

**PINELANDS PRESERVATION ALLIANCE**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**RESOLUTION**

**AUTHORIZING CONTRIBUTION TO RANCOCAS CRANBERRY FARM  
ACQUISITION AND PURCHASE OF MEHLER PARCEL**

January 26, 2021

WHEREAS, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance (“PPA”) is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, with Tax ID No. 521-164-1512; and

WHEREAS, PPA’s mission is to preserve and enhance the natural and cultural resources of the New Jersey Pinelands; and

WHEREAS, PPA has received a bequest of approximately \$1.49 million from the late Herman Pagel for the specific purpose of purchasing land for conservation and recreation in Burlington County, of which PPA has so far spent a total of \$39,159; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey Conservation Foundation (NJCF) is a leading land trust and a key partner of PPA, holds numerous properties in the Pinelands and throughout the state for conservation, and has a proven track record of preserving and managing conservation lands; and

WHEREAS, NJCF has negotiated the acquisition of land to create a new preserve, hereafter referred to as the Preserve, in the Pinelands of Burlington County and is seeking a final \$100,000 to complete two transactions for the purchase of a total of 530 acres of land for conservation; and

WHEREAS, NJCF is seeking to create the Preserve in two “phases” or purchases from two property owners; and

WHEREAS, Phase 1 is the purchase of 230+/- acre from Rancocas Cranberry Farm, located on Onga Hat Road, Block 1702, Lot 30 and Block 3601, Lot 1, in Southampton Township, Burlington County, for a price of \$280,000; and

WHEREAS, NJCF has raised a total of \$240,000 for the Phase 1 purchase, leaving a funding gap of \$40,000 for this acquisition;

WHEREAS, Phase 2 is the purchase of 300 +/- acres owned by South Jersey Wildlife Preserves (a hunt club), Block 1702, Lots 31, 51, 52 and 55–57 and Block 3601, Lots 3-6 and 13, in Southampton Township, Burlington County, for an estimated price of \$338,000; and

WHEREAS, NJCF has raised a total of \$278,000 for the Phase 2 purchase, leaving a funding gap of approximately \$60,000 for this acquisition;

WHEREAS, assuming the acquisitions are completed, NJCF will own the Preserve, subject to an existing, unique farmland conservation easement in favor of the Board of County Commissioners of Burlington County (formerly known as the Board of Chosen Freeholders) and a standard Green Acres conservation easement; and

WHEREAS, there is a 1.1 acre parcel on Onga Hat Road owned by Karen Mehler, Block 1702, Lot 30.01, in Southampton Township, Burlington County, that is adjacent to and largely surrounded by land to be included in the Preserve, that provides convenient access to the Preserve lands from the paved road, and that is not currently subject to any conservation restriction; and

WHEREAS, the Mehler parcel has a small ruined cabin and a small garage structure, and is served by an electrical line, but is otherwise undeveloped and is deemed unimproved by the tax assessor; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Mehler is willing to sell this parcel to PPA for \$5,000; and

WHEREAS, given the proposed purchase price, the Board does not believe it is necessary or appropriate to obtain formal appraisals of the Mehler parcel; and

WHEREAS, the Preserve and Mehler parcel are in the Pinelands Rural Development Area, which permits certain forms of development that include but are not limited to low-impact recreational operations;

WHEREAS, the Preserve includes forest, wetlands, ponds and streams of high ecological, scenic and recreational integrity and value; and

WHEREAS, the Preserve includes existing sand roads, dykes and paths that are in good condition and are suitable as paths for hiking and nature explorations, and the pond is suitable for canoe and kayak activities; and

WHEREAS, NJCF and PPA have obtained written confirmation from Burlington County that the conservation easements on the Preserve, which will continue in effect after acquisition, permit recreational and education programs to be held there, and the Green Acres conservation easement also permits recreational and education programs; and

WHEREAS, contributing to the acquisition of the Preserve and purchasing the Mehler parcel are each appropriate uses for funds from the Pagel bequest for the purchase of land in Burlington County for preservation and passive recreation in perpetuity; and

WHEREAS, NJCF's acquisition of the Preserve is an excellent opportunity for PPA to contribute to an important land preservation project; and

WHEREAS, NJCF wishes to enter into an agreement governing public access to the Preserve and allowing PPA and Pinelands Adventures to conduct nature education and recreation programs at the Preserve; and

WHEREAS, PPA's purchase of the Mehler parcel would provide an inexpensive means of providing access to the Preserve and a staging area for recreation and education programs at the Preserve; and

WHEREAS, the Executive Committee has discussed these projects and recommends that PPA proceed with contributing to the NJCF acquisitions and purchasing the Mehler parcel, subject to the conditions set out below;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that:

1. The Executive Director is authorized to make a grant of up to \$40,000 to NJCF for the purpose of contributing to NJCF's purchase of Block 1702, Lot 30 and Block 3601, Lot 1, in

Southampton Township, Burlington County, and contingent upon NJCF's ability to close this acquisition; and

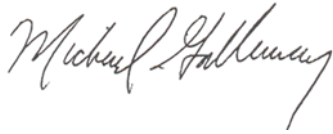
2. The Executive Director is authorized to make a grant of up to \$60,000 to NJCF for the purpose of contributing to NJCF's purchase of Block 1702, Lots 31, 51, 52, and 55-57, and Block 3601, Lots 3-6, and 13, in Southampton Township, Burlington County, and contingent upon NJCF's ability to close this acquisition; and

3. The Executive Director is authorized to complete the purchase by PPA of the Mehler parcel, Block 1702, Lot 30.01 in Southampton Township, Burlington County, and to pay all related costs of completing the purchase, for a maximum total cost for purchase and closing, inspection and title costs of \$10,000, on the following conditions:

- a) The Executive Director consults with a lawyer with relevant experience to carry out the transaction;
- b) PPA obtains title and liability insurance for the property; and
- c) PPA obtains a Phase I environmental survey of the property, which survey discloses no environmental hazards or potential liabilities for PPA.

I, Michael Gallaway, Secretary of the Board of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and complete copy of a certain resolution duly adopted by the Board of Trustees of PPA at its meeting by videoconference on January 26, 2021, in which a quorum participated, by a vote of 20 in favor, 0 against, and 0 abstaining.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I, the undersigned, Michael Gallaway, Secretary of the Board of the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, have hereunto subscribed my name.



Jan. 26, 2021

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Michael Gallaway, Secretary

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Date