



New Jersey Pinelands Commission **PRESS RELEASE**

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Florio launches Pinelands forestry policy review *Advisory committee set up to review Pinelands forestry policies*

NEW LISBON, NJ - Pinelands Commission Chairman James J. Florio today announced appointments to the Pinelands Forestry Advisory Committee, a blue ribbon panel to review the forestry provisions of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan. This action is part of a new initiative aimed at ensuring that harvesting, land preparation and re-vegetation practices conducted in the Pinelands are consistent with the Commission's mandate to protect and maintain the Pinelands environment while ensuring that forestry is a viable economic and cultural resource in the Pinelands.

"Forestry is a traditional activity in the Pinelands," said Florio. "When done properly, forestry can help to revitalize the forest landscape, but when done improperly, it can affect the natural biodiversity of the Pinelands. The Pinelands Commission's last comprehensive review of its forestry standards was nearly a decade ago and the time is now right to take a fresh look at how well the program is working and what we can do to improve it."

Florio added that he is pleased that Michael Catania, former Deputy Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and past Executive Director of the New Jersey Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, has agreed to chair the Committee. Catania is currently founder and president of Conservation Resources, Inc., a non-profit organization which provides technical and financial assistance to New Jersey's conservation community. An attorney, Catania also teaches environmental policy and law at the Eagleton Institute for Politics at Rutgers University and serves as Chair of the New Jersey Natural Lands Trust. He was a founding member and Co-Chair of the Stockton Alliance, an organization comprised of business and environmental leaders from throughout New Jersey.

"I look forward to working with this outstanding group of people, who bring varied perspectives and disciplines to the table," said Catania. "Together, we will work to ensure the viability of commercial forestry and that the highest standards of forest ecological health are met in the Pinelands."

Forestry Advisory Committee

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Other members of the committee include:

- **James Barresi**, the State Forester and Assistant Director of Forestry at NJDEP. Jim represents New Jersey for the National Association of State Foresters, where he serves on the Forest Fire Protection and Urban Forestry Committees;
- **Thomas Bullock, Esq.**, an attorney with a private general real estate practice, Tom is Director, Treasurer and past President of the New Jersey Forestry Association, an organization of over 1,000 woodland owners and conservationists who advocate the wise use and management of the State's forest resource;
- **Robert Williams**, a certified professional forester and wetlands scientist, is Director of Forestry Operations at Land Dimensions Engineering. He manages 75,000 acres of private woodlands in four states, primarily in southern New Jersey;
- **George Zimmermann Ph.D.**, professor of environmental studies at Richard Stockton College, teaches forest ecology and forest management. Through his research, he has established himself as national expert on the physiology, restoration and regeneration of Atlantic White Cedar.
- **Troy Ettl**, Director of Conservation at the NJ Audubon Society. Troy has served as Tennessee State Ornithologist and Texas Natural Heritage Program State Zoologist and has developed forest management plans for a variety of habitats;
- **Marc Matsil**, Senior Policy Advisor for Natural Resources at NJDEP. Marc previously served as Assistant Commissioner for Natural and Historic Resources at NJDEP and Chief of the Natural Resources Group of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation;
- **Jon Wagar**, Assistant Director of Stewardship with the New Jersey Conservation Foundation and former field botanist with the USDA Forest Service. Jon holds a Masters of Forestry from Yale University and taught plant physiology at National University;
- **Robert Zappalorti**, President and Executive Director of Herpetological Associates, Inc. an environmental consulting firm which specializes in the study of threatened and endangered plants and animals;

The Pinelands Forestry Advisory Committee was first established in 1987 to assist in the review of harvest and forest management plans for state-owned lands as well as to advise the Commission on other forestry-related matters. This latest effort is the first time the Committee's charge has been expanded to review the policy framework for all Pinelands forests, both public and privately owned.

“A healthy forest resource is one of the most important tools for protecting air quality, wildlife, open space and water resources in our rapidly growing state,” said Florio. “Under Michael Catania's leadership and with the banner team we've assembled, I am confident that this effort will bolster long-term, ecologically sustainable forestry within the million-acre Pinelands,”

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