

Disclaimer

These minutes reflect the actions taken by the Commission during its September 12, 2025 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 September 18, 2025.

PINELANDS COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES
September 12, 2025

All participants were either in-person or present via Zoom conference and the meeting was livestreamed through YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/live/zDfhjE7Y73k>

Commissioners Participating in the Meeting

Nicholas Asselta, Alan W. Avery Jr., Deborah Buzby-Cope, Jerome H. Irick, Mark Lohbauer, Gaetano Matro, Mark Mauriello, Jonathan Meade, William Pikolycky, Jessica Rittler Sanchez, Ryck Signor, 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 Michael Eleneski.

Commissioners Absent

Theresa Lettman.

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).

DAG Stypinski administered the oath of office to Camden County's new appointee on the Commission, Gaetano (Guy) Matro.

Commissioner Matro said he looks forward to serving as a Commissioner. He said his father-in-law, Peter Burke, also served on the Commission.

Executive Director (ED) Grogan called the roll and announced the presence of a quorum. Thirteen Commissioners participated in the meeting. Commissioner Meade joined the meeting at 10:02 a.m.

The Commission pledged allegiance to the Flag.

Minutes

Chair Matos presented the open and closed session minutes from the Commission's August 8, 2025 meeting. Commissioner Pikolycky moved the adoption of the minutes. Commissioner Lohbauer seconded the motion.

The minutes from the open and closed session from the August 8, 2025 Commission meeting were adopted by a vote of 11 to 0. Commissioner Matro abstained from the vote.

Resolution for former Commissioner John Holroyd

Chair Matos requested a motion for a resolution recognizing former Commissioner John Holroyd's time at the Commission.

Commissioner Lohbauer made a motion Expressing the Commission's Appreciation to John W. Holroyd, Jr. for His Service as a Member of the Commission From January 20, 2022 to May 20, 2025. Commissioner Asselta seconded the motion (See Resolution # PC4-25-25)

Chair Matos read the resolution. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 12 to 0.

Paul Leakan shared a photograph of Penbryn Lake that was printed onto a canvas and sent to former Commissioner Holroyd.

Committee Reports

Chair Matos provided a summary of the August 29, 2025 Policy and Implementation Committee meeting:

The Committee approved the minutes of the July 25, 2025 meeting.

The Committee heard a presentation from Dave Specca of the Rutgers University Agrivoltaics Program. Mr. Specca provided an overview of their program and trial results from three of their New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station Farms. He also reviewed the Board of Public Utilities' Dual-Use Solar Energy Pilot Program's applicant and research requirements and the incentives of participating in the program.

Chief Planner Brad Lanute presented an update on the work of the Interagency Council on Climate Resiliency of which the Pinelands Commission is a member agency. He highlighted a recent report by Rutgers University on the State of the Climate presenting historic and projected trends of New Jersey's climate.

Commissioner Avery provided a summary of the August 19, 2025 Personnel and Budget Committee meeting:

The Committee adopted the minutes from its June 24, 2025 meeting. The Committee heard staff presentations pertaining to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Draft Budgets and Commission Initiatives and voted to recommend Commission approval of the Budgets.

Committee members discussed their concerns with the long-term viability of the State Health Benefit Program given the upcoming significant increases in health insurance costs that will impact staff and the Commission. Staff reviewed financial updates, including Check Registers, Electronic Disbursements and Application Fees. Lastly, staff provided a summary of recent employee actions.

Executive Director's Report

ED Grogan provided information on the following matters:

- The Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) Bank recently released and distributed its 2025 Annual Report. At the October Commission meeting, staff will present the findings from the PDC Bank report and the Permanent Land Protection data.
- The consultants continue to prepare design documents for the Fenwick Manor rehabilitation project. Another site visit is scheduled for September 22, 2025.
- The Governor's Authorities Units has requested that the Commission along with other state agencies prepare a Transition Report, detailing staffing needs, ongoing projects and current budget impacts. The report is due on October 17, 2025 in anticipation of the new administration taking office in January 2026.

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

- Staff continues to work with Manchester Township regarding its police communication tower. Construction equipment placement and vehicle turnarounds expanded the area that needs to be cleared. Staff is discussing ways in which disturbance can be minimized so that habitat for a threatened and endangered (T&E) animal species is not impacted.
- On August 7th, staff met with a representative from the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (DOA) to discuss the status of applications for the conversion of agricultural barns to temporary seasonal employee housing. The development activity does require an application to the Commission. The conversion of the barns must also meet the

Department of Community Affairs (DCA) building codes and comply with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's (NJDEP) wastewater regulations. The representative from the DOA will encourage the agricultural community to complete their applications with the Commission.

- Staff continues to correspond with representatives of the Joint Base McGuire Dix Lakehurst (JBMDL) on the application submitted by Ocean County for the construction of the elevated roadway (bridge) on Route 539. JBMDL submitted a statement to the County advising that the easement is on federal property. It still remains unclear who owns the easement.

April Field, Chief Permitting Officer, provided an update on the following two applications:

- Staff completed its field verification of a wetlands delineation for an 800-acre parcel in Evesham Township located next to the Black Run Preserve. On August 27th, staff requested additional revisions be made to the wetlands line. The applicant submitted those revisions, and staff are currently reviewing them.
- Equity Enterprises, a developer proposing a large residential subdivision in Pemberton Township, continues to work on resolving a list of issues related to the Comprehensive Management Plan. In 2005, the Commission issued a Certificate of Filing (CF) for the development. Pemberton Township issued a General Development Plan approval that remains valid through 2027. At this time, the applicant continues to work through the application process and is also having discussions with the NJDEP Green Acres staff about conservation of the property. The parcel is located in both a Pinelands Regional Growth Area and a Forest Area.

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

- The public comment period for the rule proposal (Management Area change, CF expiration and application fee enhancements) closed on August 15, 2025. A total of 490 comments were received between the public hearing and the submission of written comments. The majority of those comments were in support of the redesignation of the Black Run watershed. An overview of the response to comments will be discussed at the September 26th P&I Committee meeting. A presentation on the Commission's Long-term Water Level Monitoring Program and an update on Fair Share Housing Plans will be provided at the September P&I Committee meeting.
- The deadline for Pinelands Conservation Fund land preservation grant applications is approaching. Applications are due on Friday, September 19, 2025.

Commissioner Mauriello asked if there is an anticipated adoption date for the rule proposal.

ED Grogan said the adoption notice will be submitted to the Governor's office for their review. The adoption of the proposal is expected to be on the November 14th Commission meeting agenda and it's anticipated that the rules will go into effect in early February.

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

- Evesham Township continues to work on its T&E Survey protocols for its accessible trails project at the Black Run Preserve.
- The first round of discovery was completed on the Artistic Materials matter. Counsel will meet with the mediator before the actual mediation session, which is scheduled for October 14, 2025.

Brad Lanute, Chief Planner, provided the following updates:

- Staff continued to review adopted Housing Elements and Fair Share Plans in response to the fourth round of affordable housing obligations. As of the end of August, the Commission has received 34 adopted plans. Ten plans have been deemed incomplete due to the absence of adopted and submitted implementing ordinances. Three of the plans deemed incomplete propose zoning changes likely to require review and approval by the full Commission.
- Staff met with Evesham Township to discuss its upcoming master plan reexamination and the redesignation of the Black Run watershed associated with the current rule proposal. Discussions centered around mapping changes and zoning changes that would be required once the rule is adopted.

Commissioner Avery inquired about the recourse that municipalities have if the number of affordable housing units assigned are not possible in the Pinelands Area.

Chief Planner Lanute said the Fair Housing Act amendments provide for vacant land adjustments or durational adjustments based on availability of infrastructure. He said in instances of vacant land adjustments, there is a provision that allows non-Regional Growth Areas to be considered unavailable and units are deferred into the future. He added that if towns propose to increase densities in Regional Growth Areas or change management area designations, they must maintain consistency with the CMP. He said if it's not consistent with the CMP, a municipality would need to amend its housing plan.

Commissioner Avery asked if housing plans are reviewed by COAH (Council on Affordable Housing). He then asked if COAH still exists.

ED Grogan said COAH was disbanded and DCA has taken over per the new affordable housing legislation that went into effect in early 2024. Any disputes are handled through a new Court process established by that legislation.

Commissioner Meade joined the meeting.

Paul Leakan, Communications Officer, provided the following update:

- World Water Monitoring Challenge is scheduled for October 24 at Batsto Lake. This long-standing program is held in partnership with the NJDEP. Approximately 150 students will participate.
- Staff continues to make progress on a project to develop native plant seed mixes for use in the Pinelands. Staff has compiled a series of lists of native seeds that two native plant nurseries are currently producing and lists of seed mixes that are being used by several public entities.

Public Development Projects and Other Permit Matters

Chair Matos introduced a resolution approving the demolition and reconstruction of bathrooms at Bass River State Forest and the expansion of existing athletic fields in Egg Harbor Township.

Commissioner Buzby-Cope made a motion Approving With Conditions Applications for Public Development (Application Numbers 1990-0868.036 & 1992-0351.006) (See Resolution # PC4-25-26). Commissioner Pikolycky seconded the motion.

Ernest Deman, Environmental Specialist, said the first application is for the demolition of a 670 square foot restroom building that is 50 years old or older and proposes the construction of a 668 square foot restroom building. The restroom services the North Shore Campground located in Bass River State Forest. The restroom that will be demolished is currently located 90 feet from wetlands and the newly constructed restroom will maintain that same buffer.

He said the second application is for the expansion of existing grass athletic fields in Egg Harbor Township. He said 0.6 acres of a wooded area will be cleared to accommodate the expansion of the fields. Also proposed is a concrete sidewalk around the perimeter of the fields.

Commissioner Rittler Sanchez asked if any artificial turf is proposed.

Mr. Deman said no.

The resolution was adopted by a vote of 12 to 0. Commissioner Matro abstained from the vote.

Chair Matos introduced a resolution for the Ocean County forestry application.

Commissioner Rittler Sanchez made a motion Approving With Conditions an Application for Public Development (Application Number 1983-4180.005) (See Resolution # PC4-25-27). Commissioner Buzby-Cope seconded the motion.

Director Horner said in July, Commission staff issued a Public Development report recommending approval for forestry activities and a forest fire fuel break in portions of Lacey and Ocean Townships in Ocean County. He said Ocean County requested that the application not be acted on at the August Commission meeting because a few Commissioners raised questions about the application. Ocean County's consultant provided a response to the questions and concerns, and that response was shared with all Commissioners on September 4, 2025. He said

the application proposes 1,200 acres of forestry, 850 acres of forest fire fuel breaks, 35 acres of planting and restoration and 133 acres of wildlife enhancements.

Branwen Ellis, Environmental Specialist, reviewed the finer details of the forestry plan and displayed a map depicting the forestry activities to be conducted on the 12,678-acre parcel. She said thinning is proposed on approximately 953 acres, and that will result in a 34% reduction in trees in those areas (yellow crosshatching areas on map). The plan proposes Atlantic White Cedar regeneration (green crosshatching areas on the map). The plan also includes 35 acres of restoration to an area that has been damaged by off-road vehicles.

Director Horner pointed out the forest fire fuel breaks on the map. He said that they begin at the southern portion of the parcel and head in a northeastern direction and are linear in shape. He said the red portions on the map are areas that are proposed for prescribed burns, which do not require an application to the Commission.

Ms. Ellis said the applicant had to address T&E bird, snakes, frog and plants species. The plan was designed to ensure the protection of T&E species.

Commissioner Wallner said it would have been helpful to have seen the map when the public development report was issued.

Ms. Ellis shared a map (see attached) of the Jones Road Wildfire that occurred in the spring of 2025. The boundary in yellow on the map shows the Forked River Mountain Preserve and the red line depicts the area of the 15,000-acre Jones Road Wildfire.

Commissioner Ritter Sanchez asked if the fire started on private or public land.

An Ocean County representative said the fire started on public land.

Commissioner Meade asked how much of the forestry activities will occur on the land that burned this spring.

Ms. Ellis said she would have to research that but it's important to note that the activities described in the Forestry Plan will take place over a 10-year span.

Commissioner Buzby-Cope asked how much of the Jones Road Forest consumed by wildfire could have been saved if the forestry plan had been in effect 10 years ago.

Jason Hager, Ocean County Environmental Specialist, said many factors play a role in the intensity of a wildfire, including weather conditions and timing. He said the forest fire fuel break associated with this plan are along existing roads and would have allowed the forest fire service and other personnel to have safer, quicker and easier access to extinguish the wildfire. He said the north/south fuel break would have provided more options to intercept the fire.

Commissioner Avery asked about the prior Wells Mills forestry plan that the County undertook and how it stood up to this fire.

Jason Hager said the County saw numerous benefits to having the forest thinned. He said fire crews had improved visibility into the forest, and that helped to address and spot fires. He said ladder fuels were removed, and crews had improved maneuverability in areas where vegetation had been removed.

Commissioner Mauriello asked how the County plans to restrict access to off-road vehicle use post restoration.

Geoffrey Lohmeyer, Senior County Park Manager, said the County will use enforcement to the best of their abilities, but it is difficult because you can't chase off-road vehicles. The County will use gates, barriers and logs to limit access and future damage.

Commissioner Lohbauer said he has a few questions related to the application.

He said in the applicant's memo in response to questions raised by Commissioners, the response did not address the studies that he shared about forestry thinning as a wildfire management tool. He said the studies found forestry thinning to be ineffective and even create a risk of greater wildfire spread. (He noted just one of several links, to an article entitled "*Fuel Reduction' Logging Exacerbates Wildfire Effects and Puts Communities at Greater Risk*," a fact sheet by the John Muir project out west, that cites 39 studies of forest thinning projects ranging from 1940 through 2024 demonstrating the ineffectiveness of forestry thinning. That article is found at <http://www.johnmuirproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/JMP-fact-sheet-thinning-and-fire-29Nov24.pdf>)

Commissioner Lohbauer asked the County to provide reassurance as to why he should trust the legitimacy of the studies the County cited which contradict the studies he shared.

Director Horner said it's important to note that the CMP permits thinning of a forest. He said the memo shared with Commissioners on September 4, 2025 advised that some of the issues raised by Commissioners are not regulations contained in the CMP. He said the applicant is not required to demonstrate that the thinning is necessary or effective as a fire management technique. He reiterated that staff reviewed this application based on the current regulations and did not ask the applicant about the effectiveness of forest thinning.

Vinh Lang, Ocean County Consulting Forester, said the yellow hatched areas on the map outlined in red include both thinning and prescribed burn to mimic what would actually occur during a small-scale fire. He said a fuel break is a good tool to fight a wildfire but because it's linear, it doesn't reflect exactly what would happen in nature. He said the intention of the thinning is to take into account the biodiversity of the specific area.

Commissioner Lohbauer said his next question is related to canopy reduction. He said he is familiar with the Wells Mills Forestry plan and the reduction of the canopy. He asked how much of the canopy will remain once the thinning is completed at the Forked River Mountain Preserve.

Mr. Lang said it is dependant on the specific prescriptions. He said there are similarities to the forestry plan at Wells Mills that would create small shade breaks, which would result in a canopy reduction. He said this plan is more intentional, in that the plan is intended to create a change in the arrangement post thinning. The plan calls for a greater canopy reduction in the Atlantic White Cedar restoration area and for other sun loving species.

Commissioner Lohbauer said he asked that question because he is concerned about the ladder fuels drying up once the thinning is complete, thereby increasing the potential for a wildfire.

Mr. Lang said wildfire is dependant on the weather. He noted that if all the slash was left in the thinned areas, there is an increased risk of fire potential. He said each prescription will dictate the correct approach.

Commissioner Lohbauer said he supports the restoration of the Atlantic White Cedar trees but raised concerns about the removal of a red maple hardwood to make room for the cedar. He asked if there would be reduction in thinning elsewhere in Ocean County to compensate for the loss of red maple in the Forked River Mountains.

Mr. Lang said that's a question for Ocean County but related to this plan, the cedar tree population is fading, and in order to maintain the historic Atlantic White Cedar population for future generations, it must be replanted.

Commissioner Lohbauer asked about time frame that is proposed for forestry activity each year, which extends from April 15th through November 15th. He said in his experience with other forestry projects involving potential snake habitat, that window has been narrower, more like mid-May through mid-October in order to avoid cold days where snakes might be too chilled to move out of the way of forestry activities.

Ms. Ellis said the timeframe from mid-April to mid-November is consistent with the CMP's T&E protection standards for snakes. She said the applicant proposes that any forestry or creation of forest fuel/firebreaks that is undertaken with heavy equipment, shall only occur between April 15 to November 15, the period when the concerned snake species are active. The applicant further proposes that from November 15 to April 15, the period of time when the concerned snake species are hibernating, only low-intensity methods such as thinning on foot, with handheld chainsaws or handsaws, will be utilized for forestry and the creation of forest fuel/firebreaks.

Director Horner noted that years ago the professional guidance related to the protection of snakes for forestry applications was that forestry activities could only occur during the winter months while the snakes were hibernating. He said then the professionals changed the guidance and said forestry activities should be conducted only when the snakes are active, because the snakes could move away.

Commissioner Lohbauer thanked everyone for answering his questions. He said the answers addressed all of his reservations with the application.

The resolution was adopted by a vote of 12 to 0. Commissioner Matro abstained from the vote.

Chair Matos thanked staff, Ocean County representatives and Commissioners for the work on this application.

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

Chair Matos read the list of Public Development applications. She said Egg Harbor Township Board of Education is proposing a parking lot at the Alder Avenue Middle School. The Lenape Regional High School District is proposing an artificial turf field. Hammonton is proposing improvements to an existing park and Galloway Township is proposing a two-lot subdivision.

Director Horner said Lenape Regional High School District is proposing a 15,000 square foot expansion of an already existing artificial turf field at Shawnee High School.

Jason Howell of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance said he is opposed to poison plastic turf in the Pine Barrens. He said many states are considering banning “forever chemicals” associated with cookware and artificial turf. He said artificial turf is detrimental to human health and natural ecology. He said he hope the Commission votes against it.

Jerry Henger of Baltimore, Maryland, expressed his general dislike of plastic. He said as a society we should be looking for alternatives to plastic. He said plastic ends up in the environment and causes health problems.

Margaret Stephens of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, said there is no reason to use artificial turf. She said grass turf is grown locally and supports the local economy. She said the precautionary principle is an approach in which if its not safe, it should not be used or installed. She urged the Commission not to approve the use of artificial turf.

Ordinances Not Requiring Commission Action

Chief Planner Lanute said staff reviewed one stormwater management plan, two ordinances, and nine housing element and fair share plans that were found to raise no substantial issues with respect to the standards of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP).

Other Resolutions

Chair Matos introduced a resolution to adopt the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Budgets.

Commissioner Pikolycky made a motion To Adopt the Pinelands Commission’s Fiscal Year 2026 Budgets for the Operating Fund, Fenwick Manor Preservation Fund, Katie Fund and Pinelands Conservation Fund (See Resolution # PC4-25-28). Commissioner Lohbauer seconded the motion.

Jessica Lynch, Business Services Manager, said the FY26 Budgets consist of four separate budgets: Operating Fund, Pinelands Conservation Fund, Fenwick Manor Preservation Fund and Katie Fund. She reviewed the revenues and expenditures associated with each of the budgets.

Presentation slides can be viewed here:

<https://www.nj.gov/pinelands/home/presentations/FY%202026%20PB%20Budget%20Presentation%20-%20mini%20.pdf>

ED Grogan said the state appropriation only covers a portion of the Commission's operating expenses, and the increased costs of health benefits is of great concern. The Commission leases the buildings from Treasury, and the Commission is responsible for all repairs, maintenance and insurance associated with the property. Funds from the state appropriation are used to pay for these things, including electric bills, cleaning services, grounds maintenance and garbage disposal. The budget process and all unexpected expenses make it extremely complex. The Commission has continued grant funding from the National Park Service for FY26 to fund both economic and environmental monitoring, including a new project to overhaul the Commission's application database.

The Pinelands Conservation Fund (PCF) was created approximately 20 years ago as an offsetting measure when the Commission entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Board of Public Utilities for a Connectivity project. The Pinelands Conservation Fund supports a number of projects, and it includes \$3 million for land acquisition projects. The PCF account is also used to support other projects, including the Science offices studies and the Pinelands Development Credit Bank functions. This fiscal year, money has been designated for the creation of T&E plant data sharing agreement with the NJDEP.

Lastly, ED Grogan reviewed the work that will be supported by the operating fund.

See presentation slides for complete list of all initiatives:

<https://www.nj.gov/pinelands/home/presentations/FY%202026%20Commission%20Budget%20Presentation%20final.pdf>

The resolution was adopted by a vote of 12 to 0. Commissioner Matro abstained from the vote.

Commissioner Avery left the meeting.

General Public Comment

Jason Howell of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance said he has been following the Commission for awhile and the leadership and the amount of work completed is inspiring and demonstrates how effective the staff is. He said a data center being constructed in Vineland is using an air cooling system and no water. He said as more data centers are built, and if they are constructed in the Pinelands Area, a standard should be incorporated that they cannot utilize any Kirkwood-Cohansey water. Lastly, he asked that the Commission move forward as quickly as possible to redesignate the management areas in the Black Run watershed. He said thousands of people are awaiting the adoption of the rule.

ED Grogan advised that the update on the Black Run rule proposal was provided earlier in the meeting. She said the public comment received on the rule proposal will be discussed at the September 26th P&I Committee meeting. The rules are expected to go into effect at the beginning of February 2026.

Chair Matos said the Commission does not determine the rulemaking process. We are required to work within the state process.

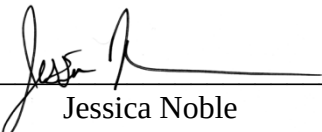
Shary Koenig said we all live in the same home: this planet. She said she would like to see the adoption of the rule proposal move as quickly as possible. She said she hopes the developers won't win and all of the Pinelands will be preserved.

Jerry Henger of Baltimore, Maryland, said he has been to the Pinelands a few times and it's not just for people in New Jersey to explore. He said the Pinelands are great resource, because of the water. He said keep up the great work and hopefully the Pinelands will be around for many generations.

Adjournment

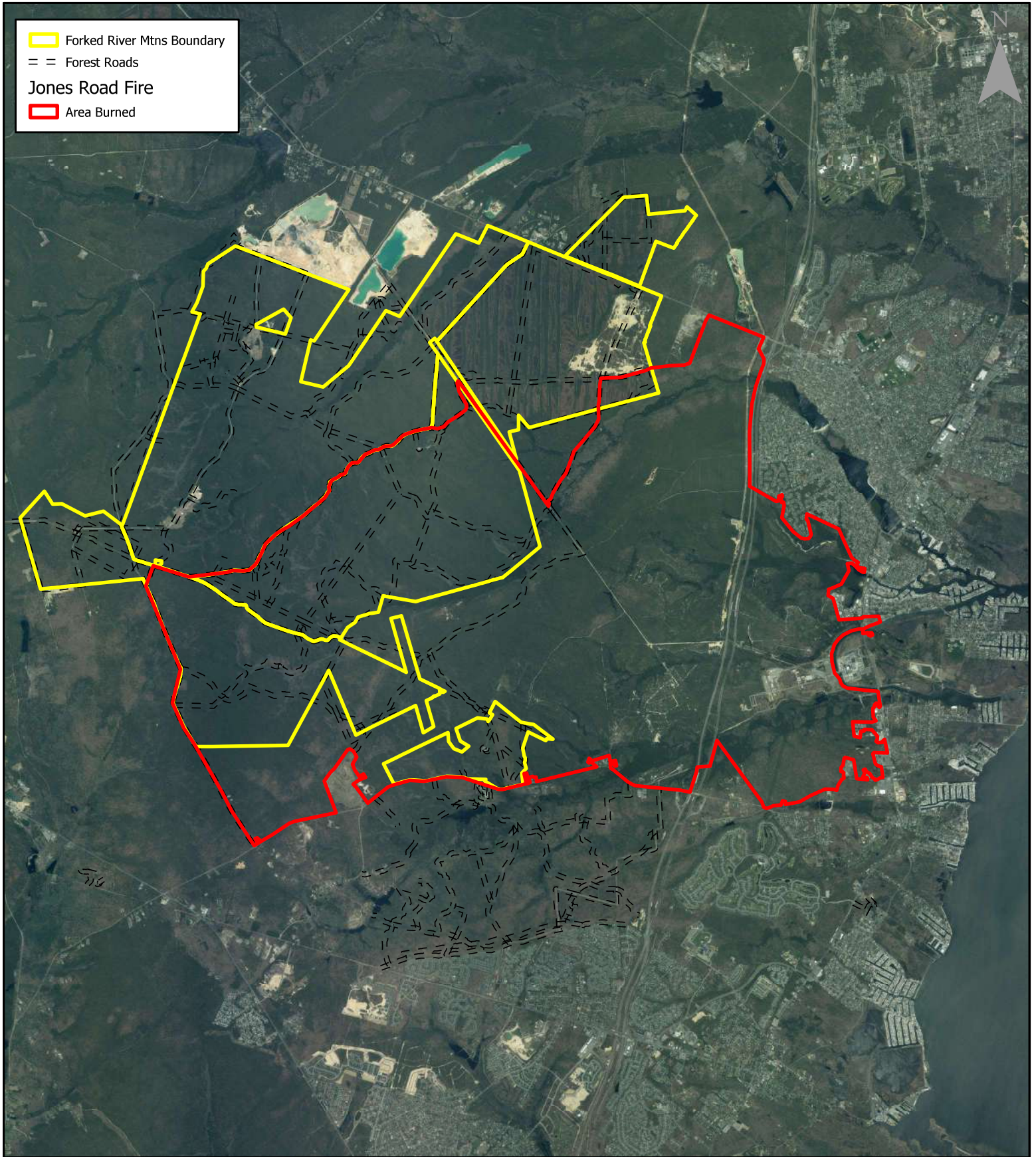
Commissioner Rittler Sanchez moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Buzby-Cope seconded the motion. The Commission agreed to adjourn at 11:42 a.m.

Certified as true and correct:



Jessica Noble
Executive Assistant

Date: September 18, 2025



SEE ATTACHED LIST OF BLOCKS AND LOTS
LACEY AND OCEAN TOWNSHIPS
OCEAN COUNTY, NJ

Jones Road Wildfire Map

1 inch = 7,000 feet



PINE CREEK FORESTRY, LLC

STATE APPROVED & CERTIFIED FORESTERS
1405 CHEWS LANDING ROAD, SUITE 31
LAUREL SPRINGS, NEW JERSEY 08021, (856) 352-2090

County of Ocean
1198 Bandon Road
Toms River, NJ 08753
Map created: 9/10/2025

*This product is for forest management information use and has not been prepared for/is not suitable for engineering or surveying purposes.

74°16'13"W 39°49'40"N F-2322

Personnel & Budget Committee Fiscal Year 2026

August 19, 2025

FY 2026 BUDGETS

- Operating Fund - \$7,377,086
- Pinelands Conservation Fund - \$3,802,337
- Fenwick Manor Preservation Fund -\$1,264,000
- Kate Fund Budget - \$4,550

Operating Fund FY26 Revenue

	FY26 Anticipated
State Appropriation	\$3,899,000
State Supplemental Funding (Salaries)	\$95,000
State Supplemental Funding (Health Benefits)	\$687,000
Application Fees and Escrow Payments	\$850,000
Grants/Special Purpose	\$389,000
Interest Income	\$125,000
Fund Balance & Reserves	*\$1,332,086
TOTAL	\$7,377,086

* Includes:

- \$940,086 from the Undesignated Fund Balance
- \$383,000 from Designated Reserves – Energy Conservation and Shelving
- \$9,000 PCF Administrative Assessment

Operating Fund FY26 Expenditures

	FY26 Anticipated
Salary and Wages	\$4,069,287
Fringe Benefits	\$2,448,185
Supplies	\$143,677
Professional Services	\$271,500
Other Services	\$334,574
Maintenance/Rent	\$83,063
Improvements and Acquisitions	\$26,800
Total Expenditures	\$7,377,086

Pinelands Conservation Fund

FY26 Expenditures

	FY25 Anticipated
Land Acquisition	\$3,026,300
Conservation Planning & Research	\$539,627
Community Planning & Design	\$198,640
Education and Outreach	\$37,770
Total PCF Expenditures	\$3,802,337

Fenwick Manor Preservation FY26 Budget

	FY26 Anticipated
New Jersey Historic Trust Capital Grant	\$575,000
Fund Balance - Commission Match	\$575,000
Additional Painting Reserve Funding	\$45,000
FY26 State Appropriation	\$69,000
Total Expenditures	\$1,264,000

Katie Fund FY26 Budget

	FY26 Anticipated
Rain Garden Supplies	\$100
Grounds Supplies - Plants, Mulch and Pavers	\$750
Pinelands Online Store - Merchandise and Supplies	\$3,500
On-Line Store Postage	\$200
Total Expenditures	\$4,550



Pinelands Commission Fiscal Year 2026 Initiatives

September 12, 2025

FY2026 Initiatives: National Park Service

Project/Initiative	Account
Local Conformance & Zoning System Database (through 9/30/2025)	NPS – Economic Monitoring
Historic cemetery mapping and GPR surveys (through 9/30/2025)	NPS – Economic Monitoring
PDC supply and demand methodologies (through 9/30/2025)	NPS – Economic Monitoring
Annual Pinelands calendar	NPS – Economic Monitoring
PCIS 2.0 – application tracking and reporting database (beginning 10/1/2025 for FFY26)	NPS – Economic Monitoring

FY2026 Initiatives: National Park Service

Project/Initiative	Account
Water Quality Monitoring	NPS – Environmental Monitoring
Forest and pond water level monitoring	NPS – Environmental Monitoring
Annual Anuran surveys	NPS – Environmental Monitoring
Rare Snake Monitoring	NPS – Environmental Monitoring
Snake Fungal Disease and Adenovirus Monitoring	NPS – Environmental Monitoring
Box Turtle study	NPS – Environmental Monitoring

FY2026 Initiatives: Energy Conservation Reserve

Projects and Capital Expenditures

Electric vehicle charging station(s) and electrical upgrades

New and replacement energy efficient office equipment

Office composting supplies

Stormwater management: technical assistance

FY2026 Initiatives: Pinelands Conservation Fund



Project/Initiative	Account
4 th annual land preservation summit	Land Acquisition
Stewardship and monitoring report on PCF-funded properties	Land Acquisition
Acquisition funding round	Land Acquisition

FY2026 Initiatives: Pinelands Conservation Fund



Project/Initiative	Account
Corn snake research/study	Conservation Planning & Research
King Snake research/study	Conservation Planning & Research
Box turtle research/study	Conservation Planning & Research + NJDEP \$

FY2026 Initiatives: Pinelands Conservation Fund



Project/Initiative	Account
Septic pilot program	Conservation Planning & Research
Kirkwood-Cohansey water management rule implementation	Conservation Planning & Research
T&E Plants: data sharing agreement and protected plant list	Conservation Planning & Research
Permanent land protection data and reporting	Conservation Planning & Research

FY2026 Initiatives: Pinelands Conservation Fund

Project/Initiative	Account
Local Conformance & Zoning System (starting 10/1/2025)	Community Planning & Design
PDC Supply & Demand (starting 10/1/2025)	Community Planning & Design
PDC Bank administration, legislation, funding and rules	Community Planning & Design
Pinelands Infrastructure Trust Fund administration	Community Planning & Design
Affordable Housing: tracking and technical assistance	Community Planning & Design
CMP Amendments - Accessible Trails	Community Planning & Design



FY2026 Initiatives: Pinelands Conservation Fund

Project/Initiative	Account
Climate Change initiatives • IAC/Reports and Resilience Action Plans • BPU dual use solar program and CMP amendments • Research for CMP amendments • Climate Change curriculum (w/Stockton University) • Artificial turf research and recommendations • Implementation of any adopted NJDEP REAL rules (e.g., stormwater management, wetlands general permits, MOAs, etc.)	Community Planning & Design

FY2026 Initiatives: Pinelands Conservation Fund



Project/Initiative	Account
Pinelands Short Course(s)	Education & Outreach
World Water Monitoring Challenge	Education & Outreach
Pinelands Speakers Series	Education & Outreach
Bog and native species gardens maintenance; tree/plant identification	Education & Outreach
Visitors Center programs and supplies	Education & Outreach

FY26 Fenwick Manor Preservation Budget

	FY26 Anticipated
New Jersey Historic Trust Capital Grant	\$575,000
Fund Balance - Commission Match	\$575,000
Additional Commission Reserve Funding	\$45,000
FY26 State Appropriation	\$69,000
Total Expenditures	\$1,264,000

Fenwick Manor



FY26 Katie Fund Budget

	FY26 Anticipated
Rain Garden Supplies	\$100
Grounds Supplies - Plants, Mulch and Pavers	\$750
Pinelands Online Store - Merchandise and Supplies	\$3,500
On-Line Store Postage	\$200
Total Expenditures	\$4,550

FY2026 Ongoing Work: Operating Fund

Review and processing of development applications, including Letters of Interpretation, general permits, CAFRA permits, landfill closure assessments and resolution of violations

Review and processing of municipal master plans, land use ordinances and redevelopment plans

CMP amendments

- Adoption and implementation: application fees; expiration of waivers and CFs; PDC/RGA codifications; Black Run watershed redesignation
- Proposal: “gap” application and approval process

Memoranda of Agreement and Understanding

- Evesham Township - accessible trail
- South Jersey Transportation Authority – AC Airport development
- Monitoring of existing agreements
- Annual update on status and accomplishments

Local communications facility (cell tower) plan amendment

FY2026 Initiatives: Operating Fund

Project/Initiative
Legal advertising: implementation of new state law (website, archive, rules, etc.)
Escrow policies and procedures
AI data centers: research and identification of issues
Municipal training seminar(s)
Development/marketing of native seed mix(es) for landscaping
Cape May County MUA five-year waste flow report
WQMP amendments
Interpretations database
Grant research and identification of opportunities
Biosphere Region designation: 10-year report (?)

FY2026 Ongoing Work: Operating Fund

Litigation
Legislation tracking
Committee and Commission meeting support
Reports (annual and monthly)
Website and social media
OPRA forms and responses
Financial management (audits, budget, insurance, purchasing)
Personnel management (recruitment, training, evaluations, telework, payroll)
Facilities management (buildings and grounds)
Development/enhancement of databases, tracking systems and mapping (GIS)
User support, hardware/software, cyber security

FY2025 Initiatives: Operating Fund

Project/Initiative
Updated Personnel Policies
Updated Purchasing Policies
Review and recommendations related to State Health Benefits Program
Updated job descriptions
Emergency response policies and procedures
RFP for new payroll service
RFP for new outside accountant
Temporary relocation of staff due to Fenwick Manor rehabilitation
Transition report for new Administration
Unanticipated Projects



Questions?