



# **NEW JERSEY PINELANDS COMMISSION**

## **MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT**



Puffy clouds reflecting off of a former cranberry bog at Whitesbog Village in May

**MAY 2022**

# 1 EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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## 1.1 ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

### 1.1A COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- **Personnel & Budget (P&B) Committee:** The Committee's next meeting is on June 14, 2022.
- **Pinelands Climate Committee:** The Committee met on May 27, 2022, and it received a number of updates from the staff on office initiatives and the programs and rulemaking activities of other state agencies and departments. The Committee discussed the recently completed Local Government Energy Audit reports and agreed that the financial implications of various recommendations should be addressed by the Personnel & Budget Committee. Staff briefed the Committee on the Interagency Council on Climate Resilience, noting that the Commission and other state agencies will be expected to produce Resilience Action Plans by October 2023. Finally, the Committee agreed to review Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) amendment priorities and recommendations in preparation for a more detailed discussion at the July meeting.

**Policy & Implementation (P&I) Committee:** The P&I Committee met on May 27, 2022. Representatives of Stockton University presented a summary of the University's 2020 Facilities Master Plan and highlighted a number of upcoming development projects and priorities. Staff briefed the Committee on the need for adjustments to the previously recorded Deed of Conservation Restriction to recognize existing infrastructure on campus and provide an opportunity for its improvement. The Committee acknowledged receipt of the full draft rule proposal for the Kirkwood-Cohansey (water management) CMP amendments and the need to await approval from the Governor's office prior to commencement of the formal rulemaking process. Finally, staff briefed the Committee on CMP amendment petition standards and procedures, the petition received in March from Bill Wolfe and its continued incomplete status.

### 1.1B RULEMAKING

- **Stormwater Management:** Staff members are nearing completion of a draft model stormwater ordinance that will be reviewed with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) and then distributed to Pinelands municipalities for adoption.
- **Water Management (Kirkwood-Cohansey):** Staff completed a draft of a full rule proposal, which was shared with the P&I Committee at its May 27, 2022 meeting. The proposal was submitted to the Governor's office for approval on May 19, 2022. Comments on the proposed amendments were submitted by the Pinelands Preservation Alliance on May 26, 2022.
- **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. Mr. Wolfe submitted an email, dated April 12, 2022, noting his objections to the staff's determination and attempting to demonstrate that his initial submission was sufficient. By letter

dated May 12, 2022, staff notified the petitioner that the petition remained incomplete. NJDEP and the Highlands Council denied the petition for rulemaking and have submitted notices to that effect to the Office of Administrative Law for publication in the New Jersey Register on June 6, 2022.

### **1.1C OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT**

- A total of eight Open Public Records Act (OPRA) requests were received in May. One was provided responsive material, two were advised that there was no responsive material, one was notified that the request needed to be more specific and four were advised to schedule a file review.

### **1.1D PINELANDS MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**

- The Pinelands Municipal Council met on May 3, 2022 in Stafford Township. The Council took no actions due to the lack of a quorum. The next meeting will be held at the Commission's office in July, as part of the annual Pinelands Orientation for Newly Elected or Appointed Officials.

### **1.1E OTHER**

- The Commission's office reopened to visitors, applicants, and the public on April 4, 2022. The Commission began holding hybrid public meetings in May, with the May 13<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting and May 27<sup>th</sup> P&I and Climate Committee meetings conducted in that fashion. Commissioners and members of the public have the option of attending in person or participating via Zoom and YouTube.

## **1.2 LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS**

**1.2A LEGISLATION:** There are no legislative updates for May as the State Legislature is currently conducting budget hearings.

### **1.2B STATE RULEMAKING**

- **NJDEP Environmental Justice proposal:** NJDEP has released on its website proposed rules to implement the provisions of the Environmental Justice Law, N.J.S.A. 13:1D-157 *et seq.* These rules establish the requirements for permit applications for certain pollution-generating facilities in overburdened communities, including the analysis of relevant environmental and public health stressors, as each is defined in the Act. The proposed rule also sets forth the requirements by which members of the host overburdened communities are meaningfully engaged by applicants and community participation in the Department's decision-making process. The rule proposal is expected to be published in the June 6, 2022 *New Jersey Register*. There is a 90-day public comment period for the proposal that ends on September 4, 2022.
- **NJBPU Solar Siting Straw Proposal for its Competitive Solar Incentive Program (CSI):** The Board of Public Utilities (BPU) is in the midst of a stakeholder process for its CSI program. The

CSI program will provide incentives for the development of grid supply and net metered solar facilities designed to generate in excess of 5MWs. As part of this process, BPU accepted comments on the staff's straw proposal, which provides an overview of the potential regulatory structure of the CSI Program. The Commission staff submitted comments to BPU on May 31, 2022. These comments indicated the staff's concern that the siting criteria and waiver process authorized in the Solar Act of 2021 and contained within the straw proposal could generate confusion regarding siting of solar facilities in the Pinelands. In addition to offering a suggestion on how to ameliorate such confusion, staff offered to work with BPU's staff in the development of the draft regulations implementing the CSI Program.

- **NJDEP Protection Against Climate Threats (PACT):** in late May, NJDEP conducted additional stakeholder meetings concerning proposed amendments to its Flood Hazard Area Control Act, Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act and Coastal Zone Management Act rules. During these meetings, NJDEP announced that it will be adopting an emergency rule on June 14, 2022. Based on information provided by other sources (law firms and the NJ Builders Association), the emergency rule will expand the areas in New Jersey subject to the flood hazard permitting requirements by raising the base elevation by two feet above existing mapped elevations. It will also update the criteria used to design best management practices for stormwater management. Notably, projects subject to the Residential Site Improvement standards will immediately be subject to the new stormwater requirements. Staff is scheduled to meet with NJDEP on June 6, 2022 to discuss this emergency rule and the NJPACT rules generally.
- **State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) soil protection standards:** The SADC circulated a revised draft of its Soil Protection Standards proposal to various agricultural and preservation partners in early May. The SADC is soliciting informal comments from its partners before finalizing its rule package for publication in the *New Jersey Register*. SADC is proposing to replace the existing BMPs with "bright line" definitions as to what does and does not constitute a soil disturbance. Additionally, the rule proposal will establish soil disturbance limits on preserved farmland of 12% or 4 acres, whichever is greater, and will authorize the Committee to issue soil disturbance waivers up to 15% or 6 acres, whichever is greater. SADC is also proposing 22 activities that will not constitute a soil disturbance and will not count towards the soil disturbance limits. SADC has asked that its partners provide their comments by June 10, 2022.

### 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. Weekly COVID-19 testing of unvaccinated employees resumed April 1st. The office is open to the public, although most meetings continue to be held remotely.
- **Telework Pilot Program:** In coordination with the Civil Service Commission, the State established a pilot telework program for state employees on April 6, 2022. The pilot program will begin on July 1, 2022 and be in effect for one year. Employees will be given the option of

working remotely two days each week in accordance with an extensive series of guidelines, including applications, training, surveys, and agreements. Commission staff drafted a plan to implement the pilot program and submitted it to the Governor's Authorities Unit for approval on May 26, 2022.

- **Recruitment:** Staff continued the recruitment process for four positions: a Research Scientist, two MIS Specialists and a Human Resources Manager. Interviews were held for the Human Resources Manager and one MIS position in May, with second interviews scheduled for early June.

## 2 INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

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- **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 and have been posted on the Commission's website.
- **Rutgers Cooperative Extension:** Throughout May 2022, Commission staff corresponded with the Rutgers Cooperative Extension about a native Pinelands rain garden that will be installed in front of the Richard J. Sullivan Center for Environmental Policy & Education. Commission staff also corresponded with a contractor that visited the office and has provided a preliminary estimate of costs. Commission staff drafted a new rain garden webpage and has been working with several nurseries to source plants. The Commission entered into an agreement to work with Rutgers on the project in December 2021, and construction of the rain garden is expected to occur by the end of June 2022.
- **Interagency Council on Climate Change (IAC):** The IAC cancelled its May and June meetings and, in their place, has scheduled meetings of the six IAC Advisory Groups. The Commission has been assigned to the Environmental Systems and Land Use Advisory Group which is scheduled to meet on June 3, 2022. Each of the Advisory Groups has been charged with the development of Resilience Action Plans (RAP). The final RAPs are to be completed by October 2023 and will need to identify how each member agency's policies, programs, and decision-making strategies will be consistent with the 2021 New Jersey Climate Change Resilience Strategy.

### 3 PLANNING

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#### 3.1 CONFORMANCE ACTIVITY

	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
<b>Master Plans/Ordinances Received</b>		
Adopted	8	34
Drafted or Introduced	5	43
Total <sup>1</sup>	8	55
Substantial Issue Finding <sup>2</sup>	3	4
No Substantial Issue Finding	8	19
No Issue Finding	2	8
Total	13	31
<b>Finding Letters Issued<sup>3</sup></b>	8	22

#### 3.2 CULTURAL RESOURCE ACTIVITY

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Applications Reviewed	17	55
Surveys Required	2	2
Surveys Reviewed	2	4
Certificates of Appropriateness Required	0	1

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<sup>1</sup>The 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).

<sup>2</sup> 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.

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

### 3.3 PINELANDS DEVELOPMENT CREDIT (PDC) PROGRAM

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
PDCs Allocated	0	5.36
PDCs Severed	1.50	4.50
Acres Protected	41	116
PDCs Extinguished	0	0
Acres Protected	0	0
PDCs Sold	14.25	21.75
Average Sales Price per PDC	\$71,860	\$78,897
Average Sales Price per right	\$17,965	\$19,724
PDCs Redeemed	0.50	4.75

#### Notable Activity:

- **PDC Severances:** 1.50 PDCs (6 rights) were severed from a parcel in Monroe Township’s Agricultural Production Area, permanently preserving 41 acres.
- **PDC Sales:** Three sales transactions were processed during May, including one for 12.50 PDCs (50 rights). This was the largest single sales transaction to date in 2022.
- **PDC Redemptions:** A total of 0.50 PDCs were redeemed for the development of single-family detached dwellings in Hamilton and Shamong townships.

### 3.4 SPECIAL PROJECTS

- **Stockton University 2020 Facilities Master Plan:** Representatives from Stockton University made a presentation at the May 27, 2022 CMP Policy & Implementation Committee regarding the University’s 2020 Facilities Master Plan Update. The Commission will need to review and approve this Plan as an update to Stockton’s State Agency Plan. During the meeting, Commission staff provided Committee members with the history and scope of Stockton’s prior two Master Plans, 1990 and 2010, respectively. Additionally, staff discussed CMP standards for review of a State Agency Plan. Staff also discussed an issue that has arisen pertaining to the boundaries of the deed restricted areas on campus and the need to amend the November 2010 deed of conservation restriction to clarify the scope of such boundaries to reflect the location of existing infrastructure.

## 4 REGULATORY PROGRAMS

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### 4.1 APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Pre-Application Conferences	6	55
Certificates of Filing	14	83
Public Development Reports	1	10
Forestry Certificates of Filing	1	2
PDC Letters of Interpretation	0	7
Non-PDC Letters of Interpretation	0	0
MOA Consistency Determinations	13	30
Review of Agency Determinations	61	330

### 4.2 NOTABLE APPLICATIONS

- **Residential Development, Jackson Township (App. No. 1983-5386.002):** This application proposes 457 dwelling units and a 24,500 square foot private school. The Pinelands Commission issued a Certificate of Filing for the proposed development on April 5, 2019. In December of 2019, the Township Planning Board denied the proposed development application. On April 1, 2022, the Commission received a copy of a Consent Order issued by the United States District Court, District of New Jersey, indicating that that the applicant, Jackson Township and the Jackson Township Planning Board had entered into a Settlement Agreement. The Settlement Agreement appears to provide that the Township and the Township Planning Board have now approved the previously denied development without further action being required by the Township Planning Board. Pinelands Commission review of the development “approval” remains necessary. Upon completion of that review, the Commission staff issued a letter on May 16, 2022, scheduling a public hearing to review the “substantial issues” raised by the proposed development with the stormwater management standards and the forest fire perimeter fuel break standards of the Township land use ordinance and the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP). The Commission staff letter also indicated that the proposed development raised a substantial issue with the residential density standard because the required number of Pinelands Development Credits had not yet been redeemed.
- **Marina, Washington Township (App. No. 2022-0004.001):** On April 6, 2022, the Commission staff received a request for a pre-application conference for the proposed expansion of an existing marina located on the Mullica River. The proposed expansion consists of approximately 60 boat slips and 15 jet ski slips. The proposed marina expansion includes the dredging of approximately two acres of the Mullica River to a depth of approximately four feet below the existing riverbed. The Commission is receiving public comment on the proposed marina expansion. A pre-application conference was conducted on May 5, 2022 for the proposed



marina. The proposed expansion would occur in the Pinelands Preservation Area District. By letter dated May 23, 2022, the Commission staff advised that the proposed development in the Mullica River is subject to the permitted land use requirements of the Township land use ordinance and the CMP and that the proposed development appeared to require a use variance from Washington Township.

- **Communications Tower, Woodland Township (App. No. 1981-0162.002):** This application proposes a communications tower as an accessory use to the existing Woodland Township EMS/Fire Company located on the same parcel. The purpose of the tower is to improve emergency communications service to the existing EMS/Fire Company. The application proposes an AT&T FirstNet service antenna array on the tower. AT&T FirstNet service provides a combination of emergency wireless communication service and commercial (general public) wireless communication service. Unless it is demonstrated that the proposed tower qualifies as accessory to the existing 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 Commission staff public hearing. Should the applicant wish to proceed with a hearing, the matter will need to be transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law.

The applicant submitted information in December 2021 attempting 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. Staff responded by letter dated February 23, 2022, indicating 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 commercial wireless communications service.

On April 7, 2022, the applicant submitted additional information in an effort to demonstrate that the proposed communications tower with FirstNet Service constitutes an accessory use to the existing EMS/Fire Company located on the parcel. That information remains under review.

- **Communications Tower, Pemberton Township (App. No. 2006-0440.001):** On April 28, 2022, the Commission staff issued a letter indicating that a proposed tower at the Presidential Lakes firehouse would not qualify as accessory to an existing firehouse based upon the proposed provision of AT&T FirstNet service. The applicant thereafter advised that the Commission staff has misunderstood the application and that the tower was proposed as a principal use within an approved “search area” in a Commission approved plan for the siting of principal use communications towers. By letter dated May 6, 2022, the Commission staff advised of the information necessary to complete an application for a principal use communications tower. On May 13, 2022, the Commission staff met with the Pemberton Township Administrator to review the requirements to complete the application.
- **Communications Tower, Washington Township (App. No. 2022-0069.001):** On May 3, 2022, an application was initiated for a proposed communications tower at the Lower Bank Volunteer Fire Company. The application appears to propose AT&T FirstNet service. That application is currently under review. It is currently unclear whether the tower is proposed as an accessory use to the existing firehouse or as a principal use. The Commission staff will clarify that issue with the applicant prior to issuance of any review letter.

- **Residential Development, Hamilton Township (App. No. 2004-0351.002):** On September 11, 2009, the Commission staff issued a Certificate of Filing for the development of 608 dwellings on a 112-acre parcel. That project has not yet been constructed. On May 10, 2022, the Commission staff received a meeting request to further discuss the proposed development. That meeting is currently being scheduled for June.
- **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 a threatened and endangered (T&E) 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. By letter dated May 6, 2022, the Commission staff advised that the proposed 2.53 acres of grubbing and vegetation removal was inconsistent with CMP T&E species protection standards. The letter also indicated that it may be possible to demonstrate that the proposed investigation is consistent with the T&E protection standards if the area of disturbance is reduced. However, the letter also indicated that a Waiver of Strict Compliance from the Commission may be necessary.

### 4.3 OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

- **Sandy Soils Training:** On May 12, 2022, Regulatory Programs staff attended an all-day sandy soils training session with National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) staff at Brendan T. Byrne State Forest. Regulatory Programs staff participated as both trainees and trainers. The training session was both informative and offered a valuable opportunity for Regulatory Programs staff to interact with NJDEP (enforcement, mitigation, land use, etc.) and NRCS staff in the field.
- **Enforcement Coordination Meeting:** On May 18, 2022, Regulatory Programs staff met with NJDEP Enforcement staff to review enforcement coordination between our two agencies. Staff discussed the Commission's limited enforcement authority and reviewed the established processes between the Commission and NJDEP staff with regard to notification and pursuit of violations of the NJ Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act within the Pinelands Area.

## 5 SCIENCE

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### 5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

- **Water Level Monitoring:** In May, Science 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. Science staff also

downloaded water level data collected from continuous water level recorders installed in seven ponds and one forest plot.

- **Water Quality Monitoring:** Science staff sampled pH and specific conductance at the 37 long-term monitoring ponds in May. This sampling occurs in April and May each spring to monitor long-term changes in these two parameters.
- **Annual Frog and Toad Surveys:** Science staff completed the May round of nighttime frog and toad vocalization surveys.

## 5.2 LONG TERM STUDIES

- **Microorganism Study:** Science staff drafted a final report to be submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The draft report was sent to the Commission Executive Director and collaborators at the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to review. Science staff are revising the report based on comments received. Staff submitted a request to EPA for a second no-cost extension for additional time to complete the final report.
- **Endocrine Disruption Study:** Collaborators at USGS drafted a manuscript that describes the results of the Endocrine Disruption Study. Science staff reviewed the draft manuscript and provided comments to the USGS. The manuscript was revised and submitted for publication in May. A USGS data release is available on the internet at: <https://doi.org/10.5066/P93VW8GX>
- **King Snake Study:** In May, Science and Herpetological Associates (HA) staff captured several new king snakes to be radio tracked as part of the study. One of the king snakes found in May was initially found at a hollow pine tree in May of 2019 and then lost in May of 2020, perhaps due to a malfunctioning radio transmitter. Three years later (in May of 2022), the snake was recaptured at the same hollow pine tree where it was first captured in 2019. The hollow pine tree is an important habitat feature since it has been used for shedding by multiple corn snakes and this king snake. The recapturing of this king snake and others like it demonstrates the fidelity that snakes maintain for habitat features used for shedding, nesting, and denning. Several king snakes were also killed by predators in May.
- **Joint Corn Snake Study:** Science and Herpetological Associates (HA) staff continued to monitor the drift fence for animals found under the wood and metal cover, in box traps, and in pitfall traps established along the drift fence array. Due to the excessive mortality of masked shrews in the pitfall traps, staff removed the



A radio tracked king snake that was recaptured three years after it was lost deposited urates on a Research Scientist's head as it was coaxed out from inside a hollow tree.

pitfall traps from the fence array. In May, Science and HA staff captured several corn and pine snakes found at the fence. These snakes will be radio tracked to find their dens. Because the drift fence is installed in a nesting area, gravid corn snakes started to appear at the fence in late-May. Gravid snakes will be brought back to lay their eggs in the laboratory and the eggs will be incubated so the hatchlings can be pit tagged and released for future monitoring.

- **Rare Snake Monitoring:** In May, Science staff opened small ground level doors on the den corrals established as part of the project. The doors allow snakes to enter and leave the den throughout the active season. The doors will be closed again in the wintertime to contain hibernating snakes so they can be captured again when they emerge the following spring. Science staff continued to work on a response to the comments provided by NJDEP Endangered and Nongame Species Program (ENSP) staff regarding the Commission snake research permit.
- **Box Turtle Study:** In May, Science staff continued to radio track box turtles from last year and found several new box turtles to add to the study. Science staff coordinated with NJDEP ENSP staff to work to obtain additional funding for the study, assist turtle experts from the Mid-Atlantic Center for Herpetology and Conservation to conduct box turtle surveys in the Pinelands, and to potentially collect genetic samples from Pinelands box turtles. A Communications Office staffer tagged along with a Research Scientist to create a video highlighting the ongoing project to radio track box turtles in the Pinelands. The two-minute video was shared on the Commission social media sites in May.

### 5.3 OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

- Dr. Howard Reinert of The College of New Jersey continued to train Science staff on how to conduct snake surgeries to implant and remove transmitters.
- A Research Scientist retired from the Commission at the end of May. To celebrate, Science staff spent a day in the field together looking for snakes. Staff found two corn snakes, two black racers, a pine snake, and the lost king snake mentioned above in the **King Snake Study** update. It was a successful and enjoyable retirement party.



Science staff with a retiring Research Scientist holding a new corn snake.

## 6 COMMUNICATIONS

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### 6.1 COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- **Website:** The Pinelands Commission’s website was viewed 15,298 times in May 2022. Staff drafted a new rain garden webpage in May. It will be launched in the coming weeks.
- **Inquiries/Correspondence:** The Communications Office received and responded to 54 inquiries from the public in May, including phone calls, e-mails, and media inquiries.

### 6.2 EVENTS, OUTREACH & INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

- **Pinelands Speaker Series Webinars:** The Commission hosted a live performance by local musician Pat Seiler on May 20, 2022. Mr. Seiler performed several songs from his “Tap Roots” album, which features recordings of birds, frogs, and other sounds of nature in the Pinelands. The performance was held in the Terrence D. Moore Conference Room, and it was livestreamed on the Commission’s YouTube Channel and Instagram site.



**Above:** Local musician Pat Seiler performed at the Commission’s headquarters on May 20, 2022.

- **Education Programs and Events:** A member of the Communications Office took new employees on a daylong tour of the Pinelands on May 12, 2022 and delivered an overview of the Pinelands Commission for a group of approximately staff members from the NJDEP Green Acres program on May 25, 2022.
- Planning Office staff provided a PowerPoint presentation for the Commission’s new Planning and Regulatory Programs staff detailing the environmentally sensitive nature of the Pinelands and the Commission’s programs that are aimed at controlling nitrogen released from residential and non-residential onsite wastewater systems.



- **Social Media Enhancements:** In May, staff shared 71 photos on the Commission’s Facebook page, 87 photos on Instagram, and 44 tweets on Twitter.
- **Science Office Assistance:** A member of the Communications Office assisted the Science Office by measuring water levels on May 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>.



**Above:** The Commission shared 71 photos on the agency’s Facebook page in May 2022, including this photo of a native pink lady’s slipper orchid blooming in the Pinelands.

- **Pinelands Summer Short Course:** Staff continued to plan the annual Pinelands Summer Short Course, which is scheduled for July 21, 2022 in Hammonton.
- **Springtime, Pinelands--themed World Water Day Event:** The Commission will educate approximately 100 students about water quality and the importance of protecting the Pinelands at Batsto Lake on June 2, 2022.

## **7 INFORMATION SYSTEMS**

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- **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. Treasury finalized the migration of all Pinelands digital files to FileNet P8.
- **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). To improve security, staff continues the rollout of password policy changes. Staff is working to address how password changes impact service accounts and scanning processes.
- **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 preparing the PLP system and

mapping interface for a release to all Pinelands staff in June.

- **Ad Hoc Reporting:** Staff assist the Pinelands Commission by generating reports to provide insight into relevant topics of interest. A draft report was created to track staff workload and overdue responses.
- **Pinelands Development Credit Bank:** The Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) Bank utilizes custom software to manage all operations including tracking data and issuing certificates. Staff held a meeting with the Executive Director of the PDC Bank to review the progress that has been made and get input on new reports and features to develop prior to the release of the annual report.
- **Technology Enhancements:** Staff members continually evaluate emerging technologies for how they can impact or enhance the office environment. The WiFi Access Point (AP) was integrated into the Pinelands Commission infrastructure and installed in Fenwick Manor. Staff continues to monitor the AP to make any configuration changes necessary. Upgrade servers were ordered and received from Dell for both the internal Oracle and GIS servers to keep the infrastructure up to date and provide performance improvements.

## **8 BUSINESS OFFICE**

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### **8.1 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

- **Application Fees:** May 2022, Net Total: \$110,122.51; Fiscal Year to Date Total: \$1,036,107.55. (207% of the budgeted projection for FY2022).

The Fiscal Year 2023 Budget process has begun. Staff are preparing their office budget requests for the Business Manager's review.

### **8.2 FACILITIES MANAGEMENT**

- Four unhealthy trees were removed from the Commission property for safety purposes. Five additional trees along Springfield Road were trimmed back to ensure the safety of passing traffic.