



NEW JERSEY PINELANDS COMMISSION

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT



A migratory snow goose spreading its wings at the Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge in the Pinelands National Reserve in March

MARCH 2022

1 EXECUTIVE OFFICE

1.1 ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1.1A COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- **Personnel & Budget Committee:** The Committee did not meet in March.
- **Pinelands Climate Committee:** The Committee's March 25, 2022 meeting was canceled.
- **Policy & Implementation (P&I) Committee:** The Committee met on March 25, 2022, and it endorsed the staff's proposal to relaunch a new round of land acquisition funding using \$1.5 million from the Pinelands Conservation Fund. Invitations will be sent to project partners on or about April 22nd, with a project application deadline of late June. The Committee also reviewed draft amendments to the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) related to water management and the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer.

1.1B RULEMAKING

- **Stormwater Management:** At the request of the New Jersey Society of Professional Engineers, staff will be conducting a webinar on the Commission's new stormwater management rules on April 1, 2022. Staff members have drafted a model stormwater ordinance that will be reviewed with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and then distributed to Pinelands municipalities for adoption.
- **Kirkwood-Cohansey:** Staff presented draft CMP amendments to the P&I Committee at the March 25, 2022 meeting and discussed the planned rulemaking schedule. A full rule proposal is being prepared for the Committee's review in May.
- **ROW Pilot Program:** Staff is preparing a draft rule proposal for review by the P&I Committee at its April 29, 2022 meeting.
- **Amendment petition:** The Commission received a petition from Bill Wolfe to amend the CMP on March 9, 2022. The petition, which was also submitted to the New Jersey Highlands Council and NJDEP, requests that all three agencies enact development restrictions in certain wildfire hazard areas. By letter dated March 23, 2022, staff notified the petitioner that pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:50-7.3(b) and 7.5, additional information would need to be submitted to complete the petition.

1.1C OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

- A total of 15 Open Public Records Act (OPRA) requests were received in March. Nine were provided responsive material, three were advised that there was no responsive material, two were notified that the information they requested was not subject to disclosure, and one was notified that the request needed to be more specific.

1.1D PINELANDS MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

- The Pinelands Municipal Council met on March 8, 2022 in Buena Vista Township. State Senator Vince Polistina swore in the Council’s officers for 2022. Kerry Kirk Pflugh, NJDEP Director of the Office of Local Government Assistance, provided information to the Council on various NJDEP initiatives and grant opportunities.

1.1E OTHER

- Effective March 14, 2022, the Governor lifted the requirements for masking and daily health checks in all executive branch state offices and buildings. The Governor further authorized the resumption of in-person, public meetings. The Commission staff is currently testing various technologies to facilitate hybrid (in-person and Zoom) public meetings and hearings. In the meantime, the Commission’s offices will reopen to visitors, applicants and the public on April 4, 2022.

1.2 LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

1.2A Litigation:

- **I/M/O New Jersey Natural Gas Application for The Installation and Operation of The Southern Reliability Link, Docket No. A-000925-17T1:** On May 19, 2021, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance (PPA) submitted petitions to the New Jersey Supreme Court asking it to review the Appellate Division’s Opinions in the substantive, process and third-party hearing denial appeals regarding the Commission’s approval of the portions of New Jersey Natural Gas Company’s gas transmission line located within the Pinelands. Both Mr. & Mrs. Caruso and Ms. Kovath joined PPA in its petition of the decision in the third-party appeal denial matter. The Commission filed its opposition to these petitions on June 23, 2021. On March 28, 2022, the New Jersey Supreme Court issued Orders in each of these matters denying the requests for certification. As a result, the Opinions of the Appellate Division stand and all state appeals processes have been exhausted.

1.2B Legislation:

- **S757/A2772** - Authorizes Special Occasion Events (SOE) at Certain Farms on Preserved Farmland Under Certain Conditions; appropriates \$85,000 – This bill would authorize special occasion events (wedding, lifetime milestones events, or other cultural or social events) conducted, in whole or in part, on preserved farmland on a commercial farm. S757 has been substituted for A2772 and differs from the Assembly bill. Specifically, S757 states that any commercial farm that produces agricultural/horticultural products worth \$10,000 or more annually may conduct no more than 1 SOE with over 75 guests per calendar day and up to 26 SOEs per calendar year, of which 6 may have more than 250 guests in attendance during the event. The bill would limit the number of these SOEs that would be conducted indoors in a permanent structure to 15, of which 2 may have 75 guests or more. However, in certain circumstances, the bill would permit a municipality to restrict the commercial farm to holding no more than 2 SOEs per calendar year with 1,500 guests or more in attendance at any time during the event. Events attended by fewer than 75 people do not count toward the indoor event limitations. Additionally, the indoor event limitation does not apply to

wineries. The bill would permit municipalities to increase the number of permitted SOEs, the number of permitted guests in attendance at a SOE, or both through municipal ordinance. Municipalities are also permitted under certain circumstances to require applications for SOEs. The bill fixes the fee for such applications at no more than \$200. Finally, the bill requires SADC to adopt implementing rules. S757 was passed by the Assembly on March 24, 2022.

- **S2374** – Clarifies Law Concerning Circumstances in Which Members of the Pinelands Commission May Vote – This bill was introduced on March 24, 2022 and referred to the Senate Environment and Energy Committee. The bill would amend the conflicts of interest provisions in the Pinelands Protection Act at N.J.S.A. 13:18A-17 to eliminate the prohibition against participation by members of the Commission on matters in which they may have a direct or indirect financial interest. Instead, Commission members would be prohibited from taking official action on any matter in which the member has a personal interest. The bill specifies that a personal interest shall be deemed to exist if, by participating in a matter, a Commission member (or someone from his/her immediate family) has reason to believe s/he will derive a direct monetary gain or suffer a direct monetary loss. The bill further amends the definition of personal interest to exclude a matter where no benefit or detriment could reasonably be expected to accrue to the member or someone from his/her immediate family, as a member of a business, profession, occupation, or group to any greater extent than any such benefit or detriment could reasonably be expected to accrue to any other member of such business, profession, occupation, or group.
- **Forest Stewardship Task Force** - The Commission received an invitation to the NJ Forest Stewardship Task Force's April 28, 2022, kickoff meeting. Participants have also been asked to complete a survey to help the Task Force set priorities and begin to build engagement and momentum. The results of the survey will also be used to create individual work groups. Chuck Horner will represent the Commission at the April 28, 2022 meeting.

1.3 HUMAN RESOURCES

- **Return to Office:** In accordance with the Pinelands Commission Return to the Office plan, all staff began reporting to work at the office on a full-time basis starting January 31, 2022. No weekly COVID-19 testing of unvaccinated employees was required throughout March. The office remained closed to the public in March and all meetings continued to be conducted remotely.
- **New Hire Orientation:** An orientation for a new employee was held on March 28, 2022. All new hire policies and procedures were reviewed. Processing of paperwork is ongoing.

2 INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

- **NJ Board of Public Utilities (BPU):** On December 29, 2021, the Commission received notification that its application to BPU for a Local Government Energy Audit had been approved. The Local Government Energy Audit program is open to local and state governments and non-profit organizations. The program provides reports on how facilities use energy, identifies energy conservation measures and guides applicants toward appropriate and available rebate and

incentive programs to fund implementation of recommended energy efficiency strategies. Staff hosted the BPU consultants for a site visit on January 19, 2022. The consultants provided draft Energy Audit Reports on February 18, 2022 and met with Commission staff to review the findings and recommendations on March 18, 2022. Final reports were provided to the Commission on March 21, 2022, have been posted on the Commission's website and will be the subject of a presentation at the Commission's April 8, 2022 meeting.

- **Interagency Task Force:** The Governor's Interagency Task Force was asked to meet and discuss the growing demand for developing large warehouses throughout the State, with the specific goal of identifying guidance for municipalities. The Acting Executive Director participated in a Task Force meeting on February 14, 2022 and subsequently provided comments on and suggested language to be included in the draft guidance document developed by the Office of Planning Advocacy.
- **New Jersey Department of Community Affairs (NJCA):** The NJCA's Local Planning Services office is in the final stages of its work with Egg Harbor Township on a Redevelopment Plan for an area known as Cardiff Center. The Acting Executive Director continues to participate as a member of the working group charged with developing recommendations for the area. After NJCA distributed a "near final" draft of the Redevelopment Plan, Commission staff completed its review, provided comments, and suggested revisions to NJCA on February 28, 2022. A meeting was held with NJCA staff on March 22, 2022 to discuss revisions to the draft plan.
- **Rutgers Cooperative Extension:** In late March, the Rutgers Cooperative Extension sent the Commission two draft engineering drawings, as well as the garden design and listing of potential plantings for the rain garden that will be installed in front of the Richard J. Sullivan Center for Environmental Policy & Education. Rutgers incorporated several changes based on the survey it conducted onsite in January, in addition to changes recommended by Commission staff. The Commission is working to identify plant selections that are native, suitable for the garden and commercially available. Commission staff also requested that Rutgers revise the rain garden design to incorporate an underdrain that will convey pretreated stormwater to the adjacent infiltration basin and thereby attain 65% total nitrogen reduction from the water quality design storm. The Commission entered into an agreement to work with Rutgers on the project in December 2021, and construction of the rain garden may occur in the spring.
- **NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP):** In 2018, Commission staff partnered with NJDEP and the Highlands Council to complete the New Jersey EPA Wetlands Program Plan for 2019-2022. NJDEP is preparing to update the plan for 2023-2027 and has once again requested participation by Commission staff. John Bunnell and Kim Laidig will participate in the update, which will involve reviewing and updating text and tables and attending several coordination calls during 2022.
- **Interagency Council on Climate Change (IACC):** The IACC met on February 8, 2022. The NJ Chief Resilience Officer noted that the IACC's Operating Principles Document had been approved. An IACC Workplan Draft was distributed for further discussion at upcoming meetings. The March meeting of the IACC was cancelled. The Chief Resilience Officer requested that the Pinelands Commission participate in the IACC Communications Work Group.

3 PLANNING

3.1 CONFORMANCE ACTIVITY

	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Master Plans/Ordinances Received		
Adopted	9	17
Drafted or Introduced	15	28
Total ¹	21	36
Master Plans/Ordinances Reviewed		
Substantial Issue Finding ²	1	1
No Substantial Issue Finding	2	5
No Issue Finding	2	2
Total	5	8
Finding Letters Issued³	4	7

3.2 CULTURAL RESOURCE ACTIVITY

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Applications Reviewed	7	30
Surveys Required	0	0
Surveys Reviewed	1	2
Certificates of Appropriateness Required	0	1

¹The total accounts for unique master plans and ordinances received (i.e., it does not double count drafted, introduced, or adopted submissions for the same ordinance).

² Ordinances and Master Plans that are found to raise substantial issues with respect to the standards of the CMP require formal review and approval by the full Commission.

³ A single finding letter can pertain to multiple master plans/ordinances from the same municipality.

Notable Activity:

- **New Jersey Historic Trust (NJHT):** Staff is preparing a grant application for submission to the New Jersey Historic Trust in April 2022. The grant would provide funding for preparation of a Preservation Plan for future projects involving Fenwick Manor.

3.3 PINELANDS DEVELOPMENT CREDIT (PDC) PROGRAM

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
PDCs Allocated	2.50	5.36
PDCs Severed	1.75	1.75
Acres Protected	45	55
PDCs Extinguished	0	0
Acres Protected	0	0
PDCs Sold	0.25	1.75
Average Sales Price per PDC	\$90,000	\$74,856
Average Sales Price per right	\$22,500	\$18,714
PDCs Redeemed	3.50	4.00

Notable Activity:

- **PDC Allocations:** 2.50 PDCs (10 rights) were allocated to a 49-acre parcel in the Agricultural Production Area in Shamong Township.
- **PDC Severances:** 1.75 PDCs (7 rights) were severed from a 45-acre parcel in Franklin Township's Agricultural Production Area.
- **PDC Sales:** 0.25 PDCs (1 right) was sold in March 2022 for \$22,500. Also in March, the PDC Bank processed the sale of 4.50 PDCs (18 rights), all for \$25,000 per right. Although completed in late 2021, the paperwork associated with these transactions was not provided to the Bank until March 2022. The sales are not displayed on the above table, which reflects transactions only for calendar year 2022. The average sales price for *Fiscal Year 2022* (July 1, 2021-March 31, 2022) is now \$21,941 per right.
- **PDC Redemptions:** 0.25 PDCs were redeemed for the development of a single-family home in Barnegat Township. An additional 3.25 PDCs (13 rights) were redeemed as part of a 94-unit development in Winslow Township.

3.4 SPECIAL PROJECTS

- **Water Management (Kirkwood-Cohansey) rules:** Staff completed a final draft of proposed amendments to N.J.A.C. 7:50-6.86 of the CMP. Proposed amendments to the fee schedule for well applications were added. Staff worked with the United States Geological Survey to prepare the final version of an agreement for that agency to review and validate certain analyses and modeling elements of applications for wells in the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer.
- **Pine Barrens Byway:** On March 16th, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and National Scenic Byways Program (NSBP) released their 2022 grants and technical assistance Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The grant program makes \$22 million available for Byway projects across the country and is facilitated by state Departments of Transportation. The Commission staff distributed information on NOFO grant application contacts, requirements, and deadlines to all Pine Barrens Byway municipalities and other interested stakeholders.

4 REGULATORY PROGRAMS

4.1 APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Pre-Application Conferences	11	34
Certificates of Filing	28	57
Public Development Reports	2	8
Forestry Certificates of Filing	0	1
PDC Letters of Interpretation	1	6
Non-PDC Letters of Interpretation	0	0
MOA Consistency Determinations	10	12
Review of Agency Determinations	98	213

4.2 NOTABLE APPLICATIONS

- **350 Single Family Dwellings, Manchester Township (App. No. 1981-1470.009)**

On January 19, 2022, the Commission received an application proposing the development of 350 dwelling units on a 225-acre parcel. A portion of the parcel was previously subject of resource extraction (sand mining). The parcel and adjacent lands were previously subject of multiple threatened and endangered (T&E) surveys in 2003-2005. Those surveys identified T&E animal and plant species in the area, primarily on adjacent parcels. The staff reviewed the results of a T&E species survey that was conducted in the Fall of 2021 on the 225-acre parcel. By letter dated March 16, 2022, the Commission staff advised that additional T&E animal species

survey work must be completed in the spring of 2022.

- **Tabernacle Township, Existing Municipal Building Site (App. No. 1981-1383.007)**

The Township has requested emergency authorization from the Commission to allow for the placement of three office trailers on the site of its existing municipal building. The Township has determined that the existing municipal building is structurally unsafe and must be vacated by May 31, 2022. The staff is currently reviewing the request for emergency authorization.

- **Tabernacle Township, Potential New Municipal Complex Sites (App. No. 1993-0010.002)**

On February 28, 2022, the staff conducted a pre-application conference with representatives of the Township to discuss possible sites for a new municipal complex. By letter dated March 9, 2022, the staff provided written guidance to the Township on three potential municipal complex sites.

- **Communications Tower, Woodland Township (App. No. 1981-0162.002)**

This application proposes a communications tower on a 0.71-acre parcel. The development is proposed as accessory to the existing Woodland Township EMS/Fire Company located on the same parcel. Unless it is demonstrated that the proposed communication tower is accessory to the existing Woodland Township EMS/Fire Company, it is not a permitted land use. A Township site plan approval for the proposed development is currently the subject of a scheduled Commission staff public hearing. By letter dated February 23, 2022, the staff responded to the applicant's most recent submission. The submitted information was intended to demonstrate that the proposed communication tower qualified as accessory to the Woodland Township EMS/Fire Company and to eliminate the need for the scheduled public hearing. The staff's February 23, 2022 letter indicated that based on a review of the submitted information, it had not been demonstrated that the proposed communications tower was accessory to the Woodland Township EMS/Fire Company as opposed to being a principal use that provided general public wireless communications service.

On March 8 and 9, 2022, the staff issued letters rescheduling the public hearing for the proposed communications tower to April 12, 2022. The staff's letter also indicated that due to a conflict of interest, the Commission staff could not conduct a Commission staff public hearing. The Commission's Executive Director typically serves as the hearing officer for a Commission staff public hearing. For this application, the Acting Executive Director, Susan Grogan, was extensively involved in meetings and discussions regarding the application. For this reason, Ms. Grogan is unable to conduct the public hearing due to a conflict of interest. The Acting Executive Director may designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing on her behalf. Historically, such designee has always been a Director. For this application, because of the complexity of this matter, Director Charles Horner has also been extensively involved in staff meetings and discussions. As a result, all Commission staff members who could be designated as the hearing officer are unable to do so, because of a conflict of interest. Given these circumstances and, to afford the applicant due process, if the applicant elects to pursue a hearing, the hearing must be conducted by the New Jersey Office of Administrative Law.

- **Communications Tower, Winslow Township (App. No. 1994-0391.007)**

On October 8, 2021, the staff issued a Certificate of Filing for a 157-foot-high communications tower on a 0.86-acre parcel. There is an existing fire company on the parcel. The communications tower was proposed as accessory to the existing fire company. The communications tower will support an antenna for a proposed two-way radio system that will expand the coverage area for fire company emergency communications. On March 25, 2022, the staff issued a letter indicating that a Winslow Township Board approval for the proposed communications tower could take effect.

- **Residential Fence, Shamong Township, (App. No. 2022-0011.001)**

The staff was contacted in late January 2022 by a concerned resident regarding the alleged installation of a fence in wetlands. As a structure accessory to an existing single-family dwelling on a parcel, the fence did not require application to the Commission. The Township had issued a permit for the fence. Based upon the potential wetlands issue, the Township rescinded the fence permit. Thereafter, the staff was contacted by a Township official with a request for information and assistance. The staff arranged to conduct a site inspection with the Township Zoning Officer. Based upon the March 15, 2022 site inspection, it was determined that the proposed fence was not located in wetlands. The Township Zoning Officer is re-reviewing the Township fence permit.

- **New Egypt Speedway, Plumsted Township (App. No. 1985-0035.012)**

On February 23, 2022, the staff received a meeting request from the Township to discuss whether certain land uses that are occurring on the Speedway parcel require application to the Commission. Two commercial uses not associated with the Speedway have been established on the parcel. In preparation for the meeting, the staff provided Township officials with a copy of a prior Commission letter regarding development activities on the parcel. The staff also provided the Township with aerial photography depicting the historic and current uses and development on the parcel. On March 16, 2022, the Commission staff met with representatives of Plumsted Township and the Ocean County Soil Conservation District to discuss the matter. By letter dated March 24, 2022, the staff sent a letter to the property owner indicating that development had occurred on the parcel without application to, and approval by, Plumsted Township and the Pinelands Commission. The letter asked for the Township's assistance in issuing all appropriate violation notices and municipal court summonses.

- **Wetlands Restoration, Mullica Township (App. No. 1988-1153.003)**

On March 4, 2022, the staff issued a Certificate of Filing for earthwork associated with the proposed conversion of approximately 26 acres of former cranberry bogs to wetlands on a 41-acre parcel. The Certificate of Filing noted that certain of the proposed restoration activities, such as removal of cranberry bog water control structures and removal of earthen dikes, did not require application to the Pinelands Commission because they constituted "deconstruction" of an agricultural structure. The Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) provides that the improvement, expansion or reconstruction of a structure accessory to an agricultural use does not require application to the Commission. Based upon that CMP provision, the staff has also determined that the removal of certain agricultural structures associated with an

agricultural use does not require application to the Commission.

- **Landfill Capping/Solar Energy Facility, Borough of Woodbine (App. No. 1986-0257.003 App. No. 1986-0257.002):**

The staff is reviewing an application for the capping of the Borough of Woodbine municipal landfill and installation of a solar facility on the capped landfill. The application proposes a two-foot-thick permeable, earthen soil cap. The CMP requires an impermeable landfill cap unless it is demonstrated that an alternate capping technique will address any public health and ecological risk that may be associated with the landfill (N.J.A.C. 7:50-6.75(c)). If it is demonstrated that an impermeable cap is not required, it must then be determined what specific alternate capping technique will be required to address any public health and ecological risk that may be associated with the Woodbine landfill. As part of the proposed landfill capping and solar energy facility application, the Commission staff has requested certain threatened and endangered plant and animal information. On March 14, 2022, the applicant submitted a proposed protocol to conduct T&E species survey work on the parcel. By letter dated March 15, 2022, the staff provided comments on the proposed T&E protocol. The applicant thereafter submitted a revised protocol. By letter dated March 23, 2022, the staff provided additional comments on the proposed protocol.

- **Landfill Capping and Solar Energy Facility, Pemberton Township (App. No. 2021-0112.001)**

Information was previously provided to the staff regarding the known presence of an endangered animal species on the parcel. During a telephone conference, the staff provided guidance to the applicant regarding the extent of T&E species survey information that must be provided to address the consistency of the proposed landfill capping and solar energy facility with the T&E species protection standard. On March 3, 2022, an application was filed with the Commission for proposed clearing on the 27-acre landfill parcel to conduct investigative work regarding the limits of the landfill. That application is currently under review.

- **Landfill Capping and Solar Energy Facility, Berkeley Township (App. No 1986-0127.001 & App. No. 1986-0127.015)**

By letter dated January 22, 2022, the staff provided extensive guidance to the applicant regarding the proposed development. The letter included the requirement to address T&E species and land development violations on the parcel. On January 26, 2022, the staff met with the applicant to discuss the contents of the January 22, 2022 letter. Between January 28, 2022 and February 16, 2022, the applicant submitted additional information. By letter dated March 10, 2022, the staff indicated agreement with the proposed T&E species survey protocol.

- **Landfill Capping and Solar Energy Facility Manchester Township (App. No. 1981-2232.001 & App. No. 1981-2232.004)**

On March 23, 2022, the applicant submitted a T&E Habitat Analysis for the proposed development. Upon receipt of the required application fee, the staff will review the submitted information.

- **Solar Energy Facility, Tabernacle Township (App. No. 1985-0653.006)**

The staff reviewed an application proposing an approximately 11-acre solar energy facility on a 62.9-acre parcel. The solar energy facility is proposed to be located within an area on the parcel that was previously subject to resource extraction (sand mining). By letter dated March 8, 2022, the staff advised the applicant of the information necessary to complete the application.

- **Ocean County Vo-Tech School Addition, Jackson Township School Addition (App. No. 1981-0390.003)**

This application proposes a 19,256 square foot addition to the existing school. By letter dated March 23, 2022, the staff identified the information that must be submitted to complete the application. The applicant is required to delineate and map wetlands associated with the Ridgeway Branch of the Toms River. Based upon the Commission's certification of a Township ordinance implementing the Toms River Corridor Plan, a 600-foot buffer is required to wetlands associated with the Ridgeway Branch of the Toms River. Until the wetlands mapping is completed, it is not clear whether the proposed school addition will, or will not, be consistent with the required 600-foot buffer to the wetlands associated with the Ridgeway Branch.

- **Single family dwelling, Southampton Township (App. No. 1983-9132.003)**

On March 28, 2022, the staff received an inquiry regarding the reconstruction of an existing single-family dwelling on a parcel. In 1983, the Pinelands Commission issued a Letter of Interpretation (LOI) allocating 29.75 Pinelands Development Credits (PDCs) to an 801-acre parcel. On September 15, 1983, the Commission staff issued a letter referencing three existing homes and one abandoned home on the parcel. On October 20, 1983, the Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders recorded a PDC Deed of Conservation Easement on the parcel. The Deed of Conservation Easement indicates that "(i)t is specifically agreed upon and recognized that there exists the right to 4 dwelling units on the property." Based upon our review of historic aerial photography, two of the four existing dwellings on the parcel were apparently demolished prior to 2004. The reconstruction of the two dwellings that were demolished prior to 2004 requires the completion of an application with the Commission. As part of any such application, it must be demonstrated that the two proposed dwellings will meet all applicable lot size and environmental standards.

The 801-acre parcel subject of the LOI is comprised on multiple lots. The lots have been sold to separate parties. The location of all four dwellings referenced in the LOI and the Conservation easement is unclear. A single-family dwelling was apparently not located on the lot subject of the current inquiry. However, the inquirer's deed references the right to reconstruct one of the four dwelling that apparently existed on the remainder of the parcel. The staff has provided initial guidance to the inquirer and the inquirer's attorney.

4.3 OFF-ROAD VEHICLE EVENT ROUTE MAP APPROVALS

- **Application # 19880757.068**
Tri-County Sportsmen Motorcycle Club, Inc.
Approval Issued: 3/10/2022
Event Name: Greenbrier Enduro
Event Date: March 13, 2022
Municipality: Dennis Township, Maurice River Township
Lands Utilized: Belleplain State Forest, US Silica
Route Length: 48 miles
- **Application # 19871127.046**
Meteor Motorcycle Club
Approval Issued: 3/21/2022
Event Name: Sandy Lane Enduro
Event Date: March 27, 2022
Municipality: Bass River Township, Washington Township, Woodland Township
Lands Utilized: Wharton, Penn & Bass River State Forests
Route Length: 88 miles
- **Application # 19880272.036**
Central Jersey Competition Riders
Approval Issued: 3/25/2022
Event Name: Pine Hill Enduro
Event Date: April 3, 2022
Municipality: Manchester Township, Pemberton Township, Woodland Township
Lands Utilized: Brendan T. Byrne State Forest
Route Length: 101 miles

5 SCIENCE

5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

- **Water Level Monitoring:** In March, Commission and Communications staff measured water levels at forest plots and ponds in the Commission network of long-term monitoring sites. This work is completed each month with assistance from the Communications Office.
- **Pinelands-wide Water Quality Monitoring:** Staff conducted proficiency testing to maintain the certified laboratory status.
- **Annual Frog and Toad Surveys:** Staff completed the March round of nighttime frog and toad vocalization surveys.

5.2 LONG TERM STUDIES

- **Snake Fungal Disease Monitoring:** All of the long-term study dens were excavated, and the snakes present were processed and swabbed for snake fungal disease. A total of 15 pine snakes, five corn snakes, two hognose snakes, one timber rattlesnake, and one black racer were sampled. Overall, the number of snakes found in the dens was lower than average, but not unprecedented during the decades-long study.



Above: The single adult timber rattlesnake found during the excavation of a pine snake hibernacula.

- **Kingsnake Study, Joint Corn Snake Study, Rare Snake Monitoring, and Box Turtle Study:** In March, staff captured and processed 50 corn snakes, pine snakes, and black racers. All but a few were released back into their den corrals. Staff continued to enter and proof radio tracking data and other related snake data. Commission and Herpetological Associates (HA) staff finished building all but one den corral. Staff continues to prepare and finalize data to submit to the NJDEP Endangered and Nongame Species Program to satisfy the annual scientific collecting permit requirements. For the past several years, the Commission has been listed on the HA snake permit to accomplish the snake research. NJDEP staff asked Commission staff to obtain a separate permit for Commission snake research, so staff submitted proposals to NJDEP for each snake study to obtain a scientific collecting permit for 2022. Staff submitted a list of radio transmitter frequencies to ENSP for approval and ordered the snake and box turtle transmitters for 2022.

5.3 OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

- Staff assisted the Communication Office on plant selection for the Commission rain garden.

6 COMMUNICATIONS

6.1 COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- **Website:** The Pinelands Commission’s website was viewed 17,493 times in March 2022.
- **Inquiries/Correspondence:** The Communications Office received and responded to 54 inquiries from the public in March, including phone calls, e-mails, and media inquiries.
- **Annual Report:** The Commission voted to approve the Commission’s 2021 Annual Report on March 11th, and staff posted the report on the Commission’s website.

6.2 EVENTS, OUTREACH & INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

- **Pinelands Speaker Series Webinars:** Staff hosted a webinar presentation on Spongy Moths on March 10th. The recording has been viewed more than 70 times. The Commission will host a webinar entitled “Communication in Nature Part 2: Amphibians, Insects, and Mammals” on April 14, 2022.

- **Social Media Enhancements:** In March, staff shared 88 photos on the Commission’s Facebook page, 86 photos on Instagram, and 23 tweets on Twitter. In March, SJ Magazine listed the Commission’s Instagram site among its top nine for a “Totally South Jersey Feed.” The Commission has added hundreds of new followers on Instagram since that listing. A total of, 2,162 people are following the Commission on Instagram. The site was launched in May 2020.



Above: The Commission shared 86 photos on Instagram in March, including this photo of vegetation reflecting off a cedar swamp at Brendan Byrne State Forest.

Pinelands Short Course:

The Commission co-sponsored and carried out the 33rd annual Pinelands Short Course at Stockton University's main campus in Galloway Township on March 12th. More than 400 people attended the event, which featured 31 educational presentations, including 15 new programs. Three Commission staff members delivered presentations, and online event/course evaluations are overwhelmingly positive. Staff has started to plan the annual Pinelands Summer Short Course, which is scheduled for July 21, 2022 in Hammonton.



Above: A Commission Research Scientist displayed three species of native, live snakes, including this colorful corn snake, during his presentation on Snakes of the Pine Barrens during the 33rd annual Pinelands Short Course.

- **Science Office Assistance:** A member of the Communications Office assisted the Science Office by measuring water levels on March 14th and 15th.
- **Barnegat Bay Partnership:** Staff led a hike of the Pine Plains for the Barnegat Bay's Communications and Education Committee on March 25th. Approximately 15 people attended.

7 INFORMATION SYSTEMS

- **Pinelands Commission Information System Upgrades:** The Pinelands Commission Information System (PCIS) is the internal system of record for all applications to the Pinelands and associated transactions. Staff provided desktop support, implemented enhancements and bug fixes to streamline operations and facilitate remote work. Staff updated language in all PCIS documents to reflect the move towards hybrid and in person meetings. Staff focused on and released several 'dashboard style' reports to improve customer service, including Inbox transaction maintenance, reviewer inbox status, Incoming transactions, and outgoing communications.
- **Cybersecurity:** Vigilance to protect the internal networks, hardware, and data of the Pinelands Commission is critical in today's networked world. The Information Systems office participated in the monthly call hosted by the New Jersey Cybersecurity & Communications Integration Cell (NJCCIC). NJCCIC provided results from a security audit they conducted of all state agencies. Changes are being implemented to the Pinelands Commission's Active Directory server to

improve security.

- **Permanent Land Protection (PLP) Data System:** The PLP system manages the data related to all the preserved land in the Pinelands National Reserve. Staff is continuing development of data editing and maintenance screens for the Planning Office. A new report was developed to display Preservation by Acquisition Area.
- **Ad Hoc Reporting:** Staff assist the Pinelands Commission by generating reports to provide insight into relevant topics of interest. A report was generated focusing on well application activity.
- **Pinelands Development Credit Bank:** The Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) Bank utilizes custom software to manage all operations including tracking data and issuing certificates. Staff developed reports for new Planning Office staff and provided training on the underlying data structures of the system.
- **Technology Enhancements:** Staff members continually evaluate emerging technologies for how they can impact or enhance the office environment. Staff solicited quotes for hardware and software to replace assets identified by the NJCCIC security audit. Staff also configured Pinelands Commission laptops for use in hybrid meetings.

8 BUSINESS OFFICE

8.1 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- **Application Fees:** March 2022, Net Total: \$70,359.15; Fiscal Year to Date Total: \$795,931.13 (159% of the budgeted projection for FY2022).

8.2 FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

- The Final Energy Audit reports were received from TRC (BPU Energy Consultants). The final report and presentation will be made at the April Commission Meeting.
- An RFP (#22-002) for development of a Preservation Plan for Historic Fenwick Manor was issued on March 14, 2022, with a response deadline of April 1, 2022. Six bids were received and are currently under evaluation.
- A Fenwick Manor 1st floor restroom was repainted.