



WHAT'S HAPPENING TO CAPE MAY COUNTY?

Excessive development in the Cape May peninsula harms the Pinelands in two ways: First, much of the peninsula is inside the Pinelands National Reserve. And second, parts of Cape May County have a serious water supply crisis due to poor land use planning. Some leaders want to import water from the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer in the Pine Barrens to solve the problem and, possibly, fuel even more growth in the Cape May peninsula.

When the Pinelands Protection Act was passed in 1979, much of the Pine Barrens along the Delaware Bayshore and Atlantic coast was already under the older Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA). New Jersey decided to leave that part of the Pinelands National Reserve under CAFRA, so it is not under the jurisdiction of the Pinelands Commission.

CAFRA is enforced by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP),

instead of the Pinelands Commission. DEP is supposed to enforce both the CAFRA rules and the objectives of the Pinelands Protection Act for developments that lie in the Pinelands National Reserve.

Unfortunately, CAFRA has proven to be a very weak system of land use control, which has permitted massive overdevelopment of our coastal areas, including the Cape May peninsula. The CAFRA statute and regulations suffer from many deficiencies, including a complete exemption for developments of 24 units or less — a loophole that can easily be manipulated by breaking larger developments into smaller pieces.

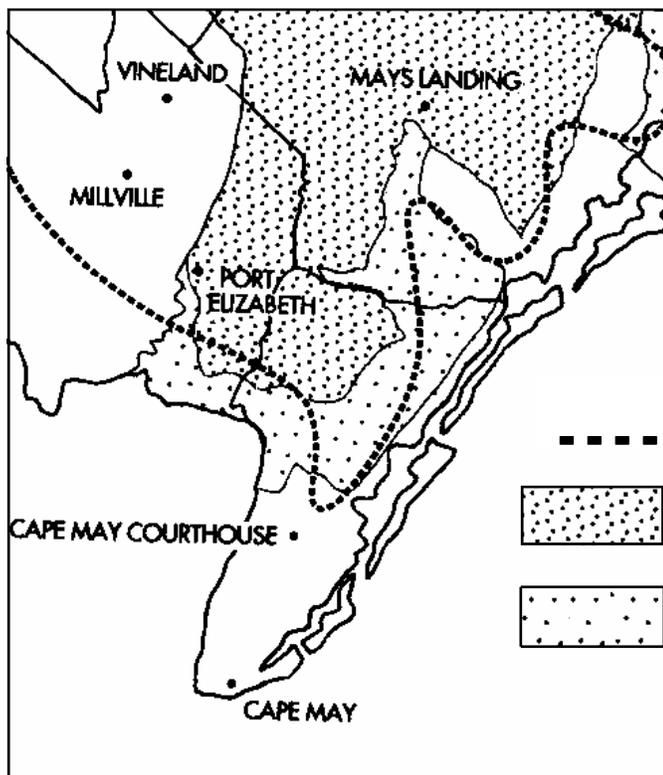
Although times are changing, DEP also did not enforce Pinelands standards very rigorously in the CAFRA area.

To summarize:

1. Much of northern Cape May County is within the Pine Barrens ecosystem and the Pinelands National Reserve.
2. Some of that land, the Pinelands Protection Area, is under the jurisdiction of the Pinelands Commission.
3. A greater portion of that land is also in the CAFRA area, so it is not under the jurisdiction of the Pinelands Commission.
4. In the CAFRA area, DEP is charged with regulating development under both CAFRA rules and the objectives of the Pinelands Protection Act.

Development of all kinds has resulted in increasing

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Adapted, courtesy of Plexus Publishing, from *A Field Guide To The Pine Barrens Of New Jersey* by Howard P. Boyd.

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ground water withdrawals in Cape May County. These increases, in turn, have resulted in saltwater intrusion in the lower portions of the peninsula that is severe enough to necessitate the use of a desalination plant to help supplement water demands in Cape May City.

Excessive development has also destroyed much of the Cape May peninsula's world-renowned migratory and song bird habitats.

Now that county leaders can no longer deny the water crisis—a direct result of decades of uncontrolled development—some are calling for help to take water from the sensitive Pine Barrens ecosystem.

What is needed?

1. The citizens of New Jersey must demonstrate their commitment to protect the unique features of the Cape May peninsula and the Pine Barrens ecosystem.
2. Cape May County officials must engage in meaningful long-term land use planning for a sustainable community that protects the peninsula's extraordinary natural resources.
3. CAFRA must be revised to close the loopholes which have proven to subvert the intent of the law.

What can you do?

1. Support the Concerned Citizens of Cape May County, a citizens group actively promoting sound land use planning and fighting sprawl development. Call Douglas Jewel at 609-463-8423, or Linda Colson at 609-463-0054.
2. Write, e-mail, or call the Governor, the DEP, and your representatives. Tell them you want rigorous protections for the unique natural heritage of the Pinelands and the beautiful Cape May peninsula.
3. Get acquainted with the natural places in the Cape May peninsula. Go exploring, do some birding or fishing. You'll be reminded of the urgent need to protect this invaluable part of New Jersey's natural heritage.

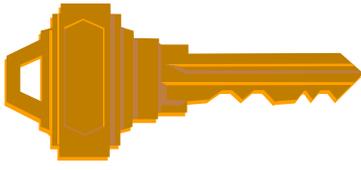


POINTERS ↗

Fundamental Elements of LETTERWRITING

- 1) **Write to your representative.** Correspondence from outside a legislator's constituency is often ignored.
- 2) **Focus on one subject.** Letters that cover many topics get delayed because they have to be routed to staff members assigned to respond to each issue.
- 3) **Identify the bill or issue.** Identify it by name, number and what it will do. If possible, give the author's name(s).
- 4) **Be timely.** Find out when your legislators are due to consider a bill, and time your correspondence accordingly.
- 5) **Be courteous.** Steer away from emotional outrage, and stick to the facts. Don't attack the person; attack the issue.
- 6) **Be brief.** Limit your letter to one page. Concise, articulate statements are always appreciated.
- 7) **Give Reasons.** It's not enough to say you're opposed. Support your views with rational, convincing arguments.
- 8) **Ask for action.** Offer alternative approaches or specific calls to action. Help your legislator become focused and responsive.
- 9) **Share expert knowledge.** A scientist's professional opinion may move a letter from a staff member's desk into the legislator's hand.
- 10) **Follow-up.** Praise a positive action; point out a negative one. Legislators appreciate being thanked.
- 11) **Mention community affiliation.** Avoid being "pigeonholed!" Your letter will carry more weight if a legislator realizes you represent others within the community.





Key Issues in the Pinelands

Call us for more info and ideas on how to make a difference on these challenges!

◆ **Pinelands Water**

The Threat: Quantity & Quality! Developments both in the designated growth areas and in the nearby communities surrounding the Pinelands are placing growing demands on the Pinelands water and impairing its quality. No one knows how much water can be drawn from the aquifers without harming the landscape. And it's the chemistry of the water and soil (acidic and nutrient-poor) that makes the Pine Barrens different from other ecosystems and creates its distinctive plant and animal communities. Yet recent studies by the Pinelands Commission's scientists show that large areas of the Pinelands are losing essential features of a genuine Pine Barrens ecosystem because impacts from development and upland farming are changing the water chemistry of Pinelands streams.

What You Can Do: Call, write, e-mail, or set up a meeting with Pinelands Commissioners or your elected officials. Urge them to support more stringent measures to protect the waters of the Pinelands.

◆ **Endangered Species**

The Problem: While the Pinelands harbors many rare and endangered plants and animals, they are by no means assured of survival here. Some species, like swamp pink and the corn snake, face constant threats from illegal collectors and habitat destruction. Some, like timber rattlesnakes and pine snakes, are deliberately killed because of popular misconceptions about them. Pine barrens tree frog populations, in some areas, are suffering declines because the non-native bull frog is colonizing degraded habitat. And government relies on developers to tell it whether endangered species inhabit their development tracts, so it should be no surprise that this essential information is often incomplete, inaccurate and unreliable. The results can be tragic.

What You Can Do: Get well-acquainted with the wildlife of the Pinelands, especially in areas close to you and in places where you visit. Learn to recognize threatened and endangered species. More importantly,

for animal species, learn about the sounds and signs associated with them, which are often much more apparent than the creatures themselves. Then help to monitor development applications in your area. Insist that your township officials, the Pinelands Commission, and the DEP recognize and fully protect any endangered wildlife that may be affected.

- Topics for upcoming issues of**
Pinelands Watch
- ◆ Amendments to the CMP
 - ◆ Appointments to the Commission
 - ◆ Leniency & Weak Standards
 - ◆ Pressure Dosing Septic Systems
 - ◆ Standards in the CAFRA zone
 - ◆ Cape May County WQMP
 - ◆ Sewerage Product Applications
 - ◆ Federal Participation in Decision-Making
 - ◆ Cell Phone & PCS Towers
 - ◆ Landfills

RESOURCES

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PINELANDS PRESERVATION ALLIANCE
www.pinelandsalliance.org/

NEW JERSEY AUDUBON SOCIETY
njudubon.org/

NEW JERSEY CONSERVATION FOUNDATION
www.njconservation.org/

SIERRA CLUB, NEW JERSEY CHAPTER
www.enviroweb.org/njsierra/

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY
www.tnc.org/ (use site index to find NJ chapter)

THE FORKED RIVER MOUNTAIN COALITION
www.frmc.org/

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
www.lwv.org/

NEW JERSEY ENVIRONMENTAL FEDERATION
732-280-8988

GARDEN STATE ENVIRONET
www.gsenet.org



Pinelands Preservation Alliance
114 Hanover St.
Pemberton NJ 08068

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WHO GAVE MONEY?

“Special interests wanting to do business with the state, petitioning for relief from the burden of regulation, or seeking a favorable hearing from lawmakers understand that you have to ‘pay to play’ in the corridors of the Statehouse, so the money flows to where it counts . . .”

—www.opensecrets.org/capi/

Visit the web site of the **Center for Analysis of Public Issues** for some insights and to search out the money trail behind specific politicians.

Another helpful resource:
www.elec.state.nj.us/

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
www.state.nj.us/
www.state.nj.us/pinelands/
www.state.nj.us/dep/

What is This? Why Me?

PINELANDS WATCH is a new publication created by the Pinelands Preservation Alliance. Its purpose is to encourage those who are concerned about conservation issues in the Pinelands to get involved and make a difference.

We sent this publication to you because we believe you care about protecting the Pinelands and will get involved when the issue is right.

Those who want to thwart the goals of the Pinelands Protection Act rely on public ignorance and apathy. But the Pinelands has survived and will continue to survive because people like you stay informed and active.

Pinelands Watch provides a summary of the most serious current issues in the Pinelands. Each edition focuses on one of these issues and provides references for getting more information. And it suggests options for taking action.

You probably know a lot of people who love the Pinelands and want it preserved. Share this publication with them, and call us so we can send it to them in the future.

Most importantly, call us, and let us know what’s going on in *your* backyard or what you’d like to see us working on!