

Office of the Governor

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NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Embarks on Three Day Tour Biking, Hiking and Kayaking Through New Jersey's Northwest and Central Regions

Governor Christie Whitman today embarked on three day tour to highlight many of the state's tourism and recreational treasures in Sussex, Hunterdon, Warren, Mercer and Middlesex Counties. Today through Thursday, the Governor is visiting farms and parks, museums and a winery, and participating in several outdoor sports including canoeing, kayaking and biking.

Gov. Whitman today kicked off the tour by visiting Borderland Farm, which straddles the New York (Warwick) and New Jersey (Vernon) border, and presenting a check for farmland preservation projects to preserve priceless open space. The Governor also took part in activities including hiking, canoeing, touring a craft center and a zinc mine, attending an old-fashioned ice cream social, visiting a safe haven for abused children and taking in a New Jersey Cardinals game.

"It's a pleasure to kick off the Skylands Tour here at Borderland Farm, truly a magical place. With our commitment here today, we are ensuring the preservation of this land for generations to come," said Gov. Whitman. "I am pleased to join in partnership with New York State in preserving these precious acres of open space for all time."

The Governor presented the Sussex County Board of Agricultural Development with a check for \$786,392 to support the preservation of more than 700 acres on four farms, including Borderland Farm, throughout Sussex County. Additionally, the funds will enable the permanent preservation of Struble Farm in Lafayette Township, Hamming Farm in Wantage Township and Joseph Farm in Wantage Township. Borderland Farm, a 199-acre equine breeding and boarding farm, is being preserved with financial assistance from the State of New York (\$420,000), the State of New Jersey (\$79,816) and Sussex County (\$75,380). Borderland Farms is noted for providing therapeutic riding lessons to children from New York and New Jersey.

During the visit to Borderland, Gov. Whitman highlighted her goal of preserving one million acres of open land over the next ten years, including farmland. She urged voters to remind their legislators of the importance of placing a question on the November ballot to dedicate nearly \$100 million in existing revenue each year for the next ten years toward open space and farmland preservation.

Gov. Whitman also hiked High Point State Park with Girl Scouts from Sussex County's Troop #738 and highlighted one of New Jersey's most beautiful natural treasures. The Governor and the scouts hiked approximately one mile to the summit of High Point, where they stopped to have lunch.

Later in the day, the Governor crossed the border to Pennsylvania and took canoe and paddle to the Delaware River with Boy Scout Troop #158 from Newton. The Governor and the scouts canoed 5 miles from River Beach Camp Sites to Milford Beach in Pennsylvania, highlighting the adventure and natural scenery of the Delaware River banks.

"From the summit of High Point to the banks of the Delaware, New Jersey's natural beauty is awesome," said Gov. Whitman. "It makes me proud of the Garden State, and proud of our efforts to continue the protection and preservation of our natural treasures."

Gov. Whitman also stopped to tour Peter's Valley Craft Center in Layton Township to visit the center's ceramics studio and try her hand at pottery making. The Center, located in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, is comprised of six craft studios, including blacksmithing, ceramics, fine metals, photography, weaving and woodworking. The Governor highlighted Peter's as an important member of New Jersey's arts and historic preservation community.

Gov. Whitman also paid a visit to the Sterling Hill Mining Museum in Ogdensburg and toured the museum facility and a zinc mine. The Governor was joined by Fredon Boy Scout Troop No. 92 and Kittatinny Girl Scout Troops No. 606 and 607 for the tour. The Franklin-Sterling Hill mining district is renowned for its history and the richness of the mines' contents - more than 340 minerals have been extracted from the district's mines.

The Governor stopped at the Newton Town Green for an Old-Fashioned Ice Cream Social with business owners, members of the Newton Rotary Club and the Sussex County Chamber of Commerce. The Governor talked with business owners about the need for preserving open space and effectively managing economic development in Sussex County and across New Jersey.

"Newton is a wonderful town with a special charm. This Green demonstrates the tremendous positive impact that can result when we give our downtown areas the

attention they need and deserve and when we are smart about balancing our development and open space preservation needs," said the Governor.

Gov. Whitman also took time out to visit Ginnie's House, a special place where children who are victims of physical and sexual abuse can seek refuge. Ginnie's House offers children a safe, non-threatening atmosphere where they can tell counselors and law enforcement officials about their trauma and receive information about treatment options and a way out of their situation. Ginnie's House is located on the Green in Newton.

Gov. Whitman, saying that any visit to Sussex County wouldn't be complete without taking in a ballgame at Skylands Park, capped off the day by hurling out the opening pitch for the New Jersey Cardinals game against the Hudson Valley Renegades. The Governor heralded the New Jersey Cardinals and Skylands Park as a fantastic recreational opportunity and a boost for the Skylands Region. She also sent her wishes to the New Jersey Diamonds, the state's first women's professional baseball team, who will kick off their season later this week at Skylands Park.