



NEW JERSEY PINELANDS COMMISSION

MONTHLY MANAGEMENT REPORT



A common yellowthroat warbler at Cloverdale Farm County Park in the Pinelands in October

OCTOBER 2023

1 EXECUTIVE OFFICE

1.1 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1.1A COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- **Personnel & Budget (P&B) Committee:** The Committee met on October 17, 2023. A closed session discussion was held. Upon returning to open session, staff provided the Committee with updates on routine financial and personnel matters.
- **Pinelands Climate Committee:** The Committee did not meet in October.
- **Policy & Implementation (P&I) Committee:** During the Committee's meeting on October 27, 2023, staff made a presentation on a recent grant application submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency related to wetlands, climate change and environmental justice. The Committee then discussed Pinelands Conservation Fund project evaluation priorities and the 20 Commission-designated land acquisition target areas. The Committee discussed revising the acquisition ranking factors and the funding structure for projects where a specific stewardship program is planned. The discussion also touched on the possibility of redrawing some boundaries for acquisition target areas.

1.1B RULEMAKING

- **Stormwater Management:** Staff finalized the Pinelands model stormwater ordinance and distributed it to Pinelands municipalities in January 2023, after tailoring the ordinance to each municipality's code. A copy of the final model ordinance was also shared with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP). As of the end of October, 45 municipalities had submitted to the Commission adopted ordinances that implement the Pinelands stormwater management regulations. Staff will continue to do outreach with the remaining Pinelands municipalities that have not adopted the Pinelands model stormwater ordinance.
- **Water Management (Kirkwood-Cohansey):** The Commission adopted the CMP amendments at its September 8, 2023 meeting. The Governor's veto period for the meeting minutes ended on October 30, 2023. The adoption notice was submitted to the Office of Administrative Law on October 31, 2023 for publication in the New Jersey Register on December 4, 2023. The amendments will take effect on that date.

1.1C OPEN PUBLIC RECORDS ACT

- A total of 16 Open Public Records Act (OPRA) requests were received in October. Seven were provided responsive material, two had no responsive documents, four were withdrawn, two were advised a file review could be held and one was advised the request was overly broad.

1.1D PINELANDS MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

- The Pinelands Municipal Council did not meet in October.

1.1E OTHER

- Following the Commission meeting on October 13, 2023, a short ceremony was held to honor the late, longtime Commissioner Ed Lloyd. Staff unveiled a newly planted, native sweetbay magnolia planted in Ed's memory on the Commission's property, along with a sign that recognizes Ed's invaluable contributions to the Pinelands protection effort.



1.2 LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

1.2A LEGISLATION

The Legislature remains in recess until after the November 7th elections.

1.2B INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS

- **Pemberton Township and the NJDEP:** This proposed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) would authorize a deviation from CMP wetlands and wetlands buffer standards to accommodate surfacing of an existing trail at Pemberton Lake for accessibility purposes. On October 16, 2023, staff from the Regulatory Program's Office met with a representative from ARH Associates at the trail to confirm the wetland boundaries and review the site plan in the field. As a result of this meeting, the site plan needed to be revised. Staff continues to draft the MOA and, after sharing it with PPA and Pemberton Township, anticipates presenting a draft to the CMP Policy and Implementation Committee at its November 29th meeting.
- **Stafford Township:** This proposed MOA would authorize a deviation from CMP wetlands buffer standards to accommodate paving of an existing trail around Forecastle Lake for accessibility purposes. The Township delivered a presentation at the Commission's July 14, 2023 meeting regarding the project and the need for a deviation MOA. Following the presentation, the Commission authorized the staff to begin working with Stafford Township to develop the draft MOA. At the end of October, Stafford Township's engineer submitted a site plan and stormwater management plan for the Forecastle Lake Accessible Trail project.

- **South Jersey Transportation Authority (SJTA):** The SJTA continues to make progress regarding the creation of the new Grassland Conservation and Management Area (GCMA) in Hamilton Township, Atlantic County, as required by the 2019 Amendment to its MOA with the Commission regarding the Atlantic City International Airport. Filing of a Deed of Conservation Restriction (DCR) for the new GCMA was required by April 2023 but was delayed because of ongoing negotiations with Atlantic City Electric regarding applicability of the DCR to its easement on the property. Atlantic County, on behalf of SJTA, requested a further extension until April 16, 2024 to complete the DCR recordation process. The Commission granted this extension request at its October 13, 2023 meeting.

1.3 HUMAN RESOURCES

- **Evaluations:** Staff continue to work on completing the 2022-2023 Final Evaluations, including objectives for the 2023-24 year.
- **Employee Benefits:** Open Enrollment was held during the month of October for staff needing to make any changes or updates to their health and/or dental plans.
- **Recruitment:** Recruitment continues for the following three positions: Management Information Systems Specialist 3, Environmental Technology Coordinator and Applicant Services Representative. Interviews have been scheduled for the MIS and Environmental Technology Coordinator positions. Interviews for the Applicant Services Representative will be set up during November.
- **NJ Employees Charitable Campaign:** The 2023/2024 NJECC virtual kickoff was held September 13, 2023. This year's campaign will run from September 2023 – December 2023.

2 INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

- **Interagency Council on Climate Resilience (IAC):** The IAC released its Two-Year Anniversary Accomplishments Report, which highlights state agency climate resilience success stories. The Commission's adoption of its enhanced stormwater management rules in 2021 and Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer water management rules in 2023 is highlighted, as is the Commission's installation of its demonstration rain garden in 2022.
<https://dep.nj.gov/wp-content/uploads/climatechange/docs/ccrs-two-year-anniversary-accomplishments-final.pdf>

3 PLANNING

3.1 CONFORMANCE ACTIVITY

	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Master Plans/Ordinances Received		
Adopted	4	116
Drafted or Introduced	5	64
Total ¹	8	122
Substantial Issue Finding ²	0	6
No Substantial Issue Finding	1	99
No Issue Finding	0	19
Total	1	124
Finding Letters Issued³	1	95

3.2 CULTURAL RESOURCE ACTIVITY

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Applications Reviewed	12	118
Surveys Required	0	19
Surveys Reviewed	3	15
Certificates of Appropriateness Required	0	1

Notable Activity:

- African Methodist Episcopal Church Historic Cemetery survey:** With the aid of a National Park Service grant and in partnership with the Tabernacle Historical Society and members of the Shawnee Baptist Church in Shamong Township, Commission staff performed a ground penetrating radar (GPR) survey at the AME Church cemetery in Tabernacle Township. The

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

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

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

survey revealed many subsurface anomalies, including some that may represent unmarked burial locations.

3.3 PINELANDS DEVELOPMENT CREDIT (PDC) PROGRAM

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
PDCs Allocated	0	40.50
PDCs Severed	0	5.00
Acres Protected	0	147.94
PDCs Extinguished	0	7.35
Acres Protected	0	187.78
PDCs Sold	0.75	11.50
Average Sales Price per PDC	\$70,000	\$70,261
Average Sales Price per right	\$17,500	\$17,565
PDCs Redeemed	0	9.25

Notable Activity:

- Annual report:** In a presentation to the Commission on October 13, 2023, staff summarized PDC activity for Fiscal Year 2023. The presentation reviewed average sales prices, allocations, application activity, and redemptions. Staff described a decrease in the number of PDC sales transactions, but an increase in the number of rights per transaction. A total of 122 rights (30.5 PDCs) were redeemed in Fiscal Year 2023 across nine municipalities. The average sales price per right of \$17,182 was down compared to the previous fiscal year.

3.4 SPECIAL PROJECTS

- Permanent Land Protection Annual Update:** At its October meeting, the Commission received an [annual update](#) from staff on the status of permanent land protection in the Pinelands Area. In summary, the presentation noted that 1,359 acres were permanently protected in Fiscal Year 2023. That acreage included 690 acres preserved as farmland, 198 acres preserved by New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Green Acres program, 348 acres preserved through Pinelands Development Credit severances, and 123 acres preserved through



Above: The July 2022 severance of 11.25 Pinelands Development Credits resulted in the permanent protection of 224.48 acres of this blueberry farm in Hamilton Township, Atlantic County.

Pinelands application conditions, such as residential clustering in the Forest or Rural Development Areas.

4 REGULATORY PROGRAMS

4.1 APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Activity	Monthly Total	Calendar Year to Date
Pre-Application Conferences	3	43
Certificates of Filing	11	160
Public Development Reports	5	28
Forestry Certificates of Filing	0	3
PDC Letters of Interpretation	0	14
Non-PDC Letters of Interpretation	0	3
MOA Consistency Determinations	0	40
Review of Agency Determinations	50	517

4.2 NOTABLE APPLICATIONS

- Marina, Washington Township (Applicant: MK3 Holdings, App. No. 2022-0004.001):** On April 6, 2022, the Commission staff received a request for a pre-application conference for the proposed expansion of an existing marina located on the Mullica River. The proposed expansion consisted of approximately 60 boat slips and 15 jet ski slips. The proposed marina expansion also included the dredging of approximately two acres of the Mullica River to a depth of approximately four feet below the existing riverbed. At that time, the Commission received public comment on the proposed marina expansion. A pre-application conference was conducted on May 5, 2022 for the proposed marina. The proposed marina expansion is located in the Pinelands Preservation Area District. By letter dated May 23, 2022, the Commission staff advised that the proposed development in the Mullica River is subject to the permitted land use requirements of the Township land use ordinance and the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) and that the proposed development appeared to require a use variance from Washington Township. On September 13, 2023, an application was submitted to the Commission for the proposed marina. On October 4, 2023, the Commission received the required application fee and the application is currently under review.
- Dredge Material Disposal Site, Upper Township (Beasley Point Development Group, App. No. 2009-0135.007):** The Pinelands Commission exercises direct regulatory authority in the state-designated Pinelands Area. The proposed dredge material disposal site is not located within the

state-designated Pinelands Area. However, the site is located within the federally designated Pinelands National Reserve (PNR). The site is therefore subject of the New Jersey Coastal Area Facility Review Act regulations, which require that coastal development be consistent with the intent, policies and objectives of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 creating the PNR and the State of New Jersey Pinelands Protection Act of 1979. In February of 1988, the Commission entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to formalize a framework for coordinating the activities of NJDEP's Coastal Management Program and the CMP in those portions of the PNR located in the Coastal Zone. That MOA provides that the NJDEP will implement the CMP within the coastal zone and consider comments submitted to the NJDEP by the Pinelands Commission on applications for development in the PNR. This application proposes 7,500 linear feet of maintenance dredging within Patcong Creek in Egg Harbor Township. The total volume of proposed dredged material is estimated to be 68,820 cubic yards. By memorandum dated August 24, 2023, the Commission staff advised the NJDEP that based upon the location of the proposed maintenance dredging in Patcong Creek at its confluence with the Great Egg Harbor River and Great Egg Harbor Bay in Egg Harbor Township, the Commission staff has no comments regarding the consistency of the proposed maintenance dredging with the intent, policies and objectives of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978 creating the PNR and the State of New Jersey Pinelands Protection Act of 1979. The dredged material is proposed to be deposited at the existing 6.35 acre Beesley's Point Confined Disposal Facility (CDF) located on a 291.5 acre lot in Upper Township. The existing CDF is comprised of the existing ground surface and earthen berms. The Upper Township land use ordinance and the CMP require that all development be designed and carried out so that the quality of surface and groundwater will be protected and maintained. The deposition of dredge material on a parcel constitutes development as defined by the CMP. In addition, the Township land use ordinance and the CMP also require that no development, including the deposition of dredge spoils, which degrade surface or groundwater quality, shall be permitted. The submitted information indicated that the dredged material will be stored on the existing ground surface and contained within earthen berms. In the absence of clarification regarding certain a copper contaminant in the dredge material and the provision of comprehensive dredge sediment sampling results, the Commission staff's August 24, 2023 memorandum indicated that it has not been demonstrated that disposal of the dredge material on the parcel would meet the CMP surface and groundwater nondegradation standard. In the absence of such a demonstration, the proposed disposal of the dredged material on the parcel is inconsistent with the water quality standards of the CMP. The August 24, 2023 memorandum also noted that it has been the experience of the Commission staff that almost all dredge material contains contaminants. On September 14, 2023, the NJDEP submitted an additional clarification regarding the previously submitted copper results and provided comprehensive sediment sampling results to the Commission. That information is currently under review.

- **Communications Tower, Stafford Township (Applicant: Ocean County, App. No. 1980-0054.009):** On September 27, 2023, the Commission staff received a request for a pre-application conference with Ocean County representatives to discuss the installation of a principal use communications tower on a 0.84-acre vacant lot in the Pinelands Village of Warren Grove. The communications tower would be utilized only for public emergency service communication and provide coverage to Little Egg Harbor Township, Stafford Township and

Barnegat Township. By email dated October 26, 2023, the Commission staff advised that in the Pinelands Area, unless located in a Pinelands Regional Growth Area or Pinelands Town Management Area, development of a communications tower exceeding 35 feet in height as a principal use must be consistent with one of the Commission-approved Comprehensive Plans for the siting of local communications facilities. The lot in Stafford Township is not located in an area identified in any of the approved plans. Staff suggested that the County contact the Land Use Programs office if it wished to pursue an amendment to one of the approved plans.

- **Seasonal Agricultural Employee Housing, Town of Hammonton (Applicant: Glossy Fruit Farming, App. No. 1984-0389.011):** On October 23, 2023, the Commission staff issued a letter to the property owner that the change of use of four agricultural storage buildings, totaling approximately 19,000 square feet, to four seasonal, agricultural employee housing buildings on a 1.82-acre lot required application to the Commission. Any such application may raise substantive issues with the wetland protection, groundwater quality (septic dilution) and septic system standards of the Town of Hammonton land use ordinance and the CMP.
- **Recreational Trails and Parking Areas, Evesham Township (Applicant: Evesham Township, App. No. 1993-0341.008):** By letter dated September 27, 2023, the Commission staff wrote to Evesham Township regarding the establishment of hiking trails, pedestrian structures and parking areas within the Black Run Preserve located on an approximately 703-acre parcel. The parcel is located in a Pinelands Rural Development Area. The Commission staff letter advised the Township of the need to complete an application with the Pinelands Commission for the various recreational improvements that had occurred on the parcel. There are extensive wetlands on the parcel. In addition, there are known threatened and endangered (T&E) animal species on the parcel. The letter also provided guidance to the Township regarding areas of the Black Run Preserve that may not be suitable for proposed trails based upon the known presence of these species. A meeting is scheduled for November 8, 2023 with Township representatives to discuss the requirements of the September 27, 2023 letter.
- **Residential Development, Hammonton (Applicant: West End Development Associates, App. No. 1983-6280.006):** On September 27, 2023, the Commission staff issued a Certificate of Filing for this application proposing the development of 59 dwelling units on a 6.43-acre parcel. The parcel is located in the Pinelands Town of Hammonton and within a redevelopment area. The Certificate of Filing noted the need for the proposed residential development to acquire and redeem 3.0 Pinelands Development Credits. By letter dated October 13, 2023, the applicant's attorney indicated disagreement with the need to purchase PDCs for the proposed development. That disagreement was based in part on a Mount Laurel Affordable Housing Settlement Agreement between the municipality and the applicant and a Redevelopment Agreement entered into by the municipality and the applicant. The information submitted by the applicant is under review.
- **Lake Herbiciding, Hammonton (Applicant: Town of Hammonton, App. No. 1989-0573.006):** This application proposes the herbiciding of Hammonton Lake. The lake is located in the Pinelands Town of Hammonton. By letter dated May 22, 2023, the Commission staff advised the applicant of the potential presence of certain T&E plants species in Hammonton Lake. The

Commission staff letter required the applicant to complete a T&E plant species survey to determine whether the concerned T&E plant species were present in Hammonton Lake. Alternatively, the applicant could provide information demonstrating that even if the T&E plants species were present in the lake, the proposed herbiciding would not have an irreversible, adverse impact on any local populations of the concerned T&E plants. On September 19, 2023, the applicant submitted a T&E plant species survey. The survey confirmed the presence of T&E plant species in Hammonton Lake. On October 9, 2023, the applicant submitted supplemental information. By letter dated October 31, 2023, the Commission staff provided guidance to the applicant and indicated that information must be submitted to the Commission demonstrating that the proposed herbiciding would not have an irreversible, adverse impact on the local populations of the two identified T&E plants.

- **Landfill Capping, Hamilton Township (Applicant: Hamilton Township, App. No. 1984-1306.002):** On May 19, 2023, an application was filed with the Pinelands Commission proposing the soil capping (permeable) of the approximately 17-acre Hamilton Township landfill. The landfill is closed and located in a Pinelands Regional Growth Area. The CMP requires that the landfill be capped with an impermeable material unless it is demonstrated that an alternate capping technique will address any public health and ecological risk that may be associated with the landfill. A permeable soil cap is considered an alternative capping technique. In 2016, the Commission met with the Township regarding the proposed soil capping of the landfill. After that meeting, the Commission's then-Executive Director sent a letter to the Township summarizing the CMP regulations pertaining to capping of the landfill and advising that an escrow fee of \$5,000 was required to permit the Commission staff to undertake a review of information associated with the proposed soil (permeable) capping of the municipal landfill, including the hydrologic framework of the landfill and landfill monitoring well data. This review would determine whether a soil (permeable) cap would address any public health and ecological risk that may be associated with the landfill. The requested escrow fee was never submitted to the Commission. By letter dated July 26, 2023, the Commission staff indicated that it remained necessary to submit the \$5,000 escrow fee to allow for Commission staff review of the information associated with the capping of the landfill, including the hydrologic framework of the landfill and landfill monitoring well data. The July 26, 2023 letter also identified the information necessary to complete an application for a permeable soil cap if it is demonstrated that a such a cap is consistent with the CMP's landfill capping requirements. The \$5,000 escrow fee was received on August 8, 2023. The landfill monitoring well data is under review. Commission staff conducted a site visit on September 27, 2023. On September 21, 2023, the Commission received a request for a meeting from a new civil engineering consultant for the project. By email dated September 25, 2023, the Commission staff confirmed a meeting to discuss the civil engineering aspects of the project for October 5, 2023. On October 4, 2023, the applicant met with Commission staff to discuss the hydrologic framework of the landfill and the landfill monitoring well data that must be provided to the Commission. By email dated October 4, 2023, the Commission staff identified the information that must be provided to evaluate the hydrologic framework of the landfill and landfill monitoring well data. On October 4, 2023, some of the required information was submitted to evaluate the hydrologic framework of the landfill and landfill monitoring well data. On October 5, 2023, Commission staff met with the new civil

engineering consultant for the project to discuss the information necessary to complete the application to cap the landfill.

- **Commercial Development, Southampton Township (Applicant: Red Lion Circle Partners, App. No. 1988-1007.005):** An application was filed with the Commission proposing the demolition of an existing diner, the construction of a 5,585-square-foot convenience store with 16 fueling stations, two 5,000-square-foot restaurants with drive-thrus, and a 9,000-square-foot retail building on a 21-acre parcel. The parcel is located at the intersection of State Highways Route 70 and Route 206. The proposed development is located in a Pinelands Rural Development Area and within the Township's Red Lion Diner Redevelopment Area. On July 14, 2023, the Commission staff met with the applicant's representatives on the parcel to conduct soil testing relative to the depth to the seasonal high water table throughout the parcel. This seasonal high water table information is necessary for both the design of the replacement onsite septic system and the stormwater management measures for the proposed commercial development. On July 26, 2023, the applicant submitted the results of the soil testing. By letter dated August 8, 2023, the Commission staff advised the applicant of the information that must be submitted to complete the application. The Commission staff met with the applicant on August 30, 2023 to review and discuss the requirements of the Commission staff's August 8, 2023 letter. On September 15, 2023, the applicant submitted information regarding the application. By letter dated October 31, 2023, the Commission staff advised the applicant of the remaining information necessary to complete the application.
- **Cannabis Growing and Processing Facility, Shamong Township (Applicant: Pure Cultivations; App. No. 1987-1156.018):** By letter dated May 24, 2023, the Commission staff advised of the information necessary to complete an application for the proposed development of a 68,125-square-foot cannabis cultivation and processing facility serviced by an alternate design onsite septic system on a 10.75-acre parcel. The parcel is located in an industrial zone within the Pinelands Village of Indian Mills. The primary issue raised by the application is that the square footage of the proposed building and the number of proposed employees requires the use of an alternate design onsite septic system. To use such a septic system, certain information must be provided to the Commission demonstrating the ability of the proposed alternate design septic system to treat the type and volume of wastewater to be generated by the cannabis use and meet the groundwater quality (septic dilution) standard. The Commission staff discussed the requirements to utilize an alternate design septic system with the applicant's attorney and provided suggested alternative development options that may allow for the use of a standard septic system. In response to the Commission staff letter, on June 28, 2023, the applicant submitted additional information. The application is now proposing a standard septic system. By letter dated September 27, 2023, the Commission staff advised of the remaining information necessary to complete the application. On September 29, 2023, the applicant submitted additional information regarding the application. On October 4, 2023, the Commission staff issued a Certificate of Filing for the proposed development.

5 SCIENCE

5.1 ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING

- **Water Level Monitoring:** In October, Communications staff measured water levels at 43 forest plots and 30 ponds in the Commission network of long-term monitoring sites. This work is completed each month with assistance from the Communications Office.



Above: Radio tracked corn snake coiled about 3 feet from her den entrance. Her den entrance is the dark area in the center right portion of the background. She is waiting to shed before hibernation.

- **Pinelands-wide Water Quality Monitoring:** In October, staff measured pH and specific conductance at the 47 stream sites distributed throughout the region. These two variables are inexpensive and easily measured field parameters linked to land-use related nutrient enrichment. This work is completed four times each year to monitor long-term trends in water quality throughout the Pinelands.
- **Rare Snake Monitoring:** Science staff continued to check on radio-tracked snakes in October. Several radio-tracked snakes have already entered their winter dens, whereas other snakes are still above ground and active. Staff also continued to find new snakes and previously captured snakes that are not being radio-tracked at or near their winter dens. These snakes were weighed and measured, their health was assessed, they were sampled for diseases and released.

5.2 LONG TERM STUDIES

- **Box Turtle Study:** Staff continued to track box turtles in October. A few new box turtles were found and outfitted with radio transmitters to be tracked, which brings the total number of turtles tracked to 68. Forty six of the 68 turtles are tracked weekly and the other 22 turtles are tracked every 4-6 weeks. Staff glued iButtons to the shells of 27 turtles to log the temperature of their turtle shells twice per day. The agreement between the Commission and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to provide funding for the box turtle study was finalized and signed by the Commission Executive Director. The agreement is now with the NJDEP to be signed. The agreement period is from March 2023 – August 2025.
- **Snake Fungal Disease Monitoring:** As part of a collaboration with Virginia Tech researchers, Science staff continued to swab Pinelands snakes for snake fungal disease.
- **Adenovirus Study:** As part of a collaboration with Rutgers University researchers, Science staff continued to swab Pinelands snakes for adenovirus.

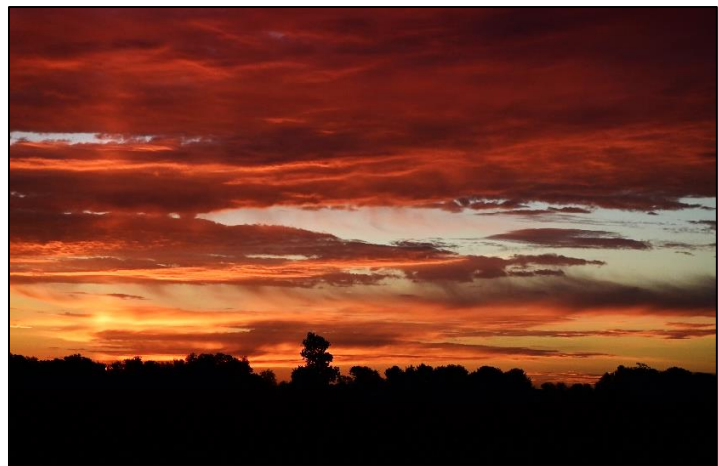


Above: Female box turtle resting in her leaf litter form and showing the radio transmitter epoxied on the left side of her shell and an iButton to log shell temperature glued on the right side of her shell.

6 COMMUNICATIONS

6.1 COMMUNICATIONS & PUBLICATIONS

- **Inquiries/Correspondence:** The Communications Office received and responded to approximately 45 inquiries from the public in October, including phone calls, e-mails, and media inquiries.
- **Website:** Commission staff made routine edits to the website in October.
- **Social Media Enhancements:** In October, staff shared 224 photos and two videos on the Commission’s Instagram site (as of October 30th) and 54



Above: The Commission shared 224 photos on Instagram in October, including this photo of the sun rising above the Pinelands.

tweets/retweets on X (formerly known as Twitter).

- **Pinelands-themed Merchandise:** Throughout October, staff promoted and processed sales of Pinelands-themed merchandise via the Commission’s online store and at the agency’s office. The items include three Pinelands-themed mugs, Pinelands notecards and Jersey Devil-themed reusable grocery tote bags. A total



Above: The Commission shared 54 tweets/retweets on its X account in October, including this photo of fall foliage reflecting on Atsion Lake in Wharton State Forest in the Pinelands.

of \$79.80 in net sales and \$250 in donations were received in October. All of the proceeds from sales and donations benefit the Kathleen M. Lynch-Van de Sande Fund for the Reforestation of the New Jersey Pinelands. The fund was established in memory of Ms. Lynch-van de Sande, a Pinelands Commission Environmental Specialist who died in a car accident in June 1989. It funds projects that support or promote the use of native plants in the Pinelands.

- **Pinelands National Reserve Wall Calendar:** In October, the Communications Office compiled, categorized, and vetted the quality of dozens of photos that may be used in the 2024 Pinelands National Reserve wall calendar. The Commission’s staff voted for the cover images for the calendar, and the final photo selections were sent to a graphic designer at Rowan College at Burlington County in late October. The 2024 wall calendar will be funded by the National Park Service, and it will feature a theme of “Winged Wonders of the Pinelands.” Staff is drafting captions for the calendar, which will be distributed free-of-charge at state parks and forests in the Pinelands by early December.

6.2 EVENTS, OUTREACH & INTERPRETIVE PROGRAMS

- **Pinelands Short Course:** In October, Commission staff continued to secure presenters for the 35th annual Pinelands Short Course. The event will be held at Stockton’s main campus on March 9, 2024.
- **Science Office Assistance:** A member of the Communications Office assisted the Science Office by measuring ponds and wells on October 3-4, 2023.

- **Pinelands Education Programs:**

Commission staff delivered a presentation and provided a guided tour of the agency's rain and bog gardens for approximately 20 members of the Long Beach Island Garden Club on October 5, 2023. Staff also led the group on a hike.



Above: Commission staff helped local students to catch fish during the annual, Pinelands-themed World Water Monitoring Challenge event at Batsto Lake on October 20, 2023.

- **Pinelands Themed World Water Monitoring Challenge:** Staff

educated approximately 130 local students during the annual event, which was held at Batsto Lake in Wharton State Forest on October 20, 2023. For a slideshow of photos, please click [here](#).

- **Barneгат Bay Partnership:** A member of the Communications Office chaired the Barneгат Bay Partnership's Communication and Education Committee meeting on October 25, 2023.

- **Ed Lloyd Memorial Tree Planting:** Staff members planted a native sweetbay magnolia and installed a sign and post at the Commission's headquarters in memory of the late Commissioner Ed Lloyd in early October. Commissioners, staff and members of Mr. Lloyd's family gathered for a memorial ceremony, which was held after the Commission meeting on October 13, 2023.



Above: Commission members, staff and members of the late Commissioner Ed Lloyd's family gathered for a tree planting ceremony that was held in his memory on October 13, 2023.

- **Biosphere Region Coordination:** A member of the Communications Office participated in the U.S. Biosphere Network's

Communications Committee meeting in September 2023. The Communications Office will also provide a guided tour of the Pinelands for Cliff McCreedy, who is the Coordinator of the

U.S. Biosphere Network, on November 8, 2023. Mr. McCreedy is scheduled to deliver a presentation on the biosphere program during the Commission's regular meeting on November 9, 2023.

7 INFORMATION SYSTEMS

- **Pinelands Commission Information System Upgrades:** The Pinelands Commission Information System (PCIS) is the internal system of record for all applications to the Pinelands and associated transactions. Staff noticed a bug in transaction delegation within PCIS while monitoring systems logs and were able to fix it immediately. Staff also continued to support the newly released online payment function.
- **Geographic Information Systems:** Geographic Information Systems (GIS) allow the Pinelands Commission to manage, analyze, and map relevant data. Staff attended the New Jersey Geospatial forum meeting to coordinate with other state agencies. Staff also worked with the ESRI "Experience Builder" to see how this new software could benefit the Commission.
- **Cybersecurity:** Vigilance to protect the internal networks, hardware, and data of the Pinelands Commission is critical in today's networked world. The Information Systems office participated in the monthly call hosted by the New Jersey Cybersecurity & Communications Integration Cell (NJCCIC). Security certificates were renewed for the Pinelands servers. Staff continue to monitor the network environment and summary reports produced by Zscaler and Falcon CrowdStrike.
- **Conformance Tracking/Zoning system:** Staff participated in the kick-off meeting for the project to modernize and integrate both the Pinelands Conformance Tracking and Zoning systems. initial and long-term objectives were discussed. Staff immediately began work on a draft of a new database that will act as a foundation for the new system.
- **Pinelands Development Credit Bank:** The Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) Bank is the processing agency for the Pinelands Development Credit Program, one of the oldest and most successful transfer of development rights (TDR) programs in the world. The Information System staff provides ongoing operational support to the PDC Bank.
- **Permanent Land Protection (PLP) Data System:** The PLP system manages the data related to all the preserved land in the Pinelands National Reserve. Staff supported the Planning Office in maintaining PLP records and validating preliminary numbers for the annual update.
- **Resolution Log:** The Pinelands Commission keeps a detailed internal log of all resolutions that were adopted by the Commission. Staff performed data cleansing, record categorization, and added links to Application records to improve the system.
- **Technology Enhancements:** Staff members continually evaluate emerging technologies for how they can impact or enhance the office environment. Staff continued with the phased rollout of Teams Voice, evaluating new Bluetooth headsets. Staff also continued the required migration of legacy data and Oracle database to new servers. To prepare for work on the Fenwick Manor, staff coordinated with both the Office of Information Technology and Verizon regarding the

relocation of network services from Fenwick to the Richard J. Sullivan building.

8 BUSINESS OFFICE

8.1 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

- **Application Fees:** October 2023, Net Total: \$16,964.39, Fiscal Year to Date Total: \$276,352.49. This is 39.48% of the Fiscal Year 2024 anticipated fee revenue of \$700,000. The net total includes 10 online application payments.
- Annual building safety inspections were performed. This includes the Richard J. Sullivan building fire sprinkler inspection and the campus wide Fire/Safety inspections. Only one minor deficiency was detected in a light fixture; the process to resolve the deficiency has begun.
- The Fiscal Year 2021 annual audit is complete. The Audit Report is in the review process with the State Auditors.