States in 1978 as the country's first national reserve. To celebrate and reflect on this remarkable milestone, a group of governmental and non-governmental organizations are holding a special conference and banquet at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Brunswick, New Jersey. The conference will be held on September 28 and 29 while the banquet is slated for the evening of September 28. All are invited to attend by registering for the conference and/or the banquet through the web site, www.regionalplanningcomesofage.org or by contacting Mike Hunninghake at the Pinelands Preservation Alliance.

The conference will explore the many regional approaches and strategies for achieving sustainable development. The conference will also highlight the most successful examples of

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regional planning in the mid-Atlantic and northeast states, such as the New Jersey Pinelands and Meadowlands, the Adirondack Park, and the Long Island Pine Barrens. The anniversary banquet will celebrate the 25th year of Pinelands protection and honor some of the most notable people involved in this success story.

Keynote speakers for the conference will be Hon. Bruce Babbitt, former Secretary of Interior and Governor of Arizona; Robert Yaro, President of the Regional Plan Association and a leading national expert in regional land-use planning; and Doug Foy, the first Secretary of Commonwealth Development for the State of Massachusetts. Former Governors and pioneers of Pinelands protection James Florio and Brendan Byrne will headline the anniversary banquet.

Regional Planning Comes of Age Conference

Regional Planning Comes of Age is a groundbreaking conference that will explore the promise and practice of regional land use planning in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast states. Hundreds of attendees from across the region and nation will convene in New Jersey to share their experiences and learn from colleagues from other regions.

Nine regional planning initiatives along the East Coast will be featured during the conference, including the NJ Pinelands, the NJ Highlands, and the NJ Meadowlands.

Over 70 experts from diverse places and backgrounds will lead more than 30 seminars on a wide range of regional planning topics.

“The depth and breadth of information on regional planning that will be presented at this conference is unprecedented,” said Carlton Montgomery, Executive Director of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance.

The conference will include plenary addresses and seminars on regional land use planning aimed at preserving natural and historic resources while strengthening communities in our dynamic and growing part of the country. Seminars will address topics such as transfer of development rights, growth management tools, protecting water resources through regional planning, economic impacts of regional planning, using regional planning to preserve historic and cultural resources, cooperative planning across political boundaries, and regional zoning and land use regulation. Seminars will also explore outstanding and developing examples of regional planning, such as the New Jersey Pinelands, the Adirondacks Park, the Long Island Pine Barrens, the Cape Cod Commission, Chesapeake Bay watershed initiatives and much more.

The conference’s opening speaker is Honorable Bruce Babbitt, former Secretary of the Interior and author of the current book *Cities in the Wilderness*. His topic, “The Pinelands: A Vision of America” will offer his thoughts on using New Jersey’s premiere model of regional planning as a national template.

Robert Yaro of the Regional Plan Association will discuss the state of regional planning in a talk entitled “Regional Planning Comes of Age.”

Doug Foy, recently retired Secretary of Commonwealth Development for Massachusetts, will speak on the Art of Commonwealth Development: Smart Growth, Cities and Climate Change.”

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Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan 25th Anniversary Banquet

“The Pinelands protection program is nationally and internationally renowned for its innovation and success, so it’s only fitting that we take time out on this, its silver anniversary to celebrate the past and renew our commitment for the future,” said John C. Stokes, Executive Director of the New Jersey Pinelands Commission.

Former New Jersey Gov. James J. Florio, author of the federal Pinelands legislation, will join a host of dignitaries and other New Jerseyans to recount the extraordinary story of the Pinelands and look ahead of the challenges of the future. The banquet, which will be preceded by a cocktail reception and feature original Pinelands music, is also expected to offer Governor Jon S. Corzine the opportunity to share his vision for New Jersey’s environment.

Two individuals who were instrumental in putting the Pinelands program into place will also be honored. Franklin Parker, the first Chairman of the Pinelands Commission, and Terrence D. Moore, the Commission’s first Executive Director, will be inducted into the Pine Barrens Hall of Fame. They will join former Governors Florio and Brendan Byrne and authors Beryl Robicheaud-Collins and Howard Boyd.

Parker was appointed by Governor Byrne in 1979 and led the Commission through the difficult and sometimes controversial planning process. As Chair of the 15-member policy-making body, Parker is widely credited with diffusing highly charged debates and keeping Commission members focused on constructive solutions to the many exceptionally complicated issues faced during the initial planning effort. Since stepping down as Pinelands Chair in 1988, Parker has stayed active in efforts to protect the environment. He is currently a trustee of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance and honorary Trustee of the Natural Resources Defense Council and the New Jersey Conservation Foundation; Chairman of the Board of Conservation Resources, Inc.; and a member of the Advisory Boards of the Rutgers Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences and the School of Natural Resources at the University of Vermont.

Moore, who served as Executive Director from 1979 to 1999, is credited with developing a truly visionary and innovative strategy for protecting the Pinelands, one that has stood the test of time. Today, he manages the National Park Service’s park planning and special studies for the northeast region of the United States.

Anyone interested in the Pinelands, New Jersey’s environment or regional planning is invited to attend the banquet, conference or both. To register for the conference or the banquet, log on to www.regionalplanningcomesofage.org or call (609) 859-8860.

For more information on either events, to schedule an interview, or to obtain a press pass for these events, please contact Paul Leakan (NJ Pinelands Commission) at (609) 894-7300 or Mike Hunninghake (Director of Education & Communications, Pinelands Preservation Alliance) at (609) 859-8860 Ext. 24.

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