



# New Jersey Pinelands Commission



Annual Report 2014

**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 Turk's Cap lily is a showy plant that is native to the Pinelands.

Photo by John Bunnell/New Jersey Pinelands Commission

# New Jersey Pinelands Commission 2014

## 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

Joseph DiBello

## 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 (January-April)  
Jane Jannarone (April-December)

### **Gloucester County**

Francis A. Witt

### **Ocean County**

Alan Avery, Jr., Vice Chairman

## Executive Director

Nancy Wittenberg

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# Pinelands Commission Highlights for 2014

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## Commission gains new Cumberland County representative

The Pinelands Commission gained a new member in 2014, as Jane Jannarone of Vineland joined the Commission as Cumberland County's new representative.

Jannarone is a Real Estate Broker with more than 25 years of experience. She owns and manages her Real Estate Company in Vineland. She serves on the Greater Vineland Chamber of Commerce, Cumberland County Board of Realtors, the Welcome Home Committee for Veterans, and is a former member of the Cumberland County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Jannarone grew up on a 256-acre property on the Maurice River in Millville. The property is home to wild rice marshes, white cedar swamps, pine trees and habitat for bald eagles, and it was preserved in honor of her father, as the Harold N. Peek Preserve.



**Jane Jannarone**

The Cumberland County Board of Chosen Freeholders appointed Jannarone as the county's new representative on April 22, 2014. She replaced Leslie Ficcaglia of Port Elizabeth. Ficcaglia served on the Commission from April 1996 until April 2014. During her tenure as a Commissioner, Ficcaglia served on the Audit Committee and was a member of the Commission's Permanent Land Protection Committee, Personnel & Budget Committee and Policy and Implementation Committee. The Commission adopted 29 amendments to the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan during her 18 years as a Commissioner.



**Leslie Ficcaglia**

On May 9, 2014, the Commission voted unanimously to adopt a resolution expressing its appreciation for Ficcaglia's service as a Commissioner.

The Pinelands Commission's 15-member board consists of seven members who are appointed by the New Jersey Governor, one member appointed by each of the seven Pinelands counties, and one member appointed by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. Commission members serve staggered, three-year terms and are uncompensated for their service.

## Chapter 1: Land Use & Planning

### Plan Review

In September 2014, the Commission issued its fourth, in-depth report on the agency's implementation of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), the rules that govern land use and natural resource protection in the 938,000-acre Pinelands Area.

New Jersey Pinelands Commission

## Comprehensive Management Plan



### The Fourth Progress Report on Plan Implementation

September 2014

Nancy Wittenberg, Executive Director

**Above:** The Commission issued its Fourth Progress Report on Plan Implementation in September 2014.

simplified permitting for the development of single-family dwellings, a ban on new mining operations in Pinelands-designated Forest Areas and waste management facility siting policies, among many other initiatives.

The *Fourth Progress Report on Plan Implementation* features chapters on land use and planning, regulatory programs, permanent land protection, memorandums of agreement or understanding, public information and outreach, economics and science. It also includes a section that lists a series of recommendations for strengthening the Plan, including numerous recommendations that were suggested by the public.

The 183-page report charts the Commission's projects, programs and efforts to advance the goals and requirements of the CMP from July 1, 2001 through June 30, 2012, the period since the last progress report was issued.

The issuance of the report marked the culmination of the Commission's fourth review of the CMP. The Commission embarked on the review in June 2012. Since that time, the Commission formed a Plan Review Committee composed of five Commission members. The Committee met regularly and provided a forum for discussing measures aimed at improving the CMP. It gathered comments from 109 groups and individuals during two public hearings and a 2½-month public comment period.

The review is required by law, and it provides a key opportunity for the Commission to chart and evaluate its implementation of the CMP. Previous reviews of the CMP resulted in changes such as

Among other findings in the report, the Commission:

- Approved 32 adjustments to Pinelands Management Areas in 21 municipalities between January 2002 and June 2012. More than half of the approved changes were relatively small, affecting less than 100 acres of land. The boundaries of all nine management areas were affected, with the Rural Development Area (RDA) involved in the majority of changes.

As a whole, the conservation-oriented management areas – the Preservation Area District (PAD), Special Agricultural Production Area (SAPA), Forest Area (FA) and Agricultural Production Area (APA) – have increased steadily since 1991. Approximately 13,000 acres were added to the conservation areas between 1991 and 2012, including 4,000 acres in the Oyster Creek watershed that were redesignated from the RDA to the FA via a CMP amendment adopted by the Commission in 2005.

As a result, the conservation areas now include more acreage than when the CMP was adopted in 1980. By contrast, the development-oriented management areas as a whole (Regional Growth Areas, Pinelands Villages and Towns) have seen a 3.25% decrease (4,200 acres) over the last two decades;

- Continued to ensure that development is channeled toward designated growth areas and away from conservation areas. Approximately 97% of all approved residential units and 87% of all approved nonresidential developments were located in the Regional Growth Areas, Towns, Villages and Rural Development Areas during the reporting period;

- Worked to permanently preserve thousands of acres of land by continuing several long-established programs and instituting a new acquisition program made possible by the creation of the Pinelands Conservation Fund (PCF).

Between 2007 and June 30, 2013, the Commission approved the allocation of \$9.6 million from the PCF to 34 projects in the Pinelands Area. Of these 34 projects, 31 proceeded to closing within the plan review time period, resulting in the permanent protection of 6,763 acres.

The Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) program continued to be one of the most successful transfer of development rights programs in the country. Nearly 24,000 acres in the Preservation Area District, Agricultural Production Area and Special Agricultural Production Area were permanently protected through the PDC Program between July 2001 and June 2013, bringing the total amount of protected land to 51,685 acres.

- Conducted important research on the status of the Pinelands ecology. Much of the research details the connection between land-use and its effect on water quality and quantity, and it

provides the basis for future policies and initiatives aimed at further protecting Pinelands natural resources.

The Commission completed five studies of the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer system. The studies focused on swamp pink, pond vegetation, wetland forests, frog development and stream habitat. Results from the studies, and those completed by other project cooperators, will be used to develop water-supply policies for the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer.

The Commission also completed a landscape, watershed and wetland assessment for the entire Pinelands Area. Results of the assessment indicated that Pinelands habitat and non-habitat covered 82% and 18% of the Pinelands Area, respectively. Fifty-one percent of the Pinelands Area fell within the highest ecological-integrity class;

- Was a signatory to 20 Memorandums of Agreement (MOAs) with a variety of public agencies, including municipalities, counties and other state agencies. As a result of the agreements, approximately 8,500 acres of land in the Pinelands Area were permanently preserved;

- Continued to monitor the economy in the Pinelands Area. Overall, the Pinelands economy either mirrored, or in some cases outperformed, the non-Pinelands portions of southern New Jersey with respect to several economic indicators. For example, the average residential property tax bill in the Pinelands continued to be significantly lower than the state and the rest of southern New Jersey. At \$4,884, the average tax bill in the Pinelands is 36.8% lower than the average bill in the state and 14.2% lower than the average bill in the non-Pinelands portions of southern New Jersey; and

- Educated thousands of people by delivering presentations at school districts, libraries and during festivals. The Commission also raised awareness and appreciation of the Pinelands by organizing new educational programs such as the Pinelands Research Series and Pinelands-themed World Water Monitoring Day, and by creating new materials such as the first-ever, National Park Service brochure for the Pinelands National Reserve.

A copy of the report has been posted on the Commission's website ([www.nj.gov/pinelands](http://www.nj.gov/pinelands)).

### **Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) Amendments**

In June 2014, the Commission voted to adopt several CMP amendments that were an outgrowth of the plan review process. (Please see the Plan Review section above).



More specifically, the amendments serve to codify current Commission practice, clarify existing standards and requirements, increase the efficiency of the Commission and its staff, eliminate unnecessary application requirements and correct typographical errors in the regulations. The



**The Commission adopted several amendments to the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan in 2014.** Photo/Paul Leakan

amendments also provide an extended time period within which the installation of certain alternate design wastewater treatment systems will be permitted, and remove from the Alternate Design Wastewater Treatment Systems Pilot Program a particular technology that has been unable to demonstrate compliance with CMP standards.

Among other things, the amendments extend the duration of Letters of Interpretation (LOIs) from two years to five years. The Commission issues LOIs at the request of an applicant. Although an LOI may be requested for any standard set forth in the CMP, the vast majority of LOI applications received by the Commission involve requests for an allocation of Pinelands Development Credits (PDC) to a particular parcel.

The CMP previously stipulated that LOIs would be valid for a period of two years from the date of issuance by the Commission. With respect to LOIs involving PDC allocations, this means that a landowner to whom PDCs were allocated has two years to sever those PDCs from his or her property so that they may be sold, transferred or redeemed. After that two year time period, if the landowner wishes to sever the PDCs, he or she must once again apply to the Commission and “renew” the LOI. Renewals are largely a paperwork exercise that provides little benefit while creating more work for the Commission and property owners.

The amendments also exempt the establishment of certain home occupations and certain changes of use from the need to file applications with the Commission. The change of one nonresidential use to another nonresidential use no longer requires an application to the Commission, provided that the existing and proposed uses are or will be served by public sewers and no additional development is proposed.

A full description of the amendments can be found on the Commission’s website. The direct address is <http://www.nj.gov/pinelands/cmp/amend/index.html>.

## **Amended Policies for the Pinelands Conservation Fund**

In August 2014, the Commission voted to amend the policies for use and management of the Pinelands Conservation Fund (PCF).

The PCF 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 policies for the PCF originally set forth three principal objectives: permanent land protection, planning and research activities and community planning and design.

The amended PCF policies established a new objective to fund education and outreach initiatives that raise awareness and appreciation of the Pinelands. The new Education and Outreach account was funded via the transfer of \$1,125,000 from the PCF's Community Planning and Design account. The Commission has begun using these funds to undertake a major overhaul and redesign of its website. (For more information about the website redesign project, please see pages 16-17).

The new PCF policies also resulted in the transfer of \$500,000 from the Community Planning and Design account to the Land Acquisition account. The funds will help the Commission continue its work to permanently preserve land in the Pinelands. (For more information about the Commission's permanent land protection efforts, please see page 8).

## **Long Term Comprehensive Wastewater Plan in Hammonton**

In 2014, the Pinelands Commission and the Town of Hammonton continued to make significant progress to reduce the discharge of treated wastewater from the Town's wastewater treatment plant to Hammonton Creek.

The beneficial reuse of treated wastewater by Hammonton will allow the Town to reduce the amount of wastewater that's pumped to its underperforming infiltration lagoons. Those lagoons have failed to infiltrate the large volumes of wastewater as originally anticipated by the system designers. The beneficial reuse of treated wastewater via drip irrigation combined with the elimination of extraneous flows that leak into the sewer system are expected to ease the hydraulic load currently placed upon the Town's infiltration lagoons.

Treated wastewater will be diverted from the infiltration lagoons to a 26 acre overland drip irrigation system. The overland drip irrigation system will supply nearly 500,000 gallons of treated wastewater daily to wooded areas at the Town's wastewater facility located along Boyer Avenue.

In addition to the overland drip irrigation system, the Town is also building a multiple depth subsurface drip irrigation system to irrigate recreational turf fields adjacent to the infiltration lagoons.

Further, the Town is implementing a program to identify areas of the sewer system that are prone to inflow and infiltration of stormwater and groundwater to further reduce extraneous hydraulic loading of the infiltration lagoon system.

All of these improvements are the direct result of the Commission's efforts to fully implement the CMP requirements that prohibit the discharge of treated wastewater into surface water bodies in the Pinelands Area.

### **Assessment of Uncapped Landfills in the Pinelands Area**

In 2014, the Commission continued its work to develop and complete a software tool to evaluate the potential ecological and public health risks associated with uncapped landfills in the Pinelands Area.

The Commission launched the project in 2012, after entering into an agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The Commission identified a total of 61 landfills to include in the analysis.

Throughout 2014, the Commission and USGS worked to develop and finalize the Excel spreadsheet-based "fate and transport" models and drafted a research article that describes the analysis.

Upon completion, the study will provide information to characterize the "level of concern" posed by potential leachate plumes from each of the landfills to nearby wetlands, surface water bodies, streams, ponds and drinking water wells. The screening-level analysis will provide information that will help the Commission review proposals for the closure and reuse of landfills.

The study expands a pilot project that Commission staff completed in 2010. Under that project, staff reviewed the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) files on select, uncapped landfills in the Pinelands and compared leachate contaminant levels in landfill monitoring wells to various regulatory standards. The USGS work built upon this pilot study and

included fate and transport modeling to determine likely leachate contaminant levels at nearby receptors.

## Review of Municipal Ordinances

Amendments to certified county and municipal master plans and land use ordinances must be submitted to, and approved by, the Commission. During 2014, the Commission received and reviewed 76 ordinance and master plan amendments from 24 different municipalities.

## Chapter 2: Permanent Land Protection

### Pinelands Conservation Fund

The Pinelands Commission helped to preserve an ecologically-valuable, 195-acre property in the Pinelands Area in 2014.

The Commission provided \$292,202 of the total \$2 million cost to acquire the land, which is located in Jackson, Manchester and Toms River townships. The Ocean County Natural Lands Trust funded the remainder and now owns the property.



**In 2014, the Commission permanently preserved a 195-acre property (above) in Jackson, Manchester and Toms River townships.**

Photo/Ocean County Natural Lands Trust

The property features exceptional natural resources, including 1,500 linear feet of frontage on the Toms River, extensive forest and wetlands, known populations of Northern pine snake and Sickle-leaved golden aster, as well as potential habitat for timber rattlesnakes.

From 2007 to 2014, the Commission approved the allocation of \$9.6 million to 33 projects in the Pinelands Area. Thirty-two of these projects have been completed, resulting in the permanent protection of 7,228 acres.

## **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.”

During 2014, five rights were severed, protecting 23.73 acres of land. A total of 5,997 rights were severed from 1982 to 2014, protecting 51,792 acres. In 2014, the mean sales price of PDCs was \$9,468 per right.

## **Chapter 3: Science and Research Activities**

### **Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Program**

In 2014, Commission scientists continued to carry out parts 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 sampled 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 each of the four watersheds and has prepared the survey data for analysis.

Since 2005, Commission scientists have measured water quality at 47 stream sites on a monthly or bimonthly basis. In 2013, sampling for various nutrients was completed at these 47 sites and nutrient analyses were performed by Rutgers University Division of Pinelands Research staff. In 2014, Commission scientists evaluated the relationship between land use and water quality at these sites and compared water-quality parameters between sites in agriculture- and development-dominated watersheds.

Each month, scientists record water levels at 35 forest plots and 30 ponds, and maintain continuous water-level recording devices installed in seven other ponds. The Commission has monitored calling frogs and toads at 20 ponds since 1996.

### **Pond-vulnerability Study**

Commission scientists continued to make progress on a study to characterize the vulnerability of Pinelands ponds to surrounding land uses. Scientists began the first phase of the project by using aerial photography to compile an inventory of approximately 3,000 natural Pinelands ponds. Ninety-nine of these ponds were selected for the study. In 2014, scientists began to monitor water quality and hydrology at all 99 ponds and completed plant and animal surveys at 53 of the ponds.



**Natural ponds, such as this one in Brendan Byrne State Forest, provide habitat for many species of Pinelands plants and animals.**

Photo/John Bunnell

These ponds are typically called “intermittent” because they are not usually connected to streams and occasionally dry out, creating largely 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 research project, Commission scientists will 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.

The study is being funded, in part, by a \$350,524 grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Commission is supplementing the EPA grant funding by contributing \$116,841 from its Pinelands Conservation Fund (please see pages 7-8 for more information about the Fund).

## Created-wetland Study

Like natural wetlands, created wetlands can provide the habitat necessary for wetland-dependent plants and animals, especially in human-dominated landscapes where natural wetlands may have been degraded or eliminated. As part of another study, Commission scientists mapped the location of two types of created wetlands commonly found in the Pinelands, shallow excavations that intercept the groundwater (excavated ponds) and excavations designed to receive stormwater (stormwater basins). About 2,000 excavated ponds and 1,700 stormwater



**Some stormwater basins can provide breeding habitat for the endangered southern gray treefrog.** Photo/John Bunnell

basins have been mapped. Fifty-two excavated ponds and 46 stormwater basins were selected for the study. In 2014, scientists monitored water quality and hydrology at all 98 created wetlands and surveyed plant and animal assemblages at 24 of the excavated ponds and 26 of the stormwater basins. As part of the study, scientists will compare water-quality, hydrologic, and biological attributes between both types of created wetlands and the natural ponds from the Pond-vulnerability Study described above. In collaboration with the U.S. Geological Survey and Montclair University, sites that represent a subset of each type of wetland are being sampled for current-use pesticides and emerging-amphibian pathogens. In 2014, eight sites were sampled for these parameters.

The study is being funded by a \$361,317 grant from the U.S. EPA and a \$120,439 match by the Commission through the Pinelands Conservation Fund (please see pages 7-8 for additional information about the Fund.)

## Pinelands Research Series

The Pinelands Research Series was initiated in 2012 to provide a regular forum for scientists to present and discuss Pinelands-related research. This is a free event that is open to the public and hosted by the Commission.

In 2014, the Commission hosted seven presentations that covered a wide range of research topics, including the southern pine beetle, Lyme disease and reptiles, arsenic in coastal-plain streams, nutrients in the Barnegat Bay, Pine Barrens gentian demography, Knieskern's beaksedge dynamics, adult pine snake dispersal and movement, and juvenile pine snake ecology.

A full listing of previous and upcoming presentations can be found on the Commission's website at: <http://www.nj.gov/pinelands/science/pinesseries/>

## **Chapter 4: 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 2014, the Commission's Project Review Office received 391 new applications (including public and private applications).

During the year, actions were taken on 1,468 applications. A total of 25 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 37 public development applications in 2014. Among other noteworthy applications, the Commission approved the reconstruction of three dams in Pemberton Township, the construction of a 21-acre underground recharge system for the infiltration of treated wastewater in Hammonton, construction of a 4,165-square-foot academic library building at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, construction of a 2,480-square-foot equipment storage building in Galloway Township, a total of 13,600 linear feet of road pavement widening and associated improvements on East Veteran's Highway in Jackson Township, improvements to existing Garden State Parkway Interchanges 36, 37 and 38, the reconstruction of the Blue Anchor Dam and the widening of U.S. Route 30 across the Blue Anchor Dam in Winslow Township, and improvements to an existing aircraft taxiway at the Atlantic City Airport in Egg Harbor Township.

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 nine such permits in 2014.



## Proposed South Jersey Gas Pipeline

In January 2014, the Commission voted 7-7 on a proposed agreement that called for the construction of approximately 15 miles of a 22-mile natural gas pipeline in the Pinelands Area.

The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the Commission and the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) sought to permit South Jersey Gas to build a high-pressure, 24-inch natural gas transmission line beneath existing paved portions or disturbed rights-of-way in Maurice River Township to Beesley's Point in Upper Township. The pipeline would provide the gas needed to repower the B.L. England Electrical Generation Plant, as well as providing supply feeder redundancy to the entire southernmost portion of South Jersey Gas' (SJG's) service territory, which is currently served by a single feed supply.

## Memorandum of Agreement with The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey

In November 2014, the Commission approved a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that will facilitate and expedite development in appropriate areas of The Richard Stockton College's campus per the College's 2010 Master Plan.

Under the MOA, the College will not be required to file a public development application with the Commission for any development located within the Designated Development Areas that were established in the 2010 Master Plan.

The College's 2010 Master Plan identifies on-campus development projects during the course of the next 20 years, based on projected student enrollment. The College's potential development projects include nearly 2.4 million square feet of new development, nearly 11,000 new parking spaces and more than 3,100 new dwelling units, most of which are dormitories. All of these projects are delineated on Designated Development Areas. The Commission has reviewed these areas and it has determined that the areas do not involve any resources, structures or areas of significance under the Comprehensive Management Plan.



**Stockton College deed-restricted more than 1,200 acres of high-integrity habitat as part of its 2010 Master Plan, including the property above.** Photo/Paul Leakan

Additionally, the College has conducted, and the Commission has approved, campus-wide studies to identify threatened and endangered plant and animal species. The College has agreed to cluster its proposed development to avoid and minimize disturbance adjacent to wetlands, wetlands buffers, threatened and endangered plant species, critical habitat for threatened and endangered animal species and other deed-restricted lands found to be necessary to protect threatened or endangered plant or animal species. Additionally, the College has deed-restricted more than 1,200 acres of high-integrity habitat. (Please see the photo on page 13).

## 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 60 violations were reported to the Commission in 2014.

## Chapter 5: Public Information, Participation & Education

### Outreach and Education

The Commission's Communications and Public Programs Office staff handled 111 press inquiries and responded to 977 public inquiries regarding the Pinelands in 2014.

Staff organized and carried out its eighth annual, Pinelands-themed World Water Monitoring Day event. Held at the historic Batsto Village, the event attracted more than 250 students and teachers who gauged Pinelands water quality and learned about the importance of protecting the region's unique natural and historic resources.



**John Bunnell, the Commission's Chief Scientist, described the Batsto River Watershed during the eighth annual Pinelands-themed World Water Monitoring Day event.**

Photo/Paul Leakan

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, 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. Commission staff members educated approximately 1,625 students during in-class education programs and field trips in 2014.

## Pinelands Short Course

The 25th annual Pinelands Short Course featured a new venue and 36 presentations that explored the unique history, ecology, culture and music of the Pinelands.

The daylong event was held at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey in Galloway Township, Atlantic County on March 8, 2014. Stockton hosted the Short Course for the first time since 2003. The event had been held at Burlington County College's Pemberton campus from 2004 to 2013.



**The 25<sup>th</sup> annual Pinelands Short Course featured 36 presentations, including one on owls of New Jersey (shown above).**  
Photo/Paul Leakan

A total of 400 people attended the Short Course. The event included 20 new programs, including presentations on southern pine beetles, the Jersey Devil, dragonflies and damselflies, butterflies and moths of the Pinelands, native bees and other Pinelands insects, wildlife habitat restoration, owls of New Jersey, the Pine Barrens Byway, the Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer system, stream health, the Batsto Village, the Bass River State Forest and the Mullica River.

Courses were held in Stockton's Campus Center and in the new Unified Science Center, two buildings that were designed to reduce energy and environmental impacts.

The event is registered with the New Jersey Department of Education, and professional development credits are available to New Jersey teachers who attend.

## **New Pinelands Commission website:**

In 2014, the Commission made significant progress on a major project to overhaul and redesign its official website (<http://www.nj.gov/pinelands>).

The Commission last redesigned its website in 2005. The State of New Jersey's website technology has improved significantly since that time, providing for more flexibility and new features that can increase the ease of navigation.

In May 2014, the Commission formed an internal Website Redesign Committee charged with reviewing and updating the content on the existing site, while identifying ways to create a vastly-improved new site. Additionally, Commission staff conducted an online survey to ask applicants, officials, residents and other members of the public about what they like or dislike about the agency's old site. The public requested that the new site be reorganized to make it easier to find information. They also wanted meeting dates to be displayed more prominently, and they wanted a better mechanism to submit written comments or questions.

The Commission began building the new site, along with designers and programmers from the New Jersey Office of Information Technology, in October 2014. (**Editor's note:** the new website was officially launched in May 2015).

## **Chapter 6: Finances**

### **Fiscal & Budget**

The Commission's Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2015 totaled \$4,315,532. Of this, \$3,806,450, or 88.2 percent, was budgeted for personnel expenses.

Budgeted revenue sources included \$325,600 in federal grants, a \$2.469 million State appropriation, \$779,200 in State grants and other State funding, \$253,000 in application fees and \$488,732 from the Commission's fund balance and reserves.

The 2015 budget for the Kirkwood-Cohansey Study, funded through legislation passed in 2001, was \$239,750. The budget for the Pinelands Conservation Fund was \$1,634,173.

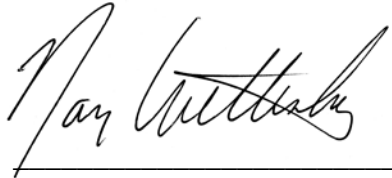
Once it is completed, the Commission's Audit Report for Fiscal Year 2014, which ended June 30, 2013, will be posted on the State Auditors web site. The website address is: [http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/legislativepub/auditreports\\_department.asp](http://www.njleg.state.nj.us/legislativepub/auditreports_department.asp). The report also will be available on the Pinelands Commission's web site: [www.nj.gov/pinelands](http://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 2015, unaudited application fee revenues totaled \$524,000 (\$271,000 more than Fiscal Year 2014).

## 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 2014 calendar year, all of the Commission's standards, procedures, and internal controls were followed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy Wittenberg", written over a horizontal line.

Nancy Wittenberg  
Executive Director

# Pinelands Land Capability Map

