



**PINELANDS
PRESERVATION
ALLIANCE**

The Pinelands Preservation Alliance (PPA) works 365 days a year to protect land, water, plants and wildlife in New Jersey's Pinelands. We have unparalleled expertise in Pinelands laws and regulations. This allows us to engage thousands of people each year in actions to protect the wildest place in New Jersey.

Thank you for being a member! You made this possible:

Drilling Stopped for New Jersey Natural Gas (NJNG) Pipeline: After a series of recent accidents, PPA and residents successfully pressed the NJ Department of Environmental Protection to suspend drilling permits for the NJNG Southern Reliability Link pipeline on July 8th. Underground drilling for the pipeline must now stop. This is a victory and comes after years of work to stop a project that is unnecessary, dangerous and threatens the Pinelands. It also came at the cost of a resident's house which was condemned after a drilling accident at the end of June. *Now we are advocating for the Governor to put a permanent stop to this destructive project.*

Strengthening the Pinelands Commission: The agency that is most critical to the future of New Jersey's Pinelands is the state Pinelands Commission. Governor Murphy nominated five highly qualified individuals in March, and they must be approved by a vote of the full Senate. We sent a joint letter to Senate President Stephen Sweeney that was signed by **twenty conservation organizations and three former Governors (Thomas Kean, Christine Whitman, and James Florio)** asking for swift action to approve Governor Murphy's nominations to the Pinelands Commission. *We will keep pressing for this critical action.*

Stopping Off-Road Vehicle Damage: We are pressing the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to better protect hundreds of natural areas on public lands that are being abused by illegal off-roading. We have regular phone calls with their staff to share information about off-road vehicle damage so that action can be taken. In response to pressure from PPA, our partners and the public, DEP recently launched a communications campaign to make clear what the rules are for using off-road vehicles in the Pinelands. *We are working with partners to demand that DEP take strong measures to protect our open space.*

Habitat Restoration Work: PPA just received approval from the NJ Department of Environmental Protection to proceed with six priority stewardship projects to protect ponds, dunes, and other critical habitat on state-owned land in the Pinelands. These projects involve installing wooden guardrails, signage, and erosion control in order help these sites recover from damage caused by off-road vehicle use. *It took almost a year to build relationships with staff at the DEP to get these projects approved.*

Monitoring Development Projects in the Pinelands: The state-wide shutdown has created some unique challenges as public hearings are held virtually and development projects continue to move forward. Some agencies are taking advantage of the pandemic to rush through major projects with as little public attention as possible. Others are using the pandemic as an excuse for not answering our document requests so we can see what plans are afoot. *We are making sure nothing slips through while so many people must focus on meeting their own immediate needs.*

Protecting the Threatened Northern Pine Snake: We were able to work safely in the field during the spring and summer. This includes monitoring Northern Pine Snake hibernation sites to record when these snakes are active and protect them from off-roading and from collectors for the pet trade. Each snake gets a pit tag (like pet microchips), which allows us to keep records of their length, weight, sex, and behavior in subsequent visits over several years. *The Northern Pine Snake is a state threatened species, so data collection is critical to their survival.*

Protecting Rare Plant Species: PPA helps to monitor and manage the habitat of two federally listed plant species, American Chaffseed (*Schwalbea americana*) and Seabeach Amaranth (*Amaranthus pumilus*) and two state listed plant species, Pickering's Morning Glory (*Stylisma pickeringii* var. *pickeringii*) and Pine Barren Gentian (*Gentiana autumnalis*). (Pickering's Morning Glory is one of New Jersey's most rare plants!) By studying these species, we learn how to best manage their populations to improve viability. *Very few resources are devoted to protecting rare plants in the state. PPA is committed to protecting what we have left.*

Reopening Pinelands Adventures: Pinelands Adventures received permission from the state of New Jersey to reopen in June with a limited schedule of self-guided canoe and kayak trips in the Pinelands. Changes have been made to our operation to comply with new state and CDC regulations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has been challenging and time consuming but worth it. *We are happy that people can get away from things and enjoy a few peaceful hours on the river.*

Providing Food to Those in Need: Rancocas Creek Farm is a new sustainable farm created by PPA to demonstrate chemical-free food production, soil conservation, and habitat management. Last year 72-aces of preserved farmland surrounding our offices was donated to PPA. *Now, a year later, we have already provided over 6,000 pounds of fresh vegetables to residents in need thanks to a grant from the Princeton Area Community Foundation's COVID-19 Relief & Recovery Fund.*

Solving Stormwater Problems: Stormwater is one of the main culprits in polluting waterways in the Pinelands. This runoff is contaminated with fertilizers, pesticides, car chemicals and more and raises the acidity of our acidic waters impacting rare animal and plant species. We created the Landscape Makeover Program to help build green infrastructure in the Pinelands that captures and treats stormwater in a more natural way. PPA is also helping towns investigate other strategies like the creation of the stormwater utilities. Hammonton and Evesham are taking the first steps to create green infrastructure in their communities and analyze the stormwater problem. *To date, PPA has helped to install 35 projects covering a drainage area of almost 300,000 square feet or the equivalent of 7 acres of land throughout 10 communities.*

Protecting New Jersey's Coastal Communities: In June, PPA completed its extension of a two-year National Fish and Wildlife Foundation coastal habitat grant. This grant allowed PPA and Raritan Valley Community College to work with towns and state beaches to create plant protection strips in front of dunes where mowing/raking would not occur. This allowed beach plants to grow and collect sediment which contributed to reductions in erosion and occurrences of rare plants and animals. *We hope to expand this effort to include and even larger percentage of the coastline in the future.*

Saving New Jersey's Rare Plants: We are starting a project with Dr. Jay Kelly of Raritan Valley College on two federally listed plants species thanks to a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The first species is American Chaffseed, a semi-parasitic plant that is limited to just one natural population in New Jersey. The second species is Seabeach Amaranth, an annual beach plant that is making a comeback in the state where beach management is compatible with protecting the back beach. *The work will compliment strategies outlined in the recovery plans for these species with the aim of increasing their numbers in the state.*