

NJ Office of Planning Advocacy

State Plan Endorsement
Opportunities & Constraints Assessment Report:
TRENDS Analysis

For:

The Township of Dennis, Cape May County
May 20, 2026

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Introduction

On March 13, 2025, the Township of Dennis (Township) submitted their Municipal Self-Assessment Report (MSA) to the New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA). This document and associated components provided by other State Agencies comprise this Opportunities and Constraints Assessment (OCA) Report conducted as part of the Municipal Plan Endorsement (PE) process. Plan Endorsement is a voluntary review process designed to ensure the coordination of state, county, and municipal planning efforts in achieving the goals and policies of the State Planning Act. The State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan) is the blueprint for achieving these goals and provides the template for coordination. The endorsement process expands upon the requirements of the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) and incorporates many planning initiatives of the State Agencies.

This report provides a comparison of information in the MSA with the most up-to-date regional and statewide data to determine whether TREND growth is sustainable and viable based on the information provided. This OCA provides specific comments that will need to be addressed through PE.

Background

The Township initiated the PE process by attending a pre-petition meeting with OPA and State agencies on July 9, 2024. The Township then appointed its Plan Endorsement Advisory Committee by resolution #2024-161 on November 12, 2024. The MSA was authorized by the Township via resolution #2025-06 on March 11, 2025. As previously mentioned, the Township submitted their MSA to OPA on March 13, 2025. The Township completed 4 visioning workshops, 3 of which were combined with their public hearings. The Township approved the Vision Statement and authorized its submission to OPA on April 7, 2026, via resolution #2026-73.

Relation to the Pinelands Protection Act

The New Jersey Pinelands Commission was granted authority to preserve the Pinelands through the passage of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 and the New Jersey Pinelands Protection Act of 1979. The Commission protects the Pinelands through its implementation of the Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP). In the Pinelands area, much of the zoning is predicated by the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan. The regulations and standards contained in the CMP are designed to promote orderly development by channeling growth toward appropriate areas while safeguarding the region's unique natural, ecological, agricultural, archaeological, historical, scenic, cultural, and recreational resources. These areas are either rural in nature or established residential. Current designations of the Pinelands CMP are identified in the State Plan Policy Map, in accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement between the Pinelands Commission and the State Planning Commission. According to the State Plan Policy Map, 15,596 acres are depicted as Pinelands in Dennis Township.

Relation to the Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA)

The Township is split between the Pinelands Commission and Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA) jurisdictions. The United States Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA) provides for the management of the nation's coastal resources. Its goal is to preserve, protect, develop, and where possible, to restore or enhance the resources of the nation's coastal zone. Adding standards to the Coastal Zone Management (CZM) rules at N.J.A.C. 7:7-13, regarding the minimum criteria for determining consistency with a State Planning Commission-approved planning area boundary, center, core, or node. The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) must assess these applications considering the goals of the Coastal Area Facility Review Act (CAFRA), N.J.S.A. 13:19-1 et seq., to ensure they will not result in unacceptable harm to the coastal ecosystem or the resources of the built or natural environment. Areas subject to these regulations are said to be within the CAFRA Zone. Approximately 60 percent (or 40 square miles) of the Township is located within the Coastal Zone, where the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) regulates development under CAFRA.

Relation to the State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan)

According to the Township's MSA Report, the municipality is seeking Plan Endorsement to continue cooperation with and assistance from appropriate State and County agencies to implement its master plan and any prospective land use projects. The municipality is seeking assistance with funding projects, permitting, and addressing planning goals that align with the State Plan. The Township's priorities that would be advanced by plan endorsement, including economic revitalization, natural and cultural resource protection, and regulatory compliance. The Township is requesting designation of the five previously designated Village Centers that expired on May 15, 2023. These Center designations stand to promote a sustainable local economy while minimizing risk from natural hazards, improving coastal resource accessibility, and encouraging redevelopment and rehabilitation in the Township.

The State Plan Policy Map (SPPM) accompanies the State Plan and categorizes every area in the State into specific Planning Areas based on their suitability to growth, development, and preservation. The SPPM shows 1,871 acres of Dennis Township as Fringe Planning Area (PA3), 5,517 acres as Rural Planning Area (PA4), 4,690 acres as Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA5), 2,489 acres as Rural/Environmentally Sensitive Planning Area (PA4B), 9,426 acres as Open Space, and, as previously stated, 15,596 acres as Pinelands.

Figure 1: Summary Table	
Land Consumption (Acres) Township Wide	
Urbanized Land	4183.28
Constrained Land	29043.76
Current Developable Land	7179.12
Buildings	
Existing Residential Units	2320
Potential New Residential Units	3250
Potential New Commercial Units	1869
People	
Current Residents	6,149
Additional Residents at Buildout	11765
Total Residents at Buildout	17,914

Census Year	Population	%±
1830	1,513	*
1840	1,350	-10.8%
1850	1,604	18.80%
1860	1,558	-2.9%
1870	1,640	5.30%
1880	1,812	10.50%
1890	1,707	-5.8%
1900	2,778	62.70%
1910	1,751	-37.0%
1920	1,639	-6.4%
1930	1,615	-1.5%
1940	1,877	16.20%
1950	1,981	5.50%
1960	2,327	17.50%
1970	2,635	13.20%
1980	3,989	51.40%
1990	5,574	39.70%
2000	6,492	16.50%
2010	6,467	-0.4%
2020	6,285	-2.8%
2023 (est.)	6,149	-2.2%

Source: United States Census of Population: 1810-2020, United States Census Bureau, Census Estimates for New Jersey

About the TREND Analysis

The TREND Analysis was conducted based on the current zoning information and from the 2017 Master Plan Land Use Element. OPA considered known environmental constraints and identified parkland as impediments to development. Also eliminated from development considerations were wetlands (with 25-foot buffer), presence of Category 1 (C1) Streams, existing developed land including infrastructure, and identified surface water. The net result from the TREND Analysis determined the amount of housing and commercial space that can potentially be built given current land use and zoning regulations.

Ultimately, the information provided throughout this document shall be utilized to inform the remaining steps in the Plan Endorsement Process. The objective of the analysis is to provide the municipality with an idea of how it might appear at the time of full buildout based on current land use and zoning regulations. A series of worksheets represent the basic methodology for the TREND Analysis. Using mapping data and zoning regulations from Dennis Township's ordinances, OPA utilized both the Residential Buildout Method and the Commercial Trend – Building Cover Method. Household size was identified as 2.62 persons per household (median) (U.S. Census Bureau).

Dennis Township Residential Buildout Method

The TREND Analysis for the Township’s Residential Buildout assumes buildout of existing residential zones. The Summary Table (Figure 1) accounts for the land consumption by acres of the Township extracted and calculated from State Plan Policy Map, the buildings covered buildout calculations focused on potential units, and the calculations of the people represent projected residents. According to the MSA and the 2020 United States Census, the Township population was estimated to be 6,149 in 2023, which is in line with a slight decline in population since the 2000 Census.

The residential buildout methodology utilized by the Office of Planning Advocacy only considers minimum lot size at the highest permissible density, including clustering (where applicable), as the determinant for the development potential of vacant lands. For example, in the R-3 Zone, the minimum lot size of 40,000 sq ft was used to calculate the estimated residential build-out by calculating the developable area remaining in the R-3 Zone, then dividing that total by 40,000 sq ft to approximate the potential number of units. It should be noted that any contiguous piece of land that was smaller than that zoning district’s minimum lot size, while shown in “Total Available Residential Land,” was not factored into the calculation of “Potential Number of Units.” It should also be noted that Figure 2 includes some ostensibly non-residential zones because the Township’s zoning ordinance allows for residential development in these districts as either permitted or conditional use.

Figure 2: Residential Buildout								
Zoning District	Total Land in Residential Zone (acres)	Total Constrained Land in Residential Zone (acres)	Total Developed Land in Residential Zone (acres)	Total Available Residential Land (acres)	Approx. Min Lot Size (area per Sq. Ft.)	Potential Number of Units	Avg. Household Size (persons per unit)	Approx. No of Total Residents upon Buildout
C	15,877.35	14,872.87	59.70	944.78	1,089,000	13	2.62	34
CR	22.13	-	11.94	10.19	35,000	9	2.62	24
CVC	207.60	4.85	131.70	71.05	43,560	54	2.62	141
CVR	27.57	1.23	5.14	21.19	43,560	19	2.62	50
OVC	51.30	0.04	33.16	18.11	43,560	16	2.62	42
OVCC	166.93	12.36	124.12	30.46	43,560	23	2.62	60
OVCR	47.37	0.50	26.41	20.45	43,560	13	2.62	34
OVR	83.49	-	61.50	21.99	35,000	22	2.62	58
PF25	12,695.92	10,992.29	241.80	1,461.83	1,089,000	14	2.62	37
PF8	381.13	100.43	31.87	248.83	348,480	21	2.62	55
PR	890.98	328.73	146.64	415.62	139,392	93	2.62	244

PV	1,554.00	314.48	518.35	721.18	139,392	143	2.62	375
R-10	721.35	369.95	32.14	319.25	60,000	191	2.62	500
R-3	5,848.30	1,689.57	1,916.28	2,242.44	40,000	2143	2.62	5,615
VC	112.73	10.35	59.30	43.08	35,000	41	2.62	107
VR	1,218.31	161.57	699.08	357.66	35,000	353	2.62	925
Total	24,029.10	13,986.35	4,039.43	6,003.33	-	3,168.00	-	8,266.10

Dennis Township Commercial Buildout Method

The Commercial Buildout (Figure 3) was performed, like the Residential Trend Analysis, using current zoning regulations. This produced an output of “equivalent units” to gauge commercial development potential.

Figure 3: Commercial Buildout						
Zoning District	Total Land in Residential Zone (acres)	Total Constrained Land in Residential Zone (acres)	Total Developed Land in Residential Zone (acres)	Total Available Residential Land (acres)	Approx. Min Lot Size (area per Sq. Ft.)	Potential Number of Equivalent Units
B	379.35	135.49	66.16	177.71	60,000	129.02
Total	379.35	135.49	66.16	177.71	60,000	129.02

Conclusion

Dennis Township actively plans for its future by engaging the public and seeks to realize the vision articulated in the 2022 Master Plan Reexamination Report. According to the Visioning Statement approved April 7, 2026, via resolution 2025-73, the Township envisions reestablishing its Villages Centers to protect and preserve environmentally sensitive lands from the impact of sprawl.

NJ Department of Environmental Protection
State Plan Endorsement
Opportunities & Constraints Assessment Report
Dennis Township, Cape May County

June 26, 2025

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Introduction

Municipal Plan Endorsement is a voluntary review process designed to ensure the coordination of state, county, and municipal planning efforts in achieving the goals and policies of the State Planning Act (Act). The State Development and Redevelopment Plan (State Plan) is the blueprint for achieving these goals and provides the template for coordination. The endorsement process expands on the requirements of the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) and incorporates many planning initiatives of the State agencies.

This document constitutes the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) component of the State Opportunity and Constraints Assessment (OCA) conducted as part of the Plan Endorsement process for the **Township of Dennis in Cape May County**. This document provides an overview of the Department's regulatory and policy concerns in the municipality. The information provided herein is intended to reflect the Department's current information concerning the municipality.

Recommendations may be found throughout the document in **bold** and are listed for easy reference in the Summary of Recommendations section at the end of this report.

Overview

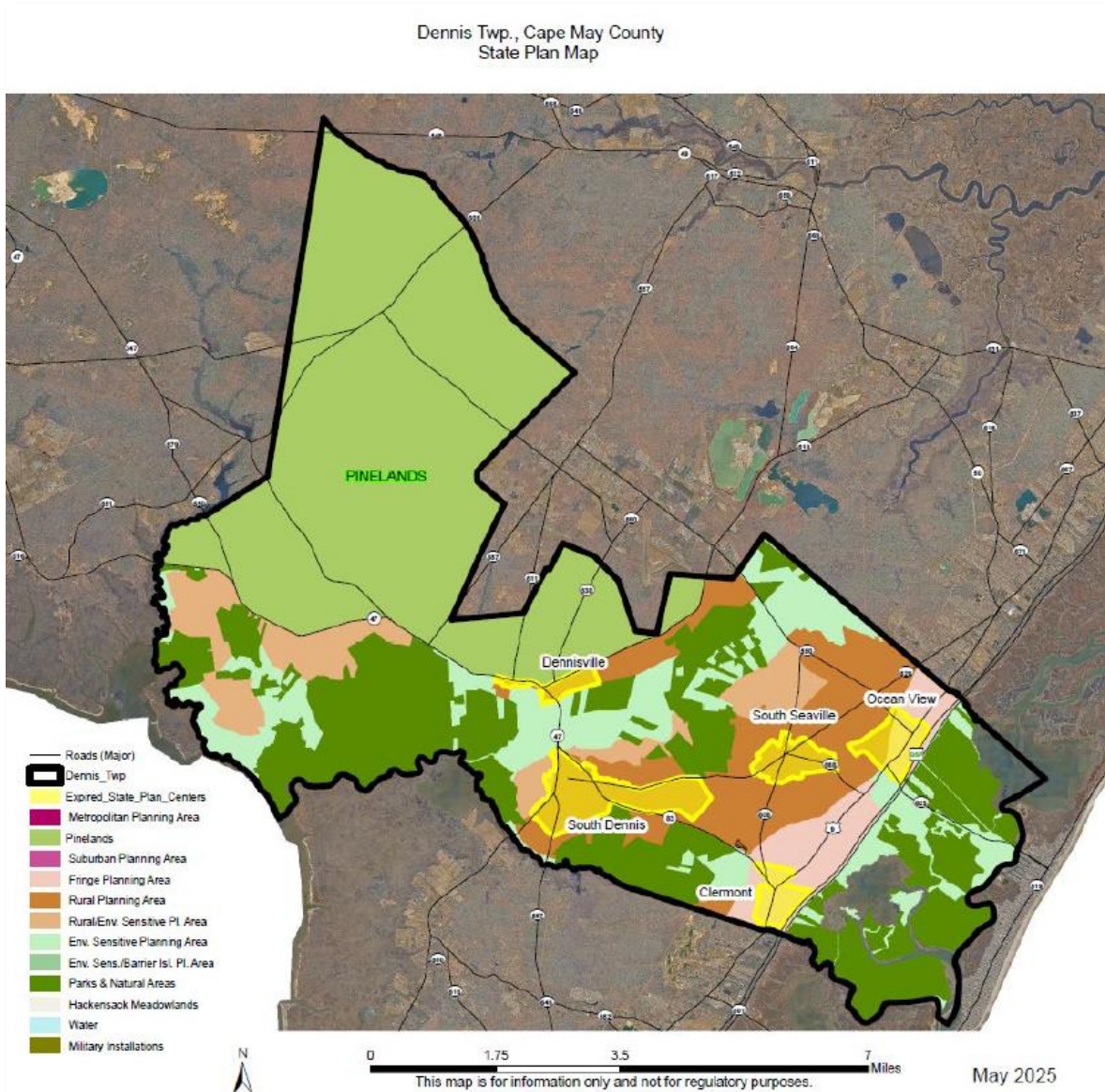
The Township of Dennis encompasses approximately **40,820.30 acres (63.78 square miles) with approximately 38,138.42 acres of land and 2035.2 acres of open water.**

Dennis Township, located west of the Garden State Parkway is predominantly in the Pinelands area administered by the NJ Pinelands Commission and/or the Pinelands Reserve area. Dennis Township is also partially **in the jurisdiction of the New Jersey State Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA), including the proposed village centers to the west of the Garden State Parkway and the wetlands reserve area east of the Garden State Parkway. Dennis Township has areas that are tidally influenced and is almost entirely in the 1% 100 year Flood Hazard Area (FHA) and entirely within the proposed NJPACT 1% FEMA FHA plus 5 feet flood inundation zone (<https://dep.nj.gov/njpact/>).** The proposed five (5) village centers are entirely in the CAFRA Zone and in Pinelands National Reserve.

There are 4,450.30 acres (11.6%) of the township – excluding surface water– in the current sewer service area although there is currently no public wastewater system within Dennis Township. Each proposed center is serviced by private individual or community wastewater treatment systems. In addition, there is currently no public water supply system in Dennis Township and homeowners are dependent on private individual or community on-site potable supply wells. A review of GIS maps indicates that approximately 24,460 acres of land is preserved in the municipality. Of the total preserved land 18,869.06 acres were preserved under the NJ State Green Acres Program. A total of 4.3 % of the municipality and 19.8% of the proposed centers are covered with impervious surface which limits in situ stormwater management.

The Township of Dennis adopted a master plan reexamination report in November 2022. A Municipal Self-Assessment (MSA) was subsequently submitted to the Department of State's Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA). It was deemed complete by (OPA) on May 06, 2025.

The Township of Dennis is proposing to renew the five (5) Dennis Township Village Centers identified as Clermont, Dennisville, Ocean View, South Dennis, and South Seaville. These centers were adopted by the State Planning Commission on April 24, 2013. They all expired on March 31, 2023. A CAFRA notice of the center expiration was published in the federal register on March 17, 2025. It was effective on April 16, 2025.



The township is not propose any planning area changes intended to promote development. Areas that the NJDEP wants to avoid including in the center include low density residential areas, undeveloped areas of habitat, or areas susceptible to repetitive flooding as this is inconsistent with goals of the State Plan, principals of smart growth, and goals intended to protect natural resources.

The DEP recommends continuing to work with the municipality and the OPA to refine the proposed centers for endorsement that fully protect environmental and cultural constraints, including preserving ranked habitat and wetlands, restoring and preserving the municipality’s natural and historic resources, preserving open space, and addressing sustainable economic development, stormwater management, affordable housing, and congestion, consistent with the planning goals and objectives contained in the State Plan. Endorsed centers should largely avoid environmentally sensitive areas, areas of repetitive flooding, and areas anticipated to be adversely impacted by sea level rise, while protecting critical facilities and evacuation routes. The Department recognizes that the existing development in the municipality and centers is focused along the municipality’s main commercial transportation corridors. DEP does not believe it is appropriate to encourage development and redevelopment in any area at prominent risk to flood impacts. Therefore, the Department would recommend amending any village boundaries to eliminate undeveloped areas with environmental constraints. A map showing the centers boundaries will be developed for submission to the State Planning Commission for endorsement. The map will reflect review and discussions between the Township and OPA while incorporating agreed upon recommendations by the NJDEP.

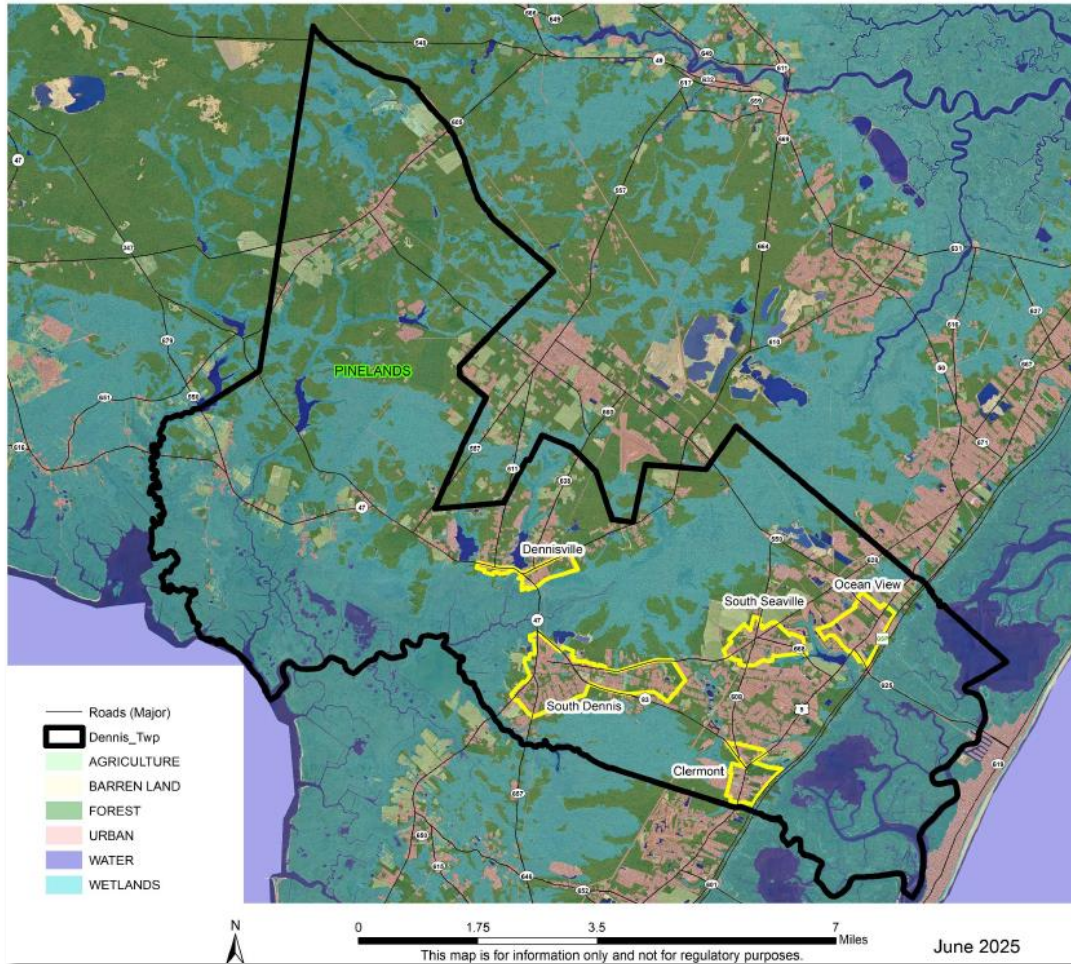
The following represents current environmental and infrastructure conditions in Dennis Township and identifies opportunities and constraints for future development.

Land Use Cover

Dennis Township is composed of many different planning areas. There are also significant areas of historic and natural resources designated for protection and preservation. These significant resources include 24,400 total acres of preserved land which includes the 18,869 acres preserved through the Green Acres program, the Magnolia Lake National Heritage Priority Site (NHPS), the Cape May National Wildlife Refuge and the Cape May Coastal Wetlands Wildlife Management Area (CMCWWMA).

Dennis Twp., Cape May		
Dennis Twp., Cape May Total Area = 40,820.30 Acres		
LULC 2020		
LULC 2020 Type	Acres	Percent
AGRICULTURE	1,893.31	4.6
BARREN LAND	173.21	0.4
FOREST	11,685.04	28.6
URBAN	4,595.97	11.3
WATER	2,681.88	6.6
WETLANDS	19,790.90	48.5
TOTAL	40,820.30	
URBAN (4,595.97 Acres)	Acres	Percent
Residential	2,742.83	59.7
Commercial/Services/ Industrial	355.97	7.7
Other	1,497.17	32.6

Dennis Twp., Cape May County
Expired State Plan Centers with
Land Use Land Cover 2020



Dennis Twp., Cape May

Dennis Twp. Total Area = 40,820.30 Acres

Dennis Twp. Total Area (without surface water) = 38,138.42 Acres

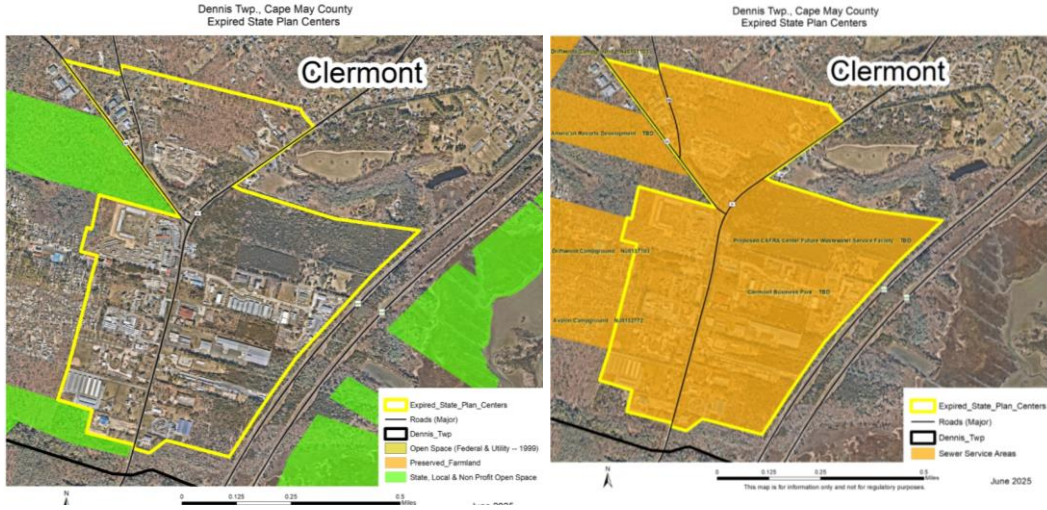
State Plan Existing Planning Areas	Acres	% of Total Existing PLA Area
Suburban (PA2)	1.34	<0.01
Fringe (PA3)	1,870.56	4.7
Rural (PA4)	5,515.04	13.9
Rural Env. Sensitive (PA4b)	2,488.09	6.3
Env. Sensitive (PA5)	4,723.34	11.9
Pinelands	15,593.23	39.4
Federal Park	1,538.45	3.9
State Park	7,883.78	19.9
Muni Endorsed Park	2.13	<0.01

Total Proposed Village Center Area: Total 1,943.67 acres

The five (5) village centers proposed for endorsement have the following characteristics:

(Note: FEMA FHA has surface water removed)

- **Clermont**



Total Area = 257.39 Acres

LULC 2020

Agriculture = 5.30 Acres or 2.1%

Barren Land = 0.86 Acres or 0.3 %

Forest = 96.35 Acres or 37.4 %

Urban = 148.80 Acres or 57.8 %

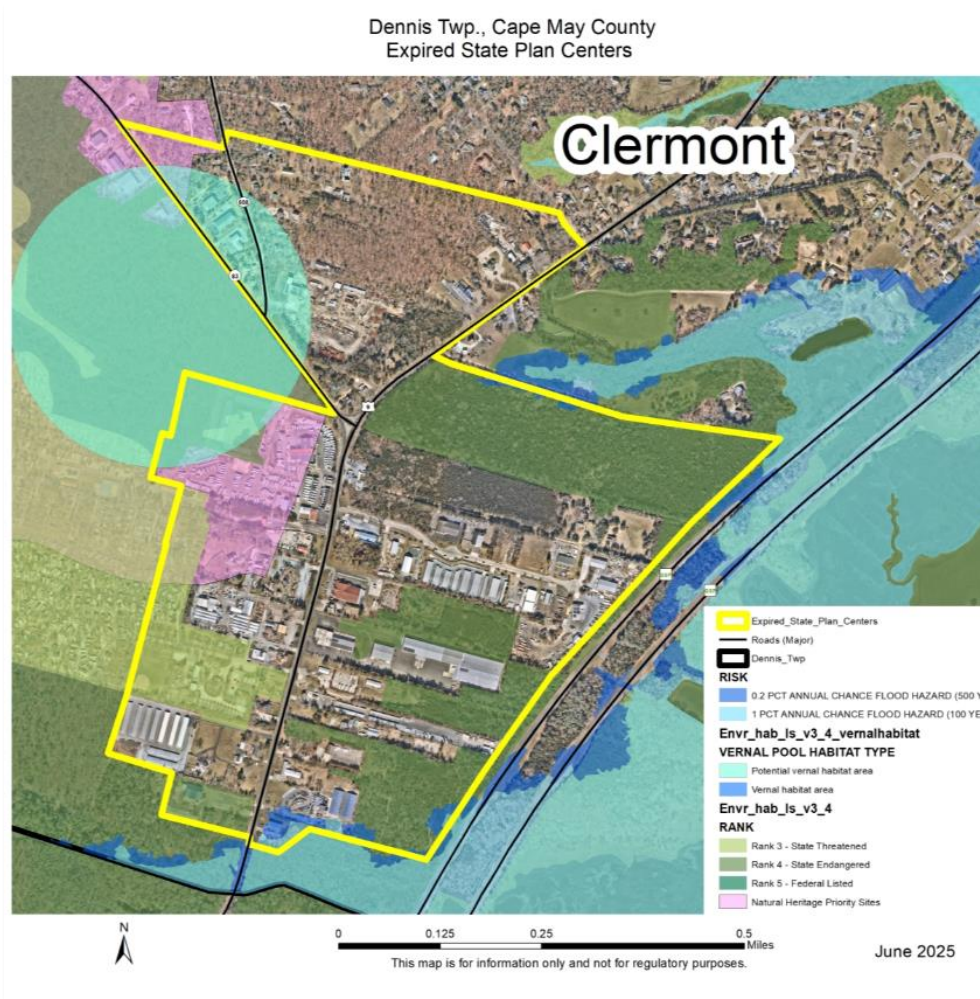
Water = 0.00 Acres or 0.0 %

Wetlands = 6.09 Acres 2.4%

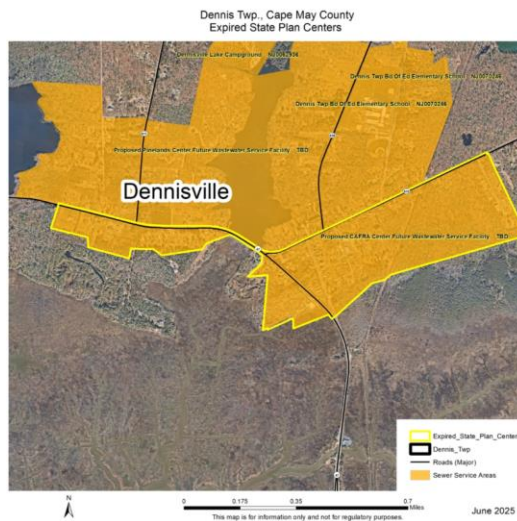
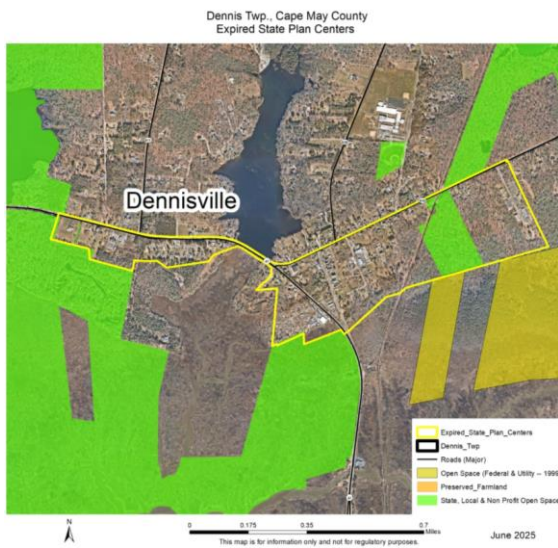
Sewer = 257.39 Acres or 100%

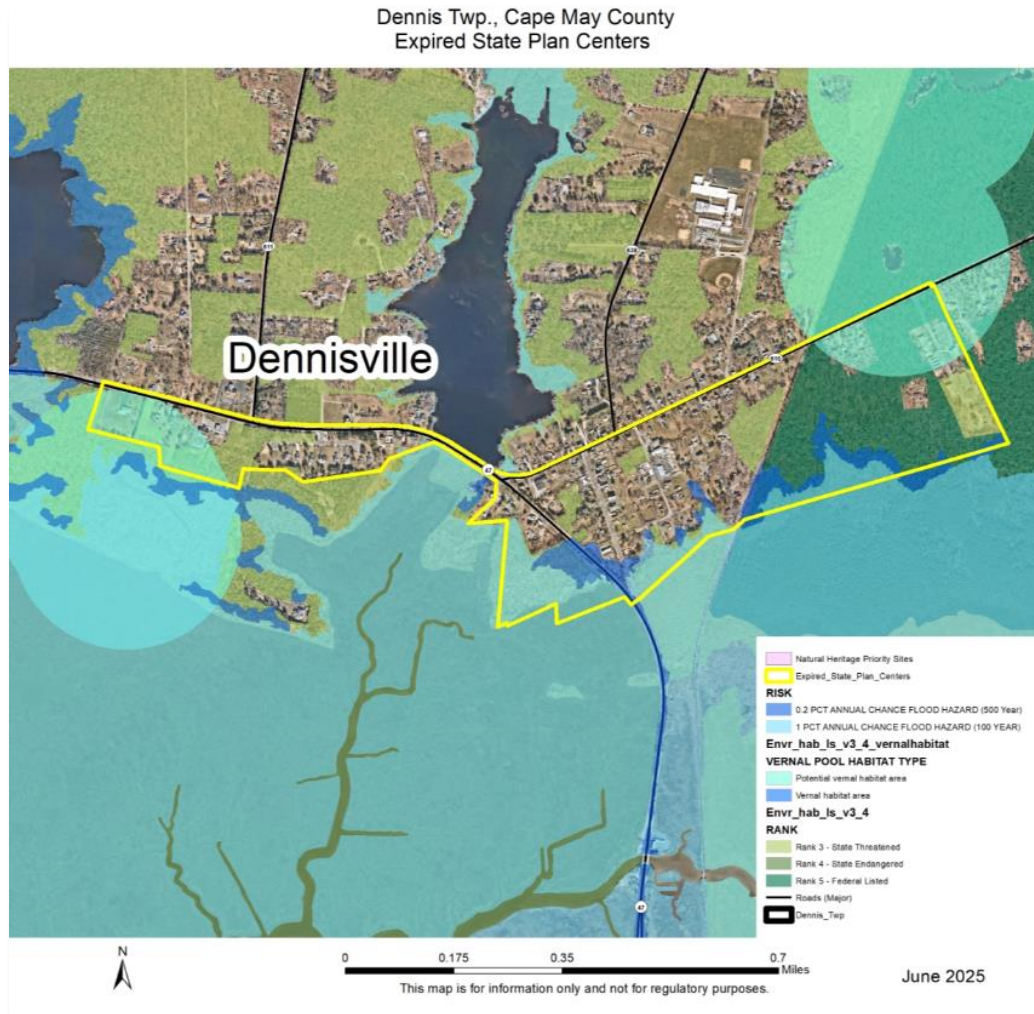
FEMA 1% & 0.2% FHA = 3.86 Acres or 1.5 %

2020 Overburden Community = 0.00 Acres



- **Dennisville**





Total Area = 158.80 Acres

LULC 2020

Agriculture = 0.05 Acres or <0.1 %

Barren Land = 8.14 Acres or 5.1%

Forest = 48.26 Acres or 30.4%

Urban = 83.58 Acres or 52.6 %

Water = 0.008 Acres or <0.1%

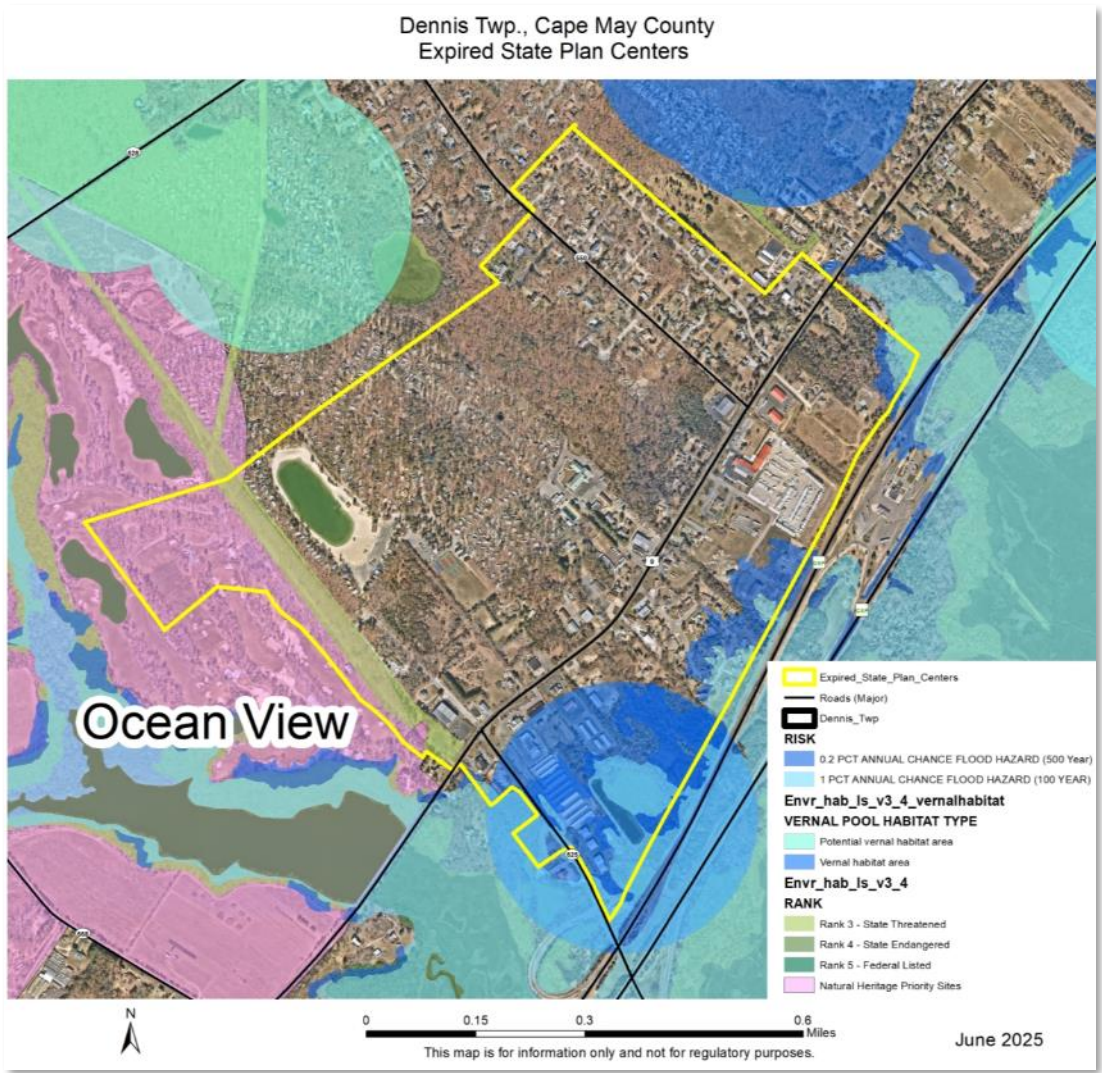
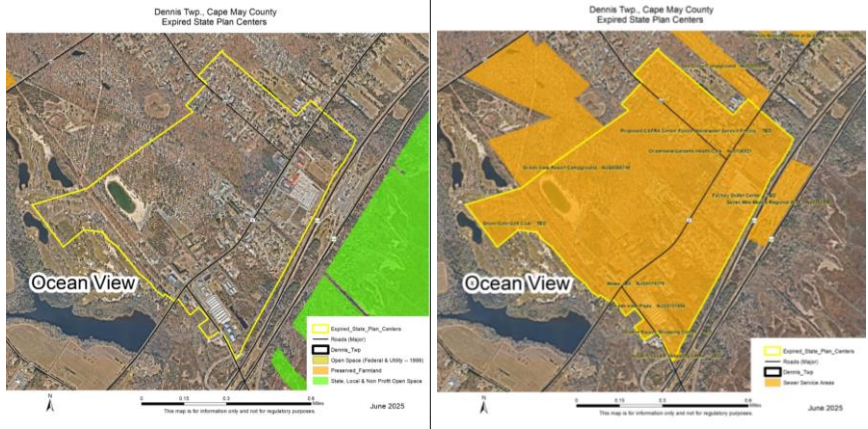
Wetlands = 18.76 Acres or 11.8%

Sewer = 158.80 Acres or 100%

FEMA 1% & 0.2% FHA = 30.35 Acres or 19.1 %

2020 Overburden Community = 0.00 Acres

- **Ocean View**



Total Area = 348.77 Acres

LULC 2020

Agriculture = 7.05 Acres or 2.0%

Barren Land = 5.41 Acres or 1.6 %

Forest = 84.54 Acres or 24.2 %

Urban = 238.88 Acres or 68.5 %

Water = 5.39 Acres or 1.5 %

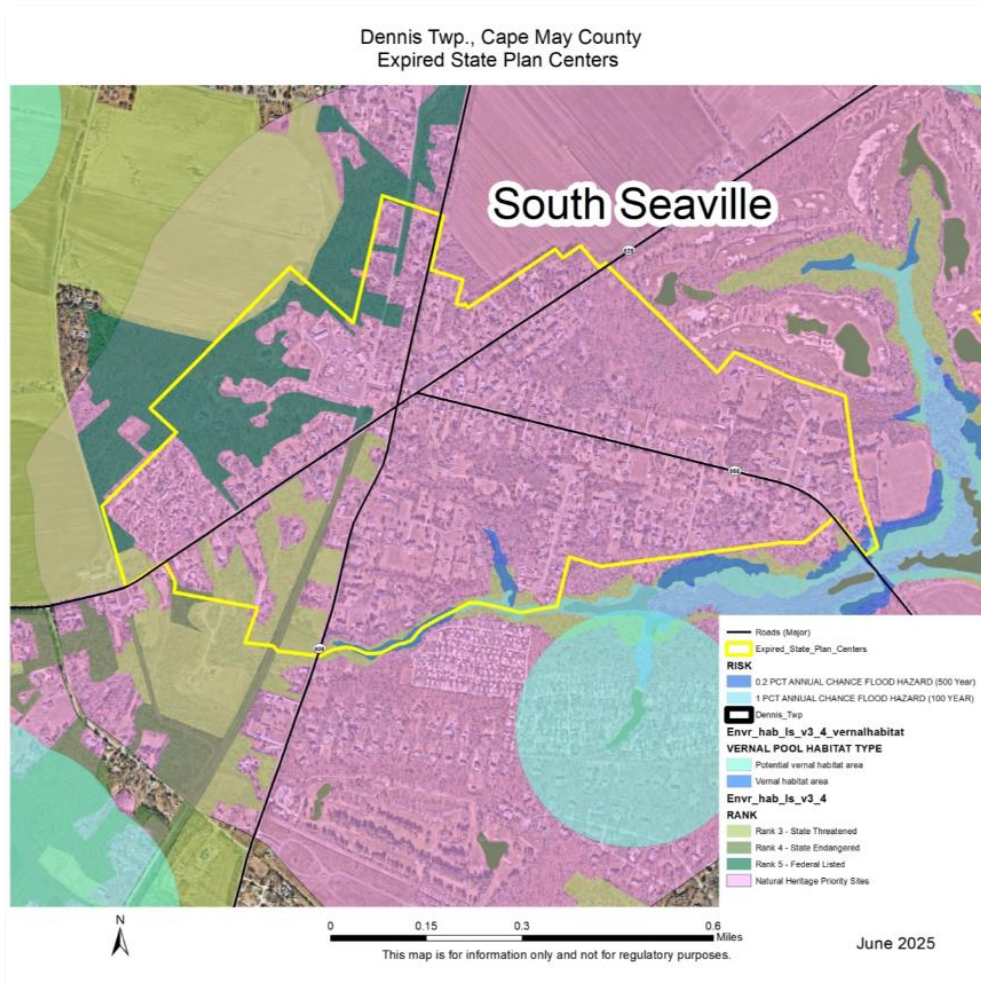
Wetlands = 7.51 Acres or 2.2 %

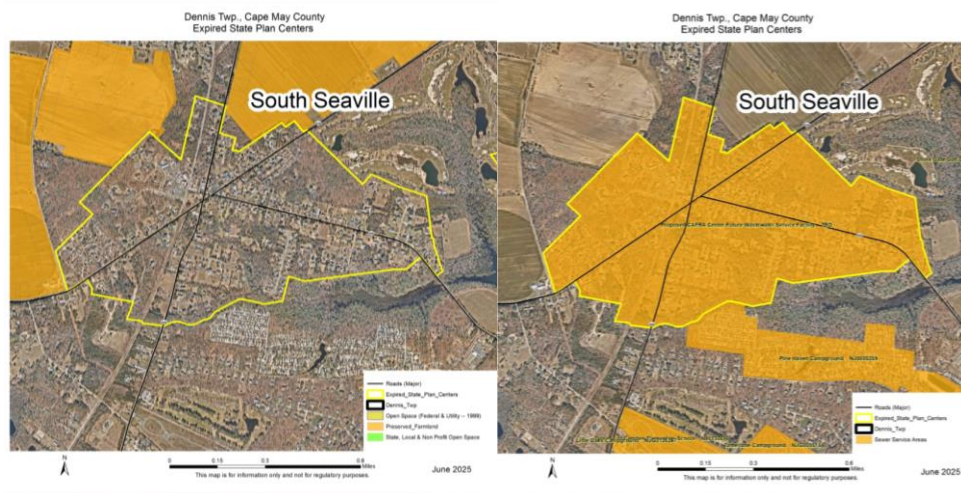
Sewer = 348.77 Acres or 100%

FEMA 1% & 0.2% FHA = 32.03 Acres or 9.2 %

2020 Overburden Community = 0.00 Acres

- **South Seaville**





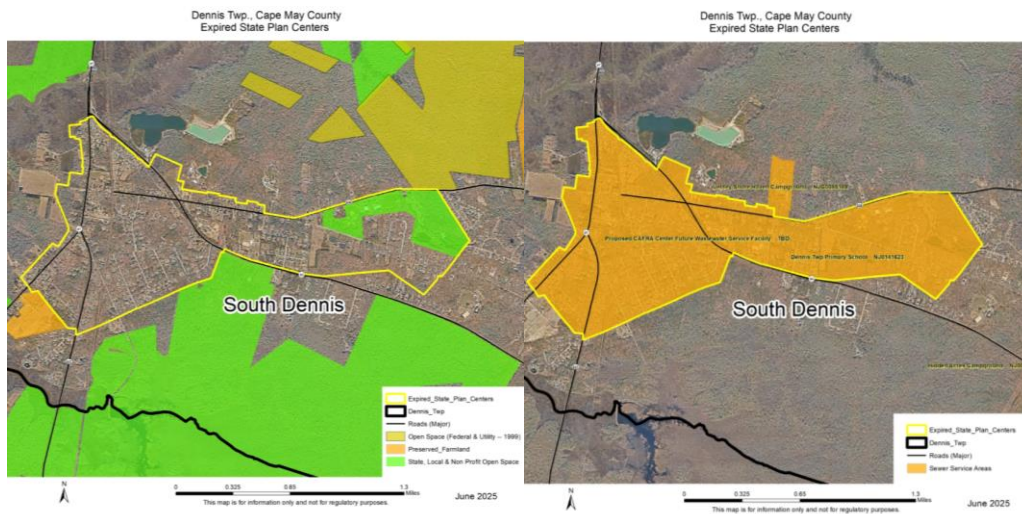
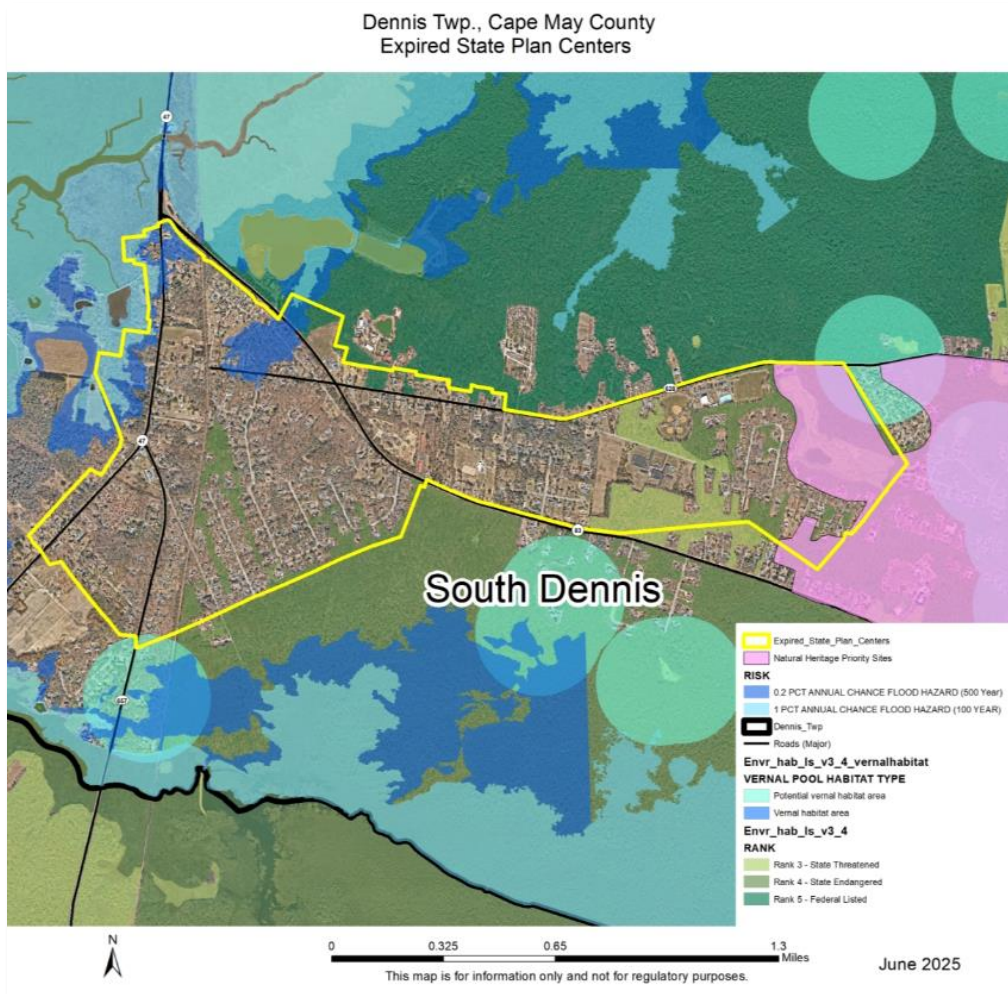
Total Area = 319.72 Acres

LULC 2020

Agriculture = 9.76 Acres or 3.0 %
 Barren Land = 7.23 Acres or 2.3%
 Forest = 76.09 Acres or 23.8 %
 Urban = 217.46 Acres 68.0 %
 Water = 0.00 Acres or 0.0 %
 Wetlands = 9.18 Acres or 2.9 %

Sewer = 319.72 Acres or 100 %
 FEMA 1% & 0.2% FHA = 3.55 Acres or 1.1 %
 2020 Overburden Community = 0.00 Acres

- South Dennis



Total Area = 858.99 Acres

LULC 2020

Agriculture = 23.73 Acres or 2.7 %

Barren Land = 22.38 Acres or 2.6 %

Forest = 278.03 Acres or 32.4 %

Urban = 486.34 Acres or 56.6 %

Water = 1.61 Acres or 0.2%

Wetlands = 46.89 Acres or 5.5 %

Sewer = 858.99 Acres or 100%

FEMA 1% & 0.2% FHA =52.64 Acres or 6.1 %

2020 Overburden Community = 0.00 Acres

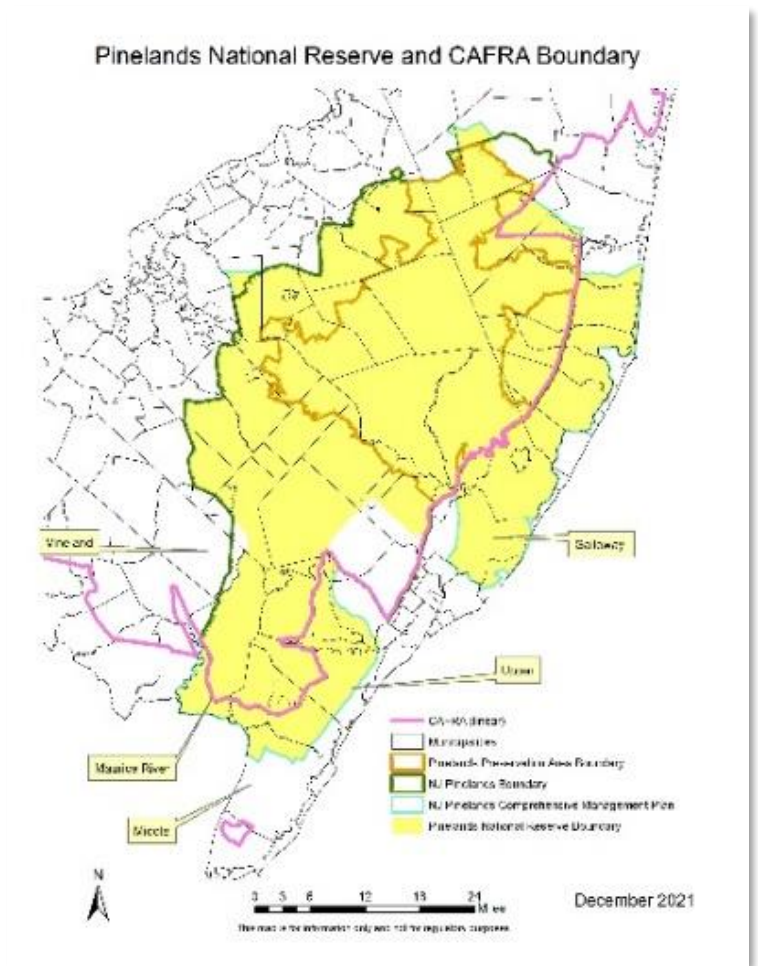
Pinelands and CAFRA Area in Dennis Township

Dennis Township is one of 56 municipalities that are located entirely or partially in the 1.1M acre Pinelands National Reserve (PNR). In 1989, the NJ State Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) was adopted to guide land use, development, and resource protection in the Pinelands area.

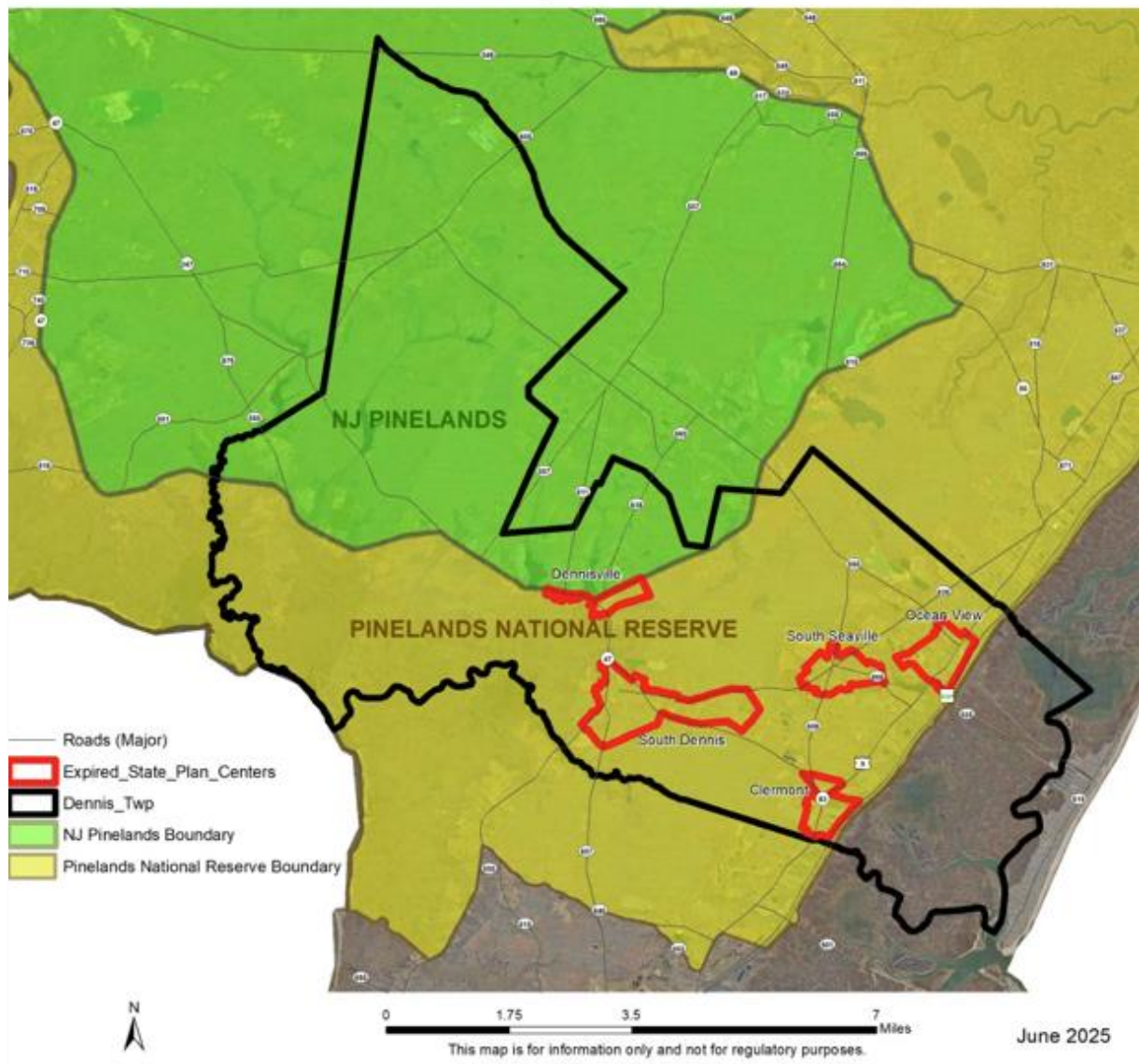
The proposed five (5) village centers are all located to the west of the Garden State Parkway and within the Pinelands National Reserve area. However, they are located outside of the jurisdiction of the Pinelands CMP. The coastal wetlands east of the Garden State Parkway and the area of Dennis Township in the Pinelands National Reserve that are to the west of the Parkway but outside the jurisdiction of the CMP are subject to the jurisdiction of the NJDEP and regulated by the Coastal Zone Management Rules (CZM) most recently amended October 5, 2021. (NJAC 7:7; N.J.S.A. 13:19-1 et seq.; 12:3-1 et seq., 12:5-3; 13:9A-1 et seq.).

Pinelands Designated Areas

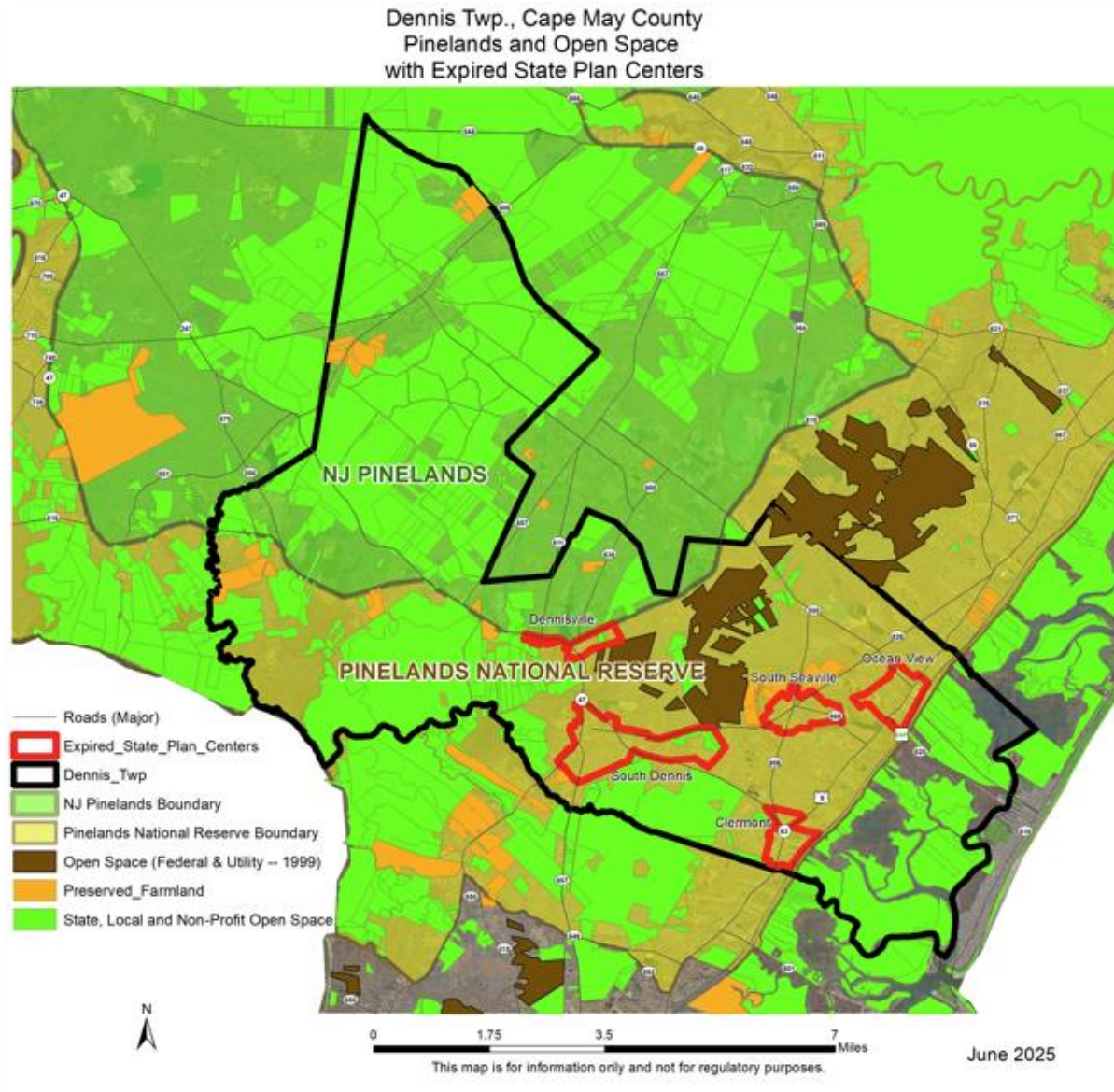
The Pinelands National Reserve portion of Dennis Township is 35,884.90 acres in size. This is a significant portion of the total land area (40,820.30 acres) of the township. This area is located to the west of the Garden State Parkway. This area is designated with tan and green boundaries. It is featured on map in the following image, with the portion of Dennis Township that is located in the Pinelands National Reserve area is the outlined in green on following map. Again, this area is subject to the jurisdiction of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP). It is 15,593.22 acres in size. Please note that the areas subject to the CAFRA regulations are shown on the following map. They are located to the south and east of the boundary line.



Dennis Twp., Cape May County
Pinelands with Expired State Plan Centers



Pinelands and Open Space

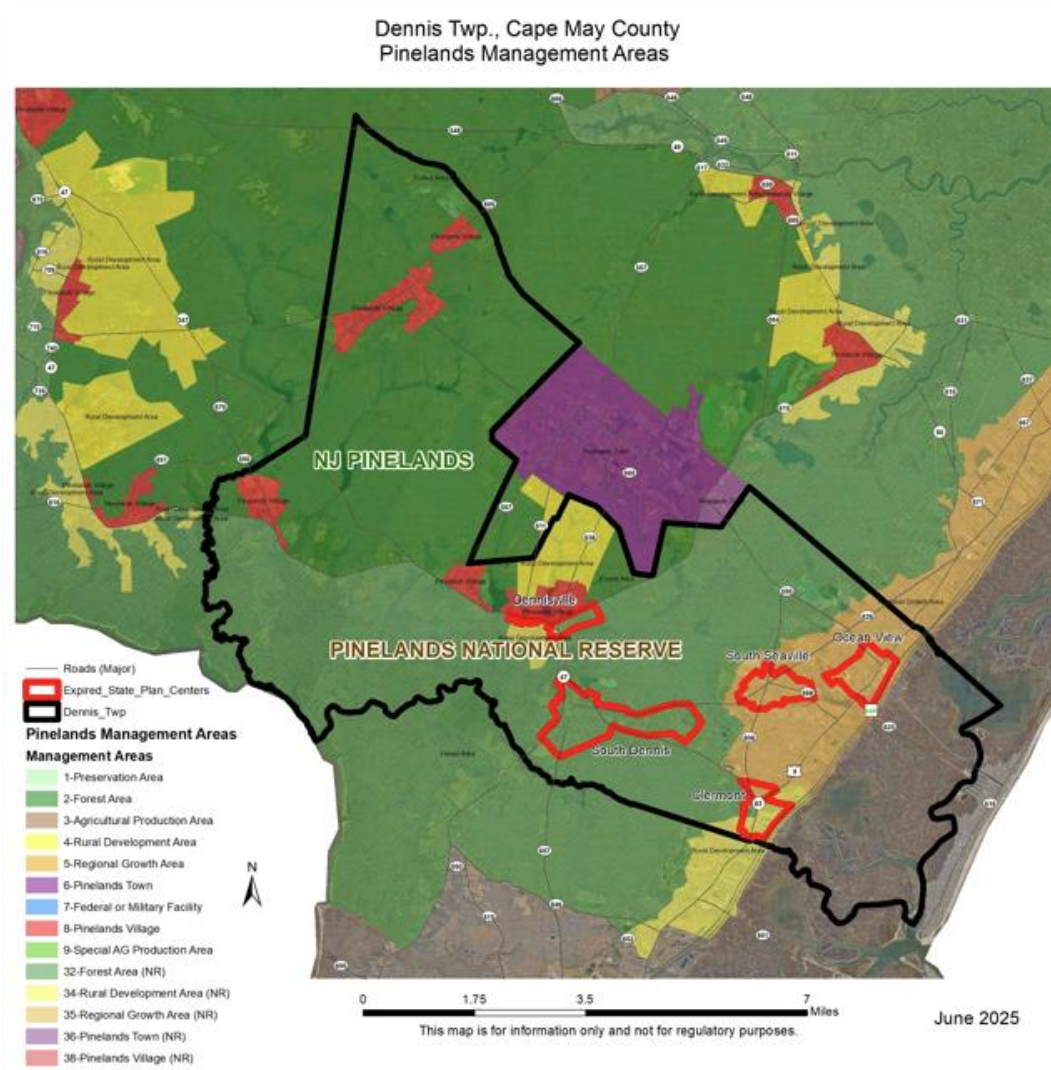


Pinelands Management Areas

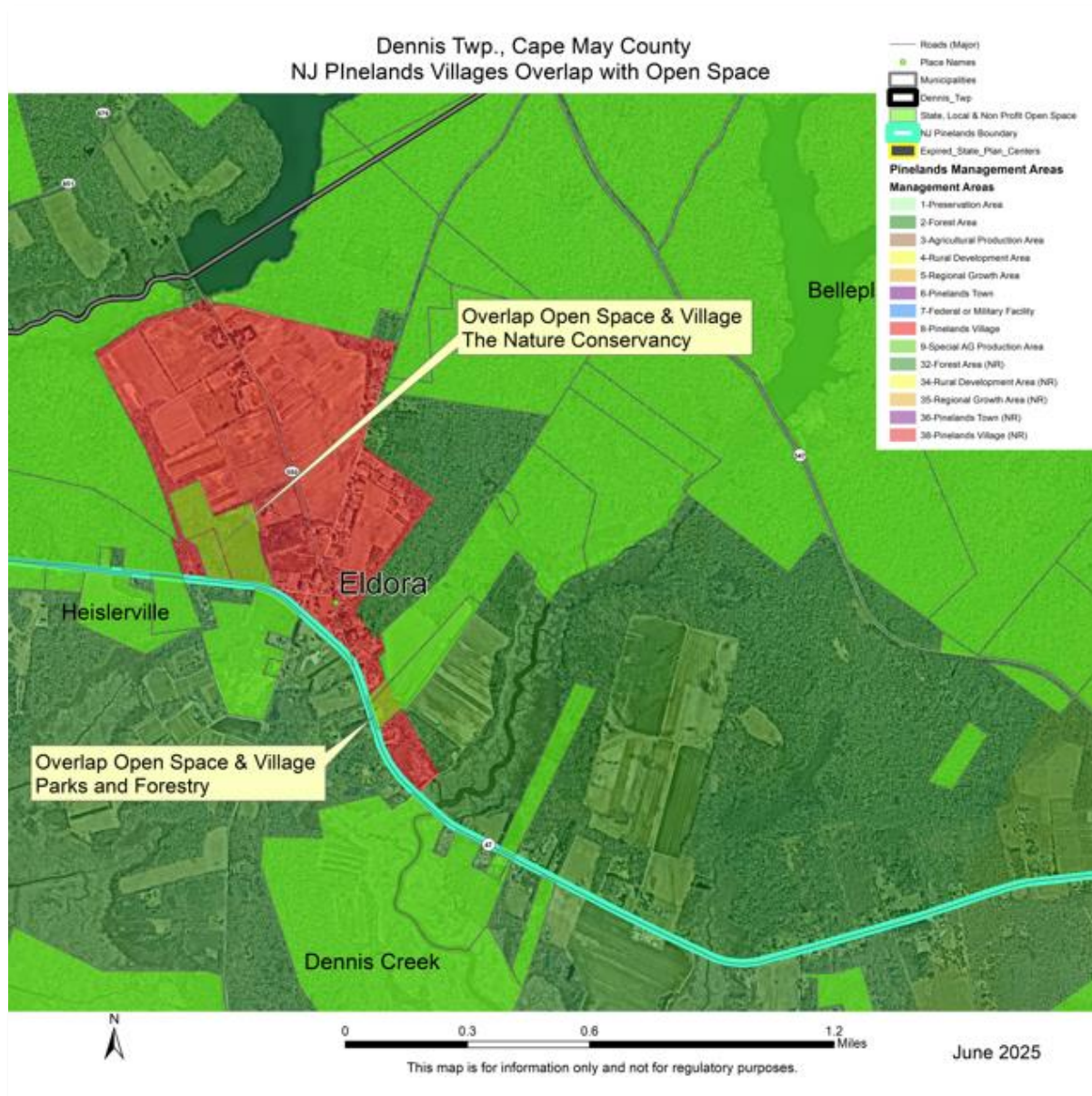
The New Jersey Pinelands Commission reviewed the MSA and proposed Centers for consistency with the intent, policies, and objectives of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 and the State Pinelands Protection Act of 1979, as implemented through the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP). The proposed centers in **Ocean View** and **South Seaville** appear consistent with the CMP. However, the proposed centers in **Clermont**, **South Dennis**, and **Dennisville** do not appear consistent with the CMP, as they include areas not designated as Regional Growth Area, Pinelands Town, or Pinelands Village under the CMP and the Pinelands Land Capability Map.

Specifically:

- The Clermont center contains approximately 28 acres within a Forest Area with the remainder in a Regional Growth Area.
- The South Dennis center is located entirely within a Forest Area.
- The Dennisville center contains approximately 100 acres within a Forest Area and approximately 42 acres in a Rural Development Area.



The Pinelands Village of Eldora is not included in this plan endorsement process. Eldora is interspersed with and surrounded by areas that are active Farmland ("Q" designation on tax records), State Lands, and Nature Preserves. There are areas appear that appear to overlap with Belleplain State Fores and Dennis Creek Wildlife Management Area.

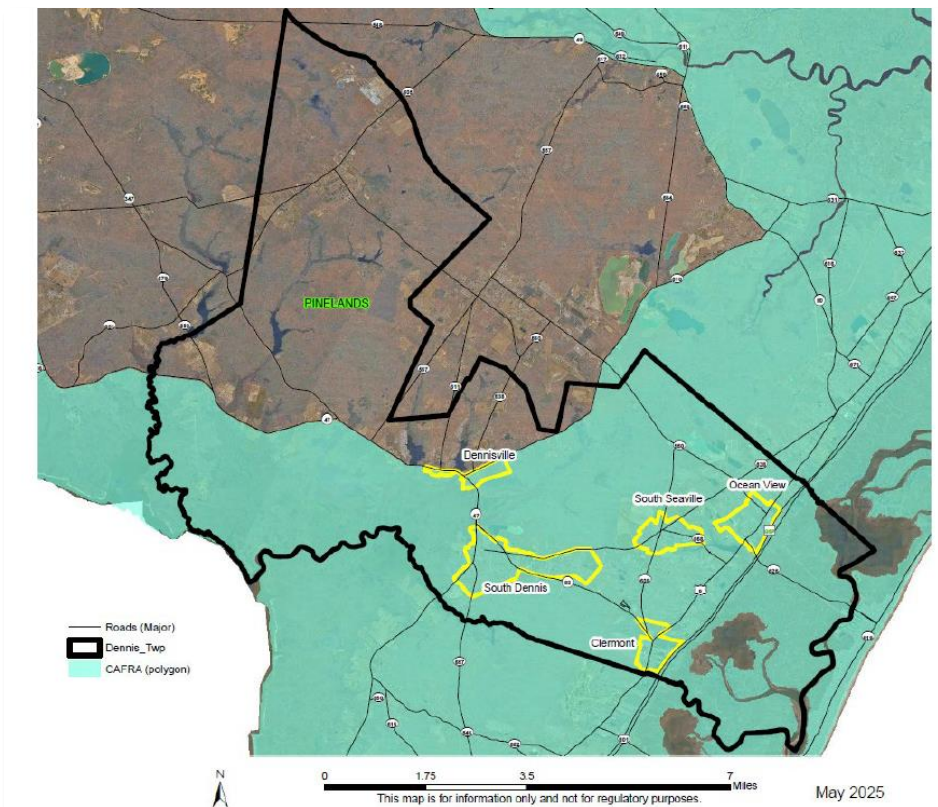


It may be appropriate to update the current Pinelands designation for some or all of these Pinelands management areas ally including the revising the Regional Growth Area in the vicinity of Clermont or the Pinelands Village in the vicinity of South Dennis and Dennisville. However, for the Commission to consider such changes, the Township must request certification of its master plan and land use ordinances pursuant to N.J.A.C. 7:50-3.39(b) relating to the portion of the Township located within the PNR but outside the Pinelands Area. This certification process would allow the Commission to consider management area changes in this portion of the PNR. If the proposed changes are found to be substantially consistent with the CMP, then the Pinelands Land Capability Map could be amended. Prior to any modifications or amendments to the Pinelands management area designation, the Township must ensure compliance with the CAFRA Program and regulations contained in N.J.A.C. 7:7. For any additional

information, the township may contact D. Brad Lanute, PP, AICP, Chief Planner via email at (e): brad.lanute@pinelands.nj.gov or by telephone at (p): 609-894-7300 x. 126.

CAFRA Designated Area

Of the 40,820.30 acres of Dennis Township (including surface water), 25,227.08 acres are in the CAFRA area. Part of the CAFRA area to the west of the Garden State Parkway overlaps with the Pinelands National Reserve. Any plan adoption in the CAFRA area must align with the NJ Coastal Area Facility Review Act (1973) Coastal Management Rules contained in N.J.A.C. 7:7-13.16(b). The CZM Rules state that when the State Planning Commission formally approves the following mapping amendments, the Department shall evaluate the new or changed boundary to determine whether it is consistent with the purposes of CAFRA and this chapter: (1) any new or changed Planning Area boundary, (2) any new or changed community development boundary, or (3) any new or changed core or node boundary.

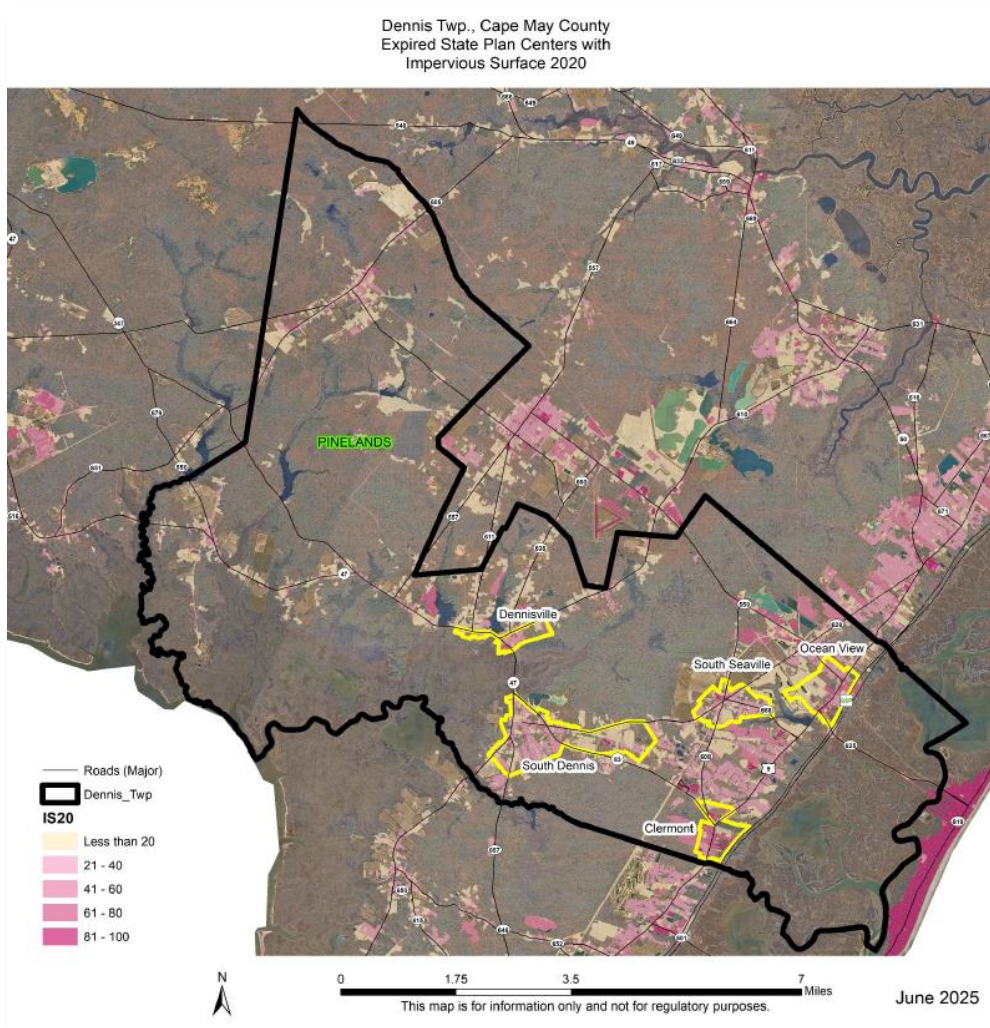


While Dennis Township planning areas were adopted in 2013, the DEP did not provide public notice of the five (5) adopted CAFRA village centers or update the CAFRA map to include the five (5) villages. As a result of this action the maximum permitted impervious cover allowances were not modified. The maximum permitted impervious cover limits in an adopted center in the CAFRA area are 80% in a CAFRA Core, 70% in a CAFRA Town Center, 60% in a CAFRA Village Center, 30% in the Coastal Suburban Planning Area (PA-2) if in a sewer service area (SSA) area, and 5% in the Suburban PA-2 Planning Areas located outside the SSA.

Any changes to ordinances, updates to the Master Plan, proposed changes to the State Plan designated areas, or proposed redevelopment plans must be reviewed by NJDEP to determine consistency with the State Plan and CAFRA Coastal Zone Rules.

Impervious Surfaces

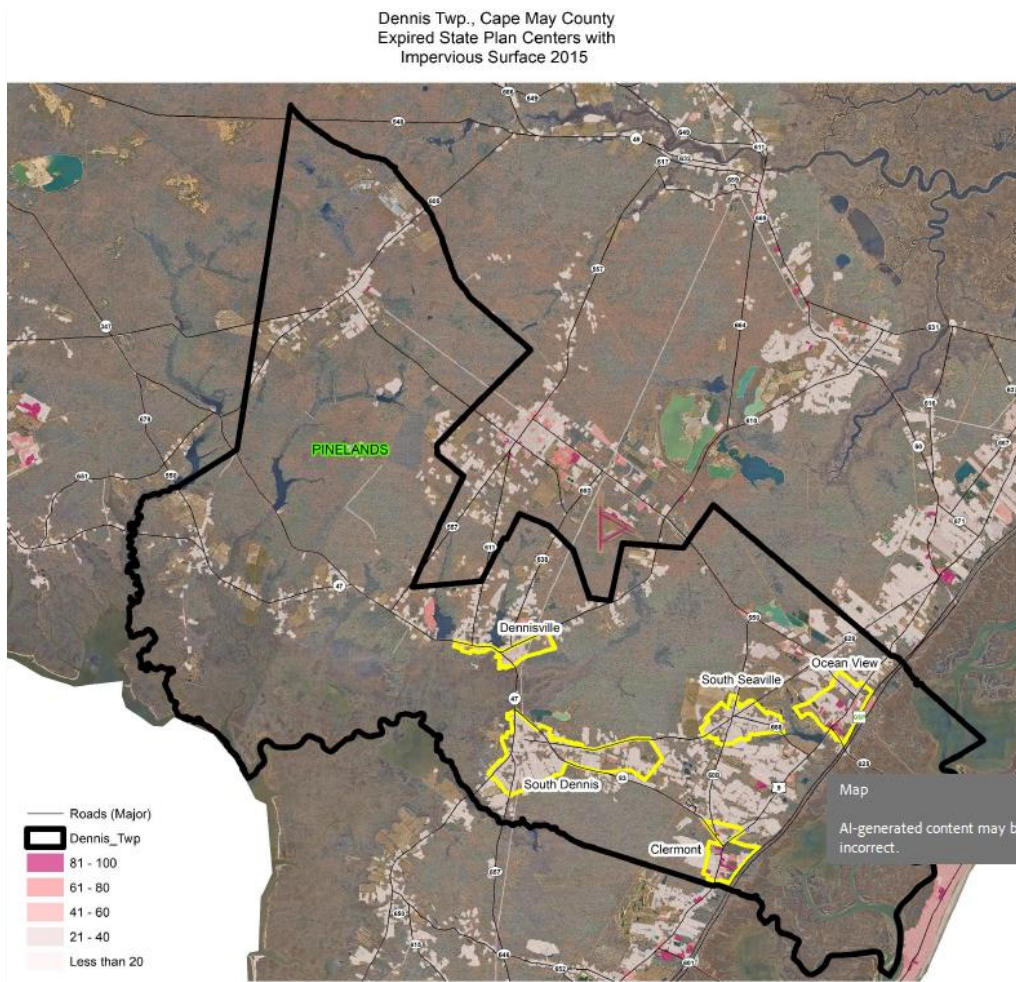
The Township of Dennis must address how to manage and minimize current and any additional impervious surface from future redevelopment. An increase in stormwater runoff may result in a discharge of excessive nutrient and pollutant loads to nearby surface water bodies. Additional stormwater runoff can also lead to soil and stream bank erosion and further degrade valuable surface water bodies.



As a result of changing climate conditions, including increases in temperature and precipitation, the ability of the municipality to manage an increase in stormwater in situ will be challenged by increases in constructing new impervious surfaces. The five (5) expired village centers included a total of 383.76 acres

(19.8%) impervious surfaces. Overall, the municipality contains 1,635.18 acres (4.3%) acres of impervious surfaces not including areas of surface water.

Dennis Twp. Total Area = 40,820.30 Acres				
	Acres of Impervious 2015	Pct of Impervious 2015	Acres of Impervious 2020	Pct of Impervious 2020
Dennis Twp, Cape May (38,138.42 ac) (without surface water)	1,583.17	4.2	1,635.18	4.3
EXPIRED Center (1,936.66 ac) (without surface water)	363.41	18.8	383.76	19.8



The amount of impervious surface area in Dennis Township increased between 2015 and 2020. This has increased the municipality’s need to manage stormwater and areas shown to include excessive heat.

Climate Change Impacts

In past OCA reports, DEP has largely focused on assessing the impacts to the development potential of municipalities. This analysis is based on documented environmental resources and existing water/wastewater capacity. This OCA will also consider the current and projected future impacts of climate change, climate mitigation (e.g. greenhouse gas reduction, renewable energy), and climate resilience (e.g. vulnerability to increased flooding) to these resources.

New Jersey issued its first *Scientific Report on Climate Change*⁽¹⁾ on June 26, 2020. The report details the latest science and describes the current and projected impacts of climate change that are specific to New Jersey. As atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases increase, the state and township can expect to see increases in average temperature, precipitation, flooding, and other impacts to its extensive natural resources. The following, are key findings from the Scientific Report that may be germane to Dennis Township.

Temperature

- New Jersey is warming faster than the rest of the Northeast region and the world.
- Since 1895, New Jersey's annual temperature has increased by 3.5° F.
- Historically unprecedented warming is projected for the 21st century with average annual temperatures in New Jersey increasing by between 4.1° F to 5.7° F by 2050.
- Heatwaves are expected to impact larger areas, with more frequency and a longer duration by 2050.
- Climate change could result in a 55% increase in summer heat-related mortalities.

Precipitation

- Annual precipitation in New Jersey is expected to increase by between 4% to 11% by 2050.
- The intensity and frequency of precipitation events is anticipated to increase due to the impacts from climate change.
- Droughts may also occur more frequently due to the expected changes in precipitation patterns.
- The size, frequency, and intensity of floods will increase as annual precipitation increases.

Air Quality

- The effects of climate change are likely to contribute to an increase in air pollution and lead to increased respiratory and cardiovascular health problems, like asthma and hay fever, and a greater number of premature deaths.
- Environmental degradation from climate induced increases in air pollution will also reduce visibility and cause damage to crops and forests.

1 <https://www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/docs/nj-scientific-report-2020.pdf>

Water Resources

- Water supplies will be stressed and continue to face depletion due to the extension in the length of the growing season and extreme temperatures expected due to climate change.
- Surface and groundwater quality will be impaired as increased nutrients and contaminants enter waters due to increased runoff from more intense rain events.

Agriculture

- The productivity and viability of crops and livestock are expected to change due to climate-induced changes in temperature and precipitation patterns.
- In the future New Jersey may become unsuitable for specialty crops like blueberries and cranberries as higher temperatures reduce necessary winter chills.

Forests

- The persistence of the Southern pine beetle in New Jersey represents an early example of the destruction of invasive pests that can occur due to climate change impacts.
- The length of wildfire seasons and the frequency of large fires has increased due to warmer temperatures, and extended periods of drought resulting from increased temperatures.

Terrestrial Carbon Sequestration

- The loss of forest habitats and wetlands marsh areas to climate change will result in the release of carbon dioxide and increase New Jersey's net greenhouse gas emissions.

Terrestrial Systems

- Climate change is likely to facilitate the expansion of non-native and/ or invasive plant species.
- It is estimated that 29% of New Jersey's bird species are vulnerable to climate change, including the American Goldfinch which is the state bird of New Jersey.

Freshwater Systems

- Freshwater fish like brook trout need cold-water habitats and are expected to lose habitat as water temperatures increase from the impacts of climate change.
- Reptiles with temperature-dependent sex determination could experience changes in sex ratios as New Jersey's temperatures increase.

Climate Change Mitigation

As climate change, energy use, and environmental sustainability take on a larger role in New Jersey's policies, land use planning should promote energy efficiency specifically integrating green building design and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction principals and policies into planning and regulatory structures.

New Jersey's Global Warming Response Act calls for an 80% reduction of GHG emissions from 2006 levels by the year 2050. The GWRA 80x50 Report² was prepared in response to that mandate. It builds on the State's previous efforts to address and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The report was released in October 2020 and analyzes New Jersey's historical and current emission levels, evaluates current plans to further reducing emissions, and presents a set of strategies across seven emission sectors. The strategies contained in this report are intended for consideration by policymakers in formulating legislation, regulations, policies, and programs.

The 80x50 Report concludes that, *"New Jersey can meet its goal of reducing GHG emissions to 80% below 2006 levels by 2050 – protecting our people, economy, and environment from the worsening impacts of climate change to which our state is uniquely vulnerable. Reaching our 80x50 goal requires planning and collaboration across all economic sectors, levels of government, political boundaries, and administrations, all fixed on a carbon neutral future. Achieving this goal depends upon a swift and decisive transition away from our reliance on fossil fuels, accomplished through adaptive policies that also ensure reliability and remain responsive to the scope and pace of efforts to electrify the transportation and building sectors while expanding renewable energy sources. However, only by working in concert across time and economic sectors can we implement the long-term, structural changes to how we generate and use energy, build our homes and businesses, operate our industries, develop and preserve our land, grow our food, manage our waste, and transport our people and products."*

While the 80x50 Report focuses on state-level actions, action at the municipal level will be crucial to meet the state's GHG reduction goals. The Municipal Plan Endorsement Guidelines identify a series of mandatory requirements that will make substantial progress. New Jersey's climate change website also identifies similar and additional actions for local governments. The website is found at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/action.html>.

Climate Resilience

Pursuant to Governor Murphy's Executive Order 89, the state has released a Draft Climate Change Resilience Strategy (CCRS) for public comment. The CCRS promotes the long-term mitigation, adaptation, and resilience of New Jersey's economy, communities, infrastructure, and natural resources throughout the State in a manner consistent with the Scientific Report on Climate Change. Much like the 80x50 Report, the CCRS identifies state-level actions including guidance and strategies for municipalities to implement resiliency measures through changes to existing plans, by-laws, regulations, policies, or land use standards. Executive Order 89 also requires the Climate & Flood Resilience Program at DEP to provide technical guidance and support to counties and municipalities in their efforts to plan for and address the current and anticipated impacts of climate change in accordance with the CCRS. Plan Endorsement is one avenue for the state provided assistance.

² <https://www.nj.gov/dep/climatechange/docs/nj-gwra-80x50-report-2020.pdf>

Flooding

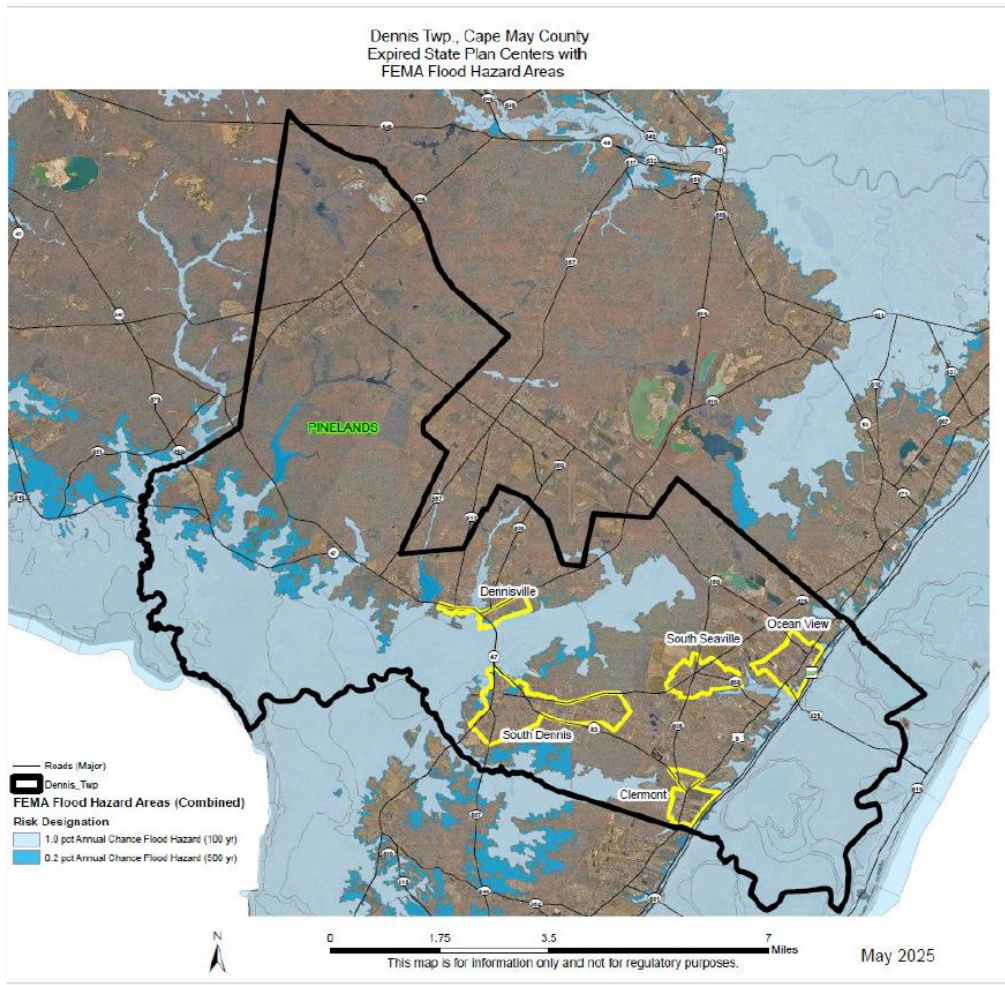
The Township of Dennis participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). As proposed, municipalities that pursue state plan endorsement must identify areas located in the FEMA designated flood hazard areas. The municipality **should update its municipal annex to the Cape May County Hazard Mitigation Plan at regular intervals to address changing climate conditions.**

Flood Zones

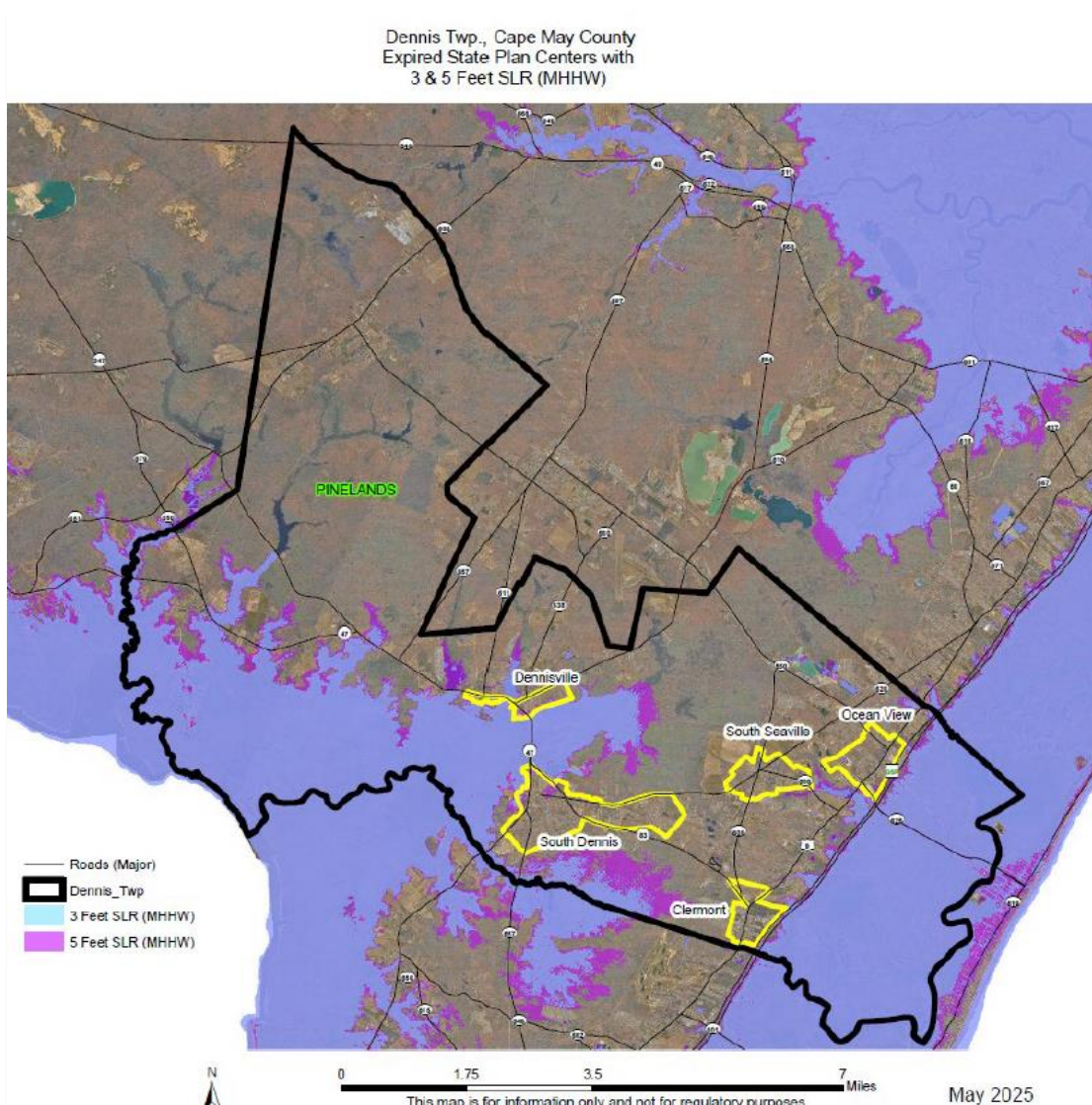
The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps depict Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) that are adjacent to streams or rivers and experience flooding during periods of high precipitation and/or stormwater discharge. FEMA has identified flood hazard areas in the Township of Dennis. Most of the municipality's floodplains are in various locations in the Coastal waterways. **In total 13,796.14 acres (36.2%) of Dennis Township's total land cover (without surface water) falls within the 100 year (1%) and 500 year (0.2%) FEMA SFHA.**

Dennis Twp., Cape May

Dennis Twp. Total Area (without surface water) = 38,138.42 Acres		
Flood Hazard Area	Acres	% of Total Municipal Area
1% (100 Year) Floodplain	12,194.25	32.0
0.2% (500 Year) Floodplain	additional 1,601.89 (13,796.14 Acres)	36.2
Source: FEMA Flood Hazard Areas (Combined)		
NJDEP 2020 LULC Surface Water Removed from FEMA Flood Hazard Area		



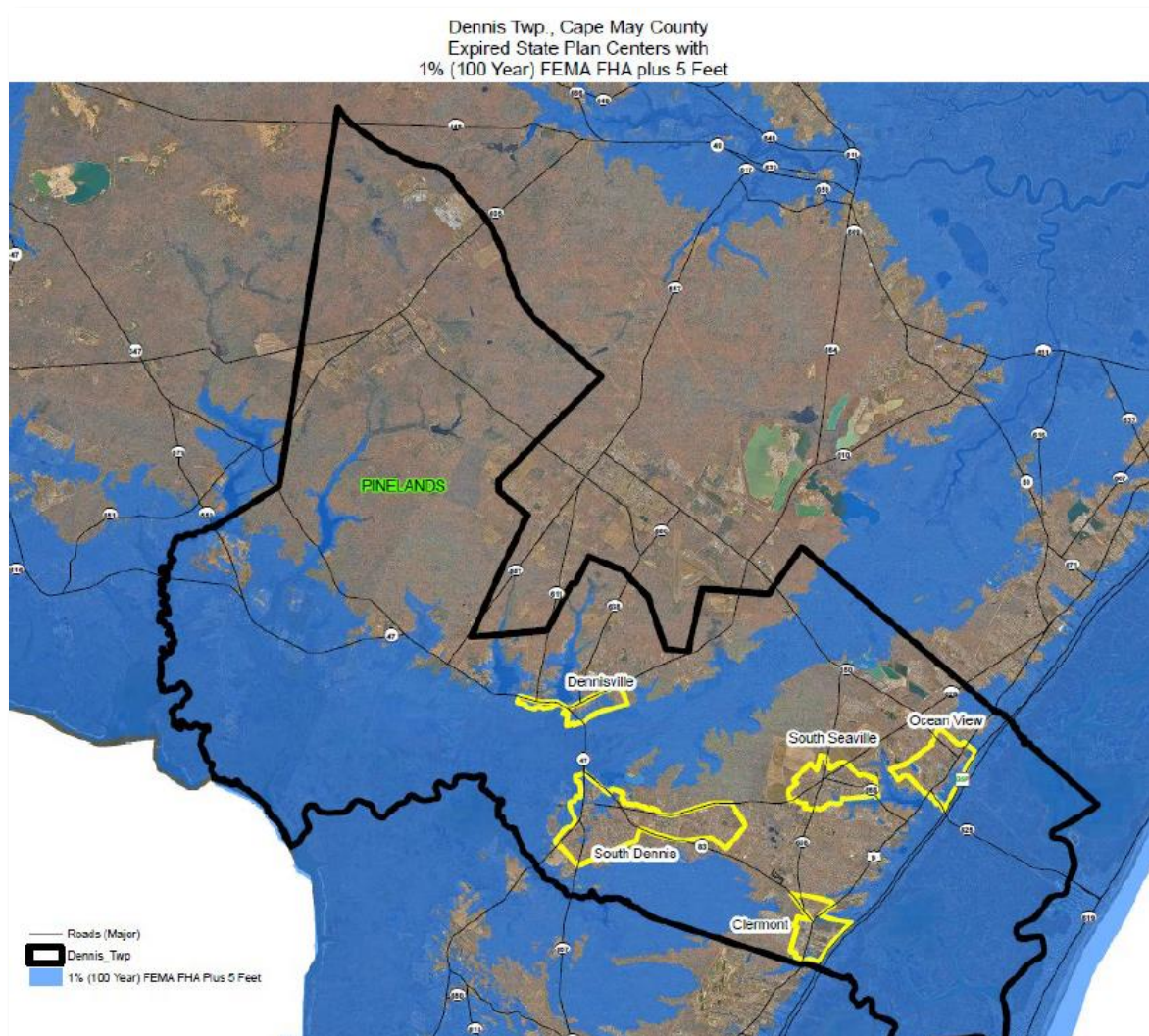
Portions of the municipality are not impacted by a 3 and 5 foot storm inundation event. One (1) of the limitations of FEMA’s currently delineated SFHAs is that they do not consider future projections of precipitation due to climate change. Annual increases in precipitation may not result in significant additional flooding, but the increased frequency of shorter more intense events is expected to result in additional flooding events.



More than one-third (1/3) of the land area of Dennis Township is in a FEMA Flood Hazard Areas. Any proposed development activities in these areas must be compliant with the Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules contained in N.J.A.C. 7:13. DEP recommends that Dennis Township utilize the SFHA for the 1% (100 year) and 0.2 percent (500-year) storm for planning purposes and consider the projected levels of inundation depicted on the proposed NJPACT maps. These recommendations allow municipalities to inform their current decisions in a manner that protects the health and safety of residents from future impacts. The NJ Protecting Against Climate Threats (<https://dep.nj.gov/njpac/>) are currently still proposed and have not been formally adopted. These regulations include Resilient Environments and Landscapes (REAL) intended to update environmental land use rules to respond to climate change by considering risks such as sea level rise and chronic flooding, and to facilitate climate resilience by supporting green infrastructure and renewable energy.

In 2020 the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) began a regulatory reform effort to help reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) and other climate pollutant emissions while making our natural and built environments more resilient to the impacts of climate change that are now unavoidable. These reforms represent New Jersey Protecting Against Climate Threats (NJ PACT), a partnership with New Jerseyans that are intended to help both stave off the worst impacts of climate change and adapt to unavoidable impacts already occurring across the State. **The NJDEP is currently enacting new rules to incorporate climate change considerations like sea level rise into environmental land use rules including the Coastal Zone Management, Freshwater Wetlands, Flood Hazard Area, and Stormwater Management. (<https://dep.nj.gov/njpact/>).** In 2024 and 2025, public hearings on the proposed rules were conducted and comments were submitted. The DEP is currently responding to those comments. Upon adoption these updated rules will have an immediate impact on the meaning and implications of any critical environmental site (CES) overlays identified in the CAFRA region of NJ.

The proposed NJPACT rules include the new Climate Adjusted Flood Elevation (CAFE) flood elevation standard for New Jersey's coastal flood hazard areas.



The proposed flood layer is calculated by adding 5 feet to FEMA's 100-year flood elevation. The CAFE is a key component of the REAL rule, which aims to create a more resilient built environment by considering the potential impacts of climate change and future flooding due to sea level rise projections in land use regulations. The REAL rule, including the CAFE, if adopted, will require new developments, redevelopment, and substantial improvements to meet higher elevation standards in flood-prone areas.

The Municipality should also consider flood hazard area riparian buffers of any waterway in future planning. The regulated area of the riparian zone (50, 150 or 300 feet) that may restrict future development in these areas depends on the designation of that regulated waterbody as per the Flood Hazard Area Control Act rules at N.J.A.C. 7:13-4.1 below:

(c) The width of the riparian zone is as follows:

1. The width of the riparian zone along any regulated water designated as a Category One water, and all upstream tributaries situated within the same HUC-14 watershed, is 300 feet;
2. Except for the regulated waters listed at (c)1 above, the width of the riparian zone along the following regulated waters is 150 feet:
 - i. Any trout production water and all upstream waters (including tributaries);
 - ii. Any trout maintenance water and all upstream waters (including tributaries) located within one mile of a trout maintenance water (measured along the length of the regulated water); and
 - iii. Any segment of a water flowing through an area that contains a threatened or endangered species, and/or present or documented habitat for those species, which is critically dependent on the regulated water for survival, and all upstream waters (including tributaries) located within one mile of such habitat (measured along the length of the regulated water). A list of critically dependent species is available from the Department at the website set forth at N.J.A.C. 7:13-1.3; and
3. For all other regulated waters not identified in (c)1 or 2 above, the width of the riparian zone is 50 feet.

Critical Facilities and Assets in Flood Zones

These flood-prone areas are subject to state and federal regulation which limits new construction and promotes open space preservation. In addition, municipal code should minimize new construction in flood hazard areas and mitigate for any redevelopment of existing structures. Of particular concern are adverse impact to existing assets, infrastructure and buildings within the flood zones, and how a municipality will mitigate for potential increased vulnerability to flooding. **The Township of Dennis should identify existing structures, critical infrastructure, emergency services, schools, etc. in or near flood zones** including any sewer service area wastewater treatment or potable water infrastructure, conveyance, utility piping, power line infrastructure, critical roadways or historic structures. For example, **239.58 acres (5.4%) of the 4450.30 acre sewer service area (excluding surface water) are in the combined 100 year and 500 year flood zone.**

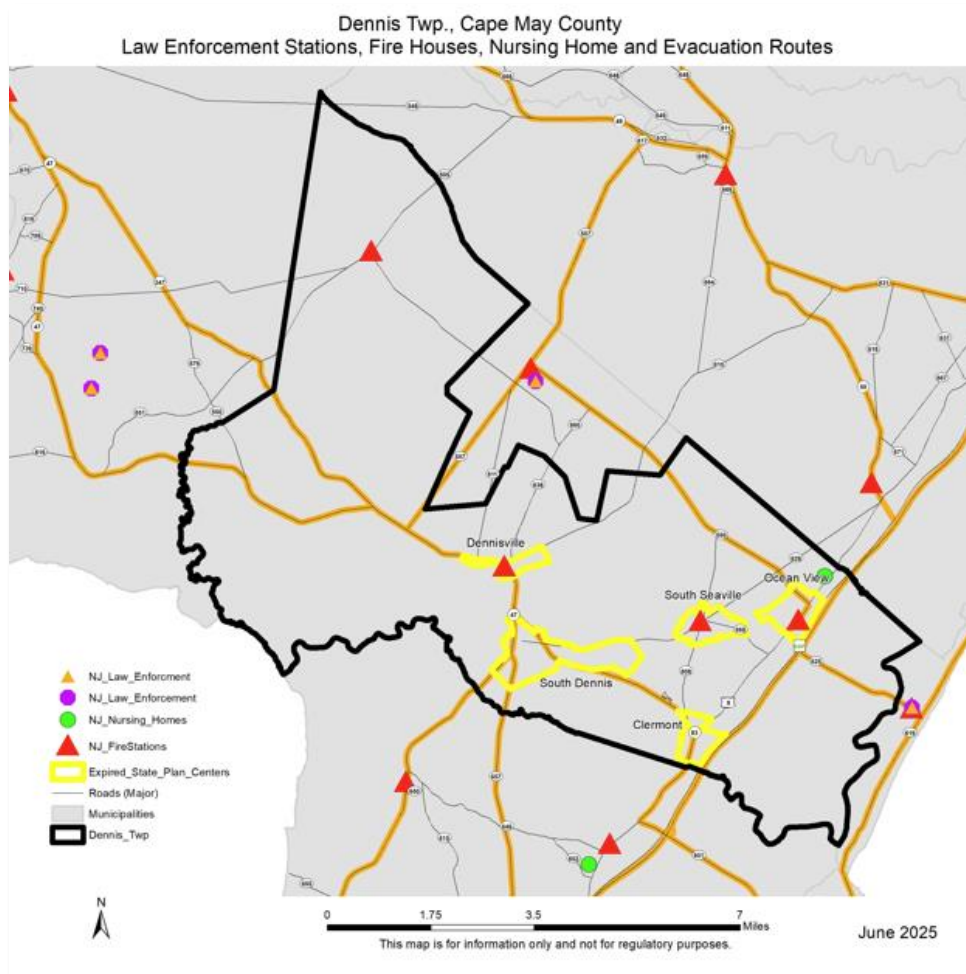
Sewer Service Area Total Area (without surface water) = 4,450.30 Acres		
Sewer Service Area within Flood Hazard Area	Acres	% of Total Sewer Service Area
1% (100 Year) Floodplain	113.51	2.6
0.2% (500 Year) Floodplain	additional 126.07 (239.58 Acres)	5.4
Source: FEMA Flood Hazard Areas (Combined)		
NJDEP LULC 2020 Surface Water Removed from FEMA Flood Hazard Area		

Buildings and Structures in Flood Zone in CAFRA

The municipality should regularly update their map of areas that flood frequently, including, but not limited to, repetitive loss (RL) and severe repetitive loss (SRL) properties. If a local Floodplain Administrator is interested in obtaining a copy of their community's RL and SRL properties list for planning purposes, a request must be made in writing on the municipality's letterhead and signed by the mayor. The municipality will be required to sign an Information Sharing Access Agreement with FEMA to protect Personally Identifiable Information associated with this list. For more information on this, please contact the Region II Insurance Representative, [Marianne Luhrs at Marianne.luhrs@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Marianne.luhrs@fema.dhs.gov).

Dennis Twp., Cape May
Township Approx. Total Buildings/ Structures = 7,577
Dennis Twp. Total Area = 40,820.30 Acres
Buildings/ Structures within FEMA 1%/ 0.2% Flood Hazard Areas within Wildwood City
Buildings/ Structures in FEMA 1% (100 Year) Flood Zone = 87 or 1.1 % of Twp. Total
Buildings/ Structures in FEMA 0.2% (500 Year) Flood Zone = 138 or 1.8 % of Twp. Total
Approx. Total Buildings/ Structures in FEMA 1%/ 0.2% Flood Hazard Areas = 225 or 3.0 % of Twp. Total
Dennis Twp. Approx. Total Roads = 162.45 Miles
Roads in 1 & 0.2 % FEMA Flood Hazard Areas = 20.66 Miles or 12.7 % of Total Miles

Unimpeded transportation via road are critical to safety and are also subject to flooding. The municipality should identify the linear feet of roadways including critical evacuation routes within the flood zone. It is likely that municipal and public works officials are fully aware of areas in the municipality that flood regularly. **The Township of Dennis should map areas that flood regularly, including roadways/intersections, with particular attention given to evacuation routes or critical access areas.**



It is recommended that in any master plan re-examination report, the municipality should enhance zoning regulations as well as building codes to encourage building outside of the flood zone and to minimize construction in flood prone areas to reconstruction of existing buildings. When evaluating any construction within the identified floodplain of the municipality, one must also consider the cost of damage and replacement in the event of flooding. Construction of any critical utility line and associated infrastructure, emergency services, or public services buildings (schools, hospitals, churches, etc.) should be avoided in the flood hazard area. By avoiding construction in floodplains, one can avoid adverse impacts also to critical roadways and provide a safe level of distance in the event of a flood. NJDEP also supports resiliency measures including elevating critical infrastructure and relocating critical infrastructure outfalls to insure uninterrupted power, sewer and potable water service.

DEP recommends that the municipality adopt a floodplain development ordinance that is consistent with the most recent standards and National Flood Insurance Programs. For guidance please review the model ordinance at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/floodcontrol/modelord.htm> and FEMA guidance at <https://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/manage-risk/local>.

Future development within the floodplain requires a higher level of regulation through state and federal environmental rules for flood hazard areas. **Any proposed conceptual plan should be presented to DEP early in review process, before planning board approval, and before submittal of any permit applications to determine if the project has any fatal flaws rendering it un-permittable in its current design.**

Green infrastructure should be incorporated into all projects within the floodplain. By creating more open public space, the municipality gains flood zone buffer areas and additional recreation area as well as enhanced areas for stormwater management. Any opportunity in a flood area to enhance or expand a buffer area protects vulnerable residential areas and minimizes future flood events. **The Township of Dennis should develop a waterfront corridor buffer area and protection ordinance where possible.**

The DEP supports the Township of Dennis’ efforts to adopt a Flood Mitigation Plan as well as update their Flood Ordinance and All Hazards Mitigation Plan to effectively manage stormwater runoff and mitigate the adverse impacts of climate related flooding within and adjacent to the municipality acres of identified floodplain.

PA 5 planning areas or already built out areas with public water and sewer do not require a CES overlay. However, it is recommended that the municipality adjust zoning for information purposes to indicate the most recent flooding potential of these developed areas including FEMA 100 year and 500 year flood zones and any newly adopted inundation maps.

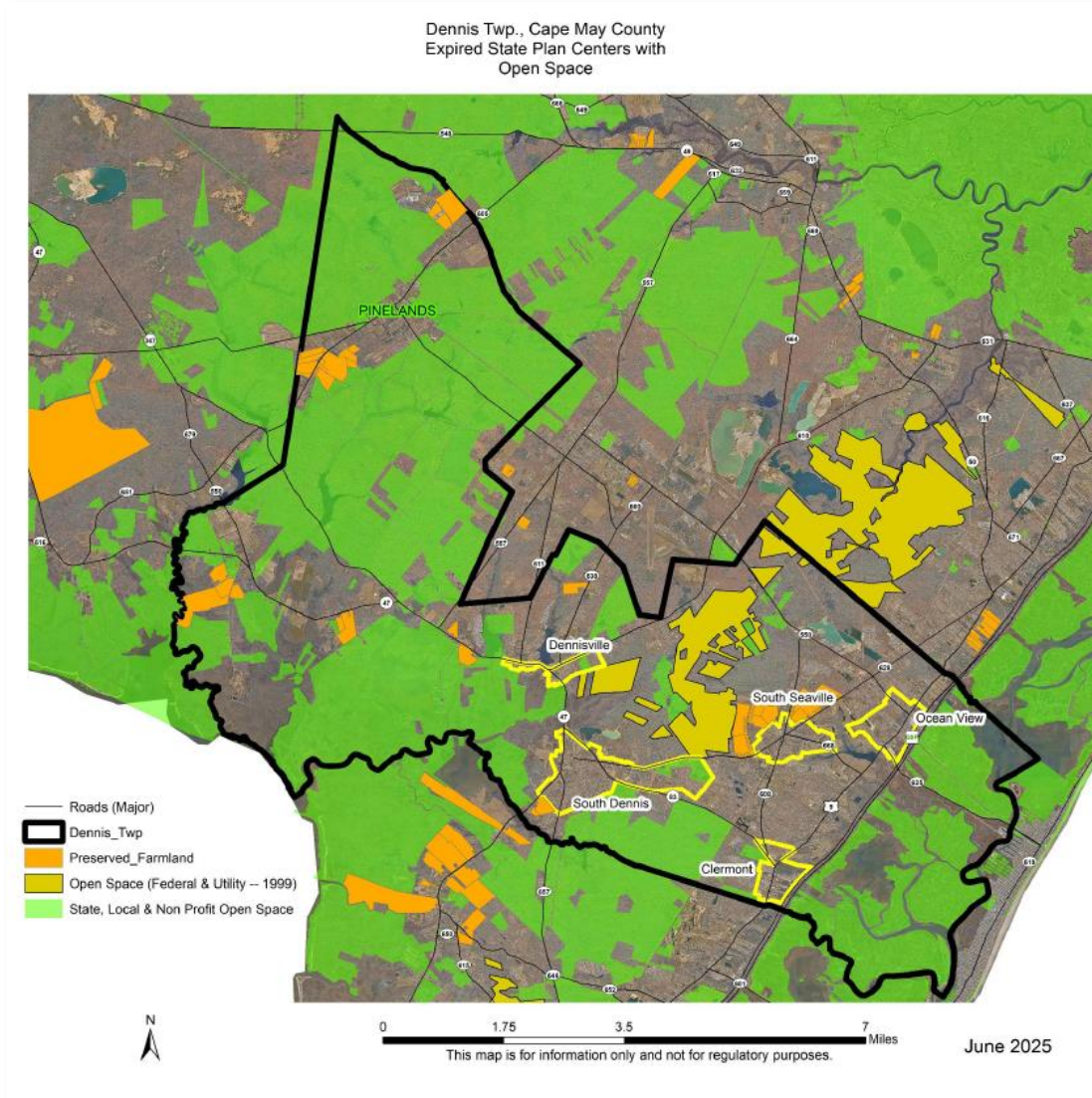
Open Space

Open space not only provides the municipal residents with recreational opportunities, it also acts as a means of climate change mitigation through enhanced tree cover shade and carbon sequestration. It also improves the municipality and the state’s natural resources by mitigating stormwater runoff, acting as flood storage, and protecting habitat for threatened and endangered species.

Dennis Twp., Cape May	
Local and State and Federal Open Space	
Type	Acres
Municipal	74.78
County	138.99
Non-Profit	413.29
State	18,869.06
Federal	1,540.58
Preserved Farms = 1,423.09 Acres	

Within all of Dennis Township, the municipality shall confirm exactly how many acres of preserved park open space has been set aside for public recreation by all entities. A GIS review indicates open space purchased through municipal (74.78 acres) and county (138.99 acres) funding and 18,869.06 acres preserved by the State. There are also federally preserved lands (1,540.58 acres) including Natural Heritage Priority Sites in the municipality. There are also extensive acres of open surface water within the Coastal waterways. **DEP recommends that the Township update their Open Space and Recreation**

Plans on a regular basis to concentrate development in the center, add additional open space, account for any changes since adoption to include climate change considerations and to consider adding a Greenway plan and an updated Critical Natural Resources Analysis.



Municipal, County and Non-profit Open Space

- The 1681.05 total acres of preserved Open Space, including preserved farmland, using municipal, county and non-profit funds is not encumbered by the State. The Township should ensure that these lands are permanently preserved.
- The Township of is included in the Cape May County Open Space and Recreation Plan, and should adopt and/or update their Open Space and Greenway Plans and Natural/Environmental Resources Inventories with their latest master plan re-examination. Dennis Township adopted their master plan in 1994 and completed a master plan re-examination in 2012. DEP recommends that the municipality update their natural/environmental resources

inventory every ten (10) years to account for any changes related to climate change as well as update a Conservation Plan Element after completion of the Climate Change Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment to incorporate new findings.

Green Acres – Office of Transactions and Public Land Administration (OTPLA)

The Green Acres program was created in 1961 to meet New Jersey’s growing recreation and conservation needs. Together with public and private partners, Green Acres has protected over a half a million acres of open space and provided hundreds of outdoor recreational facilities in communities around the State.

To date, the Township of Dennis has received funding through NJDEP Green Acres funding and therefore, there are currently 18,869.09 acres of state lands within the Township of Dennis. . While a majority of the State owned lands is managed by the Division of Parks and Forestry (Belleplain State Forest) and lands that are managed by Fish and Wildlife (Dennis Creek Wildlife Management Area, Beaver Swamp Wildlife Management Area, Heislerville Wildlife Management Area, & Cape May Coastal Wetlands Wildlife Management Area), there is a NJDEP state held easement (Open Space Easement: NJ Department of Environmental Protection) and 11.64 acres of encumbered parkland within the Township of Dennis. The encumbered lands are permanently preserved and cannot be altered without an act of the State. The NJDEP conducted an inspection of the state owned lands in 2023 and is scheduled for the next inspection in 2026.

A major goal of open space acquisition and conservation buffer easements is maintaining the municipality’s coastal waters character, minimizing the municipality’s risk from natural hazards, providing public waterfront access, improving coastal resource quality, and revitalizing each downtown center. Green Acres can help the municipality achieve their goals through land preservation, park development, and stewardship funding opportunities.

Potential Future Planning and Funding Opportunities

The MSA identified Dennis Township’s goals of protecting environmental resources, promoting and enhancing public access to the waterways, and providing recreational facilities to meet the needs of current and future Township residents. Green Acres can support Dennis Township in achieving its goals through land preservation, park development, and stewardship funding opportunities.

Dennis Township’s unique geography several open space and recreation opportunities. While nearly r half of the land in the Township is publicly owned, many acres being state owned, there is still a need to preserve land. New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection’s Connecting Habitat Across New Jersey (CHANJ) Initiative is an effort to make our fragmented landscape easier for wildlife to move through by protecting important habitats, restoring movement corridors, and making roads safer to cross. The CHANJ Map attachment provided with the MSA reveals that the majority of the Township is identified as a core area, meaning these lands are the most valuable for wildlife. The Green Acres Program is actively researching properties to purchase under the CHANJ Initiative to add to existing state parks, forests, wildlife management areas, and other natural areas and we encourage the Township to preserve land in the CHANJ core areas, too.

Green Acres can assist the Township in creating an interconnected bike system, as identified in the Township’s 2030 Vision, through park development and acquisition grant funding. The development of an

expansive, interconnected trail network within the Township can serve to increase and improve recreational opportunities, to increase the number of people using active transportation, to reduce the number of automobiles on the roadways, to reduce the Township's impact on climate change, and to safely connect people to the Township's center and core. Through collaboration with State, County, Municipal and Nonprofit partners, there are opportunities to connect people in the Village Centers to where they want to go. The Township may consider utilizing municipally owned lands, especially adjacent to residential, commercial, and recreation lands for developing potential trail connections. The Township may consider collaborating with private developers and private landowners for trail connections and easements. The Township may consider partnering with utility companies, such as JCP&L, to build trails within the utility right of way. The Township may consider partnering with the Township's Board of Education to build trails that will provide safe routes to schools. For projects that involve acquisition or park development, either new park developments or rehabilitation of existing parks, the Township can consider applying for funding through Green Acres. Additionally, the Township may want to work with the County or with local nonprofits that are eligible to receive Green Acres funding.

While creating trail connections is critical between the Village Centers and the parks throughout the Township, it is also valuable to provide recreational opportunities close to home. Since residents will be concentrated in the Village Centers, having accessible open spaces within walking or biking distance is essential. Parks in the Village Center downtowns would create public space opportunities for residents and visitors alike to enjoy. Research also shows that parks have been proven to bolster local economies, and therefore, parks could greatly benefit the Township's economy. Consider more public town squares, pocket parks, and neighborhood parks in each of the Village Centers to create a unique identity for these communities.

Similar to other coastal towns, Dennis Township is at risk of increased flooding in the future. The Township may consider implementing nature-based resiliency strategies, such as floodable parks to address increased flooding concerns and bring more public, outdoor recreation opportunities to the community. Floodable parks are designed to flood and soak up the runoff stormwater. One example of a floodable park is [Hoboken's Resiliency Park](#). Through rain gardens, permeable pathways, and innovative green stormwater infrastructure, this park not only tolerates, but is adequately equipped to handle the toughest rain and storm events. Floodable parks can support several types of recreational opportunities, and through creative problem solving, these parks can help check off several goals identified in the MSA.

While there are hundreds of acres of preserved waterfront in the Township, there are still missing links to creating public access. Consider collaborating with NJDEP Fish and Wildlife, owner of much of the preserved waterfront, as well as County and Nonprofit partners to see what might be possible regarding the creation of trails or other recreational improvements to formalize the connection with the waterfronts.

Additional nature-based resiliency strategies Dennis Township may consider are creating meadows, restoring wetlands, and establishing living shorelines. These practices have shown themselves to be successful for sequestering carbon, improving resiliency, increasing biodiversity, and protecting shorelines from erosion. Green Acres supports these types of projects, as well as other natural resource restoration and enhancement projects, through the stewardship funding program. For more information on the

Green Acres Program and for examples of assistance applications, please refer to <https://www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres>.

The Green Acres Program applauds Dennis Township for working to preserve and maintain the Township's parkland. We encourage the Township to apply for funding and to collaborate with preservation and open space partners on proposed projects that are eligible for Green Acres funding. The Green Acres Program's partnership with local governments and nonprofits could help the area achieve its goals towards our shared mission of preserving the area's natural, historic, and recreational resources for the betterment of the local community and New Jersey residents alike.

Review of Dennis Township's Existing Parkland, Planning Areas and Development Activities:

The most recent ROSI on file with our office (attached) is from 1992 and lists 11.64 acres of encumbered parkland within the Township of Dennis. It does not appear that there are any county or federal park or open space parcels within the proposed village centers. There is NJDEP state owned land that is managed by Division of Parks and Forestry (Belleplain State Forest) and lands that are managed by Fish and Wildlife (Dennis Creek Wildlife Management Area, Beaver Swamp Wildlife Management Area, Heislerville Wildlife Management Area, & Cape May Coastal Wetlands Wildlife Management Area), additionally there is a NJDEP state held easement (Open Space Easement: NJ Department of Environmental Protection). Dennisville Center borders the Dennisville Creek Wildlife Management Area in 2 locations along the south and southwest. South Dennis Center borders the Beaver Swamp Wildlife Management Area below southern properties along Holly Glen Lane.

While the municipality's Green Acres funded parkland is up for inspection in 2026, the last park inspection report indicated all Green Acres sites appeared to be well maintained and within compliance. There are no open parkland diversion/disposal applications under review with our office.

As stated in the municipality's Municipal Self-Assessment Report, the current petition for Plan Endorsement is to re-establish the five Village Centers (Clermont, Dennisville, Ocean View, South Dennis and South Seaville) approved by the State Planning Commission as described in State Planning Commission Resolution 2013-06 on May 15, 2013. Several Green Acres-encumbered, municipal and state owned parks exist within the five village centers, recreational facilities, Belleplain State Forest, and Dennis Township Little League.

The Township's Municipal Self-Assessment Report included recent and upcoming development activities. As a reminder to the Applicant, any use of Green Acres-encumbered parkland for purposes other than recreation and conservation, even temporary use, requires review and approval from DEP's Office of Transactions and Public Land Administration, Public Land Compliance section (PLC) at a minimum. Any easements or other conveyance of land granted for other than conservation and recreation purposes (such as for utilities or road rights-of-way) on Green Acres-encumbered parkland must be reviewed by PLC and will require Commissioner and State House Commission approval. A full jurisdictional determination by PLC is required for any land which may have been held for recreation and conservation purposes by the municipality or the County at the time that they accepted Green Acres funding, regardless of whether the lands were listed on a Recreation and Open Space Inventory (ROSI). Please contact the Cape May County Compliance Officer, Patrick O'Donnell, at Patrick.O'Donnell@dep.nj.gov with any questions or concerns.

Blue Acres - While located in part in the CAFRA area, the municipality may reach out to the Blue Acres Program for assistance in identifying funding sources to address residential areas of repetitive flooding. Specifically, the Green Acres, Farmland, Blue Acres and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 2007 authorized \$12 million for acquisition of lands in the floodways of the Delaware River, Passaic River or Raritan River and their respective tributaries for recreation and conservation. An additional \$124 million was approved in the Green Acres, Water Supply and Floodplain protection, and Farmland and Historic Preservation Bond Act of 2009. Properties (including structures) that have been damaged by or may be prone to incurring damage caused by storms or storm related flooding, or that may buffer or protect other lands from such damage, are eligible for acquisition. DEP encourages any town that has homes and neighborhoods that repetitively flood to consider contacting the DEP Blue Acres program regarding guidance for buyouts of flood prone properties (www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres/blue_flood_ac.html)

DEP recommends that the municipality continue to work with Cape May County and surrounding municipalities to provide and expand corridors of open space and natural features to protect historic structures, support habitat connectivity and adapt to changing climate conditions.

Natural and Historic Resources

New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation. One of the consequences of this is the extreme pressure that is placed on our natural resources. As the population grows, we continue to lose or impact the remaining natural areas of the state. As more and more habitat has been lost, people have also gained a greater understanding of and appreciation for the benefits and necessity of conserving the natural ecosystems of the state.

For example, we know that wetlands are critical for recharging aquifers, lessening the damage from flooding and naturally breaking down contaminants in the environment. Forests and grasslands protect the quality of our drinking water, help purify the air we breathe and provide important areas for outdoor recreation. Collectively, these habitats are of critical importance to the diverse assemblage of wildlife found in New Jersey, including endangered, threatened and special concern species.

Wetlands

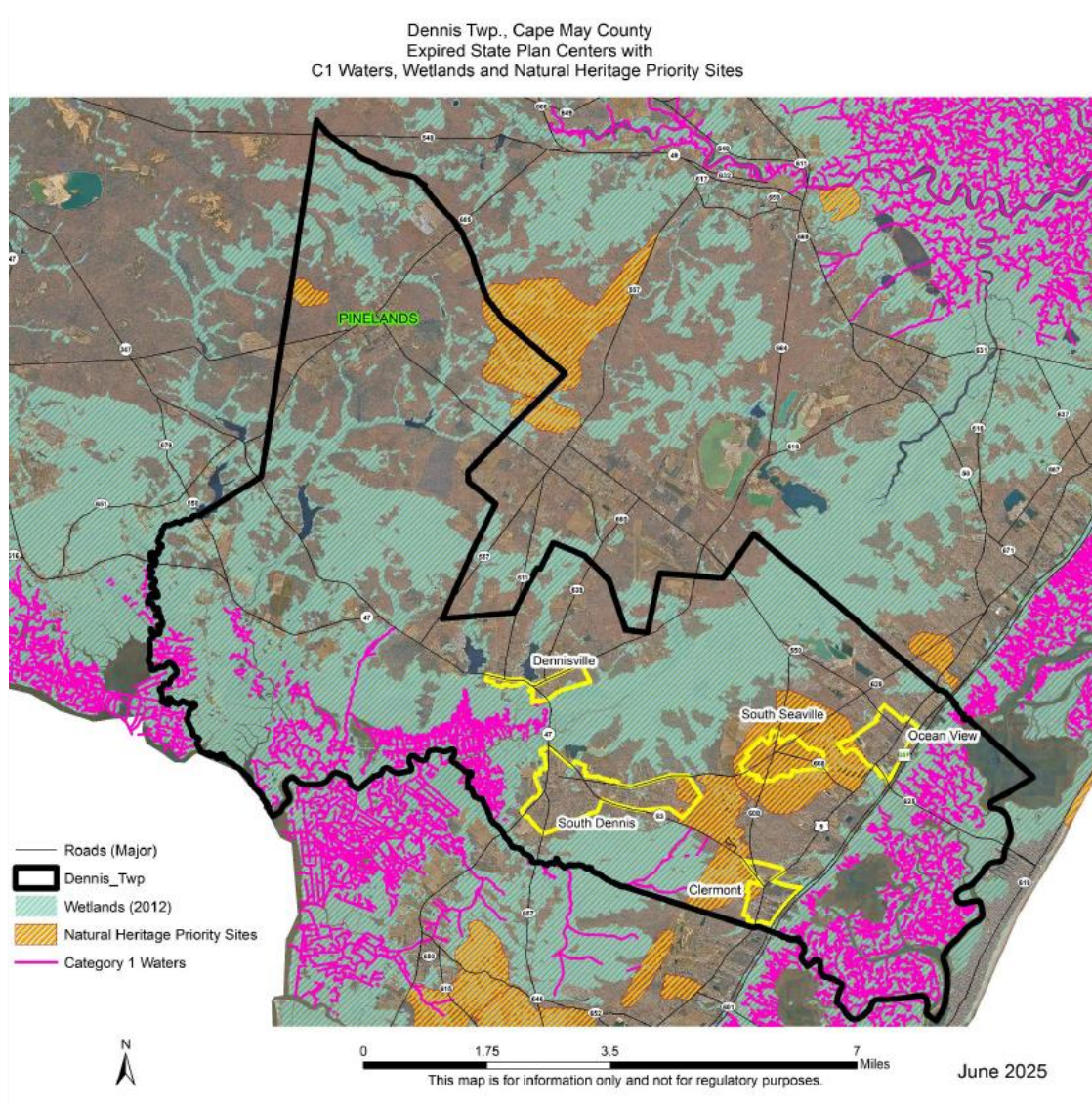
Freshwater wetlands and transition areas (buffers) are regulated by the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act rules (NJAC 7:7A). Previously misunderstood as wastelands, wetlands are now recognized for their vital ecological and socioeconomic contributions. Wetlands contribute to the social, economic, and environmental health of our state in many ways:

- Wetlands protect drinking water by filtering out chemicals, pollutants, and sediments that would otherwise clog and contaminate our waters.
- Wetlands soak up runoff from heavy rains and snow melts, providing natural flood control.
- Wetlands release stored flood waters during droughts.
- Wetlands provide critical habitats for a major portion of the state's fish and wildlife, including endangered, commercial and recreational species.
- Wetlands provide high quality open space for recreation and tourism.

There are on-site activity limits on lands identified as wetlands. The NJ Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act requires DEP to regulate virtually all activities proposed in the wetland, including cutting of vegetation,

dredging, excavation or removal of soil, drainage or disturbance of the water level, filling or discharge of any materials, driving of pilings, and placing of obstructions. The Department may also regulate activities within 150 feet of a wetland as a transition/buffer area.

The Township of Dennis has 11,685.04 acres of deciduous forested land and 19,790.90 acres of wetlands. Any wetlands areas are protected under state and federal regulation. There are Category 1 (C1) streams within the municipality and critically dependent wildlife (CDW) species that require a riparian buffer of 300 feet. However, wetlands outside C1 category riparian buffers would be 50 feet. These wetlands are regulated by the Department and in need of protection and preservation. Guidance is available from the DEP's Division of Land Resource Protection at https://www.nj.gov/dep/landuse/coastal/cp_main.html



Surface Water

The Township of Dennis has valuable and recreational bodies of water including streams, tributaries and inter-tidal waterways. These water bodies are subject to flooding which is exacerbated by an increase in impervious cover and a decrease in stormwater's ability to infiltrate the ground. Of Dennis Township's total area of approximately 40,820.30 acres, 38,138.42 acres are land based and outside of surface water bodies.

Surface Water Quality Standards and Riparian Buffers

The Surface Water Quality Standards (SWQS) are rules established under the New Jersey Administrative Code at N.J.A.C. 7:9B that include the policies, surface water classifications, and surface water quality criteria necessary to protect the quality of New Jersey's surface waters. The SWQS protect the health of New Jersey waters and ensure that they are suitable for all existing and designated uses, including recreation and water supply. SWQS also protect the health of New Jersey citizens and visitors by ensuring that the waters at our bathing beaches are safe for swimming, that water supplies are suitable sources of drinking water, and that the fish and shellfish harvested from our waters are safe to eat. SWQS protect waters for other uses such as trout production and trout maintenance, and agricultural and industrial use.

The SWQS establish designated uses (e.g., drinking water supply, recreation, etc.) to the State's surface waters, classify surface waters based on those uses (e.g. FW1, FW2-TP, etc.), and set water quality criteria that protect the designated uses for each water classification. The SWQS contain various policies for protecting water quality, including general, technical, antidegradation, nutrients, and mixing zones. The SWQS also contain procedures for establishing and modifying water quality-based effluent limitations for NJPDES point sources and reclassifying specific stream segments.

Surface waters are classified based on the type of waterbody and the designated use of the waterbody. Freshwaters are classified as FW1 waters (not subject to any man-made wastewater discharges) and FW2 waters (all other freshwaters except Pinelands waters). FW1 waters are non-degradation waters set aside for posterity because of their unique ecological significance. FW2 waters are further classified based on their ability to support trout, which thrive in cooler stream temperatures. Trout classifications include trout production (FW2-TP), trout maintenance (FW2-TM), and non-trout (FW2-NT).

The SWQS establish antidegradation policies for all surface waters of the State (see N.J.A.C. 7:9B-1.5(d)). The antidegradation policies require that all existing and designated uses shall be maintained and protected for all surface waters of the State; impaired waters must be restored to meet SWQS; and existing water quality shall be maintained.

1. Category One (C1) Waters: This tier of antidegradation designation applies to surface waters designated as C1 waters (see N.J.A.C. 7:9B-1.4). C1 waters are protected from any measurable change to existing water quality because of their exceptional ecological significance, exceptional recreational significance, exceptional water supply significance, or exceptional fisheries resources. C1 waters have more stringent antidegradation requirements than Category Two waters.
2. Category Two (C2) Waters: This tier of antidegradation designation applies to surface waters designated as C2 waters (see N.J.A.C. 7:9B-1.4). Some lowering of existing water quality may be

allowed in C2 waters based upon a social and/or economic justification. However, all existing and designated uses must be protected in all cases and waterbodies that are generally not meeting criteria must be improved to meet water quality criteria. All waterbodies not designated as Outstanding Nature Resource Waters or Category One receive the Category Two antidegradation designation.

Additional information is also provided in the [Antidegradation/Category One Fact Sheet](#).

The Township of Dennis in total (excluding surface water) has 13,796.14 acres (36.2%) of floodplain (12,194.25 in 1% 100 yr and an additional 1,601.89 7.68 acres in 0.2% 500 yr) that are protected under state and federal regulation. Anadromous waters include: all waters within and around the proposed Center unless an impediment to movement can be identified. Surface waters are subject to the state Surface Water Quality Standards (SWQS). The regulated area of the riparian zone (50 to 300 feet) may restrict future development in the municipality depending on the designation of that regulated waterbody as per the Flood Hazard Area Control Act rules at N.J.A.C. 7:13-4.1 below:

(c) The width of the riparian zone is as follows:

1. **There are C1 category streams in the Township of Dennis.** The width of the riparian zone along any regulated water designated as a Category One water, and all upstream tributaries situated within the same watershed, is 300 feet;
2. Except for the regulated waters listed at (c)1 above, the width of the riparian zone along the following regulated C2 waters is 150 feet:
 - i. Any trout production water and all upstream waters (including tributaries);
 - ii. Any trout maintenance water and all upstream waters (including tributaries) located within one mile of a trout maintenance water (measured along the length of the regulated water); and
 - iii. Any segment of a water flowing through an area that contains a threatened or endangered species, and/or present or documented habitat for those species, which is critically dependent on the regulated water for survival, and all upstream waters (including tributaries) located within one mile of such habitat (measured along the length of the regulated water). A list of critically dependent species is available from the Department at the website set forth at N.J.A.C. 7:13-1.3; and
3. For all other regulated waters not identified in (c)1 or 2 above, the width of the riparian zone is 50 feet.

All surface waters in the municipality require at least a 50 -foot riparian zone which are determined and regulated in the NJDEP Flood Hazard Area Control Act Rules but this can be confirmed with a wetlands delineation. Wetlands outside C1 category riparian buffers require at least a 50 feet buffer.

Zoning Overlays are recommended for protected areas in flood zone (C1) waters (300 foot buffer), C2 waters (50 foot buffer), Wetlands, Surface Water and Open Space (local, non-profit, State, Federal). For all other regulated waters, the riparian buffer is at least 50 feet.

Open Waters within the proposed centers - Surface Water Quality Standards (SWQS)

Clermont Center –	No open waters appear to enter the Clermont Village Center
Dennisville Center –	A tributary of the Dennis Creek meets and crosses the Dennisville Village Center at Rt.47 below Johnson Pond. Johnson Pond Dam is likely to be renovated in the near future and a fish ladder will be recommended at this location. NJFW Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries has confirmed river herring captures at this location. River Herring (Alewife and Blue-back Herring) are below management thresholds and at present have a moratorium on possession, take or attempt to take in all NJ freshwater streams, rivers and marine waters. Small tidal tributary of the Dennis Creek also enters Center at Block : 75 , Lot : 3
Ocean View Center -	No State Open waters appear to enter the Ocean View Village Center.
South Dennis Center -	No State Open waters appear to enter the South Dennis Village Center.
South Seaville Center -	Mill Creek Tributary appears to border the South Seaville Village Center from Siskin Lane to a point 600' west of the King's Highway.

The Township of Dennis should maintain an inventory all facilities within the municipality that discharge to surface water under NJDEP permits. According to NJDEP website there may be stream or shellfish impaired waters in the municipality (<https://www.nj.gov/dep/dwq/tmdl/1501.html>) that require a total maximum daily load (TMDL) restoration plan as outlined by US Clean Water Act. However, a stream corridor buffer plan would reduce sedimentation to valuable waterways in Dennis Township. Stormwater management would also be improved by preventing excessive sedimentation, reducing impervious surface and promoting on site stormwater management.

Dam Safety

There is at least one dam in Dennis Township. The East Creek Pond Dam is located within the township boundary. Further clarification is required if the Magnolia Lake Dam and Tarkin Pond Dam are located within the Township boundary (<https://damsafety.org/new-jersey>)

Vulnerable, Threatened and Endangered Species

Despite being the most densely populated state in the nation, and the fifth smallest in area, New Jersey provides habitat for an incredible number and diversity of wildlife species. There are more than 400 species of vertebrate wildlife which can be found within the state, due in large part to the state's geographic position within North America, as well as 134 freshwater fish and 336 marine finfish. New Jersey lies at the southern edge of the range of many "northern" species and the northern edge of the range of many "southern" species.

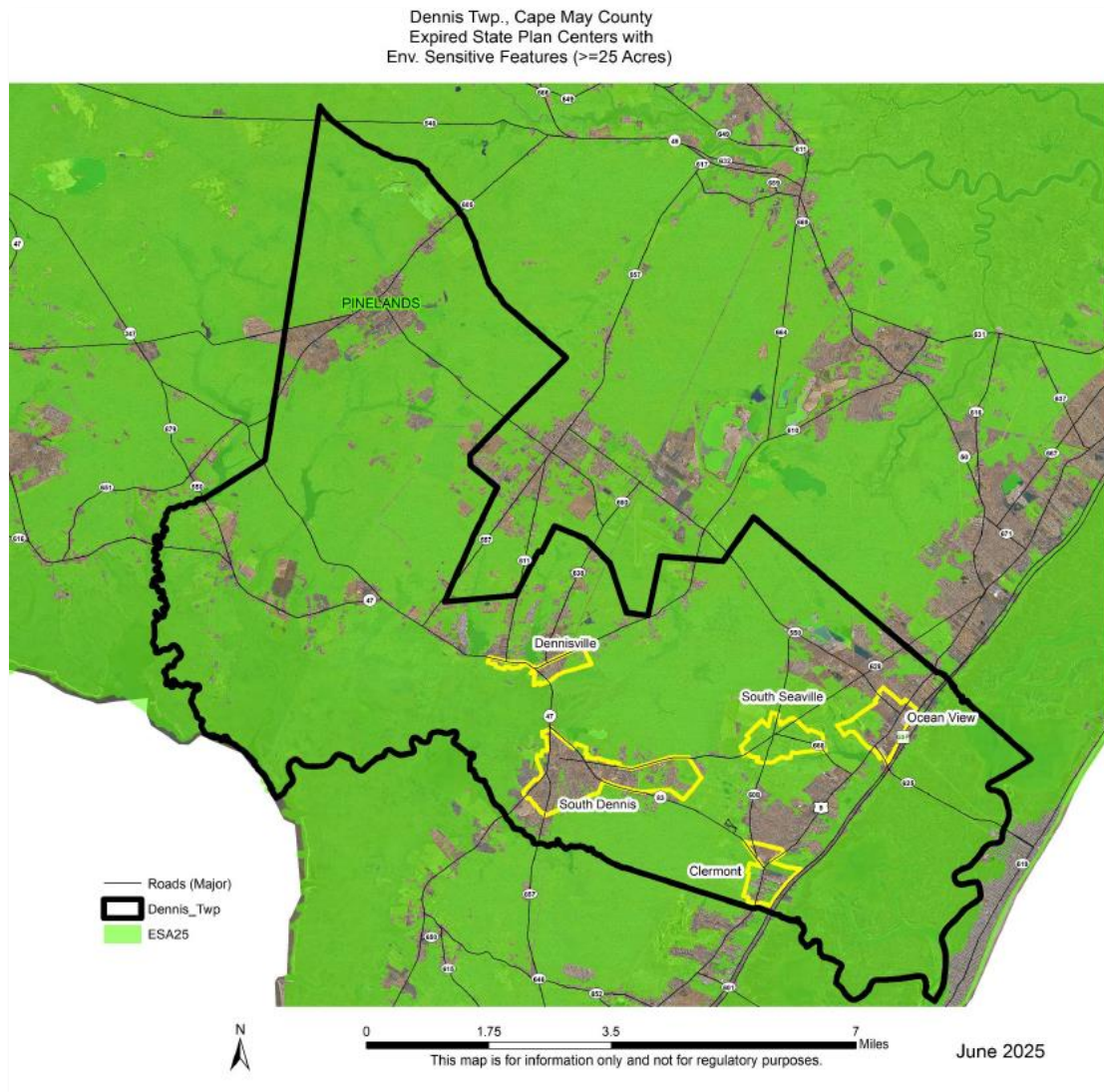
Many imperiled species require large contiguous tracts of habitat for survival. The consequence of the rapid spread of suburban sprawl is the loss and fragmentation of important wildlife habitat and the isolation and degradation of the smaller habitat patches that remain. Small patches of fields, forests and wetlands interspersed with development provide habitat for common species that do well living near humans, but do not provide the necessary habitat for most of our imperiled wildlife. We need to conserve large, contiguous blocks of forests, grasslands and wetlands to assure the survival of imperiled species over the long-term.

Future increases in stormwater runoff, flooding and contamination will adversely impact terrestrial and aquatic species. Climate change can adversely impact plants, trees, aquatic and terrestrial animals, reptiles, fish and birds. Increases in temperature and periods of drought can result in loss of suitable conditions for a tree or plant species to survive as well as a higher risk of wildfire.

The New Jersey Endangered Species Conservation Act was passed in 1973 and directed the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to protect, manage and restore the state's endangered and threatened species.

Endangered Species are those whose prospects for survival in New Jersey are in immediate danger because of a loss or change in habitat, over-exploitation, predation, competition, disease, disturbance or contamination. Assistance is needed to prevent future extinction in New Jersey.

Threatened Species are those who may become endangered if conditions surrounding them begin to or continue to deteriorate. There are other classifications for wildlife as well, including Stable, Species of Special Concern and Undetermined. For a complete listing of species monitored by the ENSP, see the Species Status Listing. A full listing of the state's threatened and endangered species can be found at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/tandespp.htm>.



Landscape Project

Designed to guide strategic wildlife habitat conservation, the Landscape Project is a pro-active, ecosystem-level approach for the long-term protection of imperiled species and their important habitats in New Jersey. The project began in 1994 to protect New Jersey's biological diversity by maintaining and enhancing imperiled wildlife populations within healthy, functioning ecosystems. The Landscape Project focuses on large land areas called "landscape regions" that are ecologically similar with regard to their plant and animal communities. Using an extensive database that combines imperiled and priority species location information with land-use/land-cover data, the Landscape Project identifies and map areas of critical importance for imperiled species within each landscape region.

Landscape Project critical habitat maps were developed to provide users with peer-reviewed, scientifically-sound information that is easily accessible. Critical habitat maps were designed for use by anyone, but especially those individuals and agencies who have the responsibility for making land-use

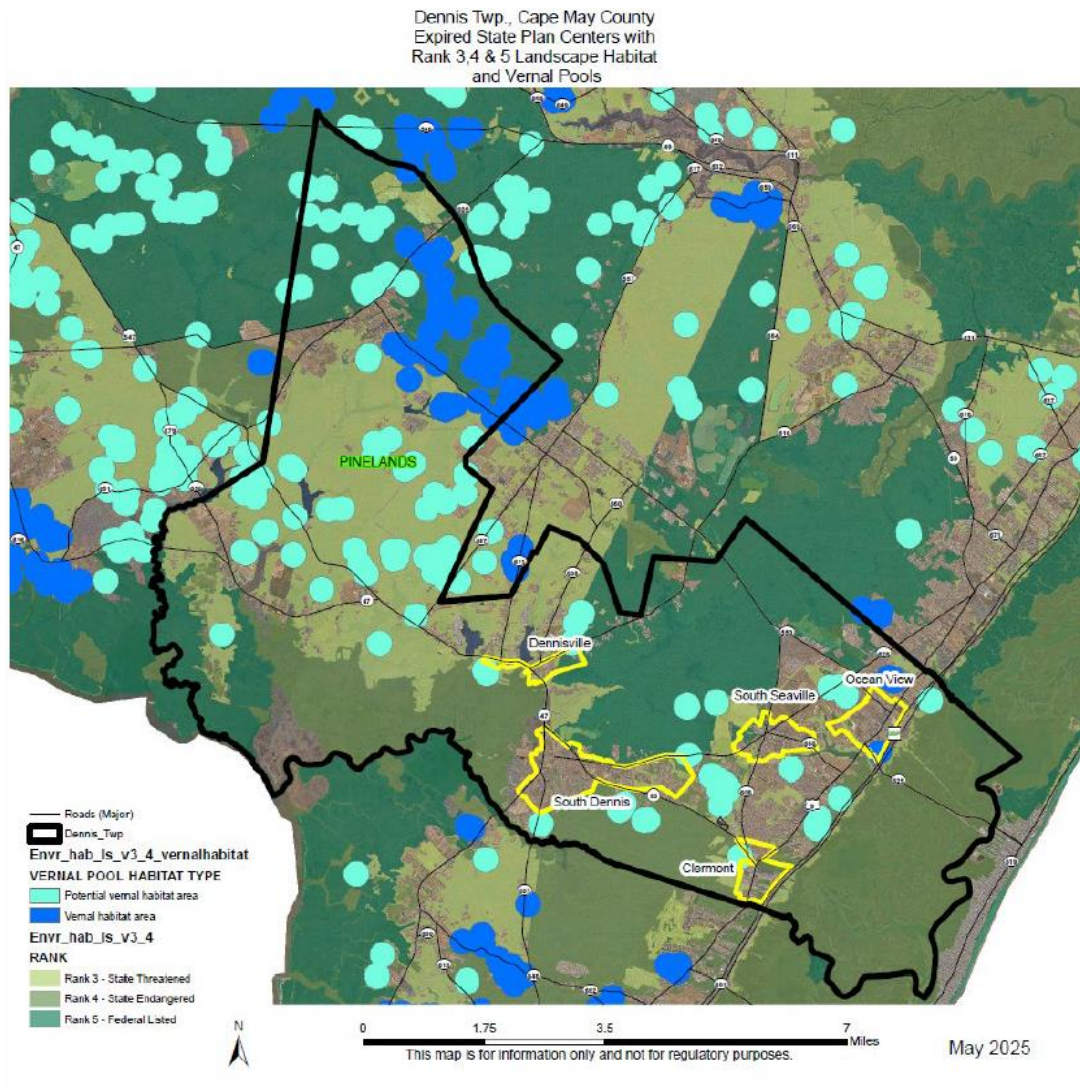
decisions, i.e., municipal and county planners and local planning boards, state agencies, natural resource and lands managers, the general public, etc. Critical area maps can be integrated with planning and protection programs at every level of government - state, county and municipal, can provide the basis for proactive planning, zoning and land acquisition projects.

Most importantly, the critical information Landscape Project products provide can be used for planning purposes before any actions, such as proposed development, resource extraction (such as timber harvests) or conservation measures, occur. Proper planning with accurate, legally and scientifically sound information will result in less conflict. Less time will be wasted, and less money spent, attempting to resolve endangered and threatened species issues.

Additional information about the Landscape Project can be found at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/ensp/landscape/index.htm>.

Dennis Township’s overall Landscape Rank 2,3,4,5 Threatened and Endangered Species are the following:

Dennis Twp., Cape May	
Note: Some habitat within Surface Water; Lands	
Landscape Project T& E	
Rank	Acres
1	194.10
2	4,441.41
3	11,098.87
4	10,636.93
5	10,874.53
Vernal Pool Habitats	#
Potential	170
Documented	5
Natural Heritage Priority Site = 2,906.09 Acres	
Development within NHPS = 876.48 Acres	



These rankings define the following habitat types:

- Rank 1 is assigned to species-specific habitat patches that meet habitat-specific suitability requirements but do not contain confirmed sightings of endangered, threatened, and special concern wildlife species.
- Rank 2 is assigned to species-specific patches containing one or more occurrences of habitats of special concern.
- Rank 3 is assigned to species-specific habitat patches containing one or more occurrences of State threatened species.
- Rank 4 is assigned to species-specific habitat patches with one or more occurrences of State endangered species.
- Rank 5 is assigned to species-specific habitat patches containing one or more occurrences of wildlife listed as endangered and threatened pursuant to the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Any proposed areas for state plan endorsement should largely avoid E&T habitats or minimized Rank 3, 4, & 5 habitats within them. In addition, for any proposed redevelopment activities, areas to avoid for development include any migratory bird nesting areas which can be confirmed through consultation with the NJ Fish and Wildlife (NJFW) Endangered and Non-game Species Program.

All but 4635.41 acres of the total municipal area excluding surface water is rank 3,4 or 5 habitat. Within the proposed centers, the following threatened and endangered species have been identified:

Key: F – Fed, S – State, E – Endangered, T – Threatened, SC – Special Concern, S – Stable; SOA – Species Occurrence Area indicate possible presence; L – Landscapes indicate habitats valued for the species

Clermont Center:

Avian Species

Black Skimmer	(S/E) foraging	SOA/L
Red-headed Woodpecker	(S/T) Breeding Sighting	SOA/L
Black-crowned Night-heron	(S/T) Foraging	SOA
Cattle Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Snowy Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Great Blue Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Tricolored Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Little Blue Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Glossy Ibis	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Common Tern	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Gull-billed Tern	(SC) Foraging	SOA

Terrestrial species

*Northern Myotis	(F/E – S/E) Summer range	
*Little Brown Bat	(S/E) Summer range	
*Tri-colored Bat	(S/E) Summer range	
*Eastern Small-footed Myotis	(S/E) Summer range	
Big Brown Bat	(SC) Maternity Colony	L
Eastern Red Bat	(SC) Active Season Sighting	L
Eastern Tiger Salamander	(S/E) Occupied Habitat	L
Pine Barrens Treefrog	(S/T) Occupied Habitat	L
Frosted Elfin	(S/T) Breeding/Courtship	L

*(*These Bats are found statewide in habitats with highly suitable roost trees - i.e., trees with shaggy or exfoliating bark, and trees of any species over 26 inches dbh)*

Dennisville Center:

Avian Species

Bald Eagle	(SC) foraging, wintering	SOA/L
Barred Owl	(S/T) Breeding Sighting	SOA/L
Kentucky Warbler	(S/T) Breeding Sighting	L
Little Blue Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Great Blue Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Cattle Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Snowy Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Tri-colored Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Glossy Ibis	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Common Tern	(SC) Foraging	SOA

Terrestrial species

Northern Myotis	(F/E – S/E) Summer range	L
*Little Brown Bat	(S/E) Summer range	
*Tri-colored Bat	(S/E) Summer range	
*Eastern Small-footed Myotis	(S/E) Summer range	
Big Brown Bat	(SC) Summer range	L
Eastern Red Bat	(SC) Summer range	L
Northern Pinesnake	(S/T) Occupied Habitat	SOA/L
Rough Greensnake	(SC) Occupied Habitat	L
Woodland Box Turtle	(SC) Occupied Habitat	SOA/L
Frosted Elfin	(S/T) Breeding/Courtship/Nectaring	SOA/L
Scarlet Bluet	(SC) Occupied Habitat	SOA/L
Pine Barrens Bluet	(SC) Occupied Habitat	SOA/L

(*These Bats are found statewide in habitats with highly suitable roost trees - i.e., trees with shaggy or exfoliating bark, and trees of any species over 26 inches dbh)

Ocean View Center:

Avian Species

Least Tern	(S/E) Foraging	SOA/L
Black Skimmer	(S/E) Foraging	SOA/L
Red-headed Woodpecker	(S/T) Breeding Sighting	L
Black-crowned Night-heron	(S/T) Foraging	SOA/L
Great Blue Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Little Blue Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Tri-colored Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Cattle Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Snowy Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Glossy Ibis	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Common Tern	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Gull-billed Tern	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L

Terrestrial species

*Northern Myotis	(F/E – S/E) Summer range	
*Little Brown Bat	(S/E) Summer range	
*Tri-colored Bat	(S/E) Summer range	
*Eastern Small-footed Myotis	(S/E) Summer range	
Silver-haired Bat	(SC) Inactive Season Sighting	L
New Jersey Chorus Frog	(SC) Vernal Pool Breeding	L
N. Diamond-backed Terrapin	(SC) Occupied Habitat	SOA/L
Woodland Box Turtle	(SC) Occupied Habitat	L

(*These Bats are found statewide in habitats with highly suitable roost trees - i.e., trees with shaggy or exfoliating bark, and trees of any species over 26 inches dbh)

South Dennis Center:

Avian Species

Bald Eagle	(SC) foraging, nest	SOA/L
Black Skimmer	(S/E) Breeding Sighting	SOA/L
Black-crowned Night-heron	(S/T) Breeding Sighting	SOA/L
Barred Owl	(S/T) Breeding Sighting	SOA/L
Red-shouldered Hawk	(S/E) Breeding Sighting	SOA/L
Wood Thrush	(SC) Breeding Sighting	SOA/L
Brown Thrasher	(SC) Breeding Sighting	L
Little Blue Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Great Blue Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Cattle Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Snowy Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Tri-colored Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Glossy Ibis	(SC) Foraging	SOA
Common Tern	(SC) Foraging	SOA

Terrestrial species

Northern Myotis	(F/E – S/E) Summer range	L
*Little Brown Bat	(S/E) Summer range	
*Tri-colored Bat	(S/E) Summer range	
*Eastern Small-footed Myotis	(S/E) Summer range	
Big Brown Bat	(SC) Summer range	SOA/L
Eastern Red Bat	(SC) Summer range	SOA/L
Eastern Tiger Salamander	(S/E) Occupied Habitat	L
Carpenter Frog	(SC) Occupied Habitat	L
Eastern Spadefoot	(SC) Occupied Habitat	L
Rough Greensnake	(SC) Occupied Habitat	SOA/L
Frosted Elfin	(S/T) Breeding/Courtship/Nectaring	L

(*These Bats are found statewide in habitats with highly suitable roost trees - i.e., trees with shaggy or exfoliating bark, and trees of any species over 26 inches dbh)

South Seaville Center:

Avian Species

Bald Eagle	(SC) Foraging	L
Black Skimmer	(S/E) foraging	SOA
Red-shouldered Hawk	(S/E) Breeding Sighting	SOA/L
Barred Owl	(S/T) Breeding Sighting	SOA/L
Kentucky Warbler	(S/T) Breeding Sighting	L
Brown Thrasher	(SC) Breeding Sighting	L
Black-crowned Night-heron	(S/T) Foraging	SOA/L
Cattle Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Snowy Egret	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Great Blue Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Tricolored Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Little Blue Heron	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Glossy Ibis	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Common Tern	(SC) Foraging	SOA/L
Gull-billed Tern	(SC) Foraging	SOA

Terrestrial species

Northern Myotis	(F/E – S/E) Summer range	L
*Little Brown Bat	(S/E) Summer range	
*Tri-colored Bat	(S/E) Summer range	
*Eastern Small-footed Myotis	(S/E) Summer range	
Big Brown Bat	(SC) Maternity Colony	L
Eastern Red Bat	(SC) Active Season Sighting	L
Eastern Spadefoot	(S/T) Occupied Habitat	L
Frosted Elfin	(S/T) Breeding/Courtship	L

*(*These Bats are found statewide in habitats with highly suitable roost trees - i.e., trees with shaggy or exfoliating bark, and trees of any species over 26 inches dbh)*

Landscape Project 3.3 Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat

Clermont Center – Delaware Bay (257 ac)

0% - Rank 5
27% - Rank 4
7% - Rank 3
<1% - Rank 2
<1% - Rank 1
65% - No Rank

Dennisville Center – Delaware Bay (159 ac)

26% - Rank 5
2% - Rank 4
22% - Rank 3
0% - Rank 2
<1% - Rank 1
50% - No Rank

Ocean View Center - Delaware Bay (349 ac)

>1% - Rank 5
0% - Rank 4
4% - Rank 3
11% - Rank 2
<1% - Rank 1
83% - No Rank

South Dennis Center - Delaware Bay (859 ac)

1% - Rank 5
12% - Rank 4
10% - Rank 3
43% - Rank 2
<1% - Rank 1
34% - No Rank

South Seaville Center - Delaware Bay (320 ac)

9% - Rank 5

>1% - Rank 4

7% - Rank 3

3% - Rank 2

>1% - Rank 1

78% - No Rank

A critical environmentally sensitive area (CES) overlay is not necessary for undeveloped, wetland, flood area and/or ranked 3-5 habitat in PA-5 planning area but zoning overlays should be implemented for information purposes. All of these areas identified above should be reviewed prior to any planning board approval of a development plan with an updated natural resources inventory, habitat suitability assessment and adherence to all DEP regulations.

Dennis Township should continue to promote ongoing and proposed community environmental education and public outreach events. The Municipality should update its Natural Resources Inventory if older than 10 years and adopt/update its Conservation Plan. DEP supports the municipality's commitment to conservation and renewable energy, although it encourages the municipality to pursue it in an ecologically responsible manner.

The Township of Dennis should continue to protect the municipal open spaces and the recolonization and reuse of open field habitats for ground nesting and foraging birds. DEP supports the municipality's commitment to conservation and renewable energy although it encourages the municipality to pursue efforts, including solar power installation, in an ecologically responsible manner. Further research is needed to determine the causes and nature of direct and indirect effects of the placement of solar arrays on and/or over ground nesting habitat on birds.

Tree removal timing restrictions – forested and wooded areas exist within the proposed Centers. If these areas are developed, a seasonal restriction from 4/1 – 9/30 should be considered for tree or shrub trimming/removal to prevent/avoid taking of active nests with eggs or unfledged chicks of non-game migratory birds and summer roosting habitats for bats in these areas.

Freshwater Mussel Habitat

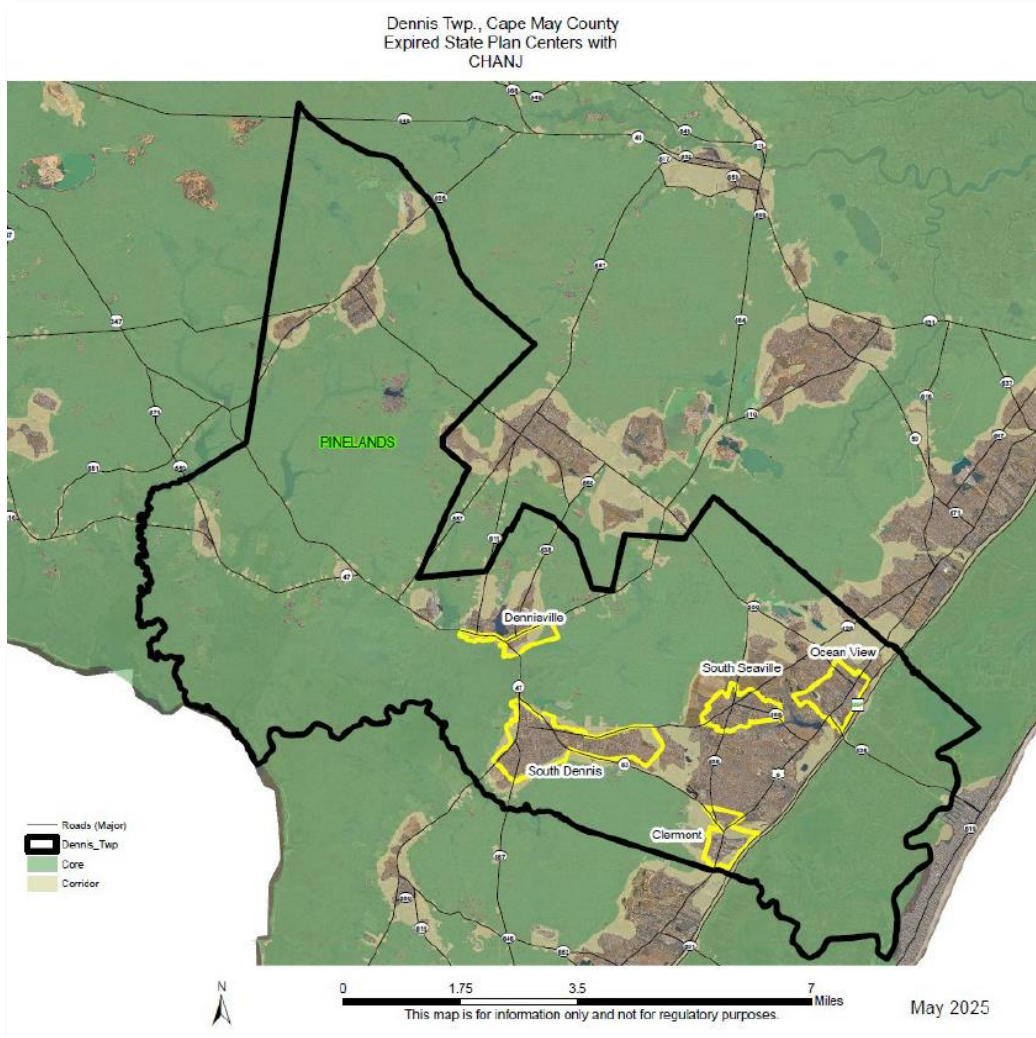
There are NO mapped occurrences of Freshwater Mussels in waters within the proposed Village Centers.

Connecting Habitat Across New Jersey (CHANJ)

A review of the Department's CHANJ mapping (information on this mapping found at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/ensp/chanj.htm>) shows that in proximity to the proposed village centers, there are identified wildlife travel corridors that could serve as viable wildlife passageway through Dennis Township. A passageway classified as a more restricted wildlife corridor is shown in

tan while a core passageway classified as less restrictive to wildlife movement is shown in green, based on the land cover features occurring within it. **A CHANJ Corridor overlays the edges of the Dennisville, South Dennis and Ocean View proposed village centers.** This data suggest that there is or could be movement between larger habitat areas adjacent to undeveloped areas of the proposed village centers. However, where CHANJ corridors overlap the Village Centers, they would be considered marginal, or the most difficult for terrestrial creatures to move through.

As noted above, a fairly unrestricted wildlife movement corridor exists around the proposed centers. Given the potential significance of this area as a landscape habitat connector/wildlife movement corridor, **DEP recommends that The Township of Dennis incorporate a habitat corridor overlay into the zoning ordinance.** In addition, **any undeveloped property within the CHANJ corridor should be designated for open space preservation if not already done so and not included in the center.** By reducing the development potential of this critical area, the likelihood that this area will remain a suitable corridor is significantly increased.



Within the proposed village centers, partially developed and disjointed or unsuitable habitat may be reviewed if any development is proposed in this area through an updated natural resources survey and a habitat suitability determination.

Note: Cores: Patches of contiguous natural land cover (land and water) at least 78.5 ha in size, which are likely to meet the habitat needs (shelter, forage/prey, reproduction) of most terrestrial wildlife species, especially if functionally linked to other Cores.

Corridors: Continuous swaths of habitat representing the most efficient movement routes between Cores. The Corridors are displayed in color gradients (1-5) based on a cost-weighted distance analysis. Gradient 1 (lightest color) represents the most optimal move-through habitat, whereas gradient 5 (darkest color) is the most marginal.

Vernal Pools

There are 5 documented and 170 potential vernal pools identified in The Township of Dennis. There is 1 known vernal pool within the proposed Oceanville Village Center. (South-east corner). In 2001, DEP partnered with Rutgers University Center for Remote Sensing and Spatial Analysis (CRSSA) to develop a method for mapping potential vernal pools throughout New Jersey. Through an on-screen visual interpretation of digital orthophotography, CRSSA identified over 13,000 potential pools throughout the state. A subset of these pools was field verified and confirmed, with an 88% accuracy rate, to meet the physical characteristics to qualify as a vernal pool (Lathrop et al. 2005).

In accordance with N.J.A.C. 7:7A-1.4, the term “vernal habitat” includes a vernal pool - or the area of ponding - plus any freshwater wetlands adjacent to the vernal pool. Vernal habitat areas mapped in the Landscape Project rely upon those data developed by the DEP and CRSSA to identify sites that should be field checked for possible identification as vernal habitat areas. DEP staff is in the process of field-verifying these pools. The Department also maps vernal habitat areas based upon on-the-ground assessment of sites not captured by the CRSSA mapping. The Landscape Project includes all of the CRSSA-identified sites, as well as sites identified by on-the-ground reconnaissance.

State Wildlife Action Plan

The **State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP)** is a strategic and cost-effective strategy for preserving the state's wildlife resources for the future. Recovering species that have reached threatened or endangered status is typically more costly than preventative actions that keep species populations from reaching such declines. Proactive management actions identified in the SWAP are intended to keep species from becoming threatened or endangered or to aid in the recovery of those that are already listed.

State Wildlife Action Plans are proactive plans created by virtually every state and U.S. territory that assess the health of each state's wildlife and habitats, identify the problems they face, and outline the actions that are needed to conserve them over the long term. The New Jersey Wildlife Action Plan identifies both priority species and habitats, assesses the threats they face and outlines actions to take to improve or stabilize their condition. New Jersey's State Wildlife Action Plan (2018) was approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in July 2018. New Jersey's Plan serves as a blueprint for conserving our wildlife heritage over the next decade. The Plan identifies priority actions over the next five to ten years to address the myriad threats facing our wildlife populations and their habitats. It also identifies species of greatest conservation need in New Jersey, as well as 107 focal species that are of the highest conservation priority.

New Jersey's State Wildlife Action Plan can be found at:
https://www.nj.gov/dep/fgw/ensp/wap/pdf/wap_plan18.pdf

Natural Heritage Priority Sites

Following a review of Natural Heritage Grid Mapping layer, Natural Heritage Priority Sites there are two NHPS sites in Dennis Township including state-listed plants, data sensitive species, ecological communities or cave terrestrial communities.

Magnolia Lake Site - The site is on the outer coastal plain and occupies the headwaters of Mill Creek upstream from the Magnolia Lake dam at Route 9. It consists of two tributaries that feed the lake, one to the north and one to the west. Wetlands include open waters. There are two separate occurrences of a federally threatened plant species.

Clermont Bog Site - The site is on the outer coastal plain of Cape May peninsula and consists of a series of hydrologically connected open water ponds and open bogs at the headwaters of Sluice Creek. These ponds are surrounded by a fringe of hardwood swamp and mesic coastal environment that have a moderate amount of moisture but not as wet as truly coastal wetlands while not being as dry as inland areas. Not consistently saturated, these areas have enough moisture and moderate water supply to support a range of plant and animal life. The site contains several Plant Species of Special Concern and a State-listed Endangered Animal Species.

A full listing of Rare Plant Species and Ecological Communities Presently Recorded in the NJ Natural Heritage Database for Cape May County can be found at: <https://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/textfiles/>.

Natural Heritage Priority (NHP) Sites

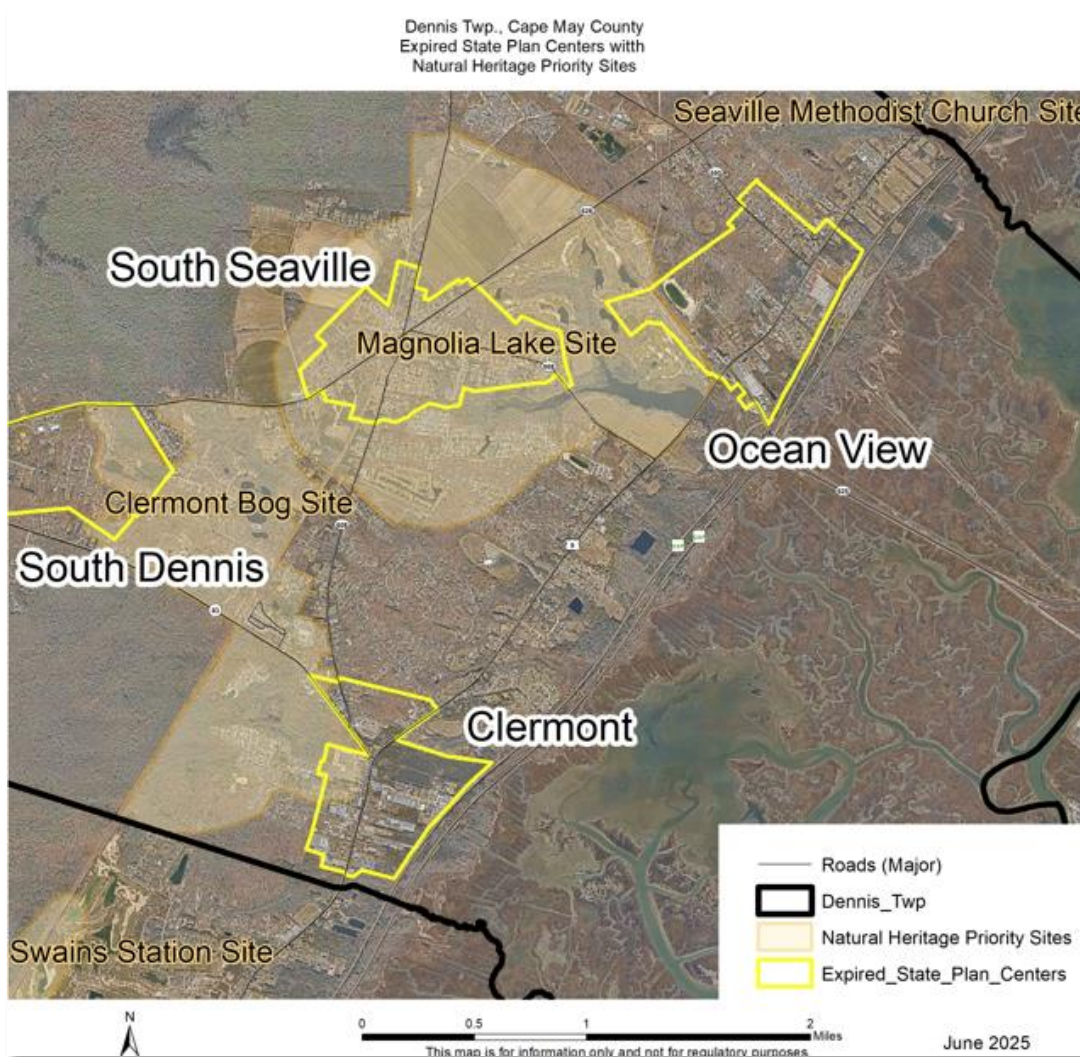
The Natural Heritage Grid Map indicates some occurrences of State listed plants within the Township of Dennis proposed village centers as follows:

South Seaville

The South Seaville Village Center is entirely within the Magnolia Lake NHPS. The Magnolia Lake NHPS was delineated for occurrences (i.e., populations) of *Helonias bullata* (Swamp Pink - Federally threatened, state endangered).

- One of the two *Helonias* occurrences is located along the Mill Creek tributary running east-west at the south edge of the South Seaville Town Center. This occurrence was last observed in 2001 when it was described as a large, healthy population. The occurrence is surrounded by housing and likely other development.
- The other *Helonias* occurrence is located along the Mill Creek tributary running north-south outside of and east of the South Seaville Town Center. This occurrence was last observed in 2010 and is bordered on the east by a golf course.

The condition of these occurrences is currently not known. However, the land alterations surrounding them can be expected to have significant impacts on wetland habitat quality and the status of these plant populations.

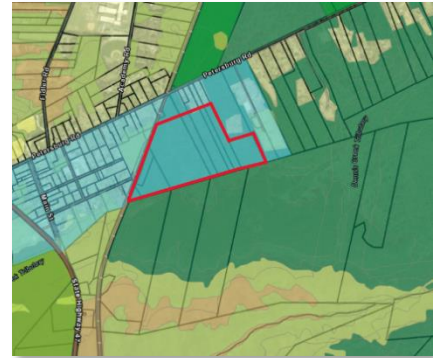


Ocean View

Most of the overlap between the Ocean View Center and Natural Heritage Priority Site (NHPS) now consists of a golf course and other degraded habitat. As a result, the damage already done within this NHPS precludes the exclusion of already developed lands from the proposed Center boundary.

Dennisville

There is no overlap between the Center and any NHPs. However, The area outlined in red, which consists of parcels – 120/101, 120/102, 120/220, and parts of parcels – 120/103, 120/105, 120/107.01, 120/107.02, 120/108, & 120/109, are wooded/forested, rank 5 and contiguous with similar habitats to the south and east, should be considered Env. Sensitive and recommended to be considered for removal from the Dennisville Center.

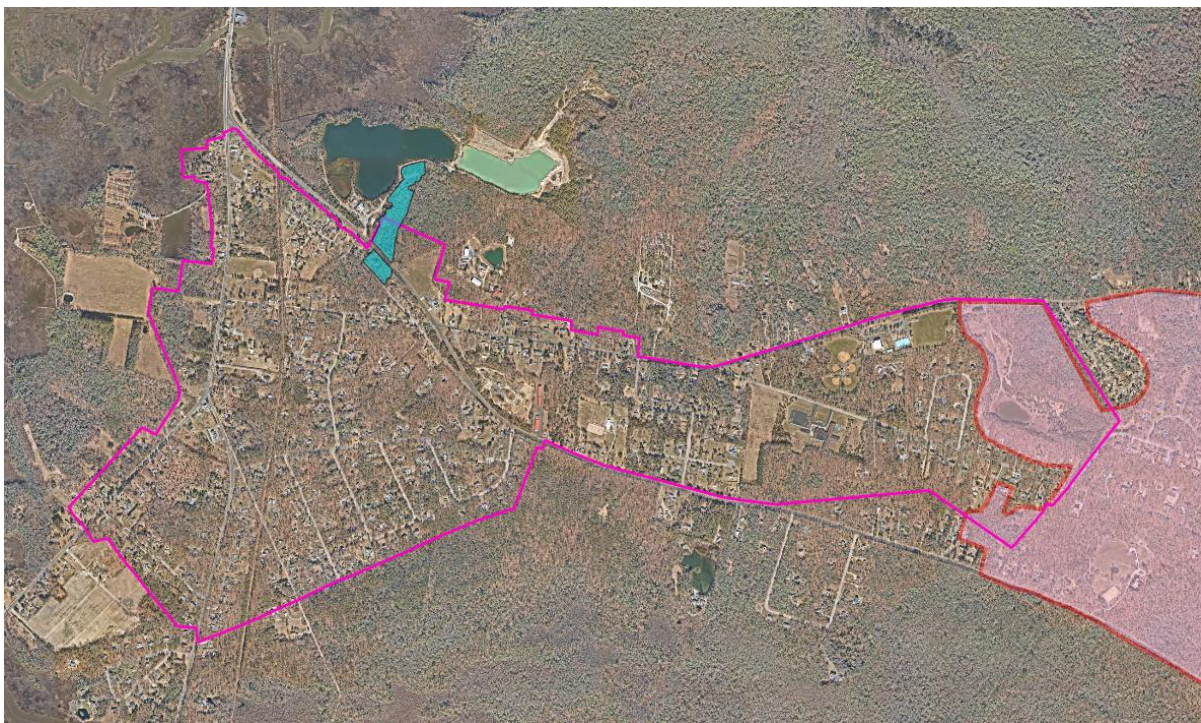


Clermont

While there is overlap between the Clermont Center and NHPs, it appears to be degraded habitat that does not require the exclusion of this overlap area from the proposed center.

South Dennis

The South Dennis Center boundaries does not overlap with the Natural Heritage Priority Site. However, there is a population of a State Endangered plant species located in the wetlands in the northwest of the designated village center. The area of concern is in blue below and should not be included in the endorsed center.



This area is shown in more detail below along with the critical wetland polygons clipped from the 2020 Land Use Coverage.

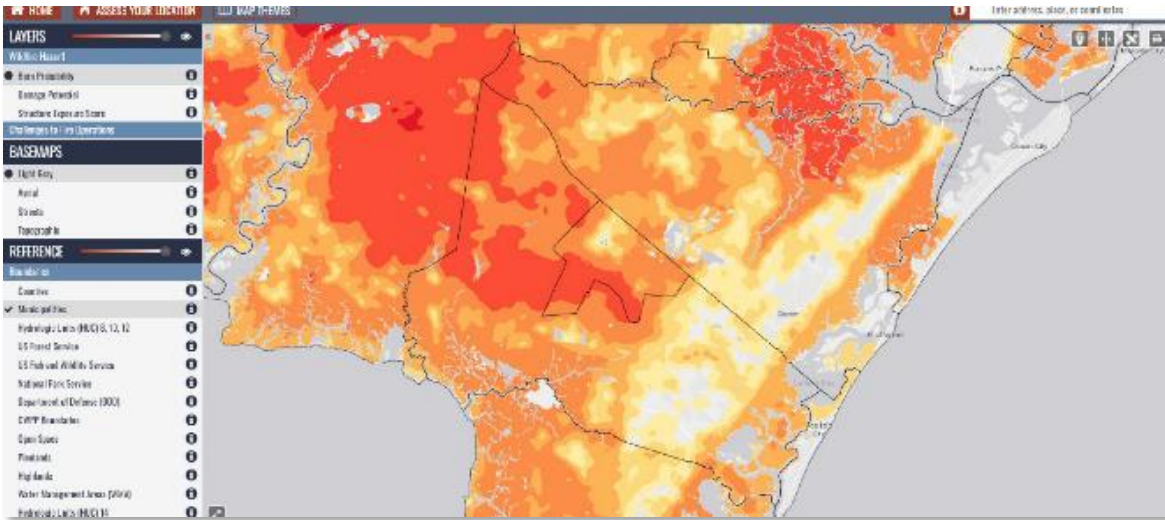


More information about State Endangered plant species and Plant Species of Concern and the codes used on the list of species can be found at:

- <https://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/njplantlist.pdf>
- https://www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/nhpcodes_2010.pdf

Forest Fire Management and Mitigation

Adverse effects of climate change increases in average daily temperature contribute to an increase in the potential for forest fires. Public and private property, infrastructure, public safety, and utilities could be compromised in a wildfire emergency. Any coastal community containing marshlands can also enhance the risk of wildfire. The impacts of a wildfire event can be reduced through the enhancement of the Municipality's emergency response plan and through the implementation of pre-event wildfire mitigation and response measures. Forest fuel loading conditions are characterized by fire hazard ratings (map below) and through coordination with the New Jersey Forest Fire Service and the New Jersey Emergency Management Program.



The Township of Dennis has not adopted a Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) with NJ Forest Fire Service and does not have a Community Forest Management Plan or street tree species inventory in their town center and proposed redevelopment areas. The municipality should consider initiating a Community Stewardship Incentive Program and updating their tree inventory. Information can be found at:

- [NJDEP | New Jersey Forest Fire Service | Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#)
- [CWPPs forSFAP letter port MC 20200528 0936.png \(2550x3300\) \(nj.gov\)](#)

Cultural and Historic Resources (check for redundancy)

The most recent Master Plan re-examination report included a brief summary of Dennis Township’s recognized historic structures but did not include a detailed description of the buildings, lots and blocks and other historic sites within the proposed center, the date the Municipality completed an Historic and Cultural Resources Survey, adopted an Historic Resources Plan element, or an Historic Resources Preservation Plan.

According to the MSA, the Dennis Township Master Plan (1994, revised 2012) functions as a guiding document for land use, housing and development, recreation, public infrastructure, and environmental conservation. Dennis Township is divided into five Village Centers (Clermont, Dennisville, Ocean View, South Dennis, and South Seaville). Overall, the MSA acknowledges the positive relationship between historic preservation, environmental sustainability, and economic development.

Goal #4 of the 2012 Dennis Township Master Plan is “to protect the historic, archaeological and cultural resources of the Township.” This Goal outlines best practices for Township development and land use while remaining sensitive to the value of the area’s cultural heritage. This includes: compatibility with the existing historic character of the Villages, expanding design guidelines to maintain the established historic architectural character of the Villages, encouraging cultural heritage tourism and activities in the Villages and the Dennisville Historic District, and ongoing preservation efforts within the designated historic districts, including the development of a Historic Preservation Ordinance and Commission. Additionally,

the Dennis Township Vision 2030 document, guided by input from residents, business owners, and public officials, notes that the existing character of the historic cores of the Villages of Dennisville, South Dennis, and South Seaville will be maintained and enhanced, and that infill will be encouraged to be consistent with the scale and style of the Villages.

The MSA also acknowledges the wealth of historic assets within Dennis Township, comprising various individual historic resources, historic districts, and archaeological sites. Please see the HPO's webpage for a complete list of all known historic properties in Dennis Township and the LUCY Online GIS Map Viewer for more information: [Known Historic Properties List | NJ Historic Preservation Office](#)

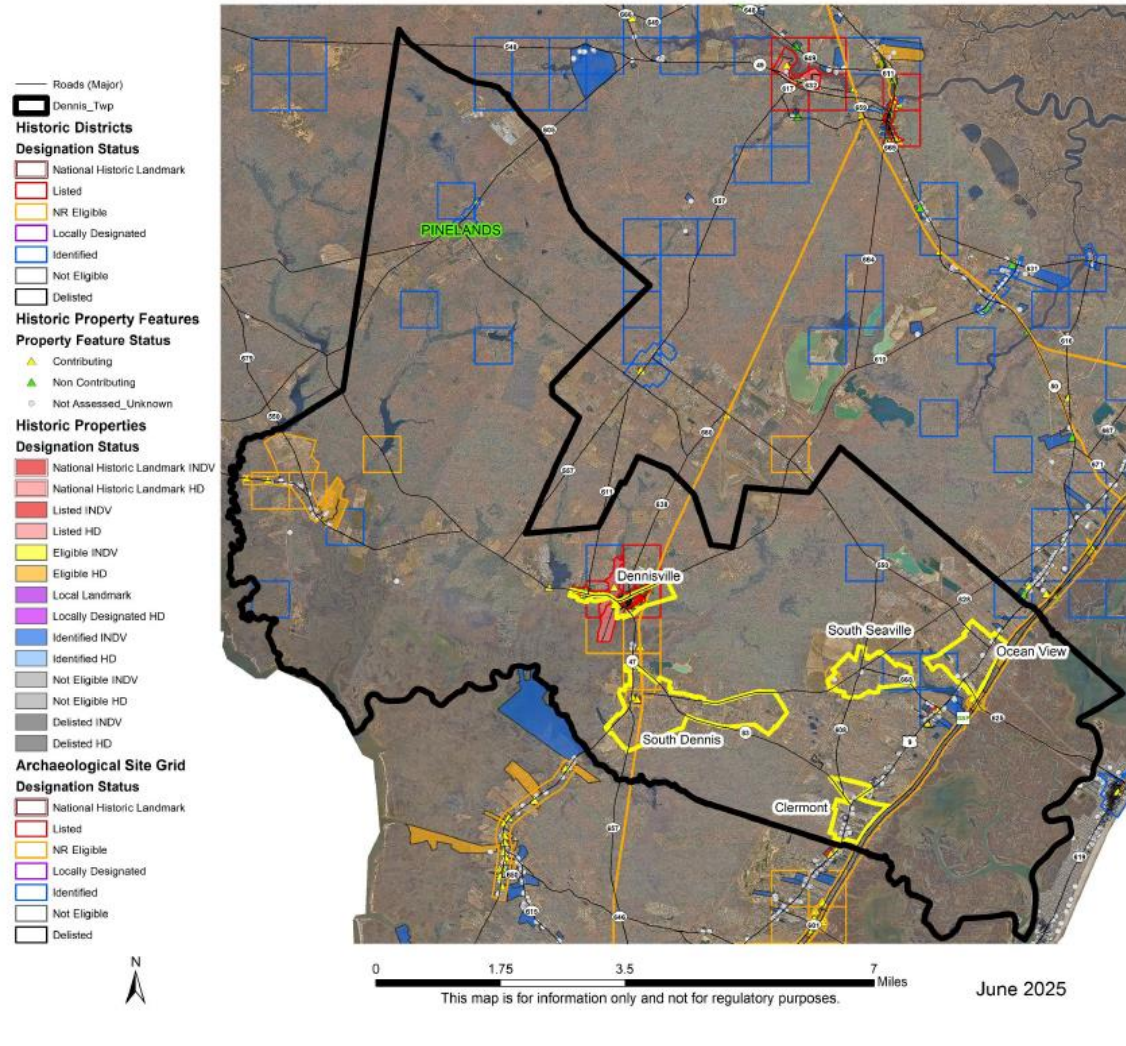
The following historic districts, each containing multiple historic resources, have been either formally listed in the New Jersey and/or National Registers of Historic Places, given formal opinions of eligibility by the HPO, or have been subject to formal survey:

- The Dennisville Historic District (SR: 4/14/1987; NR: 11/24/1987)
- The Dennis Creek Landing Archaeological Historic District (28-Cm-53) (SHPO Opinion 7/18/2001)
- The Eldora Historic District (SHPO Opinion 7/3/1996)
- The Garden State Parkway Historic District (SHPO Opinion 10/12/2001)
- The South Dennisville Historic District (SHPO Opinion 7/18/2001)
- The South Seaville Methodist Camp Meeting Historic District (SHPO Opinion 12/6/2021)

In addition, according to information on file at the HPO, there are various Native American archaeological sites located in Dennis Township. Native American archaeological sites are often located in upland settings in proximity to fresh water sources. While the precise locations of these archaeological sites are only available to cultural resource professionals upon direct request, any ground-disturbing activities within these areas should take this archaeological sensitivity into account. The same is true for historic-period archaeological sites, which are often also found in similar environmental settings and in conjunction with historically documented settlement areas.

The Historic Preservation Office (HPO) encourages municipal civic planning with a design development philosophy embodying sustainability, limiting environmental impacts through rehabilitation of existing structures over 50 years old, climate resiliency guided by preservation principals, and leadership in energy & environmental design (LEED)-based compatible design for new construction within historic districts and historic villages. Information on the location of known historic structures, historic districts, and historic landscapes and/or structures over 50 years old is available here for MSA consideration: [NJHPO Historic Property Viewer](#). Also, archaeological sites and historic buildings in tidal or storm surge areas are particularly threatened by sea level rise and need to be considered as part of the larger municipal climate change efforts.

Dennis Twp., Cape May County
Expired State Plan Centers with
Historic Sites



The HPO further encourages municipal completion of historic structure and cultural resource inventories within their jurisdiction for consideration during planning activities, preservation stewardship, and rehabilitating historic properties maintaining their unique sense of place within the local community. In addition, local municipalities are required to consider changes and impacts to all municipally owned properties listed on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places pursuant to the New Jersey Register of Historic Places Act [NJ Register Act](#).

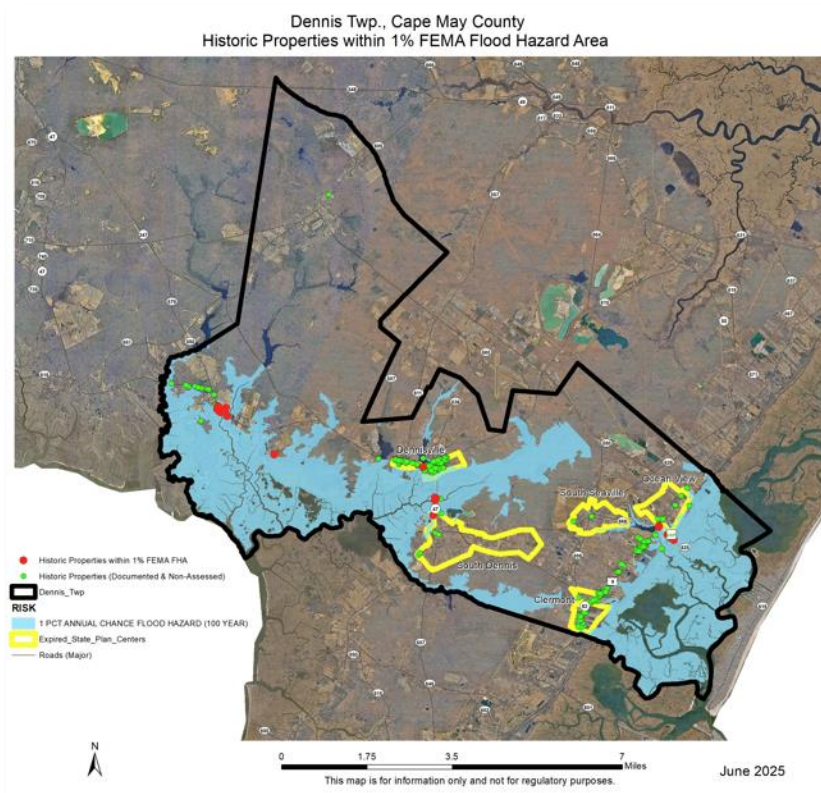
Further, municipalities can take advantage of preservation professionals through New Jersey's Certified Local Government program [CLG Program](#). The CLG program offers municipalities the opportunity to participate more directly in state and federal historic preservation programs through the development and adoption of a local historic preservation ordinance creating a historic preservation commission for guiding the municipality's longer-term planning and development policies and making available CLG grants and loans for preservation of local historic properties ([CLG grants](#)).

The HPO also plays a formal role during the following regulated activities: any federal funding, licensing, or permitting, any State of New Jersey’s Division of Land Resource Protection Freshwater Wetlands, Waterfront Development, Upland Development, or CAFRA permits, any environmental assessments under Executive Order 215, or any state, county, or municipal undertakings on a property listed on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places pursuant to the New Jersey Register of Historic Places Act. These regulatory reviews not only address above ground historic architecture, but archaeological resources related to pre-Contact period and early historic period development within New Jersey.

Finally, consideration of project effects to historic and archaeological resources is also required if a project is subject to any federal funding, licensing, or permitting, any State of New Jersey’s Division of Land Resource Protection Freshwater Wetlands, Waterfront Development, Upland Development, or CAFRA permits, or any environmental assessments under Executive Order 215. Additionally, any undertaking by a State, County, or municipal government, or entity thereof, that may affect a property listed on the NJ Register of Historic Places must receive prior authorization from the HPO pursuant to NJAC 7:4-7. This extends to properties owned by State/County/municipal governments but leased or maintained by others. Please note that portions of Dennis Township are within the CAFRA zone, and any undertakings that require CAFRA permitting would be reviewable by the HPO.

Historic Resources in Floodprone Areas

The MSA indicates that a few historic known sites are located in environmentally sensitive planning areas or entirely in the 100 and 500 year flood zone. Dennis Township **should update their historic structure inventory throughout the municipality** .



Dennis Township should update its Historic Preservation Element of the Master Plan to include climate resilience and social equity.

- **Update the Historic Districts Inventory** – the municipality should provide a table in any master plan re-evaluation of all lots and blocks in historic districts, if they are in a center, and if they are in the 1) 100 or 500 year flood zone, 2) rank 3,4,5 threatened and endangered species habitat, 3) SSA or 4) public water system.
- **Update their Historic Preservation Implementation Ordinance and Plan Element**
- **clarify all areas added to the State and National Registers of Historic Places;**
- **confirm the Historic District boundaries with the NJ State Historic Preservation Office;**
- **update the historic sites inventory as necessary;**
- **confirm the date of their most recent Historic Preservation Implementation Ordinance;**
- **confirm efforts to incorporate climate resilience into their historic preservation plan;**
- **Historic structures should be evaluated and protected with enhanced stormwater management plans and flood minimization plans.** DEP adopted Elevation Design
- **Update the Historic Districts Inventory** – each municipality should provide a table in any master plan re-evaluation of all lots and blocks in historic areas, if they are in a center/core/node, and if they are in the a) 100 or 500 year flood zone, 2) rank 3,4,5 threatened and endangered species habitat, 3) SSA or 4) public water system.
- **Update the municipality's Historic Preservation Implementation Ordinance to address Climate Resilience**
 - **Historic structures should be evaluated and protected with enhanced stormwater management plans and flood minimization plans.** DEP adopted Elevation Design Guidelines for Historic Properties in December 2019, which can be found at https://www.state.nj.us/dep/hpo/images/_MULT_DG_32_v2_ID14078r.pdf.
 - **Zoning Update** –revise the Municipal code to implement within the historic districts the following: define and adopt an historic district buffer area, adopt architectural and development standards within and adjacent to the district, establish an Historic Preservation Commission, continue to update the historic sites inventory and include historic sites in capital improvement program especially related to flood resiliency

The HPO commends the ongoing efforts to highlight and preserve the historic resources of Dennis Township. Please refer to HPO Project **#25-1343** in any future correspondence in order to expedite our review and response. For any additional questions, please contact Lucia Bianchi, Program Specialist 1, NJ Historic Preservation Office at <http://www.nj.gov/dep/hpo> or (609) 940-4312

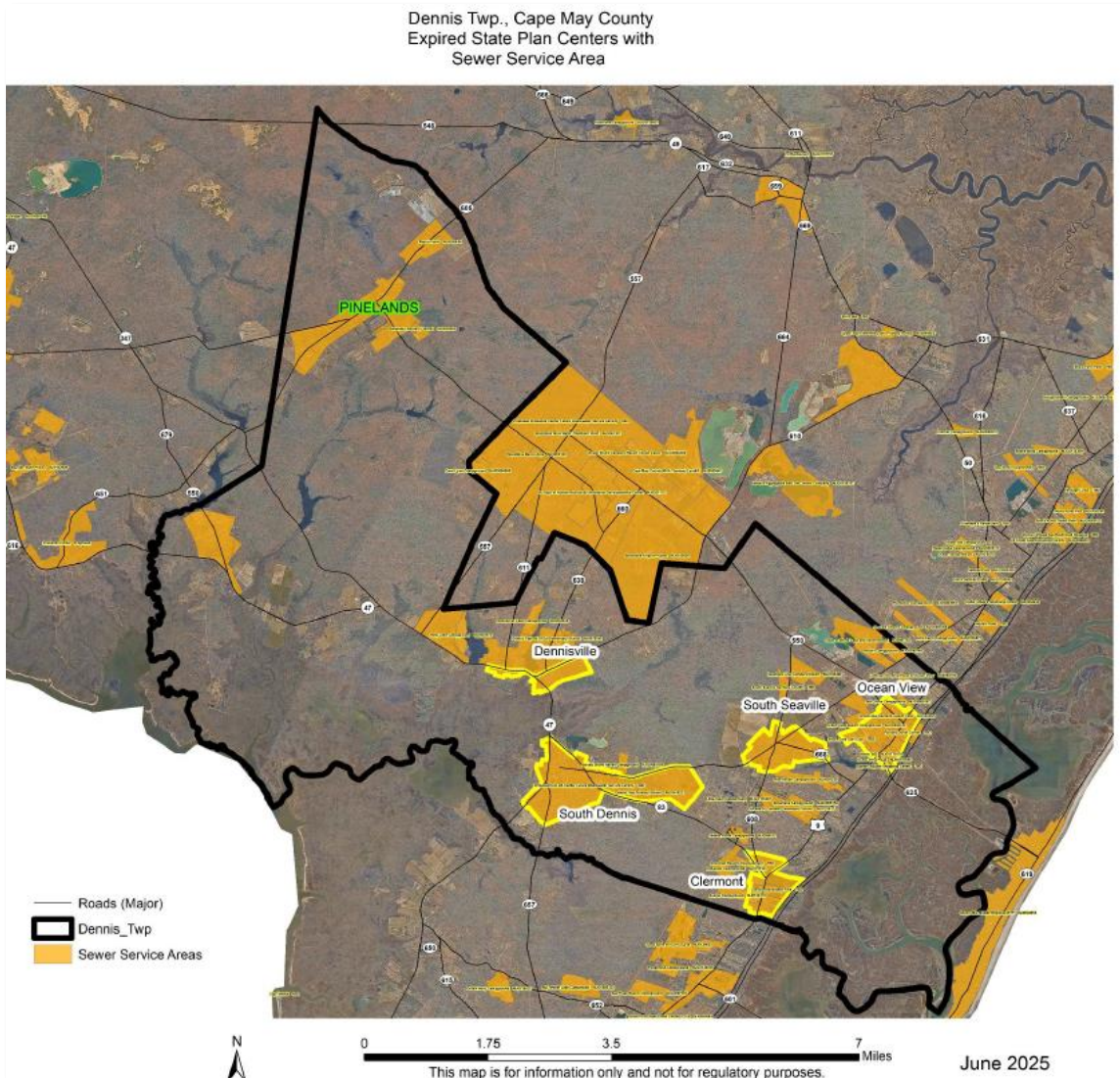
Wastewater and Water Supply

Wastewater Analysis

The proposed centers are identified in the Cape May County Wastewater Quality Management Plan (WQMP) sewer service area. Dennis Township is within the Dennis Township-Woodbine Wastewater management Area but, at this time, there are currently no existing public sewers in Dennis Township. Currently, there are privately constructed and maintained alternative wastewater treatment facilities

such as community package treatment plants for use in the proposed CAFRA centers. In the future, a proposed NJPDES-permitted Sewage Treatment Facility must be identified in the WQMP, in addition to the applicable SSA, for the proposal to be determined consistent with the WQMP. Thus, the construction of any new sewage treatment facilities (including onsite systems that discharge to groundwater aka septic systems with a design flow greater than 2,000 gpd) not already identified in the WQMP will be inconsistent even if the property is already in the SSA.

- An expansion of the permitted flow must be identified in the WQMP for the proposal to be determined consistent with the WQMP. As with new facilities, these expansions will be inconsistent until the plan is first amended to include the expansion, even if any associated development is already located in the SSA.



Sewer Service Area Extensions

Redevelopment/ development projects or activities within the centers sewer service areas may require an amendment to the Cape May Water Quality Management Plan. Any future development plan that would require extension of the current sewer system would require an amendment to the county wide Wastewater Management plan and must include, but not limited to, a public health necessity for extending the line to residents with failing or outdated systems, an updated natural resources inventory, a contiguous sewer line route, an assessment of developed or disturbed lots, vacant undeveloped lots, lots in the 100 year flood zone, and any adverse impact to threatened and endangered species habitat create a linear boundary with recognizable geographic, political, or environmental features pursuant to NJAC 7:15-4.4 (f). Coordination with NJDOT and the Pinelands Commission is also required and recommended before planning board approval. Any extension of the SSA into undeveloped areas may require a habitat suitability determination. In addition, as multiple NJDEP permits and approvals would also be required for any sewer extension project, the DEP recommends early planning consultation with the Department prior to planning board approval to identify further any permitting requirements and constraints. A pre-application conceptual meeting can be scheduled with the NJDEP through the Office of Permitting and Project Navigation at (609) 292-3600 and <https://www.nj.gov/dep/pcer/>

Wastewater Capacity Analysis

Only 4,450.30 acres of Dennis Township in Cape May County, New Jersey has access to a public wastewater treatment system as part of the Cape May County Municipal Utilities Authority (CMCMUA) Regional Wastewater Management Program. Portions of Dennis Township, including the area along the Garden State Parkway, are serviced by the Seven Mile Beach/Middle Service Region and connected to the Seven Mile/Middle sewage treatment plant in Middle Township.

An older, previously existing onsite sewage disposal system serving the Swainton Maintenance Yard and Avalon State Police Barracks (located in Dennis Township) is being abandoned and will be connected to the Seven Mile/Middle STP.

Some areas, particularly in more rural or environmentally sensitive areas like the Pinelands Village of Eldora, may rely on on-site wastewater treatment systems, which include technologies like septic systems or other advanced systems designed to reduce nitrogen levels in wastewater

The 2012 Master Plan Land Use Plan indicated that sewers and wastewater treatment may be extended to the village centers. There have been plans to connect certain areas in Dennis Township, such as the Ocean View Service Area, to the Seven Mile/Middle treatment plant, abandoning existing on-site systems. The Township has also adopted resolutions related to wastewater management plans, including one concerning a proposed development that would generate significant wastewater flow treated by an on-site groundwater disposal system.

In summary, Dennis Township has a mixed approach to wastewater management. Some parts are connected to the regional public sewer system run by the CMCMUA, while others utilize on-site treatment systems. The specific coverage of the public system would depend on the location within the township

The WQMP rule at NJAC 7:15-4.5(b)5 adopted in 2013 requires that if the “existing permitted flow is 80% or more at the time of WMP development, a municipality must determine, as part of the buildout analysis,

if remaining projected growth (for buildout of the SSA) will result in a capacity deficiency and, if the potential for a capacity deficiency exists.”

The available capacity of the wastewater treatment system in each area and cumulatively should be confirmed by Dennis Township as they consider future development in areas currently in need for redevelopment.

Wastewater Infrastructure in Floodprone Areas

Critical utility infrastructure like powerlines, sewers, and potable water lines can be adversely impacted by flooding.

Sewer Service Area Total Area (without surface water) = 4,450.30 Acres		
Sewer Service Area within Flood Hazard Area	Acres	% of Total Sewer Service Area
1% (100 Year) Floodplain	113.51	2.6
0.2% (500 Year) Floodplain	additional 126.07 (239.58 Acres)	5.4
Source: FEMA Flood Hazard Areas (Combined)		
NJDEP LULC 2020 Surface Water Removed from FEMA Flood Hazard Area		

Approximately **239.58 acres (5.4%)** of Dennis Township’s total sewer service area (excluding surface water) of **4,450.30 acres** is in the combined 100 year and additional 500 yr flood acres as follows:

- **100 Year ~ 113.51 Acres (2.6%)**
- **500 Year ~ 126.07 Acres (2.8 %)**

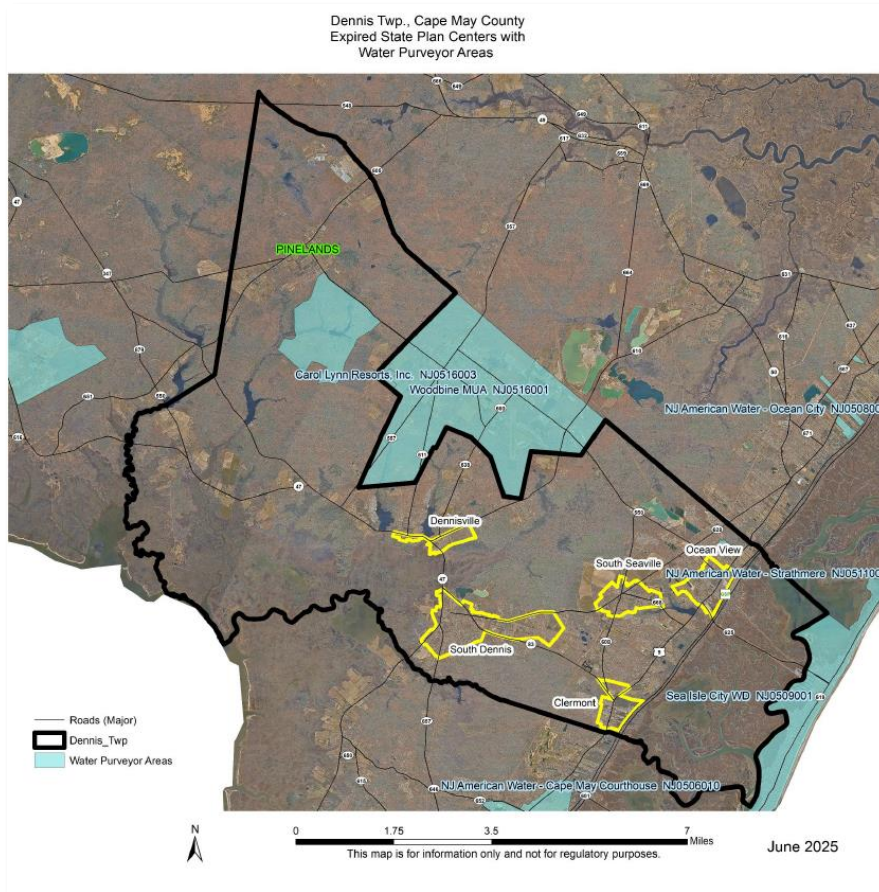
The Township of Dennis should update its Wastewater Management Plan to incorporate climate resilience. The municipality has several building facilities with discharges to surface water that are regulated by the NJDEP with a New Jersey Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NJPDES) permit.

Dennis Township should:

- **adopt/and/or update their existing Utility Services Plan element of the Master Plan, if not done so already, which includes long-term strategies and plans for all utilities in the municipalities;**
- **determine vulnerability of their infrastructure to climate change and develop resilience measures to ensure continuity of services in the event of a flood;**
- **provide an updated map of any pump stations and wastewater piping;**
- **update their Wastewater Management Plan as necessary to include additional proposed development, additional adopted WMP amendments, infrastructure upgrades and increased capacity needs.**

Water Supply

The Division of Water Supply and Geoscience (Division) has reviewed the Self-Assessment for Township of Dennis and confirms that , while the Township receives it's potable water from the Cohanse Formation, there is no public potable water system. All potable water is derived from private wells. **It is recommended that the municipality confirm with the Well Permitting section of the Bureau of Water Allocation and Well Permitting Bureau any existing domestic wells currently in use and any public potable supply wells located within the municipality.**



After reviewing pertinent permits, records and other available information related to water supply, distribution, and approved proposed connections related to new development, the Bureau has minimal water supply concerns. Dennis Township is located within Cape May County, has a population of approximately 6,149 residents who utilize a private decentralized water supply system, so potable water demand is mainly supplied by private domestic wells. Well data for the past 35 years reflects approximately 1,300 domestic/domestic replacement wells, about 100 public noncommunity wells, over 75 nonpublic wells, and only three public community wells.

As per the Municipal Self-Assessment Report, the following redevelopment and rehabilitation areas are currently approved from 2020-2024:

- **Block 225.01 Lot 8.11** - 39 Stoney Court – major site plan to construct 10,000 SF storage facility and 1,600 SF pole barn with various site improvements (construction complete; CO issued).
- **Block 241 Lot 2.02** – 10 Fairway Court South – major site plan to construct 67-unit storage facility consisting of 4 buildings totaling 10,400 SF and one 400 SF office building with various site improvements (construction complete; CO issued).
- **Block 236 Lot 6.19** – 113 Woodbine-Ocean View Road – major site plan to construct a 12,000 SF mixed use building with various site improvements (this project has not commenced).
- **Block 261 Lot 31.02** – 1879 Route 9 North – major site plan to construct an 8,000 SF brewery w/office and various site improvements (construction complete; CO issued).
- **Block 64 Lot 30** – 1089 Route 47 – major site plan with minor subdivision to construct a 5,585 SF Wawa and 7,150 SF canopy for fueling stations (Project has not commenced).
- **Block 262 Lot 1.03** – 1910 Route 9 North – major site plan to construct 3-phase development of storage facility (Phase I 15,000 SF contractor facility with 8 units; Phase II 35,880 SF 6-unit self-storage, office and living quarters; Phase III 35,200 SF 5-unit self-storage) with various site improvements (received amended site plan, see below in 2022 and 2023. Project has not commenced)
- **Block 262 Lot 1.03** – 1910 Route 9 North – amended major site plan to construct 2-phase development of storage facility (Phase I 34,680 SF 6-unit self-storage and 400 SF office; Phase II 34,400 SF 5-unit self-storage and 15,000 SF 8-unit contractor facility) with various site improvements (project has not commenced).
- **Block 225.02 Lot 4** – 30 Stoney Court – major site plan to construct a 6,000 SF storage/garage with office and 1,600 SF storage/garage only (construction in progress; 1,600 SF storage building CO has been issued).
- **Block 245 Lot 55** – 2495 Route 9 – site plan to construct 4,212 SF gasoline canopy w/4 fueling stations and renovate existing mixed-use building (project has not commenced).
- **Block 260 Lots 4.01 and 4.05** – 1084 and 1092 Route 83 – major site plan approval to construct an 11,900 SF building with various site improvements (project has not commenced).
- **Block 262 Lot 1.03** – 1910 Route 9 North – amended major site plan to alter the scope of the previously approved project. The contractor units were removed; the total number of self-storage units reduced to 4; building area increased to 96,000 SF, “phases” were removed, and certain site improvements were revised. (the project has not commenced).
- **Block 224 Lots 68.01, 73, 74.02, 75.03 and 78.04** – 384 Woodbine-Ocean View Road – major site plan to add ready-mix concrete to existing resource extraction operation. DT CLUB approval appealed; litigation ongoing; project has not commenced).
- **Block 261 Lot 15.02 – 1077 Rt. 83** – major site plan to construct a 6,000 SF storage/workshop building with various site improvements. (construction in progress.)
- **Block 96 Lot 1 – 1626 Route 83** – site plan approval to construct a mixed-use building consisting of office and workshop/storage building w/apartment and a second storage building and various site improvements. (The project has not commenced).
- **Block 262 Lot 11.14** – 19 Clermont Drive – major site plan approval to construct a 5,000 SF office/showroom/workshop w/1,000 SF lean-to and various site improvements.

All of Dennis Township is located within Cape May County USGS Study Area, PL Chapter 165 (Study) so any future plan to establish a Public Water Supply System with an associated water supply allocation that may have potential to accelerate saltwater intrusion, reduce stream flow, or harm natural resources would have to be regulatorily evaluated for approval by the Bureau. Only sustainable water supply alternatives necessary to meet the current and future water supply needs of Cape May County are considered based on the Study recommendations.

The Pinelands Management Area encompasses 24.5 square miles (or 40 percent) of the land area of Dennis Township. Land use in this area is regulated by the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan.

Portions of Dennis Township are located within the Delaware River Basin and are subject to the requirements of the Delaware River Basin Commission.

To aid in identifying the existing and proposed water supply sources and the strategies that document how water supply capacity will exist for the amount of growth detailed in the Endorsed Master Plan, the Township and County shall refer to the NJ State Water Supply Plan and contact the Bureau of Water Allocation and Well Permitting.

The Department supports and encourages all of the water conservation and water quality protection actions. As there were not adequate details on the future water demands of Dennis Township, to aid in identifying the existing and proposed water supply sources and the strategies that document how water supply capacity will exist for future growth, the municipality shall refer to the NJ State Water Supply Plan and, for guidance, contact the Bureau of Water Allocation and Well Permitting for technical guidance.

The Township of Dennis should :

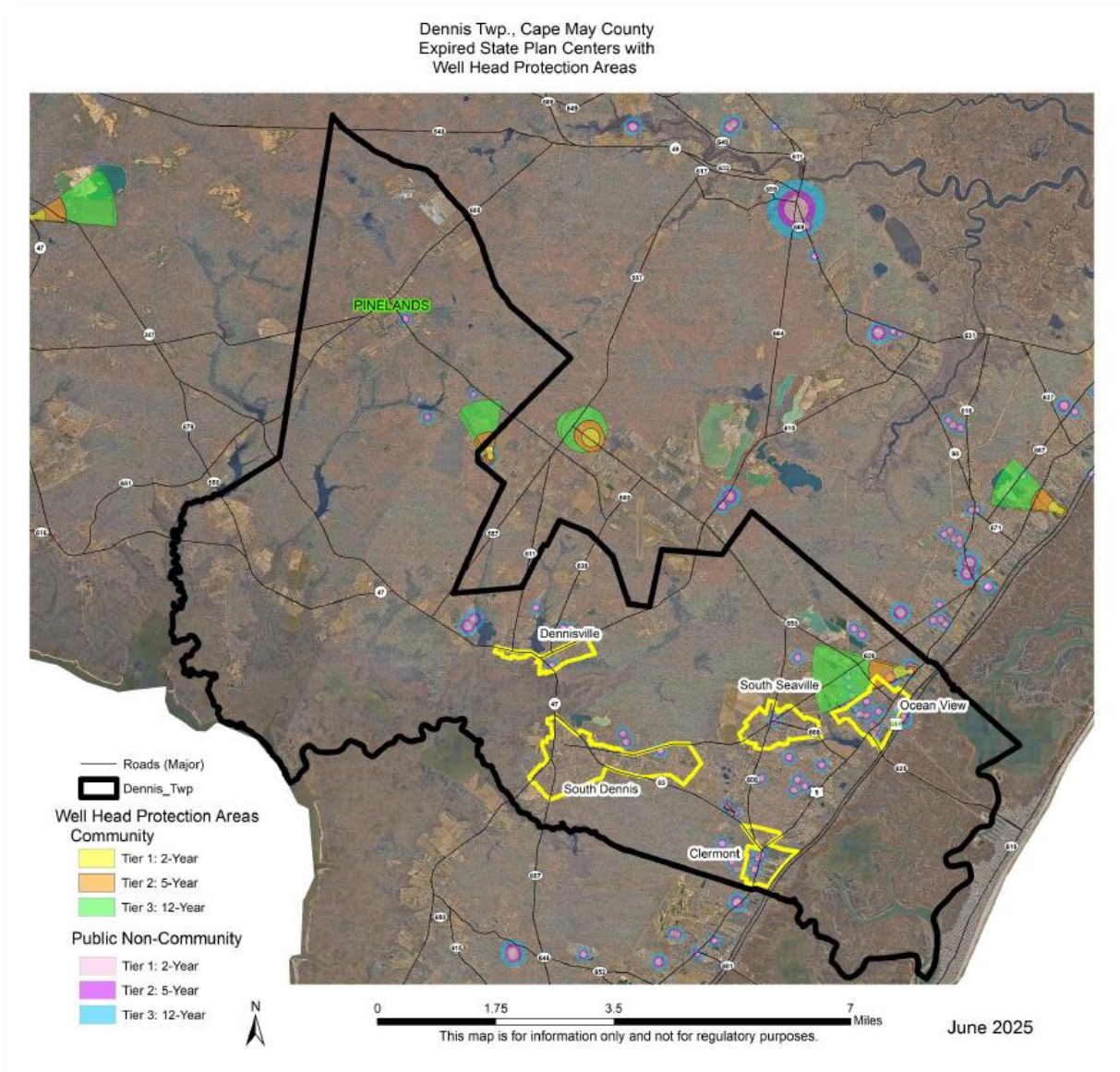
- **consider potential risk and impacts of salt water intrusion as part of the Climate Change Related Hazard Vulnerability Assessment and other planning documents as appropriate**
- **confirm that they have adopted or updated their Water Conservation and Drought Plan with their Water Conservation Ordinance or Water Supply Emergency Management Plan** consistent with the State model that details the system's water auditing and leak detection procedures. Through these initiatives, the municipality can maintain an unaccounted-for water level well below the recommended rate of 15%.

Water Supply Infrastructure in Flood Prone Areas

Potable drinking water is provided to the residents of the Dennis Township via private wells. **The municipality should also work with the Cape May County Department of Health and conduct a well search to inventory all currently documented private domestic and commercial wells within the municipality. For areas located within the 100 and 500 year flood zone and the Municipality should identify specific infrastructure vulnerability to flooding events to both inform the owners of their vulnerability and identify potential solutions to that vulnerability. Private well owners should be informed of their well's vulnerability and solutions to that well vulnerability should be identified.**

Well Head Protection Areas

A well head protection map was not included in the MSA and although there is not a municipal wide potable water supply system, there are a few community and/or commercial supply wells with a wellhead protection area around them within the Township of Dennis.



For any private wells or community supply wells, efforts should be made to protect that well and water quality that serve a community by providing drinking water and should have land surrounding the community wells, known as Well Head Protection Areas, to prevent contaminants that may move through the ground to be withdrawn in water taken from the well. Protection of the public health, safety, and welfare through protection of ground water resources, ensures a supply of safe and healthful drinking water. Well Head Protection Areas (WHPA) are mapped areas calculated around a Public Community

Water Supply (PCWS) well in New Jersey that delineates the horizontal extent of groundwater captured by a well pumping at a specific rate over a two-, five-, and twelve-year period of time for confined wells. The confined wells have a fifty-foot radius delineated around each well that defines the well head protection area, which must be acquired and controlled by the water purveyor in accordance with Safe Drinking Water Regulations (see NJAC 7:10-11.7(b)1). WHPA delineations are conducted in response to the Safe Drinking Water Act Amendments of 1986 and 1996 as part of the Source Water Assessment Program (SWAP). The delineations are the first step in defining the sources of water to a public supply well. Within these areas, potential contamination will be assessed, and appropriate monitoring will be undertaken as subsequent phases of the SWAP. WHPA delineation methods are described in *Guidelines for Delineation of Well Head Protection Areas in New Jersey*. (www.state.nj.us/deo/njgs/whpaguide.pdf)

Consistent with the recommendation above, **the municipality should identify all wellhead protection areas around public supply wells in its planning documents and adopt a wellhead protection ordinance, if not already done.** A map of wellhead protection areas in and around the Township of Dennis is provided below. The municipalities should identify if there are any public supply wells in active use on the barrier island. Most of the public supply system wells are located to the west of the municipal boundary on the mainland and do include wellhead protection areas. WHPA delineation methods are described in *Guidelines for Delineation of Well Head Protection Areas in New Jersey*. (www.state.nj.us/deo/njgs/whpaguide.pdf)

The Township of Dennis should include the date when all the wellhead protection areas were established and last reviewed around the community and non-community public supply wells in its planning documents.

Stormwater Management

Improvements to surface water infiltration and stormwater management can be implemented in many ways including replacing impervious pavement with pervious surfaces, maintain and restore all surface water bodies potential for additional stormwater retention through dredging and silt control, constructing green infrastructure, requiring buffers to surface water bodies, restoring wetland areas, adhering to state requirements for stormwater management best management practices, and adding stricter municipal building codes. To reduce flooding as temperatures and precipitation rise, **DEP recommends that the Township of Dennis continue to address stormwater runoff and improve stormwater retention on site at its source including updating their stormwater ordinance and stormwater management plan.**

In 2024, Dennis Township's Stormwater Ordinance may have been updated (Ordinance No. 2025-05) but the MSA did not confirm that the municipality is in compliance with their stormwater NJPDES MS4 Tier A permit. As a Tier A municipality, the municipality is required to submit an electronic outfall pipe map and post a stormwater pollution prevention plan online. Updated info shall be posted to Township website at <https://dennistwp.org/stormwater/>

The Township of Dennis shall update and confirm compliance with the following:

- **Confirm that their Stormwater Ordinance was updated by March 4, 2021 and is in compliance;**
- **Confirm compliance with their stormwater NJPDES MS4 permit;**
 - **Has submitted their electronic outfall pipe map which was due in December of 2020;**
 - **Has updated their Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SPPP) for the new permit – Last revised April 2025**
 - **Has met their public education requirements by conducting the required annual employee training in 2020;**
 - **Has prioritized list of outfall needed scour repair (this is required unless they don't have any needing that repair.)**
 - **Has submitted to DEP their electronic outfall pipe and inventory but should also update maps indicating any stormwater outfalls located within the flood zone. An MS4 outfall map is posted to township website at**

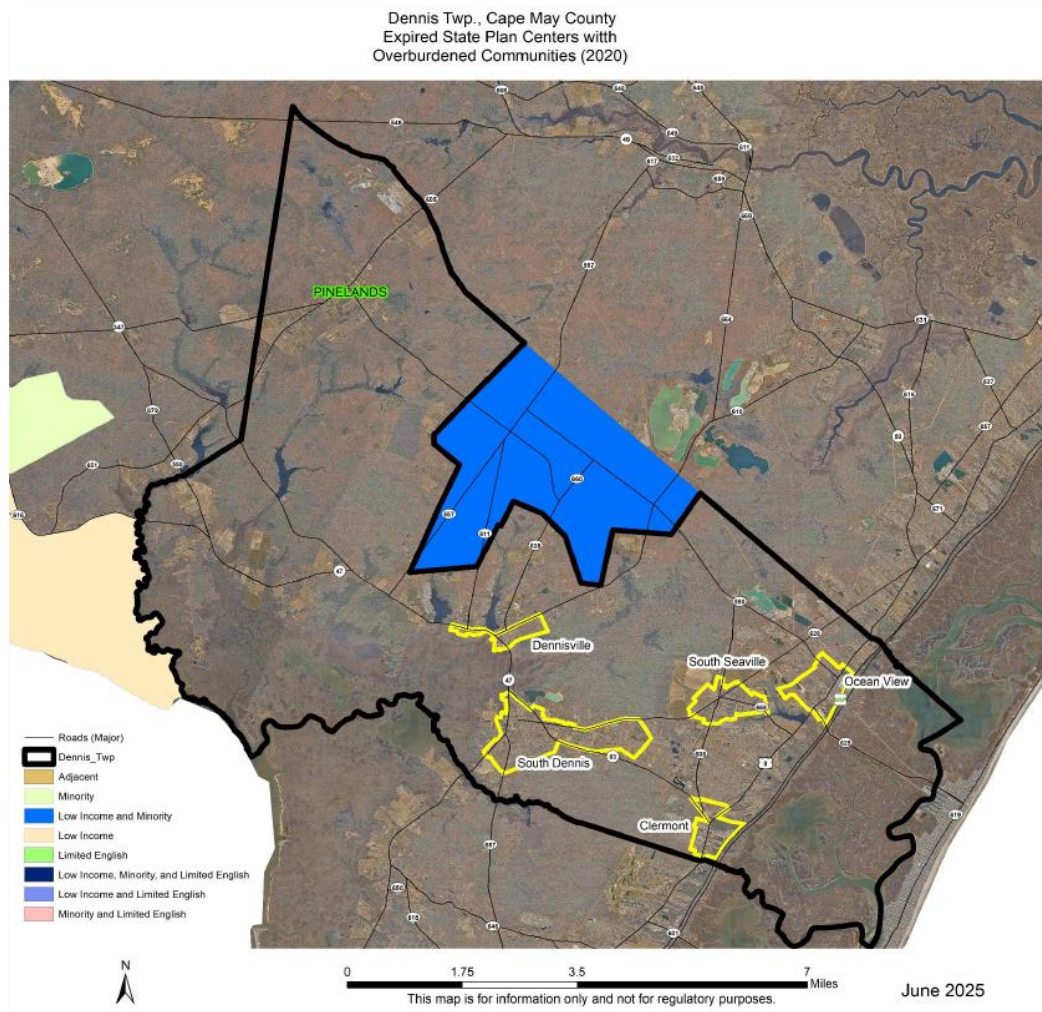
The municipality should also assess any wastewater system specific vulnerability to flooding events. Zoning ordinance and building codes should be updated to incorporate overlays for aquifer recharge, stream corridor and greenway conservation, and steep slope erosion control.

The municipality should seek opportunities to install green infrastructure measures and expand stream corridor buffer areas to offset increased stormwater, but also to lower the impacts of the heat-island effect by reducing the amount of impervious surfaces.

Social Vulnerability and Human Health

Population Assessment

The Township of Dennis had full time, year round population of 6285 in 2020, a decrease from 6457 in 2010. Many residences are now second homes or rental properties. It is projected that the year round population of Dennis Township may continue to decrease as the average age of residents increases. A portion of the municipality is designated as an overburdened community. The municipality shall confirm current levels of available housing delineated to include vacant or designated for short term rental or as a vacation home properties. The Township of Dennis shall confirm when they last updated their Housing Element and Fair Share Plan and what percentage of permanent residents qualify for affordable housing. Transportation and evacuation routes are entirely in the flood zone.



In planning for climate change related resilience measures, the Township of Dennis also consider the vulnerability of various populations within the municipality to adverse effects of climate change. All residents of the municipality are vulnerable to adverse impacts of a climate change, including an increase in temperature and precipitation and a degradation of natural resources. However, climate change also impacts residents differently based on their location in the municipality, their social and economic situation, and their ability to anticipate, resist, or recover from a natural hazard.

For those living near or within the municipality's flood zones, increased stormwater runoff under elevated precipitation and current impervious cover conditions could lead to catastrophic flooding. Any vulnerable residents that are adjacent to or in the floodplain may be at greater risk to flooding. The municipality should evaluate residents living in tracts close to or in the floodplain including the elderly, disabled, minorities, and those without personal transportation to identify the social vulnerabilities they may face as a result of increased flooding. For example, if there are people without cars who rely on public transportation, increased flooding could result in loss of wages or their jobs if they cannot get to work on flooded days.

Environmental Justice

As of September 2020, New Jersey has passed new environmental justice legislation and guidance, building on Executive Order 23 to mandate integration of equity considerations into government decision-making. All municipalities should seek to reduce disproportionate environmental and public health stressors and increase environmental and public health benefits for communities of concern, which defined as community block groups having concentrations of low-income, minority, or limited English-proficient residents. Municipalities should empower residents, particularly their most socially vulnerable residents, to meaningfully participate in decision-making that affects their environment, communities, and health. More information can be found on the Office of Environmental Justice Website, <https://www.nj.gov/dep/ej/>.

To mitigate negative impacts on the municipality's overburdened communities, the OEJ recommends that Township of Dennis consider the following: The municipality has overburdened communities (OBC) at the block group level designated as low income and minority under the [New Jersey Environmental Justice Law](#) (NJSA 13:1D-157).

- Flooding and other storm risks such as high winds and storm surges have been identified as a major threat for these municipalities. Resiliency, emergency, and evacuation plans should incorporate the needs of the minority populations in OBC blocks. This [report](#) commissioned by NJDEP addresses strategies to incorporate the needs of underrepresented and socially vulnerable populations into coastal hazards planning.
- Preserved natural, cultural and historic resources and outdoor recreation areas appear to be the town's defining characteristic and central to plans for economic development. Consideration should be given to whether residents of the town's OBC block groups have equitable access to these resources and how to reduce any barriers.
- Hold engagement sessions in OBCs to engage with communities and respond to concerns/comments regarding any redevelopment plans and proposals.
- Ensure representation from OBCs in any advisory committee who can act as a liaison between municipal officials, councils, and community members.
- Review this [report](#) commissioned by NJDEP which addresses strategies to incorporate the needs of underrepresented and socially vulnerable populations into coastal hazards planning.
- Follow the "Environmental Justice & Social Equity" section (p. 34) of the Office of Planning Advocacy's [Municipal Plan Endorsement Guidelines](#) to best incorporate environmental justice in the Municipality's municipal planning activities.
- Review the [Environmental Justice Mapping, Assessment and Protection Tool \(EJMAP\)](#) for visualization of OBC designations and stressor summaries per location.

A Housing and Fair Share Plan in accordance with Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL) was included by the Township of Dennis in the Housing Element of their most recent adopted Master Plan and Re-examination report. In 2024, the State adopted legislation to enter into the fourth round of the Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) regulations. The State Department of Community Affairs (DCA) assigned the number of affordable housing units each municipality would be responsible to provide. All municipalities had a deadline of January 31, 2025 to accept or reject DCA's assigned affordable housing requirements. Any municipality that rejected the assigned required units was required to

produce an affordable housing plan that reflects the number of units agreed upon by both the municipality and DCA.

The municipality is working to update their Housing Element to meet any requirements of COAH, identify vacant properties and acres completed under COAH rules NJSA 5:97-5.1 and identify efforts to meet affordable housing obligations through the development of vacant land and rehabilitation of vacant or underutilized existing buildings. Although it may be difficult to meet required affordable housing units because the lack of available vacant land, the DEP does not support affordable housing in flood zones. **The Township of Dennis should determine if any vacant lots under consideration for affordable housing construction have regulated wetlands, are in the 100 and 500 year flood zone, or have identified state or federal threatened or endangered species and habitat.** For areas in need of redevelopment that have environmental constraints may not be considered by DEP Watershed and Land Use Management Program to be eligible for necessary permits to redevelop a vacant property if the sewer service area needs to be extended. Impediments to SSA extension include significant wetlands, flood zone, or identified threatened and endangered species habitat.

The Township of Dennis shall provide a status update and supporting documentation to confirm the number and potential locations of their affordable unit obligation. Dennis Township shall confirm if they accepted the DCA assigned number of affordable housing units, if they reached a negotiated agreement of units with DCA, or if the municipality has not reached an agreement of affordable units with DCA.

If Dennis Township has reached an agreement with DCA of number of affordable housing units, Dennis Township must adopt an affordable housing plan indicating how they would achieve their obligation no later than June 30, 2025.

The Township of Dennis should update its Housing Element of the Master Plan, affordable housing ordinance and, if not already completed, develop an overlay for proposed affordable housing on vacant or underutilized land including any areas proposed in the center in need of redevelopment.

Healthy Communities

DEP strongly encourages Dennis Township to work with its municipal and county Offices of Emergency Management (OEMs) to review their Emergency Management Plans. **The Township of Dennis shall confirm completion of a Hazard Vulnerability and Mitigation Plan** that especially addresses, but not limited to, potential flooding of critical utilities, roadways and historic structures located in the flood zone and vulnerable to flooding related to increased precipitation. Water, sewer utilities, and piping are subject to flooding. **The municipality should document that it has an up to date Emergency Master Plan and that they have received an approval letter from NJ State Police for their Local Emergency Management Plan consistent with the Cape May County Plan, considers adverse effects of climate change, and that they have received an approval letter from NJ State Police for their Local Emergency Management Plan. The municipality is included in a chapter of the Cape May County Hazard Mitigation plan.**

For information, the NJ Department of Health data is limited . DOH data is more available for municipalities with larger populations. Data for the Municipality can be found at <https://www-doh.state.nj.us/doh-shad/>.

Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction

The degradation of air quality and elevated temperatures can lead to negative health issues. Elevated temperatures can interrupt power supply to all residences which could impact those who need electricity for medical equipment in their homes and loss of air conditioning could increase heat stress and its associated impacts. **The Township of Dennis should conduct an energy audit of all municipal owned buildings to identify energy inefficiencies. The Municipality shall also explore utilization of alternative fuels and green energy. Dennis Township should explore the feasibility of implementing community solar facilit(ies).**

Traffic congestion relief is a priority in municipality along it's existing and proposed commercial and evacuation routes as they explore alternative bikeways, walking paths and additional parking.

The municipality should adopt a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Ordinance that encompasses energy efficiency and sustainable alternatives to transportation including bike paths and walking trails. The DEP Air Quality, Energy and Sustainability program has a model ordinance available as guidance (<https://www.nj.gov/dep/aqes>)

Air Quality, Energy, Sustainable Materials

We commend the municipality for already taking many actions addressing energy, environmental protection, hazard mitigation, and energy management. If the municipality hasn't already done so, DEP encourages the municipality to do the following and if it has, provide a description and date of each item:

Energy

- Adopt a Greenhouse Gas Reduction Ordinance.[1]
- Adopt a Community Energy Plan (aka Energy Master Plan).[2]
- Audit public buildings, including schools for energy usage.[3]
- Implemented the recommendations from the energy audit to reduce energy demand.
- Implement LEED energy efficiency standards for all new building construction and ensure building energy demand is being met through electricity (rather than fossil fuels).
- Build, encourage on-site renewables on new and existing infrastructure.[4]
- Implement greenhouse gas emission reduction actions[5].

Transportation

- Conduct an analysis and develop a plan to right size new fleet vehicle purchases, emphasizing electric vehicle (EV) purchases where available and appropriate.[6]
- Install electric vehicle charging stations for use by public employees and visitors.
- Adopt EV friendly ordinances, e.g., classify charging stations as an accessory use; require pre-wiring for EV charging stations in new residences, multi-unit dwelling and workplaces; and/or count EV charging station spaces as parking spaces when calculating minimum parking requirements.[7]
- Regularly enforce the 3-minute idling requirement for diesel and gasoline vehicles.[8]

· Implement a complete streets plan for the municipality, ideally coordinating with Tuckerton on this work. .[9]

[1] Database of Climate Ordinances Now Available to Planners - Great Plains Institute (betterenergy.org) [2] Community Energy Plans | NJ OCE Web Site (njcleanenergy.com) [3] Local Government Energy Audit | NJ OCE Web Site (njcleanenergy.com) [4] Benefits | NJ OCE Web Site (njcleanenergy.com) [5] NJDEP | Climate Change | Take Action [6] Electric Vehicle Incentive Programs | NJ OCE Web Site (njcleanenergy.com) [7] Guidance_for_Creating_EV_Friendly_Ordinance_V.1_April_2017__1_.pdf (sustainablejersey.com) [8] Idling Fact Sheet (nj.gov) [9] Complete Streets Overview (nj.gov)

Contaminated Sites, Solid and Hazardous Waste, & Recycling

Known Contaminated Sites

To protect public health, the Township of Dennis should maintain and update a map of known contaminated sites and their remediation status. While some sites were mentioned in the MSA, a KCSL Inventory should not only include maps but also a table of site name, address, lot and block, NJDEP Program Interest Number, and note which sites are within the boundary of the proposed Center or areas in need of redevelopment or identified for any future housing needs.

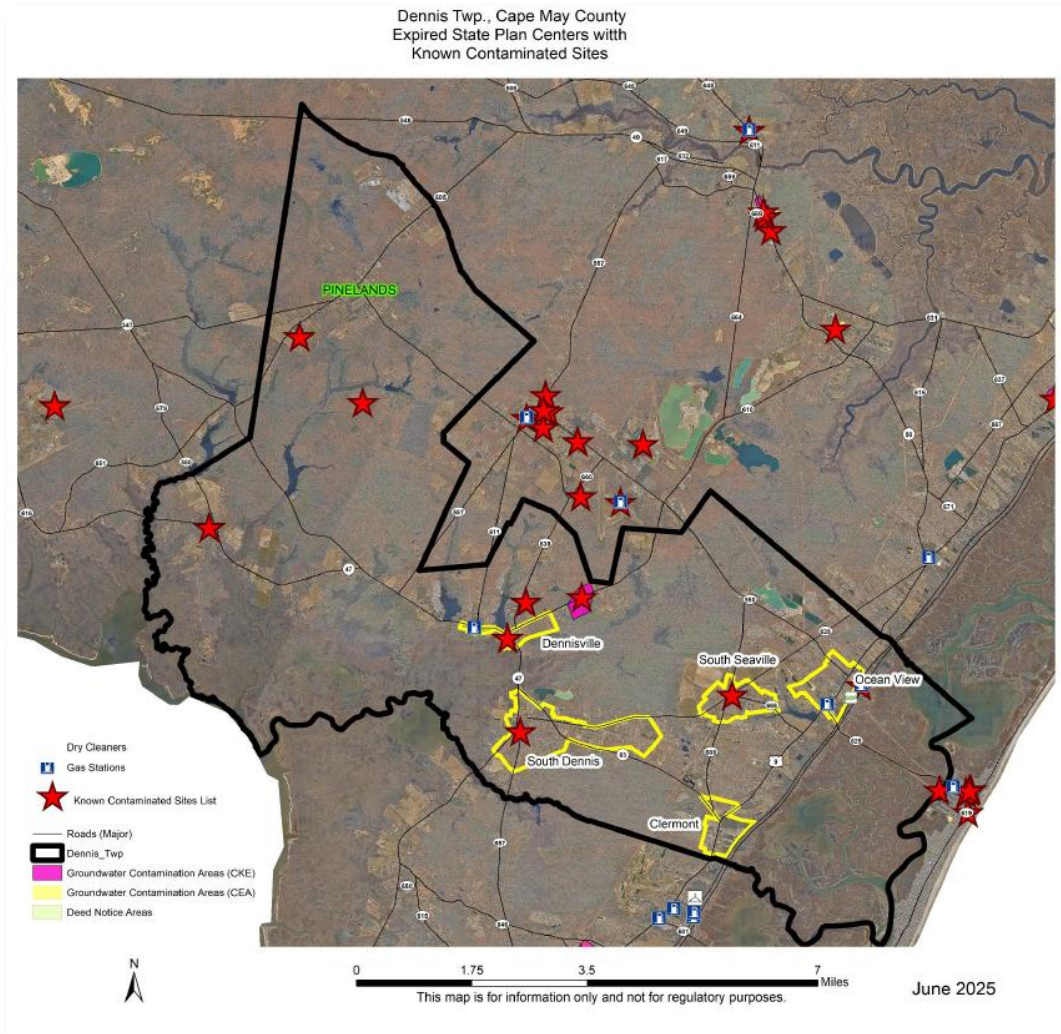
The Municipality should also conduct an inventory of home sources of contamination including residential underground heating oil tanks and septic systems. Several contaminated sites are located within or immediately adjacent to the proposed town center that may have an impact on ground water quality and have been subject to remediation measures. These include gas stations, underground storage tanks, dry cleaners, and locations of former commercial/industrial facilities. Adhering to DEP regulations for spill prevention and completing any required remediation and long-term groundwater monitoring of existing contamination are required in order to protect this valuable resource and public health.

The MSA's also did not include a map identifying classification exception (CEA) areas for groundwater remediation which are Groundwater Contamination Areas undergoing either active remediation or remediation through natural attenuation. There are known contaminated sites in the area of the proposed center also identified with Groundwater Contamination Areas undergoing remediation through natural attenuation.

Brownfields

The MSA states that as of the 2022 master Plan re-examination, there are no existing or anticipated redevelopment or rehabilitation areas in the Township as per NJSA 40A:12A-1 et seq. A GIS review indicates some sites including gas stations and dry cleaners that may be an ongoing source of contamination or active remediation. These Known Contaminated Sites in and adjacent to proposed centers may be an ongoing source of contamination or active remediation. **To protect public health, the municipality should maintain and update a map of known contaminated sites and their remediation status.** A KCSL Inventory should not only include maps but also a table of site name, address, lot and block, NJDEP Program Interest Number, and note which sites are within the boundary of the proposed Cores or areas in need of redevelopment or identified for any future housing needs. **The municipality should also conduct an inventory of home sources of contamination including residential underground heating oil tanks and septic systems.** Adhering to DEP regulations for spill prevention and completing

any required remediation and long-term groundwater monitoring of existing contamination are required in order to protect this valuable resource and public health.



The Township of Dennis should identify if any of these Known Contaminated Sites (KCS) meet the DEP definition of a brownfield site.

The Brownfield Act (N.J.S.A. 48:3-51) defines “brownfield” as:

“[A]ny former or current commercial or industrial site that is currently vacant or underutilized and on which there has been, or there is suspected to have been, a discharge of a contaminant.”

The Solar Act (N.J.S.A. 48:3-51) also defines “brownfield” as:

“[A]ny former or current commercial or industrial site that is currently vacant or underutilized and on which there has been, or there is suspected to have been, a discharge of a contaminant.”

It is often difficult for municipalities to identify their brownfields. It's even tougher for municipalities to navigate through the cleanup process and partner with willing developers. Sustainable Jersey is a good place to seek information to develop a brownfields inventory. **If the municipality pursues brownfield cleanup and development in the future, DEP recommends taking actions as part of the Sustainable Jersey Certification Program. Dennis Township is currently not one of many municipalities that are part of the Sustainable Jersey Certification Program. The Township of Dennis should register for the (<https://www.sustainablejersey.com/certification/registration-overview/>) Sustainable Jersey Certification Program.** There are many actions the municipality can accomplish specific to resilience, protection and redevelopment Actions within Sustainable Jersey. **If the municipality pursues brownfield cleanup and development in the future, DEP recommends taking actions as part of the Sustainable Jersey Certification Program.** These actions include Brownfield Inventory and Prioritization, Brownfield Reuse Planning, Brownfield Marketing, and Brownfield Assessment and Investigation. Each of these Sustainable Jersey Actions provide information on why they are important and how they can be accomplished. There are also resources provided to help municipalities accomplish the Action goals and examples of what other municipalities have done. The DEP has also created programs to aid municipalities with the cleanup of their brownfield sites.

Contaminated Sites and Waste Facilities in Flood-prone Areas

The Township of Dennis has identified known contaminates sites (KCS) within the 100 and 500 year flood zone

Solid and Hazardous Waste

DEP recommends that the Township of Dennis update its waste management plan in their Utility Services Plan Element of the master plan to encourage increased recycling and reduction of solid waste removal by public, and private facilities that either collect, transfer, process, or dispose of solid waste or recyclables on its municipal inventory. The municipality should also continue to inform its residents of any opportunities for recycling including additional drop-off depot locations and opportunities for residents, any Municipality plans to build additional waste management facilities in town, and any additional waste facilities or services to provide a more holistic view of how the Municipality manages its waste.

Recycling

The Division of Sustainable Waste Management, Bureau of Solid Waste Planning and Licensing received the request for comments on the Township of Dennis Self-Assessment Report for State Planning purposes. We have reviewed the Self-Assessment and have the following general comments to provide for the self-assessment template along with comments specific to the Township of Dennis self-assessment:

The Township of Dennis shall confirm that they are in compliance with their recycling requirements.

- adopted a **Recycling Ordinance and Program**
- appointed a **recycling coordinator**.

- provided the NJDEP with a **recycling statement of consistency** to meet the requirements of N.J.S.A. 13:1E-99.11 et seq. (Recycling Act), NJ Statewide Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act. The MSA did not indicate if the recycling plan has been updated since 1993 and did not identify its recycling coordinator.
- provide the State with **tonnage reports** each year.
- publicize recycling provisions every six months.

The Municipality shall confirm that it has met its obligation to list at least one municipal recycling ordinance, and **post a current recycling ordinance. DEP recommends that the Municipality notify the State of any recycling ordinance adoption and amendments in the future through a statement of consistency, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 13:1E-99.16(b).** Future communication with the State should also include long-term plans including recycling education campaigns, how the municipality plans to enforce proper recycling practices, and potential plans to build upon the current recycling infrastructure in order to provide the State with an understanding of how the municipality plans to improve its current recycling system.

Specifically:

MSA Content Related to Solid Waste Management and recycling:

- Goal #4: Protect the Environment, Prevent and Clean-up Pollution
 - “Dennis Township is keenly aware of the need to protect the environment and prevent and reduce pollution and toxic emissions, in order to conserve resources and protect public health. The Township’s designated centers are intended to reduce automobile usage; land, water and energy consumption; and to minimize impacts on public health and biological systems, water and air quality. The Township will also purchase land and easements to protect flood plains and sustain agriculture where appropriate”
 - Recycling, waste management, cleanup programs not addressed.
- Goal #8: Ensure Sound and Integrated Planning and Implementation Statewide
 - “Township ordinances establish best management practices, and or otherwise regulate agriculture, fish and wildlife, solid waste and recyclables, storage and use of chemicals, scenic corridors, screening, utilities, and resource extraction.”

Solid Waste Management Questions:

- Has the municipality adopted a Recycling Ordinance and Program. **Not mentioned**
- Has the Municipality designated a Recycling Officer? **Not mentioned**
 - Has the Municipality submitted to NJDEP a Recycling Statement of Consistency? **Not mentioned. A statement of consistency specific to recycling is recommended.**

1. [N.J.A.C. 5:85-7.9](#): Self-Assessment Report, form, content, adoption, and submission requirements

- #2 of this statute requires each municipality to provide an inventory of all available public facilities and services.
- DEP recommends that not only public, but also private facilities that either collect, transfer, process, or dispose of solid waste or recyclables be included as well
 - **Inventory of all public facilities are services are included in MSA, but no solid waste or recycling facilities exist in Dennis.**

2. [N.J.A.C. 5:85-7.13](#): Consistency review; (d), subsection 2 outlines the requirements needed for a complete and consistent municipal plan.

- XVII of this section requires the municipality to provide a recycling statement of consistency- **Not included**
- DEP recommends [N.J.S.A. 13:1E-99.11 et seq.](#) (Recycling Act), NJ Statewide Mandatory Source Separation and Recycling Act and its various requirements explicitly be mentioned in this section. Requirements should include:
 - Statement that municipality has appointed a recycling coordinator
 - Statement that municipality has included provisions for recycling in their master plans
 - Statement that municipality provides the State with tonnage reports each year
 - Statement that municipality publicizes recycling provisions every six months**There is no mention of Statement of Consistency with above requirements in Dennis MSA**

3. [N.J.A.C. 5:85-7.13](#): Consistency review; (d), subsection 2 outlines the requirements needed for a complete and consistent municipal plan.

- [XVIII](#) of this subsection requires the municipality to list at least one municipal recycling ordinance. **No mention of specific recycling ordinances in Dennis MSA.**
- DEP recommends that all recycling ordinances adopted by a municipality should be included so that the State is aware of what each municipality is doing in order to collect recyclables and improve upon the existing recycling system. **Not addressed**
- Providing a statement of consistency that the municipality has adopted ordinances requiring that all county mandated recyclable materials are source separated and the generator is reporting all recycling to the town pursuant to N.J.S.A. 13:1E-99.16(b) would acknowledge the requirements of this legislation in the town's self-assessment. **No statement of consistency in Dennis MSA.**

4. DSWM recommends that any additional recycling information that remains mostly consistent over time should be included in a self-assessment as well. The following items should be included:

- Due to recycling changing greatly overtime, listing specifics such as the current recycling hauler, where the recyclables are processed, or current tonnages would be unnecessary.
- Components of a municipality's recycling system that are more long term, should be included. This can include, but is not limited to:
 - Recycling education campaigns
 - How the municipality plans to enforce proper recycling practices
 - Potential plans to build upon the current recycling infrastructure.
- Including this provision would provide the State with an understanding of how a municipality plans to improve its current recycling system.

These comments are provided to enhance the content of the current information included in the Township of Dennis Self-Assessment as well as any future municipal self-assessments that DEP may receive. These comments are specific to recycling and waste management within a municipality and subsequently based on the Township of Dennis Self-Assessment that was submitted. Our comments in no way should be misconstrued as additional information that needs to be added to the self-assessment but rather a guide to improve upon the current report.

Development within Proposed Centers

The DEP recommends that the municipality update zoning maps to which parcels are vulnerable to flooding. The DEP also recommends a zoning update, habitat suitability determination or environmental assessment for large tracks of undeveloped land before planning board approval of any new development in previously undisturbed areas.

Any development plan would require review and consistency with the CZM Rules at N.J.A.C. 7:7-13.16(b). A new coastal planning area map will also require review by NJDEP before State Plan Endorsement. The current CAFRA rules state that the Department evaluate the new or changed center boundary to determine whether it is consistent with the purposes of CAFRA. The Department will review any plan changes to determine if it would result in unacceptable harm to the coastal ecosystem or the resources of the built or natural environment, or would otherwise be clearly inconsistent with the purposes of CAFRA or this chapter. For those new or changed community development boundaries or new or changed center boundaries which are located within the Pinelands National Reserve, the Department shall also, in consultation with the New Jersey Pinelands Commission, determine whether the boundaries are consistent with the intent, policies and objectives of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, P.L. 95-625, section 502, creating the Pinelands National Reserve, and the State Pinelands Protection Act of 1979 (N.J.S.A. 13:18A-1 et seq.).

Future Redevelopment Areas

The 2025 MSA stated no development or redevelopment project areas within and outside the proposed center area. Any future development or redevelopment should avoid and minimize impacts to threatened and endangered species and habitat, wetlands, Flood Zones, Historic Resources, Surface Water Quality and Critical Infrastructure. Threatened and Endangered Species: If development is proposed in an area that has some identified wetlands or threatened and endangered species and/or habitat should be confirmed via an updated natural resources inventory and habitat suitability determination.

For developments requiring a CAFRA permit, if additional offsite areas are proposed to be included as part of the project site to meet the impervious cover and vegetative cover requirements of Subchapter 13, these additional parcels would need to be within the same planning area/center designation as the other portions of the property. They should consider this if they have future projects proposed and portions of the sites are in different center/planning area designations so they can consider incorporating these areas in the current centers or changing their planning areas.

Conclusion

The DEP will continue to work with the Office of Planning Advocacy to revise the proposed Center and Nodes so that it is consistent with not only the Municipal Land Use Law, the State Plan, the CAFRA Coastal Management Rules and underlying land use and natural resources, but also to avoid and minimize impacts to threatened and endangered species and habitat, wetlands, flood zones, historic resources, surface water quality and critical infrastructure. These modifications are responsive to projected open space and habitat preservation as well as projected climate change impacts. This will allow the Township

of Dennis to avoid, prepare for, minimize the effect of, adapt to and recover from extreme weather events and changes in environmental conditions that have the potential to adversely affect the resources and residents of the Municipality.

Summary of Recommendations

Assessment of Proposed Centers

In reviewing the Township of Dennis' most recent 2022 Master Plan Re-examination Report and the 2025 State Plan Municipal Self Assessment proposing re-endorsement of the village centers, a center map will be finalized between the Municipality and OPA with recommendations from DEP and will promote preservation of historic districts, preservation of natural resources, expansion of public access conservation areas and sustainable growth.

Endorsement of any centers and planning areas should promote preservation of historic areas, preservation of natural resources, and growth of public access conservation areas while avoiding repetitive flood areas, threatened and endangered species, out of zoning uses, and areas under enforcement review by the NJDEP. Master Plan elements including Natural Resources Inventory, Open Space Plan, emergency management plan, etc. and respective ordinances should be updated to ensure consideration of additional climate and EJ impacts. The Township of Dennis should confirm if their Natural Resources Inventory and Land Use Inventory was updated within the last 10 years or at the time of the last master plan re-examination.

1. The municipality needs to further identify in proposed preservation or redevelopment areas any vulnerabilities to future flooding and adverse impacts related to climate change. Resiliency actions and restrictions should be applied to any sections in flood zones. DEP can offer Technical Assistance in clarifying development constraints for sites.
2. Future development in the Municipality will likely be limited by a shortage of available vacant and open land, overlapping restrictions of Special Flood Hazard Areas, and regulated riparian zones. The Municipality's zoning ordinance should be updated to include overlays that address stormwater management, aquifer recharge, 100 year and 500 year flood zones and critical habitat and habitat corridors. In a PA-5b planning area, a Critical Environmental Site (CES) overlay for undeveloped areas in the 100 year and 500 year flood zone and environmentally sensitive areas (ESA) is not necessary but zoning should be updated for informative purposes.
3. The municipality should confirm update its Land Development Ordinance to include sustainable development practices.
4. Prior to endorsement, the municipality must demonstrate consistency with the State Plan, CAFRA, and NJDEP guidance for climate resilience and environmental Justice. The Municipality did not provide in the MSA a summary **table of all ordinances and plans with most recent date each was adopted or updated**. The Municipality should complete prior to endorsement and **update annually** a summary table of all ordinances and plans and last date updated. Any required ordinances or plans missing need to be created and adopted. Any existing ordinances, plans, zoning, etc need to be reviewed and updated to include climate resilience, updated inventories data, and social vulnerability and environmental justice. The Office of Planning and Assessment

provides guidance for a checklist. In addition, we offer the attached checklist as an option to identify and track all ordinances and plans required for state plan consistency.

Climate Change Resiliency

1. **The Township of Dennis should prepare for climate impacts described in the state Climate Change Science Report and available on the NJDEP website by completing a climate vulnerability assessment and adopting a Climate Resiliency Plan and incorporate climate resiliency into all applicable ordinances.**
2. This analysis has an extended focus on increased precipitation and flooding. The Municipality should also prepare for impacts of increased heat.
3. The Municipality shall confirm that it has updated its Hazard Mitigation Plan and chapter in County Plan and shall include a NJ State Police approval letter for the Local Emergency Management Plan.
4. The Municipality should also prepare long-term adaptive management forestry practices to preserve its tree cover as precipitation and temperatures increase. If already completed, please provide dates completed and link.
5. The Municipality should expand its conservation corridors connecting parks and walkable community areas via easements and additional open space preservation.

Flooding

1. To address flooding increases, largely due to increases in intense short-term rain events, DEP recommends that municipality utilize the Special Flood Hazard Area for the most conservative planning tool the 1.0 (100 year) and 0.2 percent (500-year) storm predictive model. In assessing flood vulnerability, the municipality should evaluate its sewer, water, and stormwater infrastructure, as well as its transportation and evacuation routes.
2. The Municipality should identify open space, vacant, and underutilized land vulnerable to future flooding and should maintain up to date mapping and inventory of areas that flood regularly, including repetitive loss (RL) and severe repetitive loss (SRL) properties, roadways and intersections, with particular attention to evacuation routes or critical access areas.
3. Future development in the Municipality will likely be limited by overlapping restrictions of Special Flood Hazard Areas and riparian zones, wetlands, and critical environmental species habitat.
4. When evaluating any construction within the identified floodplain of the Township of Dennis outside of the proposed center, the Municipality and others involved must also consider the cost of damage and replacement in the event of flooding.
 - a. Any proposed conceptual redevelopment or conservation plan should be presented to DEP early in review process, before planning board approval, and before submittal of any permit applications to determine if the project has any fatal flaws rendering it un-permittable in its current design.
5. The DEP recommends that the Municipality, as per the most recent Master Plan Re-examination Report, enhance its own zoning regulations and building codes to encourage building outside of

the flood zone and to minimize construction in flood prone areas to reconstruction of existing buildings. Flood zone area new construction or redevelopment of existing buildings should avoid high density concentration and areas of severe flooding.

- a. Construction of any critical utility line and associated infrastructure, emergency services, or public services buildings (schools, hospitals, churches, etc.) should be avoided in the flood hazard area and any currently within the flood zone should be mitigated for flood resilience. When evaluating any construction within the identified floodplain, one must also consider the cost of damage and replacement in the event of flooding.
6. DEP recommends that the Municipality adopt an updated floodplain development ordinance (<https://www.ecode360.com>) that is consistent with the most recent standards and National Flood Insurance Programs. For Guidance please review the model ordinance at <https://www.nj.gov/dep/floodcontrol/modelord.htm> and FEMA guidance at <https://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/manage-risk/local>.
7. DEP encourages any town that has homes and neighborhoods that repetitively flood to consider contacting the DEP Blue Acres program regarding buyouts. (https://www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres/blue_flood_ac.html)
8. Green infrastructure should be incorporated into all projects within the floodplain.

Historic Resources

3. The Township of Dennis shall adopt and update as necessary its Historic and Cultural Resources Inventory and update it's Historic Preservation Plan Element in the Master Plan as well as consider expanding their Historic District and a Historic District Transition Area. Historic structures within the Municipality should continue to be evaluated and protected with enhanced stormwater management and flood minimization plans within the municipal code.
4. Revise the Municipality code to implement the following:
 - Update as necessary the existing Historic sites overlay with defined historic sites buffer area;
 - Update as necessary the architectural and development standards within and adjacent to the historic sites;
 - Maintain an Historic Preservation Commission;
 - Continue to update the historic sites inventory and include historic sites in capital improvement program especially related to flood resilience.

Open Space and Wildlife

DEP recommends that The municipality regularly update their natural resources inventory every 10 years and adopt a resource conservation protection overlay. The Municipality expressed in the MSA that it wishes to acquire additional parkland for public community use in proximity to it's center and walkable areas.

The Municipality should update its most recent Open Space and Recreation Plan to protect the municipality open spaces and expand conservation easements and incorporate climate resilience.

- Continue to work with Cape May County and surrounding municipalities to provide and expand corridors of open space and natural features.
- Support habitat connectivity, adaptation to changing climate conditions, and to protect historic structures between and including town NGO, state, and federal open space within the Municipality owned open space, green acres encumbered open space, the Pinelands Reserve and the Natural Heritage Priority Sites.
- The Municipality should also incorporate conservation easement tracking and monitoring in its Open Space Plan and a Habitat Conservation Protection ordinance.

The Municipality should expand on long-term tree shade and forestry adaptive management practices to preserve its tree cover as precipitation and temperatures increase.

- Adopt a tree ordinance to protect trees during development and in accordance with a Community Forest Management Plan
- Maintain a Community Wildfire Protection Plan utilizing guidance from NJ Forest Fire Service

The Municipality should promote the recolonization and reuse of open field habitats for ground nesting and foraging birds.

The Municipality should continue to expand public outreach and educational opportunities.

Wastewater, Water Supply, and Stormwater

1. The Township of Dennis should regularly re-assess vulnerability of the municipal stormwater, wastewater management system and potable water supply system infrastructure that serves the town including any treatment plants, pump stations, delivery piping or outfalls in the flood zone, determine their specific vulnerability to flooding events, and evaluate resiliency solutions.
2. The Municipality should continue to address stormwater runoff, improve retention on site at its source, reduce flooding and maintain water quality as temperatures and precipitation rise. Improvements can be implemented in many ways, including replacing impervious pavement with pervious surfaces, maintaining and restoring all surface water bodies potential for additional stormwater retention through dredging and silt control, constructing green and natural infrastructure, requiring buffers to surface water bodies, restoring wetland areas, adhering to state requirements for stormwater management best management practices, and adding stricter municipal building codes.
3. Stormwater Management - DEP recommends that the Municipality continue to address stormwater runoff and improve stormwater retention on site at its source. DEP recommends that the Municipality come into compliance with their MS4 permit and **confirm** that their stormwater

pollution prevention plan and stormwater management ordinance **were updated** prior to deadline of March 2021.

- a. in compliance updated their Stormwater Management Plan and Ordinance by March 15, 2021.
 - b. In compliance with the MS4 permit by submitting to DEP updated outfall location maps at its wastewater treatment plant and elsewhere in the Municipality.
 - i. Inventory and update maps of any stormwater outfalls located within the flood zone and determine their specific vulnerability to flooding events.
 - ii. Update ordinance to incorporate overlays for aquifer recharge, stream corridor and greenway conservation, and steep slope erosion control.
 - iii. Adopt an Impervious Surface Reduction Plan - Evaluate and reduce impervious surfaces and improve stormwater in-situ recharge.
 - c. Stream Corridor and Green Infrastructure - The Municipality should seek opportunities to install green infrastructure measures and expand stream corridor buffer areas to offset increased stormwater runoff and to lower the impacts of heat-island effect directly related to the amount of impervious surfaces.
4. Wastewater Management – The Municipality shall identify any private wastewater treatment facility buildings, pump stations and any piping in the floodzone. The Municipality shall also identify any residential houses in need of expansion of sewer service area to relieve any remaining failing septic systems as a health priority.
- a. DEP supports ongoing resiliency improvement measures at any the Municipality wastewater treatment facilities and infrastructure and should be included in an updated municipal chapter of the Cape May County Hazard Mitigation Plan if relocating any conveyance or outfall pipe.
 - b. While the sewer service area includes approximately 80% of the Township of Dennis, the Municipality should also identify any active commercial or home septic systems.
 - c. The current sewer service area also includes areas identified as habitat or habitat migration corridors for threatened and endangered species. Future evaluation of the County approved sewer service area may eliminate those species habitat areas. Such parcels would be subject for review either through a Municipal Chapter of the Cape May County Wastewater Management Plan or through a site specific amendment pursuant to the DEP Water Quality Management rules.
5. Potable water supply system – The Township of Dennis does not have a public water supply but does have community well with a wellhead protection area. The municipality should update its mapping of any potable water supply wells and treatment infrastructure located in the 100 and 500 year flood zone including any outfalls, and conveyance piping and wellhead protection areas. The municipality should identify any water supply or conveyance infrastructure located in the flood zone and determine their specific vulnerability to flooding events.
- a. Additionally, DEP recommends that the Municipality determine if there are any private domestic wells within the flood zone and inform the owners of their vulnerability and identify potential solutions to that vulnerability.

- b. As needed, the municipality should update maps and prepare tables of location, capacity, etc. of the wellhead protection area around the community public supply wells that provide potable water to the Municipality in its planning documents. **The Township of Dennis should adopt or update their Water Conservation Plan.**

Contaminated Sites, Solid and Hazardous Waste, and Recycling

5. The Township of Dennis should update their Known Contaminated Sites Inventory of the municipality and clarify if any of those areas are slated for redevelopment. There are a few identified sites in and adjacent to the center and the municipality shall determine if any identified contaminated sites within the proposed center are currently undergoing remediation efforts and groundwater monitoring. The municipality should identify if any of these Known Contaminated Sites (KCS) also meet the current DEP definition of a brownfield site and evaluate for redevelopment.
6. If the Municipality pursues brownfield cleanup and development in the future, DEP recommends taking actions as part of the Sustainable Jersey Certification Program.
7. The Municipality should also expand its inventory of potential sources of contamination by identifying all commercial and private home underground storage tanks and septic systems.
8. **The Municipality should confirm that they have adopted a recycling ordinance** and municipal solid waste and recycling management plan to identify not only public, but also private facilities that either collect, transfer, process, or dispose of solid waste or recyclables on its municipal inventory. The Municipality should notify the State of any update to its recycling ordinances adopted through a statement of consistency, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 13:1E-99.16(b).

Environmental Justice and Social Vulnerability

1. As per new environmental justice legislation, all municipalities should seek to reduce disproportionate stressors and increase benefits for socially vulnerable populations and frontline communities. The Municipality can do this by empowering residents, particularly its most socially vulnerable residents, to meaningfully participate in decision-making that affects their environment, communities, and health.
2. The Municipality shall regularly update its available land inventory to further identify sustainable development potential while meeting conservation and environmental protection goals.
3. The Municipality shall confirm status and completion of a Fair Share Housing plan and an updated Housing Element to the Master Plan. The Municipality shall confirm adopt its affordable housing ordinance and shall develop an overlay for proposed affordable housing on vacant or underutilized land.
4. The Municipality should update any assessment of any Redevelopment Areas vulnerable to future flooding, with regulated wetlands and/or with identified critical species habitat during the planning process that would limit any future affordable housing.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction and Energy

1. All communities are encouraged to implement actions to meet New Jersey's goals for greenhouse gas emissions reduction. The Sustainable Jersey Gold Star in Energy identifies a suite of actions and levels of performance that municipalities can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Information on the goals star standard can be found at <https://www.sustainablejersey.com/actions/gold-star-standards>.
2. DEP supports the Municipality's interest in pursuing the utilization of renewable energy, although it encourages the Municipality to pursue it in an ecologically responsible manner. The Municipality shall conduct an energy audit of all municipal buildings and adopt or update an Energy Master Plan.
3. DEP supports renewable energy through solar arrays installation, although it expresses concerns for their placement in ground nesting habitats for birds. The Municipality should consider adopting a Solar Energy Plan. The Municipality should continue to protect its open spaces and the recolonization and reuse of open field habitats for ground nesting and foraging birds as they evaluate sustainable, renewable and alternative energy sources and sites.
4. The Municipality should adopt a Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Ordinance that encompasses energy efficiency and sustainable alternatives to transportation including bike paths, walking trails and contiguous sidewalks and potential congestion relief bypass routes. For guidance please refer to the Great Plains Institute database of climate ordinances at: https://www.betterenergy.org/blog/database-of-climate-ordinances-now-available-to-planners/?mc_cid=ee681f368d&mc_eid=64c234231d

Attachments



Municipal Ordinance
Checklist.docx

NJ DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

**State Development and Redevelopment Plan
Plan Endorsement
Opportunities and Constraints Analysis**

For:

Dennis Township, Cape May County

June 16, 2025

This document constitutes the New Jersey Department of Transportation's component of the State Opportunities and Constraints Analysis conducted as part of the Plan Endorsement process. This document provides a collection of the most recent data and information that exists in the Department pertaining to transportation features, studies, projects, grants, designations and other significant issues as applicable. The document should serve as a baseline to inform the remainder of the Plan Endorsement process. It should be understood that this assessment reflects conditions as they presently exist, and that changes may occur at any time during the Plan Endorsement process.

NJDOT has examined the following categories for pertinent data:

State Highways

NJ Route 47 – MP 15.98 – 24.51

NJ Route 347 – MP 0.00 – 2.70

NJ Route 83 – MP 0.00 – 3.81

U.S. Route 9 – MP 18.04 – 22.39

Garden State Parkway – MP 14.80 – 18.97

State Highway Access Management Code – Access Levels and Desirable Typical Sections

Dennis Township, Cape May County, is engaged with various State offices to secure a new Plan Endorsement (PE) which was provided to our unit, Statewide Strategies. SWS has not been made aware of the previous boundary limits that were included as Dennis Township's designated center. **As such, the Statewide Strategies review has considered the entire Dennis Township boundaries as the designated center which creates no change to the mapped limits as targeted growth areas and their environs (i.e. urban and rural areas as defined in the New Jersey State Highway Access Management Code).**

Access Management

Please find the attached Dennis Township, Cape May County Opportunities and Constraints table. As shown in the table, no changes have been identified to the Appendix B-1 access classification designations for the noted segments of the State Highway System (SHS) for (NJ Route 47), (NJ Route 83), & (U.S Route 9) because of Plan Endorsement. There are no mentions of changes to roadway classification that would alter the Access Code in any way. Therefore, the Bureau of Statewide Strategies has identified the Dennis Township, Cape May County PE request will not result in a significant change in the rules for managing access to the state highway system.

Transportation Planning

As NJDOT endeavors to coordinate reviews with other state agencies, we would direct their attention to SDRP's Statewide Goals, Strategies and Policies with special emphasis on the following Statewide Policies on Transportation.

Transportation – regarding improving transportation systems by coordinating transportation and land-use planning; integrating transportation systems; developing and enhancing alternative modes of transportation; improving management structures and techniques; and utilizing transportation as an economic development tool.

Statewide Transportation Policy 1, regarding transportation maintenance and repair - The maintenance and repair of the existing transportation network is the highest transportation priority.

Statewide Transportation Policy 5, regarding transportation and environmental resource protection – Coordinate transportation planning and project development with environmental planning through a capital planning process. Before programming for construction, evaluate the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of installing transportation improvements and of the development that these improvements may support or induce to ensure that they accommodate and protect sensitive environmental resources.

Statewide Transportation Policy 9, regarding transportation and context-sensitive design - Promote flexible transportation design standards and flexible application of standards which take into consideration the needs of people and the design and natural characteristics of adjacent areas.

Statewide Transportation Policy 20, regarding transportation as a redevelopment and development tool - Employ transportation planning, facilities and services as development and redevelopment tools to shape growth and leverage economic development opportunities.

Statewide Transportation Policy 22, regarding transportation recreational and tourism travel - Promote travel and tourism in New Jersey by making appropriate transportation investments that consider seasonal demands, enhance mobility and accessibility through infrastructure improvements, access management and demand management strategies, and protect the resources on which recreation and tourism are dependent.

Consistent with NJDOT's asset management approach, the maintenance and repair of the existing transportation network is the highest priority. Dennis Township's major highways include East/West connectors like NJ Route 347, NJ Route 47, and NJ Route 83. These routes connect Dennis Township to the Barrier Islands of the Jersey Shore as well as larger south-western NJ cities like Millville and Vineland. NJ Route 47 serves as a greater regional connector as it can be traveled to its termination point in Glassboro at

Rowan University with connections to Route 322 and NJ Route 55. The major north/south connectors in Dennis Township are the Garden State Parkway and U.S. Route 9. This infrastructure is critical to maintain as it as north/south connections become limited in this region. This is especially critical during seasonal traffic that occurs along these routes due to major tourist destinations like Cape May and Wildwood. Due to Dennis Township's location in rural environmentally sensitive planning areas and the Pineland's Special Resource Area, it is crucial to consider context-sensitive and environmentally conscious design when planning for the local and regional transportation system through this area of the State.

Congestion Management System

According to the attached charts, the Overall Congestion Assessments for the subject highways are as follows:

- NJ Route 47 is "Mildly Congested."
- NJ Route 347 is "Mildly Congested."
- NJ Route 83 is "Mildly Congested."
- U.S. Route 9 is "Mildly Congested."
- Garden State Parkway is "Not Congested."

The Overall Assessment is based on a review of Congestion Management System (CMS) and PDA Suite Data (also attached), showing weekdays of the year 2024. The congestion analysis is valid between June 2025 and June 2028. The PDA Suite was developed by the University of Maryland for the I-95 Corridor Coalition.

Major Capital Projects/Initiatives and Mitigation Projects

The FY **2024-33** Statewide Transportation Improvement Program contains the following projects:

-Route 47 Bridge over Dennis Creek – the project will replace the bridge deck and superstructure of the structurally deficient bridge built in 1928.

-East Mill Creek Road (CR 670/Route 347), Phase I – the project will mill (5") and pave (base course and surface course), upgrade existing guiderail, minor damage improvements, centerline rumble strips, centerline and edge line RPMs, enhanced lane markings, traffic calming approaching Route 47, and possibly high friction surface treatment.

-East Mill Creek Road (CR 670/Route 347), Phase II – see above.

-Kings Highway (CR 608), Route 83 to CR 628 – The existing surface from Route 83 to CR 628 needs resurfacing, as it is over 25 years old. The road surface is rated as fair to

poor on the 2019 PCI pavement assessment. The roadway services numerous container trash trucks in route to the CMCMA land fill. It also services numerous residences along the road including subdivisions. The roadway connects to existing seasonal camp grounds and a bicycle path that is part of the countywide network. The road sees more bicycle and pedestrian use due to completion of the bike path. It also provides access to two golf courses that form a portion of the tourist economy. The roadway provides a connection to both Sea Isle and Avalon barrier islands to the central part of the county and an eventual link to Route 55.

Designated Transit Villages

Not Applicable.

Designated Scenic Byways

The designated Bayshore Heritage Scenic Byway traverses Salem, Cumberland, and Cape May counties and includes Dennisville, South Dennis and Eldora Historic Districts, Eldora Nature Preserve and the Dennis Township Wetland Restoration Site.

Recent Local Aid Grant Projects

- Reconstruction of Academy Road – FY 2019 Municipal Aid - \$80,000
- Reconstruction of Chestnut Street and a portion of East Avenue – FY 2020 Municipal Aid - \$185,000
- Reconstruction of Chestnut Street and a portion of East Avenue – FY 2021 Municipal Aid - \$135,000
- Sunny Lane and Shady Lane Resurfacing – FY 2022 Municipal Aid - \$150,000
- Sunny Lane and Shady Lane Phase II Resurfacing – FY 2023 Municipal Aid - \$170,085
- Resurfacing of Halbe Lane – FY 2024 Municipal Aid - \$169,430
- Resurfacing of Clermont Drive – FY 2025 Municipal Aid - \$158,190
- Countywide Centerline Rumble Strips – Federal Aid - \$22 K – Various Municipalities

Corridor Studies

Not Applicable.

Local Planning Assistance Projects

Not Applicable.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Programs

Dennis Township does not have a Complete Streets policy according to the NJ Bicycle and Pedestrian Resource Center.

Safety Improvement Programs

Please see the Safety Management System Analysis attached.

Public Use/General Aviation Airports

Not Applicable. Cape May County Airport is located in Lower Township. Also, nearby Woodbine Borough has a municipal airport.

Rail and Truck Freight

The Cape May Branch (From MP 53.20 to 80.10) traverses Dennis Township and is an active freight railroad.

The Ocean View truck parking facility is located in Dennis Township. There are no Weigh-In-Motion stations located in Dennis Township.

Traffic Engineering and Safety Initiatives

The Bureau of Traffic Engineering currently is working on a work order with Dennis Township to modify the intersection of Route 47 at milepost 18.86 and Tyler Road (County Route 611). The revised intersection will include the addition of a lead left turn phase for Route 47 Southbound left turning movement.

Existing and Planned Park-and-Rides

Dennis Township does not have any existing or planned NJDOT-owned or leased park-and-rides.

Environmental Resources

Dennis Township will face significant resiliency challenges going forward, particularly on flood-prone roadways. In reviewing the Dennis Township annex in Cape May County's Hazard Mitigation Plan, NJDOT commends Dennis Township for its work relocating structures in flood-prone areas, as well as their joint efforts with Cape May County to understand flood impacts and develop ways to mitigate them. As Dennis

Township develops their hazard vulnerability assessment, NJDOT recommends coordination and cooperation with the South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) as they advance their Resiliency and Reliability Program, especially its Regional Vulnerability Framework (<https://sjtpo.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Regional-Vulnerability-Framework.pdf>).

Other Significant Issues

None at this time.

ATTACHMENTS

Straight Line Diagram Sheets can be viewed at [NJDOT SLD Sheet Viewer \(njsld.org\)](https://njsld.org)

Access Classification Table

Congestion Management System Charts

PDA Suite Congestion Scan Analyses

Safety Management System Analysis

NOTE: OPA may access NJDOT GIS data layers as needed.