



PINELANDS  
PRESERVATION  
ALLIANCE

Feb - March 2011  
Issue 57

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### Upcoming PPA Event

Presentation:

*When Dinosaurs Roamed the  
Pine Barrens*  
by Dr. William B. Gallagher

February 23, 2011  
7 pm to 8:30 pm  
Bishop Farmstead  
17 Pemberton Road  
Southampton

Dr. Gallagher will be available  
from 6:15 pm to discuss and  
sign your copy of his book  
*When Dinosaurs Roamed  
New Jersey.*

This event is FREE, but registration  
is required. Contact Tom at  
(609) 859-8860 x 14 or  
tomdunn@pinelandsalliance.org

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# PINELANDS WATCH



*"The Scar" in Wharton State Forest. Photo by Al Horner.*

## PPA's 12 Point Plan to Address Motor Vehicle Destruction of State Land

The irresponsible and illegal use of off-road vehicles (ORVs) is one of the greatest threats to New Jersey's open space treasures. PPA continues its efforts to curtail the illegal use of these vehicles, but the breadth of abuse from both the Class I – street legal (jeeps, monster trucks and any four-wheel-drive vehicles that can operate on paved roads) and Class II off-road vehicles ( dirt bikes and all-terrain vehicles) represents a challenge that requires multiple solutions.

PPA has worked hard to raise awareness about this problem. The passage of the ORV legislation in December 2009 was a major step forward, but more work is necessary to address the Class I vehicle misuse that also causes significant damage to state lands.

The press covered the latest concerns with these vehicles in late August into early September of last year. These latest concerns include the use of Class I vehicles on

state lands, particularly in Wharton State Forest. Al Horner, local photographer and naturalist, brought significant attention to a once beautiful area in Wharton State Forest that he has labeled "The Scar". It is named for the damage that has been done by the irresponsible use of 4-wheel drive vehicles that create significant ruts in the terrain, destroy any and all vegetation in the area and deter passive recreationists and wildlife from using the site.

The following is a quote about "The Scar" from Al Horner's blog, which can be found at <http://pinelandsimagery.com/blog>.

*Last winter I located what appeared to be either a clear cut or a former burned out section in the Pine Barrens just southeast of Hampton Furnace in Wharton State Forest. I envisioned a landscape that would look mys-*

*continued on page 2*

*tical in snow or fog and I couldn't wait to get there to plan a few future shots. It would seem to be a simple task to drive to any area in Wharton State Forest, even with snow on the roads, in a small SUV, but not to this area, it can only be considered as off limits. The area could best be described as the home of "The Wheelers", the drivers of large and small 4 x 4 vehicles equipped to go "mudding" in the Pine Barrens. They have over sized tires, exhaust stacks that reach about the vehicle roof, roll bars and winches to assist when getting stuck in mud or sugar sand. They "wheel" in groups and, in many cases, they do it for family fun like going bowling or to the movies. I have my own name for this area, I call it "The Scar". The Crying Indian of the 70's pollution commercials would break into hysteria if he visited this place. The entire area encompasses about a half a square mile and you cannot travel completely around it because all of the sand road approaches are blocked with mud holes (wallows) large enough to swallow a normal size vehicle. It is nothing short of total destruction of the land.*

PPA has put together a 12-point plan that, if implemented, would limit the irresponsible use of both Class I and Class II vehicles that occur on private and public land. Listed below are ways you can help to implement this plan.

1. NJDEP should issue a policy directive similar to Commissioner Campbell's directive in 2002 that off-road vehicle traffic (i.e., people deliberately driving in areas that are clearly not designated roads) will not be tolerated on state land.

2. NJDEP should also direct all law enforcement agencies to strictly enforce state lands regulations regarding motor vehicles, so that costs for damages to state-owned land can be recuperated from these offenders.

Points 1 and 2 - Contact DEP Commissioner Martin - (609)292-2885 - and ask him to issue this policy directive and work on designating one ORV park so that tagging and registration can begin for these types vehicles.

3. Law enforcement agencies should cite people when they find them clearly driving off the roads. The excuse that "someone drove there before, so it looks like road now," clearly does not wash in many of these cases.

4. Local judges need to hit offenders with penalties stiff enough to function as deterrents.

Points 3 and 4 - Contact your local mayor about requesting stiffer penalties from local judges and enforcement officials.

5. The New Jersey Forest Fire Service should establish a policy of blocking access to roads that were created in the course of fighting fires.

Point 5 - Contact the NJ Forest Fire Service - (609)292-2977 - [njwildfire@dep.state.nj.us](mailto:njwildfire@dep.state.nj.us) and request the implementation of this policy.

6. The state lands authorities should post "No Motorized Vehicles" signs at points where people are liable to gain access to areas that are off-limits, and should quickly provide access plan mapping for the public.

7. The state lands authorities should shut off access to damaged areas and close roads when conditions, such as inundation, contribute to the risk that such roads will continue to be damaged by specially equipped vehicles, making it impossible for the general public to travel these roads.

8. 4WD club leaders and leaders of any other kinds of recreational clubs should step up education of their members, and do everything they can to rein in the illegal and irresponsible activities.

9. Law-abiding citizens who explore the Pinelands need to use their cameras and cell phones to document and report violations. If the law enforcement personnel are tied up with something else, and can't get to the scene, or don't want to write a citation, then the citizens may need to write up a complaint.

10. Conservation and recreational organizations should work with NJDEP to develop, fund, and implement restoration plans for degraded areas.

11. Volunteer programs need to be created to help provide resources for marking trails, posting off-limits areas, and patrolling the parks.

Points 6 - 11 - Individuals from various recreation and user groups have started a South Jersey Trail Lovers Coalition to help state lands authorities implement the points above. All are welcome to join the group. Details on how to join can be found at the website - <http://njtlc.proboards.com/>. Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of every month.

12. The Pinelands Commission should formally request that access to these damaged areas be shut off so the habitats can recover.

Point 12 - Contact the Pinelands Commission and ask for its assistance in weighing in with state officials on this problem (609)894-7300.

Continue to check PPA's website for new information on the ORV problem - [www.pinelandsalliance.org](http://www.pinelandsalliance.org). You can also reach Jaclyn Rhoads at (609)859-8860 ext. 18 or [Jaclyn@pinelandsalliance.org](mailto:Jaclyn@pinelandsalliance.org).

The Pinelands Preservation Alliance regularly gives testimony at Pinelands Commission meetings, Pinelands Sub-Committee meetings, Township and Planning Board meetings and Senate and Assembly committee meetings.

These statements can be viewed on our website at:

<http://www.pinelandsalliance.org/protection/work/ppatestimony/>

## Website Notices for Development Applications

For the past thirty years, when public development projects or waiver applications came before the Pinelands Commissioners at a public meeting, PPA, citizens, scientists and non-profit organizations routinely presented information for the Commissioners to consider before they voted. In April 2010, the Pinelands Commission suddenly reversed 30 years of practice and re-interpreted its rules to bar public comment on public development projects at Commission meetings. Currently, the only means the public has to get comments on the record about applications is by submitting written comments to the Commission staff within 10 days of the Commission deems the application complete, and the applicant publishing notice of its complete application.

The public can learn about the applications that have been submitted by following public notices in the newspaper.

There are two websites that can help the public find out more about applications. You can review public notices by logging into the New Jersey Press Association's web site at <http://www.publicnoticeads.com/NJ> where you can find newspaper notices that are published in many participating New Jersey newspapers. These notices are uploaded to the website as soon as they are published in the newspapers. By clicking on manual search, and searching your municipality, county or "Pinelands" you will get a complete listing of applications to the Pinelands Commission, your local planning board or even ordinances that are scheduled for public hearing before your governing body.

The Pinelands Commission has recently developed a new page on its website to assist the public in learning what applications for public development or waivers of strict compliance are being reviewed at the by the Commission. This new page can assist the public in learning what applications have been submitted even before the applicant's public notice is published in the newspaper. Just log onto <http://www.state.nj.us/pinelands/>, navigate to "Permitting & Applicant Services" then "Application Status Reports" this brings you to a list of three types of reports:

- The **Active Public Development Applications Report** takes you to all a list of all active applications that are now currently pending before the Pinelands Commission for approval.
- The **Active Waivers of Strict Compliance Report** takes you to the list of applications by private landowners who have applied for a development application needing a waiver of strict compliance from the provisions of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan.
- The **Bi-Weekly Status Report** link takes you to a report that changes on a two week basis and lists all the activities on any application, public or private, that is pend-

ing before the Pinelands Commission. This report lists projects first by county and then by municipality, and gives you a small description of the activity and action by the Commission on an application.

These reports give you the block, lot and application numbers, making it easier to submit comments or to make an appointment to review the applications while they are being reviewed. Check out these new pages and if there is information you want considered during the review process – get your comments in!

# Get Involved!

## Attend a Pinelands Commission Meeting

Friday, March 11, 2011

Friday, April 8, 2011

Friday, May 13, 2011

Pinelands Commission meetings are held at 9:30 a.m. at the Richard J. Sullivan Center for Environmental Policy and Education, 15C Springfield Road, New Lisbon. Agendas are posted one week prior to the meeting date at:

[www.state.nj.us/pinelands/](http://www.state.nj.us/pinelands/)



Editor: Theresa Lettman

Distributed to members of the Pinelands Watch Network and other members of the public. If you would like to receive these alerts, please contact Theresa Lettman at (609) 859-8860 Ext 22 or [theresa@pinelandsalliance.org](mailto:theresa@pinelandsalliance.org).

Prior issues are available at: [www.pinelandsalliance.org](http://www.pinelandsalliance.org)

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The Pinelands needs your help...and so do we!  
Please support our mission & become a member

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Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Card Holder: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Categories**

- Basic       \$35
- Family     \$60
- Sponsor    \$100
- Patron     \$250
- Benefactor  \$500
- Chairman's Circle  \$1,000
- Other       \_\_\_\_\_

*ALL MEMBERS RECEIVE:*

- A PPA membership card
- A year's subscription to *Inside the Pinelands*
- A PPA window sticker
- Discounts on PPA merchandise and events and Pinelands Adventures
  
- A Sponsor will receive an *Exploring the Pine Barrens of New Jersey* map
- A Patron will receive a copy of *The Pine Barrens: Up Close & Natural DVD*
- A Benefactor will receive a Pinelands Botanical Print by Robin Jess
- A member of the Chairman's Circle will receive a personalized tour of the Pinelands



*Pinelands Preservation Alliance*

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**PPA's 12 Point Plan to Address Motor Vehicle Destruction of State Land**



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