



Pinelands Timeline

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New Jersey Pinelands Commission
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170 to 200 million years ago - Atlantic Coastal Plain begins to form.

100 million years ago - Start of sequence in which the Atlantic Ocean repeatedly covered the coastal plain and then withdrew, depositing layers of geologic material now beneath the Pinelands.

12,000-15,000 years ago - End of the last ice age. Many present plant and animal populations begin to develop.

10,000 BC - First human inhabitants appear in the Pinelands: These are the predecessors of the Lenape that would inhabit the region until about 1800, when most migrate to other States.

1609 - Henry Hudson sails into Raritan and Delaware Bays; Exploration of coastal inlets and bays by Europeans begins.

1650 - Whaling industry precipitates earliest settlement of southern New Jersey coast.

1688 - Earliest shipbuilding operations begin on the periphery of the Pinelands. The Pinelands yield prized material such as Cedar, Oak, pitch, tar and turpentine. Construction of wooden ships flourishes throughout the Pinelands, particularly on the Great Egg and Maurice Rivers, into the 20th century.

1700 - Some of the earliest settlements in the Pinelands begin to emerge around sawmills and grist mills.

1740 - Earliest charcoaling operations begin in the Pinelands.

1758 - Brotherton, the first Indian reservation in America is established at present day Indian Mills, Shamong Township.

1765 - First iron furnaces are built in the Pinelands.

1778 - Battle of Chestnut Neck fought near Port Republic during failed campaign by the British to destroy the ironworks at Batsto. The British force destroy a privateering center on the Great Bay, capturing a fort burning and pillaging the Village of Chestnut Neck.

1799 - First Glasshouse in the Pinelands is established at Port Elizabeth.

1800 - Whaling era in southern New Jersey comes to an end.

1810 - First cotton mill in the Pinelands is established at Retreat.

1812 - James Still, the "Black Doctor of the Pines," is Born in Indian Mills. A self-taught healer, Still traveled the Pine Barrens during the mid-to-late-1800s treating the sick with remedies largely developed using the medicinal properties of native South Jersey plants.

1830-1840 - Earliest cultivated cranberry bogs appear at Burrs Mill, Cassville, and elsewhere.

1832 - First paper mill in the Pinelands at McCartyville (Harrisville).

1878 - Joseph Wharton, a Philadelphia financier, proposes exporting Pinelands water to Philadelphia. The New Jersey Legislature blocks his efforts.

1854 - Camden and Atlantic Railroad is founded; crossing the Pinelands from Camden to Atlantic City, opening Atlantic City as a seashore resort. Other rail lines, such as the Raritan and Delaware Bay Railroad, soon follow, linking communities such as Toms River, Waretown, Atsion, Atco, and Vineland.

1864 - L.N. Renault Winery is founded in Galloway Township, establishing Pinelands viticulture industry.

1869 - Smelting and forging of bog iron in the Pinelands end

1905 - Bass River State Forest, one of the State's first, is acquired by the State of New Jersey for public recreation, water conservation and wildlife and timber management.

1906 - The New Jersey Forest Fire Service was established by the New Jersey Legislature.

1916 - Elizabeth White and Dr. F.V. Coville develop first cultivated blueberry at Whitesbog, establishing the Blueberry industry in the Pinelands and elsewhere.

1917 - Fort Dix is established as a training and staging ground for World War I US Army troops. Present-day Lakehurst Naval Air Station is acquired by the US Army as an ammunition proving ground and poison gas warfare testing ground. Prior to government acquisition, the Lakehurst property briefly served as an ammunition testing ground for the Russian Imperial Government.

1926 - The State of New Jersey establishes its first forest tree nursery at Jackson Township.

1928 - Legendary Mexican aviator Emilo Carranza perishes in a crash in Tabernacle Township during the return leg of a goodwill flight between New York City and Mexico City.

1928 - The New Jersey Forest Fire Service starts using prescribed burning as a fire management tool.

1937 - The German Zeppelin airship Hindenburg is destroyed by fire while attempting to moor at Lakehurst Naval Air Station.

1948 - The practice of prescribed burning as a fire management tool was introduced to the public; soon after, it expanded to involve both private and public lands.

1949 - After serving as a base for military aircraft for more than a decade, part of Fort Dix is officially designated as McGuire Air Force Base.

1955 - State of New Jersey acquires 100,000-acre Wharton Tract as a state forest.

1963 - The largest wildfire in the region's recorded history burns nearly 190,000 acres of Pinelands, destroying 185 homes and killing seven people.

1964 - Pinelands Regional Planning Board proposes supersonic jetport and city of 250,000 people.

1967 - Publication of John McPhee's national best-selling book, "The Pine Barrens," spurs tremendous public outcry to protect the Pinelands natural and cultural resources.

1971 - Pinelands Environmental Council created and assigned to prepare master plan for 320,000 acres.

1977 - Governor Brendan T. Byrne appoints Pinelands Review Committee to define Pinelands boundaries.

1977 - Casino gambling begins in Atlantic City, increasing development pressure on nearby Pinelands.

November 10, 1978 - National Parks and Recreation Act establishes Pinelands National Reserve: calls for preparation of Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan.

February 8, 1979 - Pinelands Commission established.

June 28, 1979 - Governor Byrne signs Pinelands Protection Act, setting deadline for completion of management plan and endorsing interim development controls.

August 8, 1980 - Pinelands Commission adopts management plan for 368,000-acre Preservation Area.

November 21, 1980 - Commission adopts plan for 556,000-acre Protection Area and balance of the Pinelands National Reserve.

January 14, 1981 - Governor Byrne approves the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan.

January 16, 1981 - US Secretary of the Interior Cecil D. Andrus approves the Plan.