Disclaimer

These minutes reflect the actions taken by the Commission during its April 12, 2024 meeting. Although these minutes have been approved by the Commission, no action authorized by the Commission during this meeting, as reflected in these minutes, shall have force or effect until ten (10) days, Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays excepted, after a copy of these minutes has been delivered to the Governor for review, unless prior to expiration of the review period the governor approves same, in which case the action shall become effective upon such approval. These minutes were delivered to the Governor on April 22, 2024

PINELANDS COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES April 12, 2024

All participants were either in-person or present via Zoom conference and the meeting was livestreamed through YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ORdQrC7-tzk

Commissioners Participating in the Meeting

Nicholas Asselta, Alan W. Avery Jr., John Holroyd, Jerome H. Irick, Mark Lohbauer, Mark Mauriello, William Pikolycky, Jessica Rittler Sanchez, Douglas Wallner and Chair Laura E. Matos. Also participating were Executive Director Susan R. Grogan, Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Jay Stypinski and Governor's Authorities Unit representative Alexis Franklin.

Commissioners Absent

Dan Christy, Theresa Lettman and Jonathan Meade.

Call to Order

Chair Matos called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m.

DAG Stypinski read the Open Public Meetings Act Statement (OPMA).

Executive Director (ED) Grogan called the roll and announced the presence of a quorum. Ten Commissioners participated in the meeting.

The Commission pledged allegiance to the Flag.

Minutes

Chair Matos presented the minutes from the Commission's March 8, 2024 meeting. Commissioner Pikolycky moved the adoption of the minutes. Commissioner Lohbauer seconded the motion.

The minutes from the March 8, 2024 Commission meeting were adopted by a vote of 10 to 0.

Chair Matos presented the closed session minutes from the Commission's March 8, 2024 meeting. Commissioner Lohbauer moved the adoption of the minutes. Commissioner Pikolycky seconded the motion. There were not enough votes to approve the closed session minutes because of the abstentions of Commissioner Holroyd, Commission Irick and Commissioner Mauriello.

Committee Reports

Commissioner Avery provided a summary of the March 26, 2024 Personnel and Budget Committee meeting:

Staff reviewed the check register and electronic disbursements and provided an update on application fee revenue to date. The Committee reviewed and approved the list of fixed assets for deletion. Lastly, staff provided an update on employee actions and current recruitment efforts.

Executive Director's Report

ED Grogan provided information on the following matters:

- The Fiscal Year 2022 Audit has begun. Three staff members from the State Auditor's office are located in the Carriage House and are expected to be here until December.
- Staff from the Division of Property Management and Construction conducted a site visit of Fenwick Manor to begin the next steps in the rehabilitation of the structure, which is to create a scope of work and prepare a Request for Proposal (RFP).
- In mid-March, the Governor signed Affordable Housing legislation into law, and it sets up a new process for municipalities to determine and implement their affordable housing obligations. The staff is already working with the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) regarding vacant land determinations and will continue to serve as a resource and provide data and GIS mapping.

Commissioner Mauriello asked if there was a designated staff member who will be working with DCA.

ED Grogan said Brad Lanute has been and will continue to work with DCA on affordable housing matters. She added that Commission staff meets quarterly with Fair Share Housing Center.

Chuck Horner, Director of Regulatory Programs, provided information on the following regulatory matters:

- On February 28th, staff met with the Department of Agriculture to discuss how the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) relates to the Right to Farm Act. He said the meeting was positive. He noted that the Pinelands Protection Act states that it supersedes all other state laws. He said most activities related to the Right to Farm Act are permitted by the CMP.
- On April 8th, staff attended an Atlantic County Board of Agriculture meeting to provide information related to agricultural employee housing. A number of years ago, farms in Hammonton, Mullica and Hamilton converted barns into agricultural employee housing. Most agricultural activities are exempt from Commission review and the construction of barns does not require application to the Commission. The conversion of the barns into housing raised issues with DCA building codes and also with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) requirements related to septic systems and wells. The conversion of a barn into agricultural employee housing does require an application to the Commission. The meeting provided an opportunity to explain the Commission's rules, answer questions and facilitate the review and resolution of issues related to agricultural employee housing.
- A pre-application meeting was held with the Nature Conservancy regarding the removal of a dam. Staff advised that the CMP wetlands standards would not permit the removal of a dam unless it was a public safety matter. Staff also advised that a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with a public agency would likely be required if a public safety matter was not evident.
- Staff received a pre-application meeting request for a proposal to mine sand that will be used for a cranberry agriculture operation on a non-contiguous parcel. Staff advised that an application is required because the mining and agricultural operation are not on the same parcel.

Lastly, Director Horner said a letter has been provided to Commissioners (see attached) regarding the demolition of the Tabernacle Township Town Hall. He said Tabernacle Township has requested emergency authorization to demolish its Town Hall. The Commission requested documentation from a structural engineer, and two reports were received on April 11, 2024. He said the CMP includes a provision for situations such as these that allows the Executive Director, after consultation with the Chair, to authorize a remedy when a public safety issue exists. The applicant would file an application after the emergency is addressed.

Director Horner said ED Grogan will be speaking with Chair Matos about this situation after the meeting.

Commissioner Lohbauer asked how the cultural resources will be addressed at the Tabernacle Township Town Hall.

Director Horner said the Commission's Cultural Resource planner will be recording the historic significance of the structure with photographs and sketches.

Gina Berg, Director of Land Use Programs, provided an update on the following:

- The 2nd annual preservation summit was held on April 4th. It was a well-attended event with representatives from 11 organizations, including non-profit organizations and county government. Green Acres staff provided an overview of changes to its acquisition funding structure. Commission staff provided an update on its stewardship efforts and Pinelands Conservation Fund (PCF) ranking criteria for the next round of grants, which will launch next month.
- Staff submitted a pre-proposal for a \$5.5 million grant to the America the Beautiful Challenge. The grant proposes habitat restoration on state lands and a planning component that would include local non-profit and county partners. Applicants will be notified in June if they have been selected to submit full proposals.

Lastly, Director Berg reviewed the agendas for the Climate Committee meeting on April 17th and the Policy and Implementation Committee meeting scheduled for April 26th.

Commissioner Avery said it takes at least one month for counties to submit a grant application. He hoped that enough notice would be provided for the new PCF round.

Director Berg said in order to allow sufficient time for proposals, the duration to submit a PCF application was expanded to a four month period.

Stacey Roth, Chief, Legal and Legislative Affairs, provided information on the following:

- In April 2019, the Commission authorized a First Amendment to the February 26, 2004 MOA between the Commission and the South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA). As part of that amendment, SJTA was required to develop a Grassland Conservation and Management Area (GCMA). A property in Hamilton Township, Atlantic County was acquired, construction of the GCMA was completed and the Deed of Conservation was filed. SJTA will be entering into a maintenance agreement with Atlantic County, which will continue to maintain the property.
- The State Ethics Commission has sent emails regarding the 2024 Financial Disclosure Statement filing requirements. The deadline to file is May 15, 2024.

Brad Lanute, Chief Planner provided the following updates:

• On March 28th, staff distributed model ordinances to Pinelands municipalities. The model ordinances implement the Kirkwood-Cohansey rules (Water Management) that were adopted in December of last year as well as the NJDEP stormwater management rule amendments that were adopted in July of last year. The CMP incorporates by cross-

reference certain NJDEP stormwater regulations, some of which were revised as part of those July amendments. Municipalities have been informed that they must adopt the stormwater amendments by July 18th and the Kirkwood-Cohansey rule amendments by December 4th. However, staff have encouraged municipalities to adopt both at the same time.

• The State Office of Planning Advocacy continues to work on a draft preliminary state plan. Earlier this month, a revised version of the draft was once again shared with state agencies for comment. Commission staff will be reviewing the draft and providing any necessary comment in the coming weeks. It is anticipated that the draft preliminary Plan will be on the State Planning Commission's May 1st agenda.

Paul Leakan, Communications Officer, said the 35th annual Pinelands Short Course was a great success, with approximately 96% of event survey respondents rating the event as either excellent or good. Staff is planning the Summer Short Course, which is scheduled for June 28th at Kramer Hall in Hammonton. He added that the upcoming Pinelands training session has 36 registrants. The session has been specifically designed for zoning officers, construction code officials and other municipal staff members who are involved in the land development application process in the Pinelands. He said the training will be held in mid-May at Kramer Hall in Hammonton.

Public Development Projects and Other Permit Matters

Chair Matos introduced a resolution for the installation of 266 linear feet of sidewalks and 898 linear feet of guiderails within the Route 54 right-of-way in Hammonton.

Commissioner Irick made a motion Approving With Conditions an Application for Public Development (Application Number 2023-0196.001) (See Resolution # PC4-24-07). Commissioner Holroyd seconded the motion.

Director Horner said the Department of Transportation (DOT) is proposing to install sidewalk improvements at 13 different intersections within the Route 54 right-of-way. He said guardrails are now known as guiderails, and they will also be installed.

The resolution was adopted by a vote of 10 to 0.

Public Comment on Development Applications and Items Where the Record is Open

Public comment was not provided.

Ordinances Not Requiring Commission Action

Commission staff reviewed two items last month that were found to raise no substantial issue.

Lakehurst Borough's 2024 Master Plan Reexamination Report; and

Ocean Township Ordinance 2023-18, which permitted Class 5 Retail Cannabis uses in an existing Redevelopment Area located outside the Pinelands Area, but within a Regional Growth Area of the Pinelands National Reserve.

<u>Presentation: Proposed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Evesham Township (Black</u> Run Preserve Accessible Trails)

ED Grogan said the CMP authorizes the Commission to enter into an MOA with another public agency for the following two reasons: to streamline a permitting process or to permit a deviation from one or more standards of the CMP. She said the MOA process consists of 13 steps, including a public hearing and final vote by the Commission. The MOA must also include offset measures.

She said today's presentation by Evesham Township is similar to the MOA the Commission entered into with Pemberton Township in January of this year for trail accessibility at Pemberton Lake. She provided a quick update of that MOA and another similar MOA proposed by Stafford Township, for trail accessibility at Forecastle Park. She added that today Evesham Township will provide the details of its proposal at the Black Run Preserve, and it includes resolving some existing violations at the site. She said after the presentation, staff will be seeking the Commission's authorization to work with Evesham Township on the specifics of the trail accessibility project and to draft an MOA (see attached presentation slides).

Kevin Rijs, Evesham Township's Community Development Director, introduced himself along with Sean Holland from the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, Rich Kerr, Superintendent of Sports Turf and Open Space for Evesham Township, and Tim Staszewski, Township Engineer.

Mr. Rijs said the Black Run Preserve is approximately 700 acres and is largely comprised of wetlands and wetland buffers. The preserve is located in the Rural Development Area. He said the proposed project improvements to the trails and parking areas stem from two grants:

- NJDEP Stewardship grant; and
- Trails grants received by the Pinelands Preservation Alliance for which Evesham provided a letter of support.

He outlined the trail enhancements as part of the MOA proposal (see attached presentation slides).

- 1) Western Section: Change in existing trail material surface from earthen to crushed gravel 4,640 linear feet at a width of five feet, the proposed disturbance is 23,200 square feet, or 0.53 acres. The proposed trail improvements would make the existing trail firm, stable and flat from side to side so it is more accessible to individuals with mobility issues.
- 2) Western Section: Installation of one pedestrian Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant bridge to reconnect two existing trails (that are proposed to include ADA upgrades).

- 3) To permit existing park amenities to remain, including boardwalks, kiosk signage at parking area, park signage, and benches. To allow additional newly proposed park amenities, including park signage and benches as appropriate.
- 4) To permit five existing parking areas to remain and to include changes in surface material to allow the installation of ADA-compliant parking spaces.
- 5) To permit the existing trail shown in red (southern section) to remain.

Mr. Rijs said the Commission sent Evesham Township a letter in September of 2023 regarding the creation of hiking trails and parking areas without application. The township is committed to resolving the issues raised in that letter and has the financial resources set aside to address them. He said for an offset measure there is an existing eight-acre area that contains former Municipal Utilities Authority (MUA) basins that could use rehabilitation. He said more formal details of the offset will be discussed if the Commission consents to moving forward with the MOA. He displayed maps of the preserve to show where the proposed improvements will take place.

Mr. Holland said he has been out to Black Run Preserve a few times and the installation of boardwalk and crushed stone will improve the experience for those with mobility challenges. He said thousands of people in Burlington and Camden Counties have ambulatory disabilities and will be able to use the ADA-compliant trails with friends and family.

Commissioner Wallner said he had been a volunteer with the Friends of Black Run Preserve for a number of years and is familiar with the layout of the park. He said he supports an MOA to address the existing infrastructure but has concerns about the proposed ADA trail.

He said the gold trail improvements are fine up until what is known as Lower Schaefer Bog. He said as the gold trails veers north it becomes wet, and existing planks are submerged in water. He said in 2023 there was a fire in the area, and there is significant damage to the trail from a tractor plow that was used to keep the fire from spreading. He noted that the plow path extends to a berm from a former cranberry bog about 150 feet in length. He said the berm is approximately six-feet high with trees that are eroding and beaver activity has been observed.

Mr. Staszewski said the intent is to reclaim the berm access to install the bridge.

Commissioner Wallner said there is a portion of the gold trail on the other side of Tomlinson Mill Road that is very steep and will require switchbacks. He proposed an alternative to use instead. He said off of the gold trails is the black trail and it would require much less improvements and would provide access to two scenic vistas with existing interpretive signs.

Mr. Staszewski said a solution is necessary for that area where it is steep.

Mr. Rijs added that there is still a lot of work that needs to be done for the proposal.

Commissioner Wallner added that the Friends of the Black Run Preserve have been managing the west side of the park as the most pristine, and adding a bridge will provide more access to the area and that is an additional reason why he is suggesting an alternate ADA route.

Commissioner Rittler Sanchez asked who owns the MUA basins and what were they originally used for.

Mr. Rijs said the township owns the entire preserve, including the basins. He said the basins were part of an MOA between the township, the Pinelands Commission and the MUA for testing of spray irrigation and are no longer in use.

Commissioner Irick said he supports providing more access to public land; however, he asked how the Township plans to manage the issue of all-terrain vehicles and dirt bikes from entering the preserve.

Mr. Rijs said the Township has dealt with the issue of off-road vehicles at the park in the past. He said new park signage will help, and the development of a new map will also improve the situation.

Mr. Kerr said there are posts and chains at the preserve to block unauthorized vehicles, along with signs. He said his department and the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) have small 4-wheel drive vehicles to address any emergencies within the site. He said the Township has an MOA with the Friends of the Black Run Preserve, which assists with general maintenance of the park.

ED Grogan reviewed the draft MOA schedule (see last slide of presentation). She said this will be a complex agreement, noting that the size of the preserve is substantial and the finer details need to be worked out. She said that once staff has completed the Stafford Township MOA, they will have more availability to work with Evesham. Additional time has been built into the schedule to address wetlands permitting and stormwater issues.

Commissioner Wallner said he supports the MOA as long as staff completes a thorough evaluation of the alternatives.

Commissioner Rittler Sanchez raised concerns about the grant funding that the Township has secured and the Commission's MOA schedule.

ED Grogan said unfortunately the Commission does not have a mechanism to work any faster on the development of the MOA. She said that Pemberton Township also had a grant for its trail project but was able to obtain a grant extension.

Commissioner Irick made a motion for staff to work with Evesham Township on an MOA for trail improvements and accessibility at the Black Run Preserve. Commissioner Pikolycky seconded the motion.

Commissioner Lohbauer said he hopes that the schedule will allow time for the consideration of alternatives.

Chair Matos thanked Evesham Township, the Friends of the Black Run Preserve and Commission staff and she looks forward to working on the development of the MOA.

All were in favor.

General Public Comment

Dr. Amy Golden, who is a volunteer with the Friends of the Black Run Preserve, said she supports the creation of ADA trails at the preserve but she believes there are better alternatives than what the township is proposing. She provided labeled photos that correspond to her attached, written comments.

Ila Vassallo of Marlton, NJ, said she supports the development of ADA trails at the Black Run Preserve but shares the concerns of Commissioner Wallner and Dr. Amy Golden (written submitted comments are attached).

Harry Harper of Browns Mills, NJ, said he is pleased to see snake studies being undertaken at the Pole Bridge residential project site in Pemberton. He raised concerns about the results being skewed because the studies were funded by the developer. He said the Commission needs to ensure that proper oversight occurs during threatened and endangered species studies.

Emile DiVito of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation and Pinelands Preservation Alliance provided an update on the dumping matter on Magnolia Road in Pemberton Township. He said he saw photos of the debris that has been dumped on the property and it consists of asphalt and construction rubble. He said the property is forested wetlands and the size of the dumping area is half a football field. He said the soil needs to be tested. He said NJDEP's notice of violation mentions an after-the-fact permit. He said there are chunks of asphalt in Stop the Jade Run.

Russell Juleg of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation and Partnerships for New Jersey Plant Conservation expressed the need for the Commission to update its threatened and endangered plant list (written comments attached).

Tracey Doron of Evesham, NJ, said she is strongly opposed to installing an ADA trail in the western portion of the Black Run Preserve. She said she purchased her property because it is isolated. She said her home is the last house on a no outlet road and she said there has been an increase in traffic on the road due to the popularity of the preserve. She has experienced loitering and trespass issues on her property. She said the current trail is approximately two-feet wide and would require significant modification to expand the trail to be ADA compliant. She noted there is a special flower that grows in the leaf liter that will be destroyed during the construction. She said the central or southern portion of the preserve are better areas to install an ADA trail and additional parking area.

Commissioner Mauriello said the NJDEP requires soil sampling as part of post excavation of a clean-ups to ensure that there is no contamination to soil and groundwater.

Mr. DeVito added that the dump trucks failed to comply with transport rules, noting that there was no paperwork for any of the loads of fill and concrete that were dumped at the Magnolia Road site.

Director Horner said that staff are monitoring the Magnolia Road violation and have requested information from the applicant. He said staff will do everything necessary to protect the Pinelands.

Adjournment

Commissioner Irick moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Lohbauer seconded the motion. The Commission agreed to adjourn at 11:15 a.m.

Certified as true and correct:

Jessica Noble

Executive Assistant

Date: April 22, 2024



PHILIP D. MURPHY Governor TAHESHA L.WAY Lt. Governor

State of New Jersey

THE PINELANDS COMMISSION
PO Box 359
New Lisbon, NJ 08064
(609) 894-7300
www.nj.gov/pinelands



LAURA E. MATOS Chair SUSAN R. GROGAN Executive Director

General Information: Info@pinelands.nj.gov Application Specific Information: AppInfo@pinelands.nj.gov

April 8, 2024

William Burns, Esq. (via email) Tabernacle Township Municipal Attorney c/o Hartman Duff 3500 Quakerbridge Road, Suite 202 Hamilton NJ 08619

Re: Application # 1981-1383.008

Block 903, Lot 33 Tabernacle Township

Dear Mr. Burns:

We have reviewed information submitted to our office on April 4, 2024 and April 5, 2024 proposing the demolition of the Tabernacle Township Municipal Building. Included in the submitted information was the following three documents:

An April 4, 2024 email from the Township Construction Official to the Commission identifying the need to take emergency action to demolish the municipal building in accordance with a specific provision of the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code (N.J.A.C. 5:23-2.32). The cited provision addresses building demolition to eliminate an immediate danger to human life.

A March 22, 2024 letter to Tabernacle Mayor Mark Hartman from Thomas Leisse, PE, the Township Engineer of Pennoni Associates indicating that the "building is an imminent danger to public health and safety."

A "Building Fall Plan" indicating that if the building collapsed, it could fall within the adjacent County Rt. 532 right-of-way.

Available information indicates that the municipal building was constructed in the 1870's. The proposed demolition of a building 50 years old or older requires completion of an application to the Pinelands Commission.

Your April 5, 2024 email requests authorization from the Commission to demolish the municipal building in accordance with an emergency provision contained in the Commission's regulations (N.J.A.C. 7:50-4.5). This provision authorizes the Commission's Executive Director, after consultation with the Chairperson of the Commission, to take whatever action is minimally necessary to remedy a danger to public safety. Such authorization would allow for the demolition of the municipal building prior to the completion of an application with the Commission.

Based upon our staff's discussion with Township representatives on April 5, 2024, it is our understanding that the soonest building demolition could begin is Monday, April 15, 2024.

Included in the submitted information is an October 13, 2021 letter from Michael A. Beach and Associates, a consulting structural engineering firm. This letter provides a structural evaluation of the municipal building. Although this letter identifies significant structural deficiencies, the 2021 letter does not address the potential for the building to collapse.

So that the Commission can make an immediate and informed decision on this request, please provide <u>one</u> of the following:

A letter from Michael A. Beach, PE or another qualified New Jersey licensed engineer with structural building expertise confirming the municipal building constitutes an imminent danger to public safety; or

Information to our office confirming Mr. Leisse's structural building qualifications and expertise.

If you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincere

Charles M. Horner, P.P.

Director of Regulatory Programs

c: Samuel Moore, III, Mayor (via email) Thomas K. Boyd, Construction Official (via email)



Memoranda of Agreement

The CMP authorizes the Commission to enter into MOAs with public entities for two purposes:

- To establish streamlined permitting procedures
- To authorize deviations from CMP standards, provided measures are included to ensure equivalent protection of Pinelands resources

13 step process involving Committee/Commission review and public hearing

Pemberton Township MOA

Development: filling, grading and surfacing of Pemberton Lake Trail for accessibility purposes

Deviation: development in wetlands and required wetlands buffers

Offsets: revegetation; rain garden; accessible parking spaces; wooden rail and post barriers

Status: MOA approved 1/12/2024. Awaiting wetlands GP, DEP Right of Entry and raingarden plans.

Stafford Township MOA

Development: surfacing of existing trails and installation of a footbridge and parking area at Forecastle Park for accessibility purposes

Deviation: development in required wetlands buffers

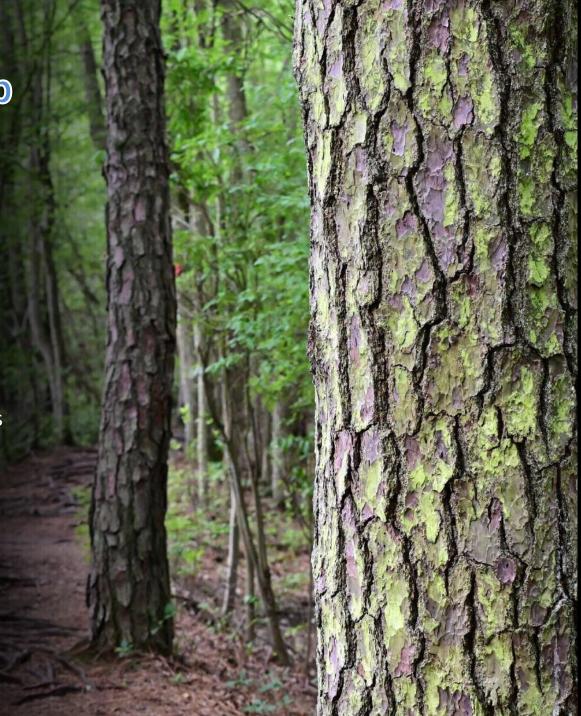
Proposed offset: revegetation/tree planting

Status: updated stormwater plan under review; draft MOA will be presented to the P&I Committee in June

Evesham Township MOA

 Development: surfacing of existing trails and installation of a bridge for accessibility purposes; resolution of violations involving existing parking areas and trails in the Black Run Preserve

- Deviation: development in wetlands and required wetlands buffers
- Proposed offset: restoration of former MUA basins
- Status: P&I presentation 2/23/24;
 Commission presentation 4/12/24



Suggested Evesham MOA Schedule

April 2024: Commission authorization for staff to proceed with development of an MOA

October 2024: P&I Committee reviews draft MOA

November 2024: Public hearing held

January 2025: P&I Committee reviews staff report and recommendation

February 2025: Commission action on MOA



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Pinelands Commission Meeting 9:30 a.m Friday, April 12, 2024

Following the 2/23/24 CMP Policy and Implementation Committee Meeting

- 1. Township of Evesham request for a potential Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the Pinelands Commission for the Municipal Park known as the Black Run Preserve (BRP).
- 2. BRP Municipal Park: 700+ acre Municipal Park located in the southern section of the Township. The entire park is within the Rural Development Area of the Pinelands Land Capability Map. Wetlands and associated Buffers cover a large portion of the park.

The park is comprised of 3 sections.

Central Section Western Section

Southern Section

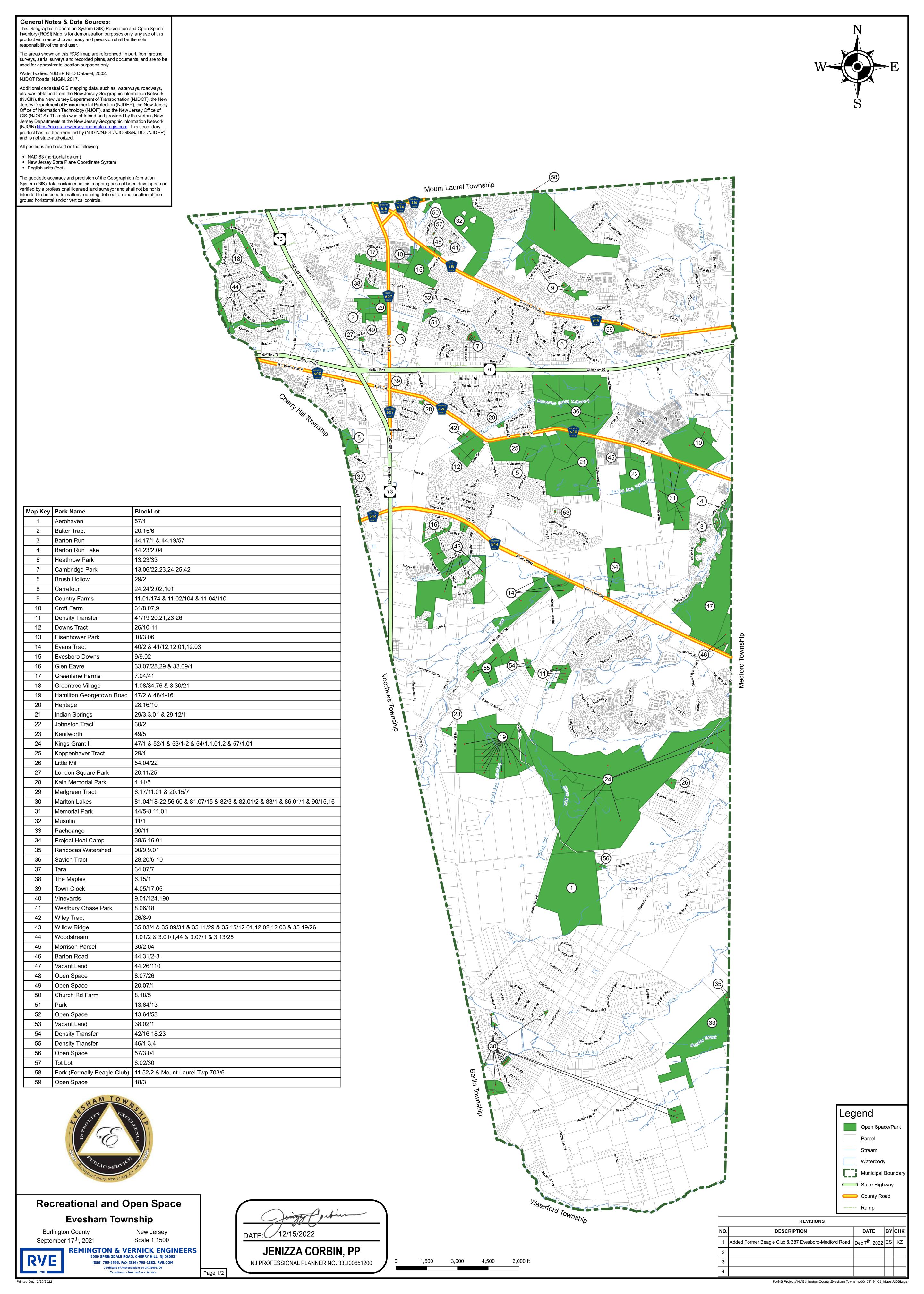
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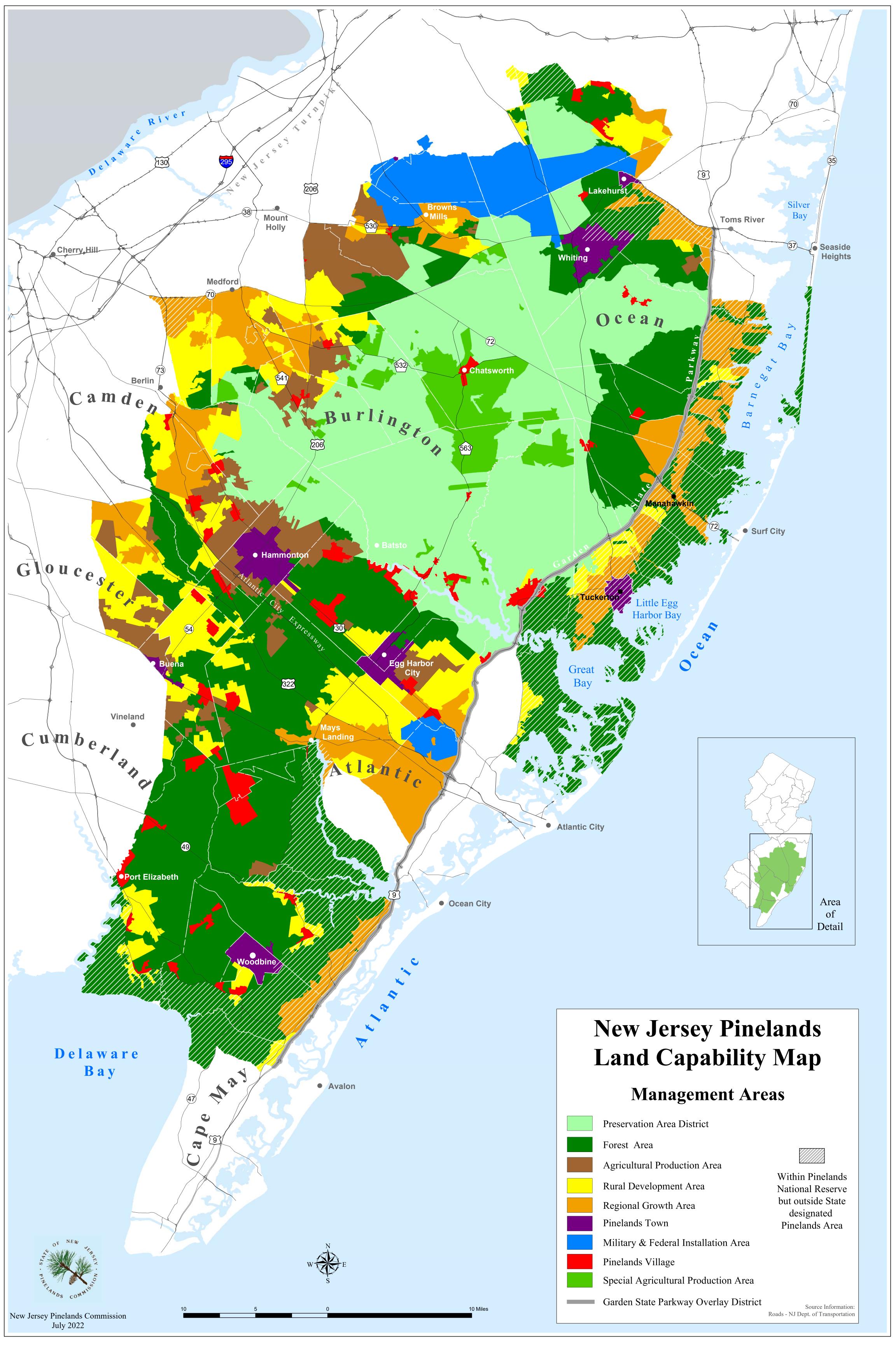
- 3. This MOA request includes permitting approval of the following:
 - 1) Western Section: Change in existing trail material surface from earthen to crushed gravel (as was approved for Pemberton Lakes Trail). 4,640 linear feet @ a width of 5 feet, the proposed disturbance is 23,200 square feet, or 0.53 acres. The proposed trail improvements would make the existing trail firm, stable and flat from side to side so it is more accessible to individuals with mobility issues.
 - 2) Western Section: Installation of one pedestrian ADA compliant bridge to reconnect two existing trails (that are proposed to be include ADA upgrades).
 - 3) To permit existing park amenities to remain including board walks, kiosk signage at parking area, park signage, and benches. To allow additional newly proposed park amenities including park signage and benches as appropriate.
 - 4) To permit 5 existing parking areas to remain and to include changes in surface material to allow the installation of ADA compliant parking spaces.
 - 5) To permit the existing trail shown in red (southern section) to remain.

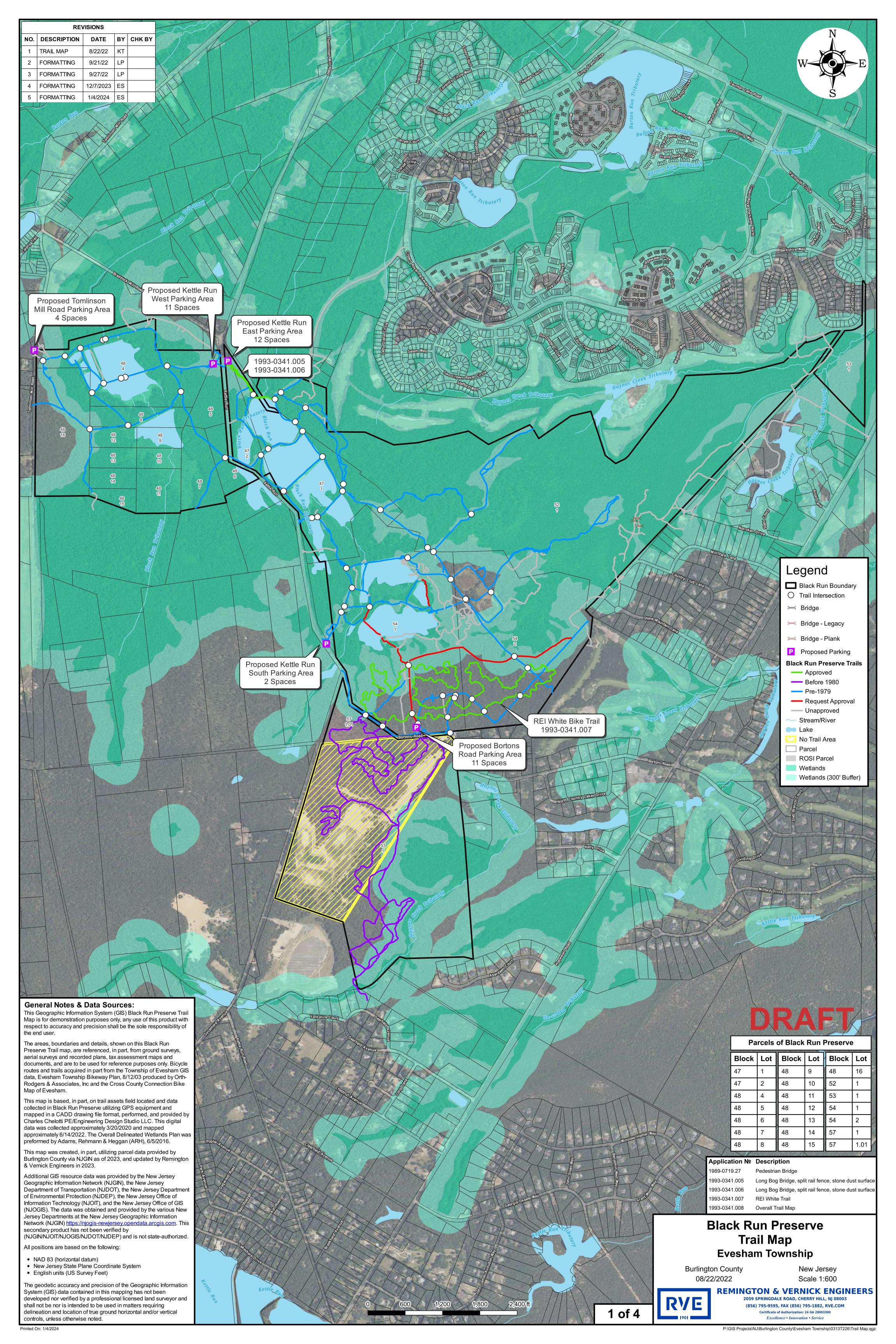
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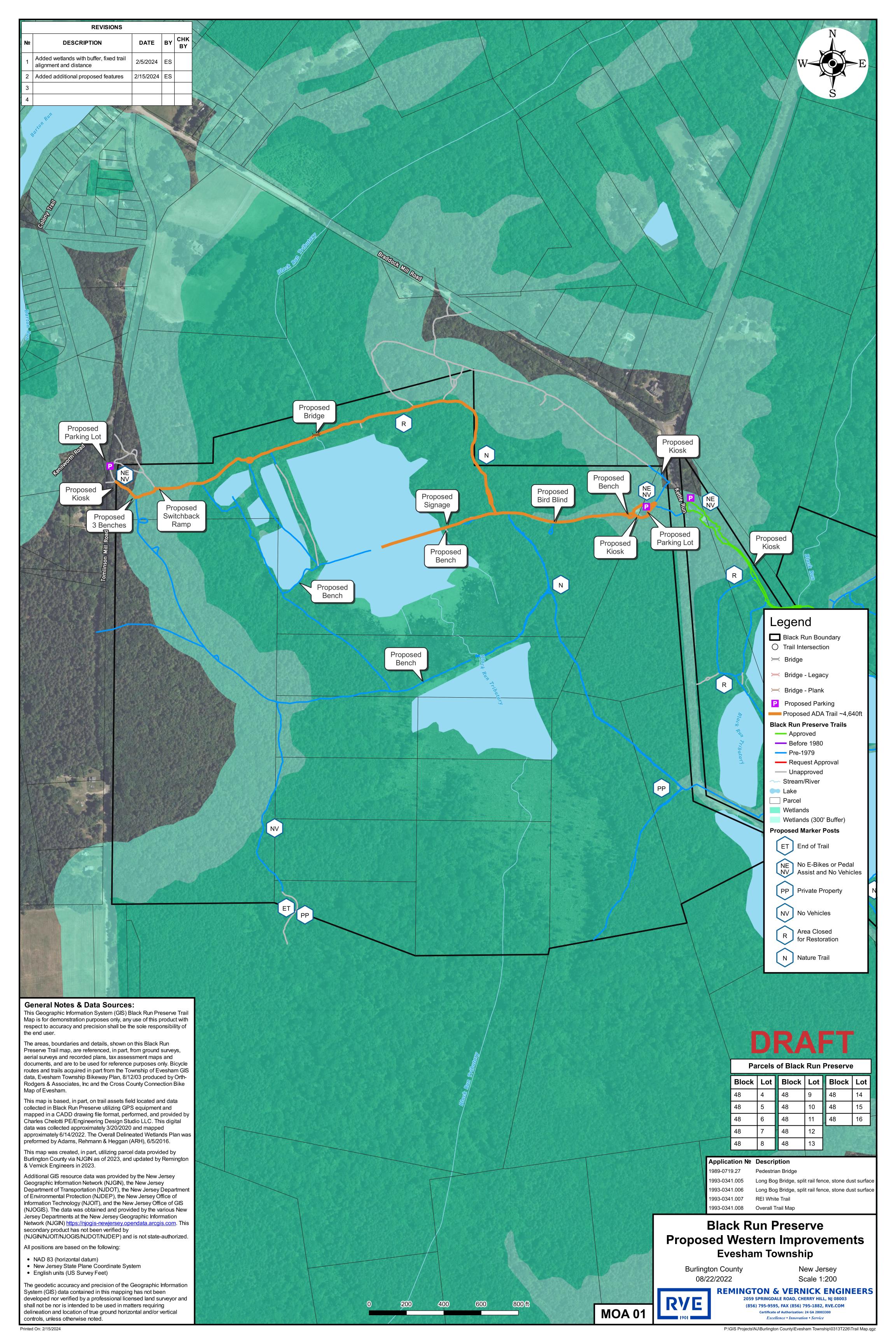
- 4. Partners involved in this effort to address permitting within the BRP:
- Evesham Township
- Friends of Black Run Preserve
- Pinelands Preservation Alliance
- 5. Offset Approximate Work Area = 8+ Acres. Restoration of former MUA basins.

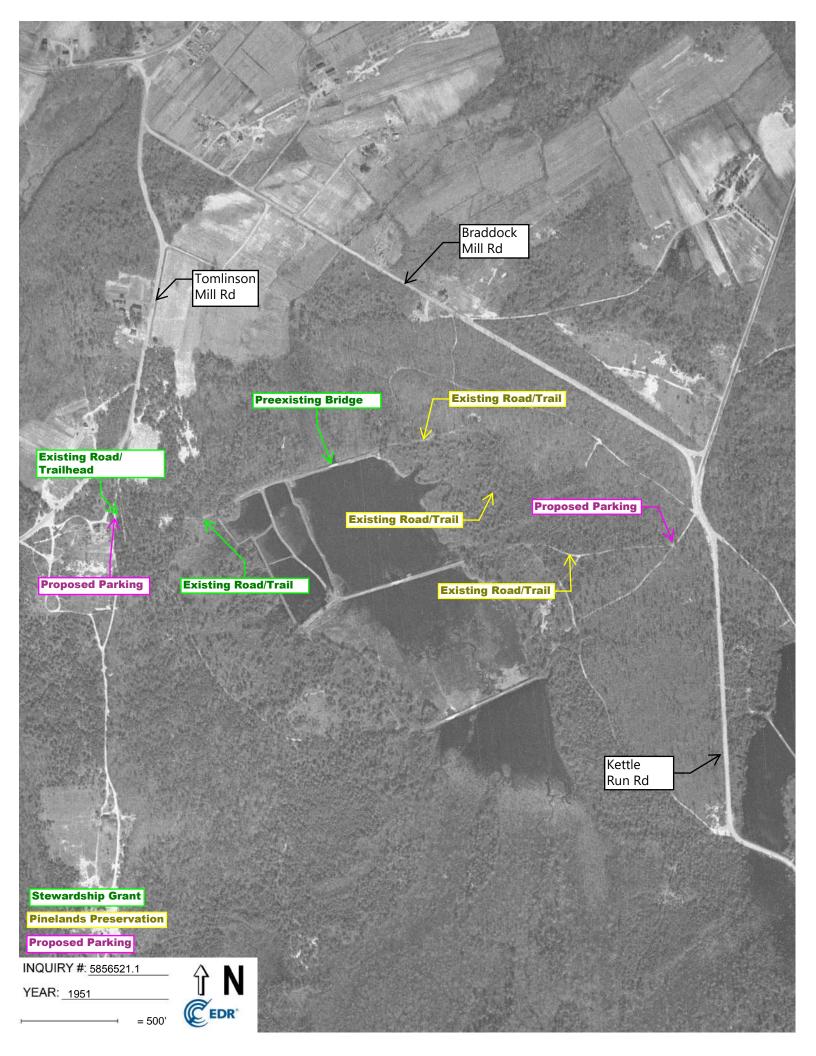


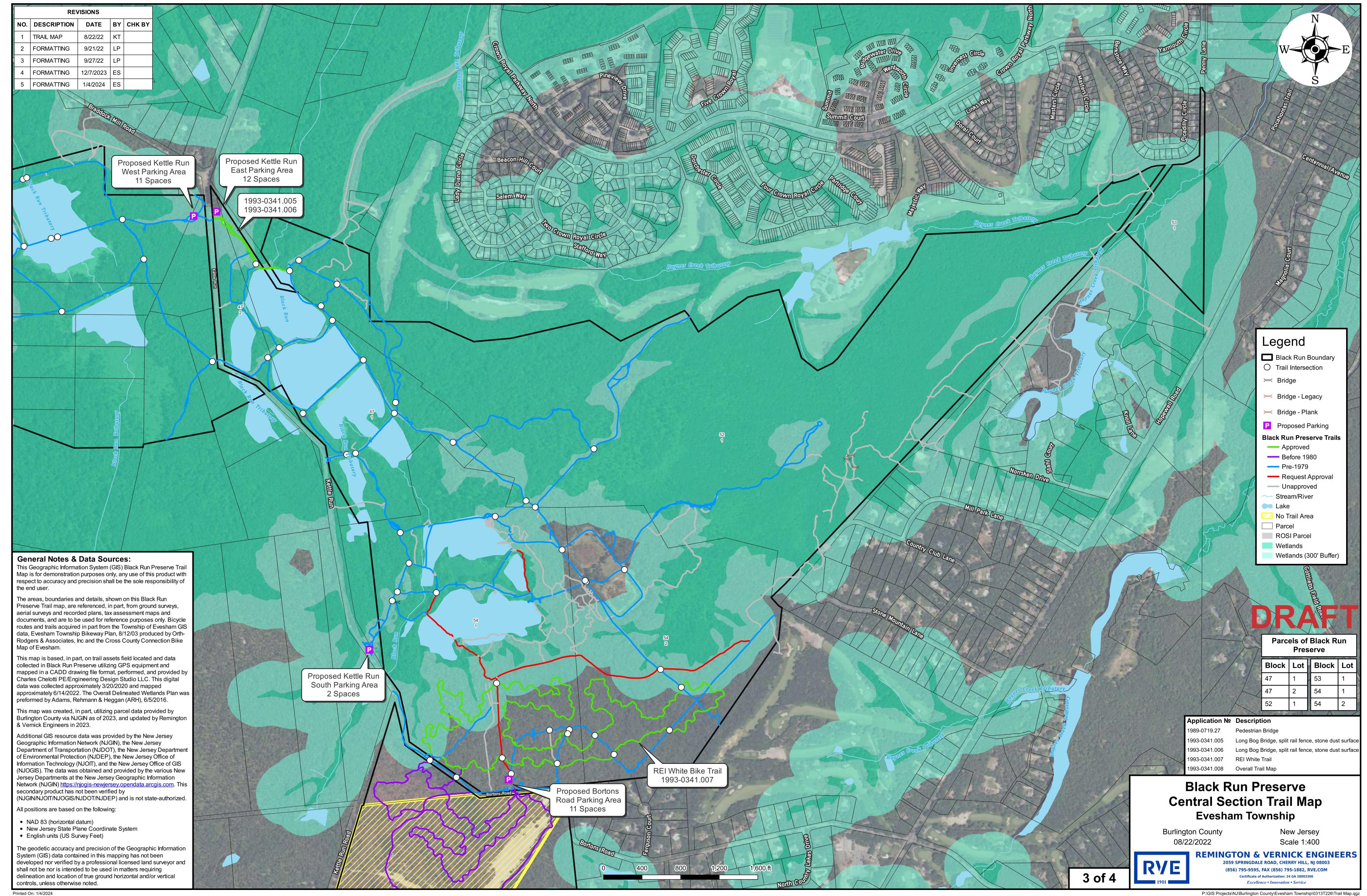


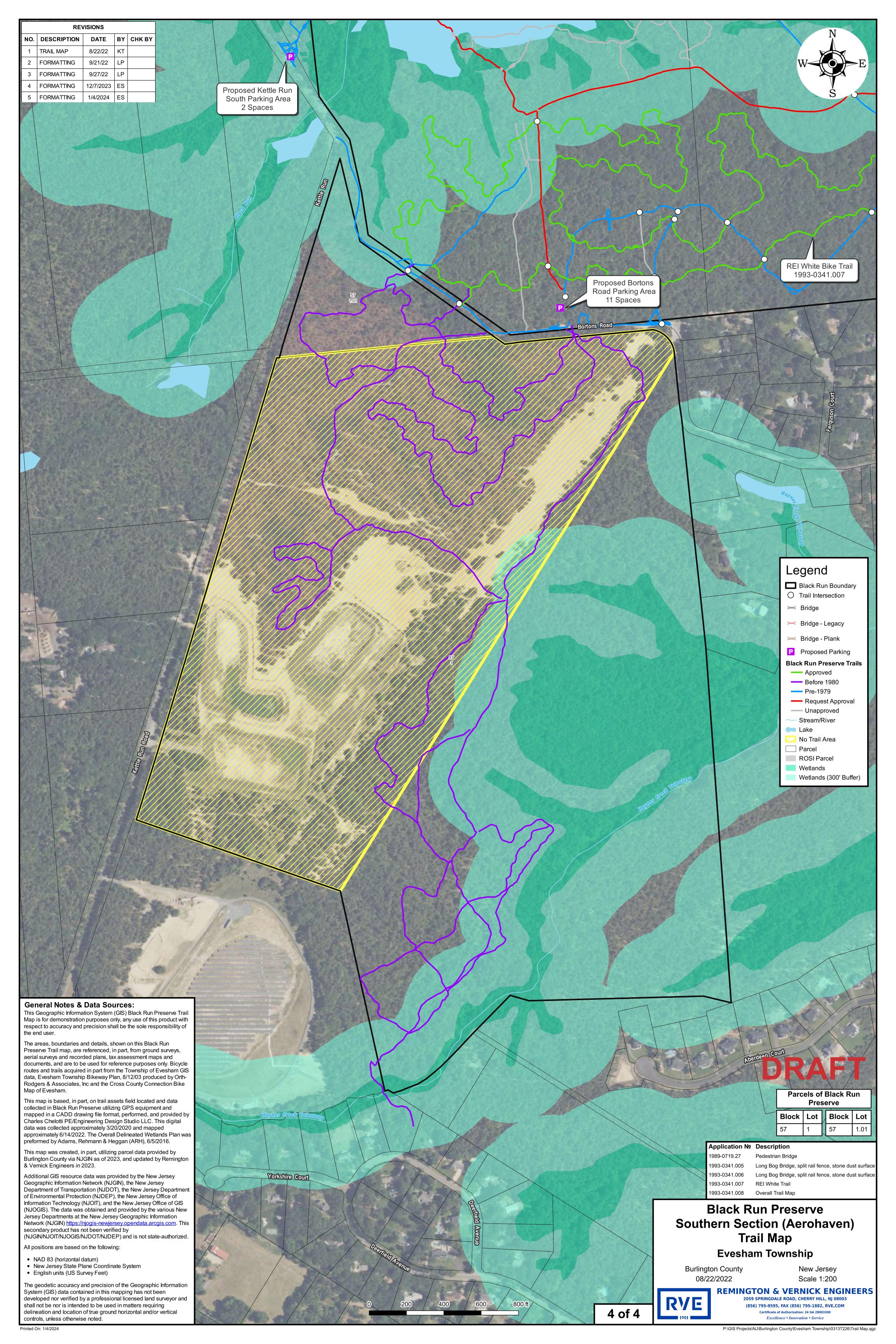










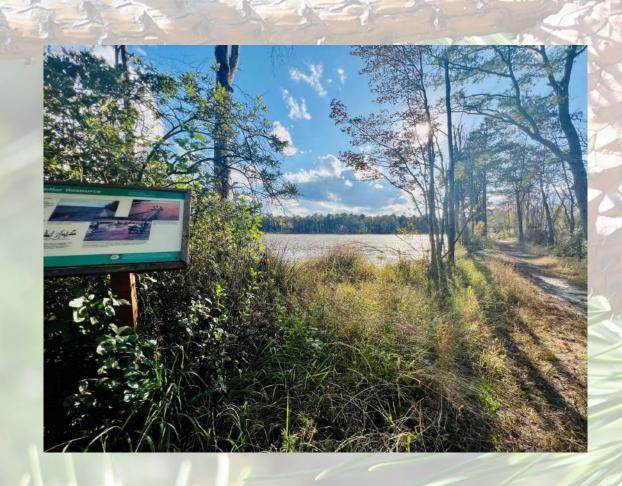


The importance of this project

- 1. Create an inclusive low-impact recreation site for the community.
- 2. Promote community health and wellness.
- 3. Provide a safe space for gathering and activity for everyone.
- 4. Encourage low-impact activity for all members of the community.
- 5. Provide inclusive access to conserved wild areas with great scenic views.
- 7. Help all residents connect with Evesham's natural places.
- 8. Improve overall value of the preserve for the community.



Why do the work: Health, Recreation, Education, Community Connection





Examples of Similar Work: State Park Level



Wharton State Forest, Batsto Village – Red Trail



Atsion Recreation Area – Red/Blue Trail

My name is Dr. Amy Golden. I love the Black Run Preserve because of its unique beauty and its magical healing powers. A simple walk around the old cranberry bogs can bring serenity and peace to the visitor.

I whole heartedly support the proposal to build ADA trails so that all can enjoy the magic of Black Run Preserve. However, I too am concerned about damaging the very sensitive wetlands by placing a 5 foot wide trail and an 8 foot wide bridge through the pristine west side of Black Run Preserve.

Please look at my handout.

The first three pages are photographs taken of the proposed route of the ADA trail. These are images of the west side of the trail, off of Kettlerun Road. One of my main concerns is that the proposed trail would extend down a narrow berm along the lower Schafer bog to what we call the infinity pool. See Picture 1. There are deep holes in this narrow dike and water on the left side is up to the level of the berm.

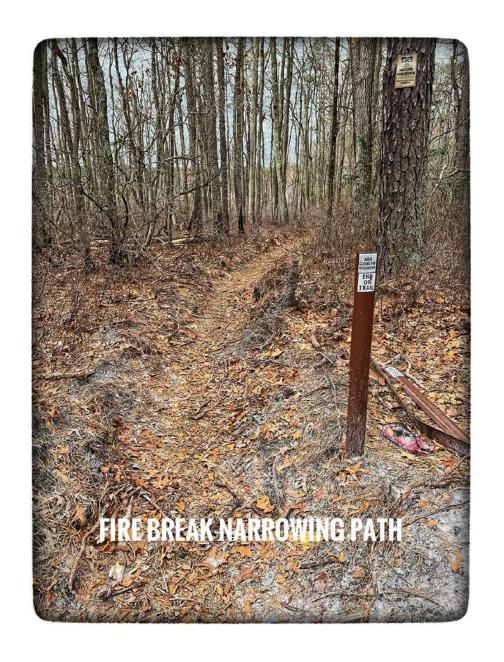
The Ada trail would also lead down a narrow nature trail, which ends in a flooded area, depicted in photo #2. The flooding makes the trail impassable. There are bladderwarts in the water there. This is where the proposed 8 foot wide bridge would span the water to connect to the Tomlinson Mill Rd side of Black Run Preserve. There is also evidence of a new beaver dam in this area. The berm where the ADA trail would be placed is very narrow, which you can see on the left side of the picture and would need widening in order to accommodate wheelchairs.

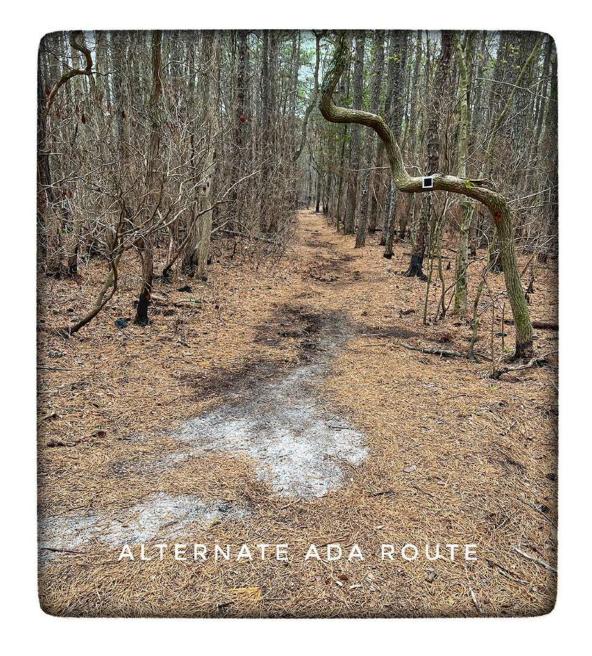
Please see Photo #3, labeled fire break narrowing path. This leads back to Lower Schafer bog. The trail is flooded in areas and very narrow. The fire trough was placed by firefighters during last year's fires, and trees would need to be cut down to establish a 5 foot wide trail

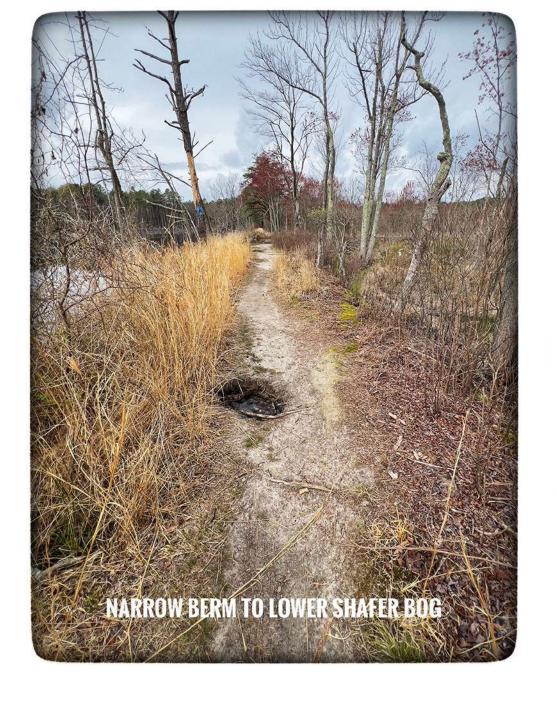
Now please turn to the Alternate ADA route which heads through an established dry, wide, sandy trail. Please turn to the next picture, labeled wider, dry alternate path. The last photo shows that this path leads to a dry wide area with a beautiful view of upper Schafer Bog.

The Alternate ADA route leads the visitor through higher dry soil and sand, protects the wetlands from traffic and would require less infrastructure to establish. I hope you will consider this alternate ADA route.

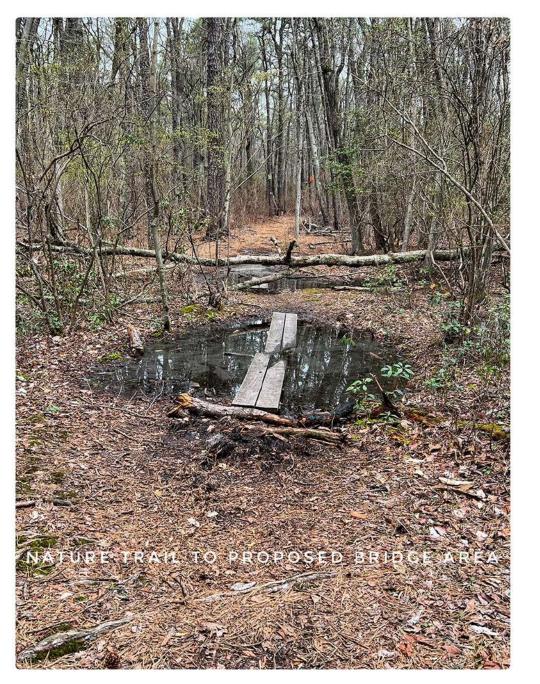
Thank you.

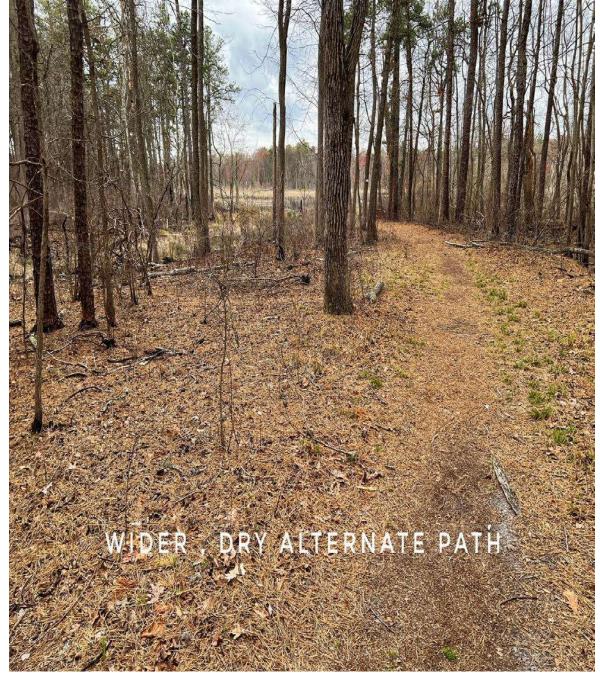


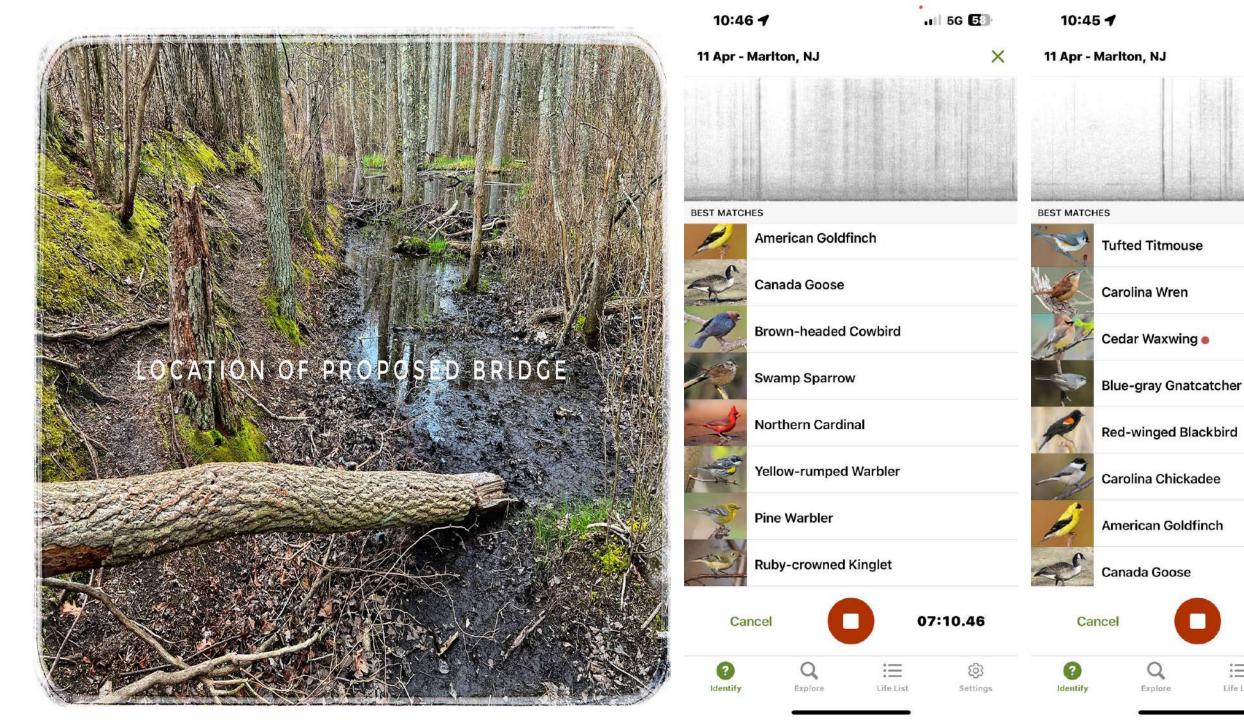












Life List



Hi, my name is Ila Vassallo. I am a resident of Marlton, and I frequent and enjoy the Black Run Preserve.

I support Evesham Township in its initiative to provide an ADA trail in the Black Run Preserve. I also applaud organizations like the PPA, who through their education and outreach, have shifted mind sets to consider and include disability access at the onset of trail planning and implementation.

I served with Doug Wallner for several years on the Evesham Environmental Commission, and I trust Commissioner Wallner's judgment, accept his expertise on environmental issues based on his experience and career, and I agree and support the statements that he made here today regarding the proposed ADA trail in the BRP.

I also served on my township's planning board for several years and one aspect of the new Planning Board member training that has always stuck with me is that there is no substitute for visiting the site.

To that end, I visited the site in the Black Run Preserve for the proposed ADA trail and is the reason that I share and support Commissioner Wallner's comments and questions. And after listening to Dr. Golden, I share and support her statements as well.

Some additional questions and comments:

From Mr. Rij's presentation, in reference to the 1951 aerial map, it refers to sections of the trail as "Stewardship Grant." Are these the areas of the BRP for which grant monies will be utilized?

How much is the township's grant for this work? What funding, if any, is the non-profit Friends of the Black Run Preserve providing?

Evesham's presentation today specified a required "offset." How was that "offset" determined?

And, finally, now that I have a better understanding of the MOA process, does what Evesham Township propose today go into the MOA, and, if so, does adopting the MOA preclude changes to, for example, the location of proposed ADA trail?

Thank you



Partnerships for New Jersey Plant Conservation

Scientists, Advocates, Educators and Citizens
Working Towards Protection of New Jersey's Rare Flora

Testimony to the Pinelands Commission, April 12, 2024, concerning the CMP list of protected plant species.

Following up on the issue of the Pinelands Commission's list of protected plant species:

The Comprehensive Management Plan states, "No development shall be carried out by any person unless it is designed to avoid irreversible adverse impacts on the survival of any local populations of those plants designated by the Department of Environmental Protection as endangered plant species pursuant to N.J.A.C 7:5C-5.1 as well as the following plants, which are hereby found and declared to be threatened or endangered plants of the Pinelands:"

What follows is the original list of 54 species that were determined to be either threatened or endangered at the time of the adoption of the CMP. The clear intention of the CMP is to protect both endangered and threatened species, and this is logical, because endangered species are generally those considered to be near extinction in the state, and threatened species are generally those considered be at a lesser level of imperilment, but close to becoming endangered.

Once a rare species reaches the stage of imperilment considered "endangered," it may actually be too late for corrective measures. So it makes sense to protect threatened species with the goal of ensuring their situation doesn't deteriorate to the point of becoming endangered.

Our problem, however, is that the state of New Jersey hasn't yet adopted any legislation that confers the official status of "Threatened" to any plant species. That puts the Pinelands Commission into a position similar to the position it was in when it created the CMP. At that time, there wasn't even a state statute to establish an official "Endangered" status. So the Commission did what was logical at the time; it availed itself of the best expert advice it could get and "found and declared" a list of "threatened or endangered plants of the Pinelands."

There may be a variety of remedies for the current problem, but one thing is certain: the knowledge, expertise, and data available to ascertain levels of imperilment of plants have monumentally increased over the last several decades. The Commission is in a far better position today than it was in 1980 to find and declare what ought to be the "threatened or endangered plants of the Pinelands."