

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council

2006 Annual Report



Water Detail, NJ Highlands, Sussex County, NJ
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Message from the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council

On behalf of the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council, I am pleased to present this Annual Report for 2006. The Council's work this year culminated with the November release of the draft Regional Master Plan.



Release of the draft Plan represents a major milestone toward fulfilling the Council's mission, but it is not an end point. We anticipate including changes in the final Plan reflecting corrections, suggestions, and advice being offered during an extended public comment period. Many comments are in writing while others are being provided at public hearings the Council is holding in each Highlands county and in Trenton. From the Council's inception, Plan development has been an open and inclusive process. We have received extensive input from a wide variety of interested individuals and groups including state and local officials, residents, landowners, developers, farmers, business owners, environmentalists, and planners. Even after the Plan is adopted, the Council is committed to holding it as a living document that will evolve and improve based on continuing interactions with counties, municipalities and other constituents. This will include periodic updates to reflect relevant new science, data, and technology as it becomes available.

The overriding goal for 2007 is to move as quickly as possible toward adoption of a Plan that incorporates the best available data, reflects the wisdom provided by public comments, and is designed for effective and efficient implementation.



John R. Weingart
Chairman

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council

John R. Weingert, Chairman

Kurt Alstede, Councilmember
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Tahesha Way, Councilmember

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Background

In August 2004, the New Jersey Legislature enacted the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act in order to protect and comprehensively plan for a region that supplies drinking water for more than 5.4 million New Jersey residents. The Act defines the Highlands Region as including nearly 860,000 acres located in 88 municipalities in seven northern New Jersey counties.

The Council's mission is to protect, restore and enhance the water quality, quantity and other natural and cultural resources of the New Jersey Highlands; provide for development and redevelopment consistent with the goals of the Act; and promote agriculture within the framework of the Highlands environment.



The Need

The Highlands Region covers less than one quarter of the state's land, but provides drinking water for 65% of its residents. While the Region's forests and open spaces retain and filter large quantities of water, rapid development has increasingly transformed our communities and impaired nature's ability to do its job. Meanwhile our population is growing, spurring demand that is straining our natural resources to the point of near-crippling water crises in the event of a drought or additional development. Families, farms and businesses all depend on a steady supply of clean water. And since water resources are not constrained by municipal boundaries, we must take a regional approach to protection and conservation, as is provided by the Regional Master Plan.

The Draft Plan

Using the latest science and data, the draft Regional Master Plan proposes policies and strategies designed to best protect Highlands' resources while also promoting a sustainable economy and agriculture. The Plan is built upon land use standards and a Land Use Capability Map.

The Map

The Land Use Capability Map is based on an analysis of natural resources, existing development, infrastructure, and agricultural activities. The map establishes three major geographic zones that overlay municipal zoning, each with its own criteria and standards.

The Protection Zone consists of environmentally important lands that are critical to maintaining water quality, quantity, and other significant ecological processes. Standards in the zone prohibit the disturbance of natural resources or expansion of infrastructure. Public land acquisition is a priority in the Protection Zone.

The Conservation Zone consists of areas with significant agricultural lands mixed with important environmental features that should be preserved when possible. Development potential is limited in size and intensity due to infrastructure constraints and natural resource protection goals, although opportunities exist for low impact, clustered development. Standards protect agricultural soils and large farms and contiguous operations.

The Planned Community Zone consists of areas with existing concentrated development. These areas are less environmentally constrained and may be able to support some development desired by the municipality that meets the other policies and standards of the Regional Master Plan. Emphasis will be on increasing land use efficiency, and encouraging the use of previously developed lands through techniques such as revitalization, adaptive reuse, infill, and property assemblage.

**New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council
Statement of Activities and Financial Report - December 31, 2006**

General Operating Budget FY06 - July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006

REVENUES:

State of New Jersey Appropriation FY06	\$ 2,000,000.00
Balance from FY 05	222,414.31
Supplemental State Appropriation January 06	<u>331,751.00</u>
TOTAL	\$ 2,554,165.31

EXPENDITURES:

Salaries	\$ 1,635,676.87
Materials and Supplies	\$ 60,432.28
Other Operating Expenses	\$ 139,082.78
Maintenance and Repairs	\$ 210,755.02
Equipment, Additions and Improvements	\$ 48,283.98
Balance through June 30, 2006*	<u>\$ 459,934.38</u>
TOTAL	\$ 2,554,165.31

* \$360,356 allocated to FY07 General Operating Budget, 99,578 to State of New Jersey

General Operating Budget for Portion of FY07 - July 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006

REVENUES:

State of New Jersey Appropriation FY07	\$ 2,275,000.00
Highlands Balance from FY06	<u>\$ 360,356.58</u>
TOTAL	\$ 2,635,356.58

EXPENDITURES:

Salaries	\$ 1,259,002.51
Materials and Supplies	\$ 52,277.79
Other Operating Expenses	\$ 81,255.46
Maintenance and Repairs	\$ 77,199.11
Equipment, Additions and Improvements	\$ 51,569.94
Operating Balance through June 30, 2007	<u>\$ 1,114,051.77</u>
TOTAL	\$ 2,635,356.58

Regional Master Plan Budget for Portion of FY07 - July 1, 2006 through December 31, 2006

REVENUES:

Highlands Balance from FY06	\$ 1,283,653.68
State of New Jersey Appropriation FY07	<u>\$ 725,000.00</u>
TOTAL	\$ 2,008,653.68

EXPENDITURES:

Contracts Paid Year to Date	\$ 628,910.15
Contract Services	\$ 22,524.74
Balance on Approved Contracts	\$ 253,548.34
Regional Master Plan Balance Available through June 30, 2007	<u>\$ 1,103,670.45</u>
TOTAL	\$ 2,008,653.68