



PINELANDS  
PRESERVATION  
ALLIANCE

August - Sept 2013  
Issue 66

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## Upcoming PPA Event

Reptiles & Amphibians of the Pines

Tuesday, Sept 24th  
7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Bob Ferguson, President of the Northeast chapter of the North American Field Herping Association will give a presentation about the reptiles and amphibians of the Pine Barrens.

Registration is required by calling Tom Dunn  
609-859-8860 ext 14.  
Fee \$10.

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# PINELANDS WATCH



Photo by F. Akers, GEHWA

B.L. England Power plant located along the Great Egg Harbor River

## South Jersey Gas Pipeline for B.L. England Plant

South Jersey Gas is proposing to put a 22-mile natural gas pipeline through a portion of the Pinelands Forest Management Area to enable the B.L. England Plant at Beesleys Point, on the Great Egg Harbor River, to be retrofitted from coal to natural gas and greatly expand its capacity. The proposal would place the pipeline through Atlantic, Cape May, and Cumberland Counties. This power plant, built in 1961, has barely operated for years.

The proposed pipeline violates the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), which only permits such infrastructure in the Forest Management Area if it is "intended to primarily serve the needs of the Pinelands." N.J.A.C. 7:50-5.23. To the extent it operates at all, the B.L. England plant primarily serves demand outside the Pinelands, where the great majority of residences and businesses in Atlantic and Cape May County are located.

There is no exception for pipes run along or under roads.

The public service infrastructure restriction was placed in the CMP for good reason. This kind of infrastructure can bring a variety of environmental harms and pressure for more development along its route. The Pinelands Commission is charged to defend the Pinelands CMP, yet it has discussed waiving the restrictions with the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) and South Jersey Gas. The parties want to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that would allow this pipeline to be built which will set a very poor precedent.

The Pinelands Commission must defend the integrity of the Pinelands or risk larger, cumulative harms in the future. The Pinelands National Reserve was created in part in response to plans to construct off-shore drilling platforms and

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run transportation pipes across South Jersey to refineries on the Delaware. The drilling did not happen forty years ago, but it may happen in the future. Similarly, proposals for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminals along the Jersey shore continue to be pressed, raising the possibility that pipes would be proposed across the Pinelands to transport LNG.

If a large wind turbine system is constructed off the Jersey Shore, as currently under study, then there will almost certainly be efforts to construct new, large-scale transmission infrastructure to cross the state – and the Pinelands will be an easier target if the Pinelands Commission suspends the Forest Management Area protection rules for linear infrastructure. We do not know today what other ways businesses or government may want to use the Pinelands as a corridor in the future.

This kind of pipeline can cause environmental damage to the Pinelands, because the construction and maintenance of these pipelines damages forests and roadside habitats through which the pipeline passes. For example, the proposed South Jersey Gas route would cross at least two populations of threatened or endangered plants. Experience shows that theory does not match practice when companies claim construction can be done without harming natural resources, as the abuse of Pinelands road

There is no good public-interest reason to make an exception for South Jersey Gas. The proponents seek “green cover” by arguing that natural gas is cleaner than the coal and oil that have fired the plant in the past. The argument is seductive, but wrong. This plant has only operated for peak demand for years. Thus, the plant is not needed to operate on a full-time basis at all. If changed to natural gas and full operation, it will cause more air pollution than it does now – to say nothing of the environmental and health risks inherent in the production and transport of the gas to this isolated plant.

There are alternatives to the proposed pipeline route. There are power plants directly to the north in Atlantic County, so it should be possible to run a supply line outside the Pinelands Protection Area where it will not impinge on the interior forests of the Pinelands.

If the Pinelands Commission doesn’t stand by own its rules, no one else will. Certainly not BPU or South Jersey Gas. When the Commission gives special exceptions for powerful players, it undermines the whole Pinelands protection project and raises the question why anyone should respect its decisions.

### What can you do?

- **Most important thing** - Attend the Pinelands Commission regular meeting and the Policy and Implementation sub-committee meetings listed on the next page! Tell them they must respect their own rules and deny this request.

For more information call the Pinelands Commission at 609-894-7300. The agenda for this meeting is available online at: [www.state.nj.us/pinelands/about/mtng](http://www.state.nj.us/pinelands/about/mtng)

- Call or write a letter to Governor Christie at 609-292-6000. Tell him to support Pinelands Protection and stop the pipeline through the Pinelands.

To stay involved with this and other action opportunities join the Pinelands Watch by emailing



Roadside erosion that intruded 240 feet into the Preservation Area of the Pinelands after a small gasline was placed along Rt. 72 to service the New Lisbon Development Center.

shoulders has shown time and again.



## Write a letter!

Governor Chris Christie  
The State House  
PO Box 0001  
Trenton, NJ 08625

Mark Lohbauer, Chairman  
NJ Pinelands Commission  
P.O. Box 359  
New Lisbon, N.J. 08064

## Get Involved!

### Attend a Pinelands Commission Meeting

Sub-Committee meetings:

Wednesday, August 28, 2013

Friday, September 27, 2013

Regular monthly meetings:

Friday, September 13, 2013

Friday, October 11, 2013

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



For more information and documents pertaining to the South Jersey Gas pipeline visit PPA's website:

**[www.pinelandsalliance.org](http://www.pinelandsalliance.org)**

Click link on the front page!



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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*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

A Sponsor will receive a copy of the Pine Barrens: Up Close & Natural DVD

A Patron will receive John McPhee's seminal book *The Pine Barrens*

A Benefactor will receive *The Pine Barrens of New Jersey*, a photographic history of this region

Chairman's Circle will receive the book *Seasons of the Pines* and a personalized tour of the Pinelands



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