



anJEC

REPORT

SUMMER 2004

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Director's Report

Highs and Lows

For the last few months, environmentalists in New Jersey have been on a political roller coaster. After several months of pushing for passage of the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (S1/A2635), we celebrated the bill's passage by the State legislature on June 10th.

But we were on that crest only momentarily, because the next day we started the quick plunge triggered by the surprise introduction of the Fast Track Permit bill (A3008/S1368). In only six days that bill sailed through legislature and Governor McGreevey signed it on July 9th.

The Fast Track bill allows developers to apply for expedited permits from NJDEP, NJDCA, and NJDOT in "Smart Growth Areas" of the state - State Planning Areas 1 and 2, designated centers, urban enterprise zones, and areas determined to be in need of redevelopment. The state agencies have only 45 days to make a decision on the permit once the application is deemed complete. This gives little to no time for local review and input on permits.

The Fast Track law also establishes a Smart Growth Ombudsman to review all relevant regulations for compliance with the State Plan. Governor McGreevey appointed NJDCA Commissioner Susan Bass Levin to this post. In addition the law enables consultants to get certified to issue some of the permits.

The Fast Track bill provides a new uphill challenge - to make sure that it will not cause undue harm to NJ's environmentally sensitive areas. Fortunately the timing is propitious for municipalities in designated growth areas to re-examine their State Plan designations and change any that affect environmentally sensitive features in their towns.

In April, the State Planning Commission started the third round of Cross Acceptance, the process of comparing planning policies among the state, county and local governments to attain compatibility between the plans. The Commission has released an updated version of the State Plan, including the latest version of the State Map that will guide policy makers over the next several years. You can view the Preliminary Plan and proposed maps at the Office of Smart Growth website (www.nj.gov/dca/osg).

The time period for Cross Acceptance is tight. Since counties need about a month to prepare their reports due in October, municipalities must submit information by mid-September.

Cover Photo A.J. Meerwald, New Jersey's official tall ship, sailing on the Hudson River near Palisades Interstate Park on an ANJEC-sponsored cruise. The Delaware Bayshore Discovery Project restored this 1928 Delaware Bay oyster schooner in the 1990's. Additional information at www.ajmeerwald.org. Photo by Renee Resky, Livingston (Essex) Environmental Commission

All environmental commissions should try to be involved in the process, by either volunteering to serve on the Cross Acceptance committee for their towns or by providing natural resources information to that committee. Commission members can also attend the public meetings in their counties to provide input. ANJEC will be sending out email alerts about the public meetings to all environmental commissions. (Let us know if we don't have your email address.)

Commissions in municipalities affected by the Fast Track Permit Law should focus special attention on the criteria being used for PA 1 and 2 designations, and consider challenging these designations in areas of environmental concern. Critical Environmental and Historic Sites (CEHS), areas under one square mile in otherwise designated growth areas, also need to be verified so that they will not be overlooked in areas targeted for growth. Commissions should take special notice of wellhead protection areas and other water supply recharge areas with PA 1 or 2 designations that will subject them to the fast track permitting. Given the time it takes to complete Cross Acceptance, for current major development proposals in erroneously designated Planning Areas 1 or 2, the municipality should file an emergency petition with the State Planning Commissions to change the region to PA 3,4, 5 or identify a CEHS.

If you need help interpreting the State Plan maps or have questions about the Fast Track Law, please contact ANJEC. State Plan Project Director Tony O'Donnell can provide information and assistance about State Plan issues; contact him by phone at ANJEC's Trenton office (609-278-5088) or by email (tonyodanjec@aol.com).

Sandy Batty
Executive Director

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566 MUNICIPALITIES ONE ENVIRONMENT

Executive Director Sandy Batty
Editor Sally Dudley
Advertising Coordinator Margaret Davey

The Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions is a private, non-profit educational organization serving environmental commission and open space committee members, concerned individuals, non-profits, and local officials. ANJEC's programs aim to promote the public interest in natural resource preservation, sustainable development and reclamation and support environmental commissions and open space committees working with citizens and other non-profit organizations.

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Cross Acceptance and State Plan Endorsement

By Paul Gleitz

Heyer, Gruel & Associates

Condensed from his handout materials for the 2004 NJ Conservation Foundation Land Conservation Rally.

What is Plan Endorsement?

The State Planning Commission developed Plan Endorsement to provide technical assistance and coordination for municipalities, counties, regional and state agencies to meet the publicly supported goals of the State Planning Act. That legislation recognizes that although the NJ Constitution and Legislature delegated land use decisions to municipalities, state and county planning and public investments often do not support their efforts. Similarly, local plans of neighboring municipalities often conflict.

The act also mandates that the State Planning Commission create and implement a cooperatively developed *State Plan* that delineates growth, redevelopment and natural resource and farming protection areas. The implementing tool is Plan Endorsement.

Why Pursue Plan Endorsement?

Plan endorsement is a way of making a municipality's master plan stronger and more easily implemented. Parallel to the benefits of COAH certification, Plan Endorsement provides protection for a local master plan. It can make new funding sources available, result in municipal regulatory consistency that streamlines development (a financial benefit for applicants) and help the community get the scale and types of development it desires.

Not just another layer of state bureaucracy designed to erode home rule, Plan Endorsement encourages municipalities to

- Engage the public in a proactive planning process;

- Identify a common vision;
- Address how, where and what kind of future growth they want;
- Recognize the constraints and opportunities for achieving their vision.

What Approach Should We Take?

All municipalities want to balance the need for development with their obligation to provide affordable housing and to protect enough open space for the enjoyment of the residents and the sustainability of the community. Smart growth planning that identifies areas of growth and areas for conservation can be coupled with environmental constraints planning to produce a balanced approach to municipal planning.

The master plan can reconcile these efforts into a cohesive local and regional vision. And it can then lead to other important planning documents that augment the vision of the master plan while focusing on more narrow concerns like open space protection, farmland acquisition, storm water control and wastewater management.

Summary of 2004 Plan Endorsement Guidelines for Municipalities

From original Office of Smart Growth, NJDCA documents

INTRODUCTION

Plan Endorsement is a voluntary review process designed to assist all levels of government to develop and implement plans to achieve the goals, policies and strategies of the *State Development and Redevelopment Plan*.

The Office of Smart Growth and other state agencies provide technical assistance throughout the process. The end product brings together sufficient information for the State Planning Commission to integrate the local context into *State Plan* consistency and for the petitioner to demonstrate its commitment to *State Plan* implementation.

Plan Endorsement aims to increase consistency among municipal, county, regional and state agency plans with each other and with the *State Plan*, and to facilitate the implementation of these plans.

BENEFITS

State agencies will offer local governments technical and financial assistance for implementation, including some for approved initial Plan Endorsement petitions, with additional designated funding and regulatory benefits from a wide range of state agencies when local governments meet the requirements of their approved Advanced Plan Endorsements. Not all benefits will be of interest to every municipality and county. Specific state agency commitments, along with the petitioner's planning requirements, will be set forth in the Plan Endorsement Contract.

REGULATORY BENEFITS

Most regulatory benefits will become available once the petitioner has fulfilled the terms of the Plan Endorsement Contract and received Advanced Plan Endorsement.

- After Initial Plan Endorsement, the NJDEP will provide a coordinated regulatory process for specific *State Plan* consistent projects as re-

quested by the local government entity.

- Petitioners will be able to obtain approvals of their Plans for NJDEP, including Open Space, Recreation and Parks, Water Resource Management, and Municipal Stormwater Management through the Plan Endorsement process.
- COAH will provide priority assistance to municipalities seeking Advanced Plan Endorsement for the certification of their Housing Elements and Fair Share Plans.

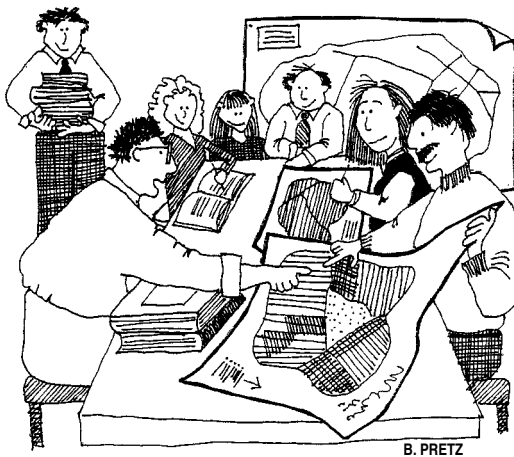
Through the Plan Endorsement process, state agencies will offer a coordinated and comprehensive, rather than a piecemeal review of local plans relating to the environment, affordable housing and utility availability in smart growth areas. NJDEP will also research historic permitting issues within the community to identify the most critical needs and issues to protecting natural resources and systems, public health, and historic sites and provide guidance tailored to these issues to help local government complete its petition for Plan Endorsement.

PRE-PETITION MEETING

The Office of Smart Growth strongly encourages municipalities to schedule a pre-petition meeting for guidance on the requirements and benefits of Plan Endorsement, before they submit an application. At least 30 days before the meeting, potential petitioners shall submit to the Office of Smart Growth their existing master plans, any other adopted planning documents, and for municipalities adopted zoning maps, zoning schedules and capital improvement programs.

PETITION COMMITTEES

Municipal petition committees should include representatives from the governing body, the planning board, the board of adjustment, the Board of Education, the sewerage authority, several public members representing diverse interests, such as social, economic, housing, environmental, and where applicable, the environmental and the historic preservation commissions.



Stage 1: Initial Plan Endorsement

Petition Local government needs to submit a wealth of documents, including the following.

- Required master plan elements,
- Any relevant Board of Education five-year facilities plan,
- Community vision and public participation,
- Proposed changes to *State Plan Policy Map*,
- Coordinated planning efforts with adjoining municipalities, counties and regional entities,
- Zoning and land use map,
- Natural resource inventory ,
- Municipal environmental justice inventory,
- Existing or proposed master plan housing element,
- Existing master plan transportation and utility service elements or information on existing and future capacity of these infrastructure components,
- Stormwater management plan (required after February 2, 2007).

The petitioner also needs to submit a proposed Planning and Implementation Agreement that identifies how it plans to achieve the goals and visions in the endorsed plan, and what kinds of technical and financial assistance from the State Planning Commission and state agencies will help advance implementation.

Stage 2: Planning and Implementation

Agreement While reviewing petitions for Initial and Advanced Plan Endorsements, the Office of Smart Growth will work with the petitioner on its Planning and Implementation Agreement and submit it to the State Planning Commission for approval. A petitioner can stop at

Stage 2, or continue on to Advanced Plan Endorsement.

Stage 3: Plan Endorsement Contract

A joint agreement signed by the State Planning Commission and the petitioner, the Contract sets forth the requirements the petitioner must meet to achieve Advanced Plan Endorsement, including those that will continue after the plan is endorsed. The agreement also details state agency obligations for financial and technical assistance. The Contract is meant to be flexible so that the requirements match the land area features and associated Plan Endorsement benefits. State agencies will work with the petitioner to identify specific requirements.

Stage 4: Advanced Plan Endorsement

Petition Requirements These include build-out and capacity analysis, current substantive certification from the Council on Affordable Housing or a court judgment of compliance, and environmental plans consistent with state programs, regulations and policies. Transportation and agricultural elements are necessary for local governments with those resources.

Stage 5: Biannual Status Reports

Once a municipality, county, or regional entity has achieved Plan Endorsement, the State Planning Commission requires that it submit status reports to the Office of Smart Growth every two years to demonstrate progress and identify needed changes to the endorsed plan or to the *State Plan Policy Map*. Failure by a petitioner to honor these terms and conditions can result in the State Planning Commission revoking the petitioner's endorsed plan status, unless the action was dependent on a state agency action that did not occur. 🌱

For Further Information

- Office of Smart Growth, NJDCA, (www.nj.gov/dca/osg/)
- Useful State Planning Commission documents (all available through www.state.nj.us/dca/osg/plan/index.shtml)
 - 2004 Draft *State Plan* Endorsement Guidelines
 - 2004 *Preliminary State Development and Redevelopment Plan*,
- NJ Smart Growth Planning and Program Resources, technical and financial assistance, (www.nj.gov/dca/osg/docs/techassist110102.pdf)

Cross Acceptance III: Why Participate?

By Candace Ashmun, ANJEC Advisor

Is it a map? A Plan? What does it mean?

The *State Development and Redevelopment Plan* is playing a bigger and bigger part in the lives and futures of NJ's residents. Where will state agencies put the next big road, the next growth-serving sewers? What will happen to local farms, parks, open space? The *State Plan* has become an integral part of decision-making by governments and courts at all levels.

A comprehensive, accurate *State Plan* is even more important, given the enactment of the Fast Track Permit bill in early July. That legislation gives NJDEP and other state agency just 45 days to review permit applications in growth areas (Planning Areas 1 and 2, designated centers, urban enterprise zones, and areas state agencies feel in need of redevelopment) or the applications will be deemed approved. Another important implication is the apparent shift in the burden of proof from applicants to municipalities in these areas. Municipalities will have to provide the proofs that determine approval or disapproval of an application for approval of rezoning, development or variances.

The future of every NJ municipality is at stake, and will depend on decisions made during this, the third, review and modification of the *State Plan*. For the first time, Cross Acceptance is primarily about adjusting the policy map to depict new data and new futures accurately.

Importance of *State Plan* Policy Map

With new technology and data, the map that governs the application of *State Plan* policies has gained significant emphasis. Some map changes will address previous errors. For example, some previous growth areas

(Planning Areas 1 and 2) had no existing or planned sewers or other infrastructure, while some environmentally sensitive areas (Planning Areas 5 and 4b) did. And previous maps often failed to acknowledge the environmentally critical character of threatened and endangered species habitat. Some map changes will reflect infrastructure changes over the last four years, some decisions being made at the local, county or state level.

Environmental Commission Role

The participation of local environmental commissions, the keepers of the local databases, the public and other local officials are critical in Cross Acceptance. Every effort should be made to ensure that the state agencies' mapping of your municipality is accurate and also reflects the residents' vision for the town's future.

The basis of determining the *State Plan* Policy Map's accuracy should focus on the *State Plan*'s criteria for each Planning Area designation and local knowledge. In addition municipalities should discuss and incorporate into their Cross Acceptance reports how the Map's Planning Area designations relate to their planning and the public's vision for the future. To make sure key information is included in their county's Cross Acceptance report to the State Planning Commission (due October 22, 2004) municipalities need to work closely with their county planning boards. It would be wise to submit the local report to the county at the latest by mid-September. Public education and participation in this process will be critical. Environmental commissions can be the local group that ensures widespread and effective participation.


Making Cross Acceptance Work For Your Municipality

- Request that a member of the environmental commission be on the municipal Cross Acceptance Committee;
- Ask your town and county for the *State Plan* maps they have recently received;
- Study and compare the *State Plan* maps with your environmental resource inventory and other data, the municipal master plan and zoning ordinance;
- Analyze the Preliminary *State Plan* Policy Map using the criteria for Planning Areas in the Plan;
- Invite the public to several discussion sessions;
- Prepare, present and circulate a Findings of Fact document to municipal, county and state decision makers;
- Participate with your municipality, county and the State Planning Commission as the process evolves through to the adoption of version three of the *State Development and Redevelopment Plan*.

Useful State Planning Commission documents (all available through www.state.nj.us/dca/osg/plan/index.shtml)

- *State Plan* Policy Maps circulated to municipalities and counties
- *Preliminary State Development and Redevelopment Plan*

- Cross Acceptance Manual

ANJEC is following this process closely and is available to assist its members make Cross Acceptance work before the State Planning Commission adopts the final *Plan* in July 2005. For help in obtaining maps or organizing your efforts, contact Tony O'Donnell, ANJEC's *State Plan* Project Director at 609-278-5088, (tonyodanjec@aol.com), or our Resource Center at 973-539-7547, (resourcecenter@anjec.org). 

Things That Go Buzz

By Marie Springer, Bee Keeper and Chair,
Norwood (Bergen) Environmental Commission

What goes with spring flowers? All those creatures that “buzz.” Flowers are there not just to delight our eyes but to attract the “buzzers” for pollination. So, when flowers begin to bloom, so do bees, wasps, yellow jackets and hornets. Honeybees, carpenter bees, bumblebees and miner (who dig underground) bees collect pollen and nectar. Wasps, yellow jackets and hornets collect nectar, their source of carbohydrates. The flowers’ pollen is bees’ sole source of protein.

Wasps – paper wasps, yellow jackets, cicada killers and hornets – get their protein from animal sources including bee larvae, spiders and their eggs. They are also quite fond of protein from human picnics and barbecues. So, the uninvited and very unwelcome guests at outdoor feasts are wasp family members. These creatures use the protein they find to feed their larvae. It is poetic justice that spiders also feed off the wasps they catch in their webs.

Over the winter, worker honeybees are in their hives, flapping their wings to create enough warmth to maintain a temperature of 82 degrees Fahrenheit. With any luck, they survived the particularly brutal winter of 2004, huddling together in the center of the hive. The honey in their winter food stores keeps them alive. Since the honeybees will not defecate inside their hives, they all hurry outside to relieve themselves once the temperature is in the 50s.

When a honeybee hive survives the winter, the queens will start laying more eggs in March.

Dependent on the worker bees being able to bring in pollen to feed the larvae, she does not go out looking for food for the first brood like other varieties of bees and wasps.

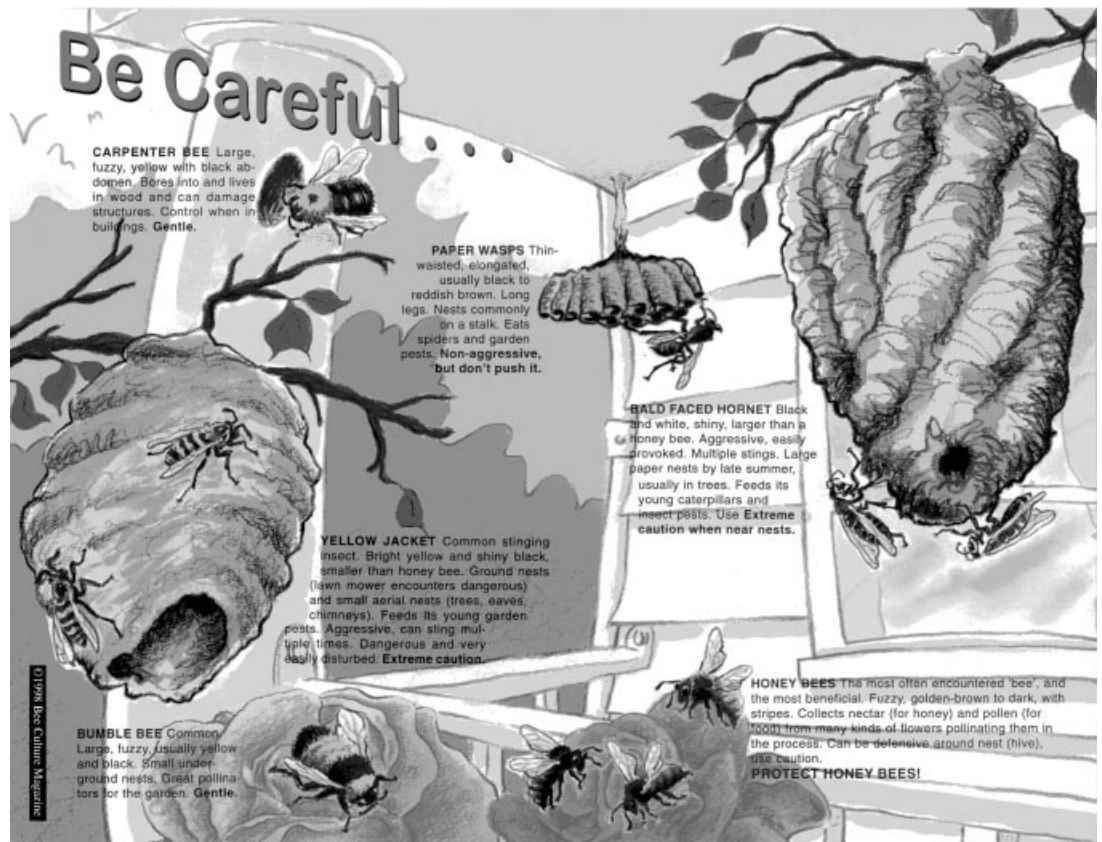
Types of Nests

All bees and wasps have nests, but only honeybees use hives. Most bees and wasps die during the winter. But the queens usually live through the cold weather, hibernating in the ground under leaves or bark. While honeybees use the same hive year after year, or move to an abandoned hive, other varieties of bees and wasps do not use nests from previous years. In the spring, queens do all of the initial work to build the nest and find food for the new broods.

Carpenter bees use their mandibles

to start their nests inside wood. The exception to the rule, male carpenter bees live through the winter as well as the females, sometimes in the previous year’s nest. Carpenter bees are capable of stinging although they would do anything to get away, preferring not to sting, because of course, they will die.

Bumblebee queens will look for an old mouse nest or a cavity in a wood pile or lawn furniture to lay their eggs. Instead of putting nectar into cells, bumblebee queens start food stores in a sort of basin they make that becomes the honey pot, a communal place where all of their offspring will deposit nectar that eventually becomes honey. Bumblebees also can sting but usually fly away because they will die. Like carpenter bees, they are considered non-aggressive.



COURTESY OF ROOT PUBLICATIONS

Miner bees are very common and many look very similar to honeybees. Many people have seen them without knowing it. There are more than 500 species in North America. In one short month, the queen digs a deep hole in the soil with her front legs, mates, lays her eggs and makes a good bundle of pollen for her larvae to feed on. She rarely lives long enough to see her offspring.

For their nests, paper wasp queens find a place protected from the elements like the edges of houses, in and under porches, or playground equipment. They collect little bits of wood with their mandibles to make six sided cells. The nest can be as small as a cookie or as large as a dinner plate hanging from a small stem the queen makes stick to the place she has selected. Paper wasp queens go to find animal matter like other larva, spider eggs or hamburgers as protein for their broods. Only females are able to sting and they can do it many times to protect the nest and themselves. They account for about 30 percent of all stinging insect allergies.

Yellow jackets are the most aggressive and dangerous of bees and wasps. Their nests are in the ground, under logs, inside sheds, inside walls – a variety of places where humans and their pets often disturb them. When provoked, yellow jackets will fly out at you in numbers and chase for some distance. Like all wasps, they can sting many times. They also feed their broods on animal protein and enjoy our picnics as much as we do. Yellow jackets also come flying out after lawn mowers and hikers. The ones to watch out for the most, yellow jackets and hornets (their venoms are similar) account for more than 50 percent of all stinging insect allergies.

Bald faced hornets make almond-shaped melon-sized nests hanging from branches from bits of wood they mold together with their mandibles. Like other wasps, they can sting many times. And they get their protein from animal sources.

Is it a Bee or a Wasp?

The best way to know if you are looking at a bee or a wasp is to see if the creature has hair or is smooth. All bees have hair. That's how they collect pollen. Wasps are all smooth

since they don't need to collect pollen. Honeybees are golden with varying degrees of black. Carpenter bees, bumblebees, paper wasps and yellow jackets are all lemon yellow with black. Bald-faced hornets are predominately black with bits of white.

Honeybees are the NJ state insect. Their primary importance to us is pollination, not honey. Because of their importance for farming in the Garden State, the Department of Agriculture protects and studies them. Farmers who raise blueberries, apples, cucumbers and watermelons often set up beehives to make sure their plants will produce good quantities. Honeybees also pollinate a great variety of trees and plants throughout the state. That in turn causes the plants to produce a great many seeds and fruits that birds, squirrels and mice consume. And those small animals are in turn food for other creatures like hawks and foxes.

Dealing with Bee and Wasp Stings

According to MedicineNet.com and MayoClinic.com, allergies to bee and wasp venoms can be deadly, but are much rarer than most people realize. Most bee and wasp stings result in itching or stinging and swelling that generally disappears within a day or so. A small percentage of people have severe allergic reactions to bee and wasp stings. Symptoms include difficulty breathing, facial swelling and shock. These reactions usually occur within minutes of a sting, although they can be delayed by 24 hours. Prompt treatment is essential and emergency help is often needed. It is extremely important for anyone who suspects they are allergic to the venom of a stinging insect to go to an allergist for tests and therapy.

It is also important to try to prevent being stung. Avoid walking barefoot across lawns so you won't step on one of these stinging insects. Also try to stay away from yellow jacket nests in the ground or walls, hornet and wasp nests in bushes, trees or under roofs. Different insects have different venoms – which result in different allergies. Most importantly, allergists can treat bee and wasp allergies with great success. 🌿

Smart Growth



By Sally Dudley,
ANJEC Report Editor

One Step Forward: Landmark Highlands Legislation

Thanks to the hard work of environmental organizations, municipalities and citizens, the Senate and Assembly passed the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (S1/A2635) with overwhelming bipartisan support on June 10th. Governor McGreevey is expected to sign the bill by the end of the summer. Tom Gilbert, executive Director of the Highlands Coalition, describes this legislation as “NJ’s most significant environmental achievement since the protection of the Pinelands.”

Based on recommendations from Governor McGreevey’s Highlands Task Force, the legislation identifies a 395,000-acre preservation core area, roughly half of the Highlands, based on analyses of critical watershed lands and contiguous forests by the US Forest Service, Rutgers University and NJDEP. More than half of the preservation area is already in public ownership.

The bill creates a Highlands Water Protection Planning council with 8 of its 15 members representing local Highlands governments. The council will develop a regional master plan that will be mandatory in the preservation core and voluntary in the planning area which is the rest of the Highlands. The act sets up incentives for all Highlands municipalities to comply with the regional plan, including a legal shield, state aid and planning assistance. The bill also dedicates \$12 million annually from the Realty Transfer Tax for watershed moratorium aid, property tax stabilization and other aid to Highlands municipalities

affected by the act.

A summary of the Highlands Bill is available at (www.rce.rutgers.edu/Highlands). For the full text of S1/A2635, go to the Legislature's web page at (www.state.njleg.state.nj.us).

Two Steps Backward: Fast Track Permit Legislation

Just one week after the NJ legislature passed the Highlands bill, it adopted Fast Track Permit legislation (A3008 /S1368), with almost no opportunity for public comment. An all too obvious tradeoff with opponents to Highlands protection, the Fast Track bill requires NJDCA, NJDEP and NJDOT to rule on permits in Smart Growth areas within 45 days or they are deemed approved.

Despite thousands of phone calls and emails opposing the Fast Track legislation from environmental organizations, ANJEC members, local officials and citizens, Governor McGreevey quickly signed the bill – and as we go to press in late July, he


still has not signed the act that would protect the Highlands.

While the Fast Track Bill refers to the State Plan, it gives the Planning Commission no additional power. Instead, it establishes a completely new and powerful bureaucracy headed by Smart Growth Ombudsman NJDCA Commissioner Susan Bass Levin. She will direct Smart Growth divisions at NJDEP, NJDCA and NJDOT and has the authority to approve or disapprove state regulations affecting smart growth areas (Planning Areas 1 and 2, designated centers, urban enterprise zones, redevelopment areas approved by NJDCA, and similar areas designated by NJDEP). The system effectively excludes municipal boards, environmental commissions and concerned citizens from commenting on these development applications.



What Commissions Can Do

The Fast Track legislation offers Smart Growth area residents no opportunity to comment on state permits for proposed developments in their communities. To prevent the legislation from resulting in natural resource destruction in currently designated Planning Areas 1 and 2, environmental commissions, local officials and citizens should incorporate recommendations in municipal Cross Acceptance reports to change these areas to Planning Area 3,4, or 5 or to a Critical Environmental Site. Since the Cross Acceptance process takes many months to conclude, to stop any pending development proposal in a Smart Growth area that threatens to harm important natural resources like wellhead protection

areas, the municipality needs to petition the State Planning Commission for an immediate change to the State Plan map. 

Making Brownfields Redevelopment Work

**By Frances E. Hoffman, PhD/MSP
Brownfields Program Director
Office of Smart Growth
NJ Department of Community Affairs**

Brownfields redevelopment is never a small undertaking. Many state agencies need to be involved and in the past the process could get very complicated. But now the Brownfields Redevelopment Interagency Team (BRIT) and the Governor's Brownfields Redevelopment Task Force are in full-force to help with all of your brownfields needs, providing the right tools to get the job done.

Brownfields redevelopment is a strategic driver for Smart Growth throughout the state. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Brownfields Program facilitates

brownfields redevelopment, promoting coordination among state agencies and maximizing the impact of state brownfields resources. This is where the planning, the regulatory programs, the financial and technical support, the infrastructure for redevelopment, and other state incentives come together to work with brownfields project managers, municipalities and counties to implement the best possible redevelopment as quickly as possible.

The Right Team

The BRIT, a group of representatives from 25 state programs in 17

state agencies, works to streamline and coordinate the brownfields redevelopment process, reviewing projects presented by developers, municipalities, counties, consultants and other brownfields project managers. The team's working sessions can shave years off a project, adding financial support by providing access to information from a variety of state agencies, and furnishing resources and people who can help guide a brownfields project through the state systems. Twenty-nine projects have benefited from this full-team review and continued support, and an additional 45 have received other support services. Like never before, the state agencies are working in concert to move projects forward proactively and in the process, identify ways to improve programs and practices.

The Right Task Force

Complementing the BRIT is the Governor's Brownfields Redevelopment Task Force, established in 1998 under the NJ Brownfield and Site Remediation Act. Its members include representa-

tives from seven public agencies whose staff also serve on the BRIT, and six public members appointed by the Governor. The Task Force evaluates brownfields-related policies and legislation, raises awareness of critical issues and identifies options for resolution of obstacles to brownfields redevelopment. The Task Force is also charged with developing an inventory of brownfields properties throughout the state and promoting their redevelopment.

The Right Tools

The Office of Smart Growth's recent **New Jersey Brownfields Resource Kit** available on line at <http://nj.gov/dca/osg/commissions/brownfields> outlines the redevelopment process and organizes state resources into easy-to-use categories.

And the **Brownfields Site Mart** (www.njsitemart.com) offers an ever-expanding public inventory of sites throughout the state. Designed to make it easier for developers to locate and build on land in cities and towns while preserving the state's dwindling inventory of open space, the Site Mart includes information provided by municipalities, counties, regional development and planning entities, private property owners, nonprofits and others.

Developers, municipalities, consultants and other stakeholders who have come into contact with these new and committed partnerships have remarked how they have helped projects move more smoothly and aid Smart Growth to come to life across the state. 🌱

ANJEC's Smart Growth Planning Program

For the third year, thanks to special funding from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation (Morristown) ANJEC has been able to offer Smart Growth Planning Assistance Grants to municipalities in the Highlands, Pinelands and Delaware Bayshore. With increasing interest in understanding the benefits of good solid local planning, the number of towns obtaining grants has tripled over the last three years. More than 40 municipalities have been able to use these matching grants to carry out land use planning projects that promote environmental protection and the goals of the State Plan.

ANJEC's Smart Growth grant program funds studies, environmental ordinances, and master plan and zoning changes that facilitate local land use based on the natural capacity and environmental sensitivity of land, and its proximity to infrastructure. Our goal for smart growth is to channel development into town centers and away from rural and environmentally sensitive areas.

ANJEC Executive Director Sandy Batty points out how these matching grants have enabled towns to put together the data that serves as the basis of good land use planning. "Many towns use their first Smart Growth grants to develop a baseline environmental resource inventory that maps and describes soils, surface and groundwater, topography, geology, vegetation and wildlife, as well as current uses and infrastructure," she notes. "This knowledge enables a town to determine suitable types and intensities (density) of uses for land within its borders. The inventory serves as the basis for zoning revisions, open space and farmland preservation plans, ordinances, and stormwater and other infrastructure planning projects which can also be funded through the Smart Growth grant program."

To be eligible for a grant, a town must have a functioning environmental commission that will participate in or manage the project. According to ANJEC Assistant Director Kerry Miller, "In the first two years, 26 environmental commissions and open space

Promoting Environmental Values

Garden State Earth Institute's volunteers offer a unique variety of courses and films to encourage active commitment to environmental values. Part of a nationwide network of "sister" Earth Institutes, they've reached more than 700 NJ people at religious institutions, libraries and homes, making presentations to adult education groups and at lunch-time sessions.

Environmental discussion courses cover Voluntary Simplicity, Choices for Sustainable Living, Discovering a Sense of Place and Exploring Deep Ecology in seven to nine sessions. Interested people can sign up for a course for just \$20 and receive a book with a collection of articles and questions for each session.

To get the discussion going, a GSEI volunteer makes an initial presentation to any group of eight or more people at a place and time of their choice. Group members facilitate subsequent sessions. "Voluntary Simplicity," for example, covers the history of simplic-

ity as a philosophy of life, resolving the conflicts between the desire to make and spend money and the desire for a simple life and poses questions like how much is enough? And when do material possessions at meaning to live and when not?

GSEI also offers environmental films, including "The Next Industrial Revolution," narrated by Susan Sarandon. Green architect William McDonough and chemist Michael Braungart, demonstrate how to bring together commerce and ecology, how businesses are working with nature and improving their profits.

The organization's workshops use presentations to make the connection between personal and environmental health on subjects like living simply, conscious consumption, living, leisure and working in the information age, and water supply.


To learn more about GSEI's programs go to www.gsearthinstitute.org or call Claire or Fred Mayer at 973-984-5371. 🌱



committees have provided thousands of volunteer hours, working with consultants on projects that will protect natural resources and open space to assure thriving, livable communities. Through their involvement, environmental commissioners are learning more about their towns, educating the residents, and working more closely with their planning boards and other local officials."

The towns receiving 2004 grants are:

- Bethlehem (Hunterdon), Harmony (Warren), Harrison (Gloucester), Manchester (Ocean), Mantua (Gloucester), Peapack-Gladstone (Somerset), Pittsgrove (Salem), Quinton (Salem), Stillwater (Sussex), Woodstown and Pilesgrove (Gloucester) – for environmental resource inventories and open space plans
- Alexandria (Hunterdon) – ground-water resource evaluation
- Byram (Sussex) – wastewater management plan amendments
- Frelinghuysen (Warren) and Green (Sussex) – greenway/stream corridor resources studies
- Jackson (Ocean) – stream corridor protection plan study
- Plumsted (Ocean) – conservation design and other critical areas ordinances
- Roxbury (Morris) – water supply capacity and buildout study
- Ringwood (Passaic), Rockaway (Morris) and Stockton (Hunterdon) – conservation element and master plan revisions
- Washington (Morris) – vernal pool mapping and analysis
- Woolwich (Gloucester) and Franklin (Gloucester) – farmland protection plans

The Dodge Foundation's funding of ANJEC's Smart Growth program has been very effective in helping environmental commissions play a significant role in moving their municipalities toward better land use planning. And many environmental commissions are reducing the local costs for these studies by providing in-kind labor contributions equaling up to half of the required 50 percent municipal match for the Smart Growth Planning projects. 

Toast and Roast for Candy Ashmun

Friday, June 11, 2004



ANJEC's First Executive Director, former ANJEC Board President, and 45 years of environmental service are among Candy Ashmun's credits. A reception and silent auction in the Basking Ridge Country Club (Somerset) attracted more than 100 of Candy's and ANJEC's friends and colleagues. All proceeds benefit the CM Ashmun Endowment Fund and ANJEC.

PHOTOS BY GARY SZELC

ANJEC Annual Meeting and Election of Board Members

OFFICERS Two-year terms

President

Robert Dobbs, Director, Camden County Soil Conservation District

Vice President, Operations

Chris Allyn, Chair, Harding (Morris) Environmental Commission

Secretary

Geoffrey Gollin, Marketing Consultant

TRUSTEES Three-year terms

Raritan

Joy Grafton, lawyer

Barbara Simpson, Muirhead Foods, Princeton (Mercer) Environmental Commission

ANJEC members will vote on the slate of nominees at ANJEC's annual meeting to be held at the Environmental Congress on Friday, October 15, 2004 at the Mercer County College Conference Center, West Windsor. At that time, members can also make additional nominations from the floor. For additional information, contact ANJEC at 973-539-7547 or info@anjec.org.

Inter COMM



Reports on Environmental Commission Activities

By Michele Gaynor, ANJEC Resouce Center Co-Director

Protecting Our Water Supplies

Well Water Awareness

The residents of Byram (Sussex) depend on local wells – on the properties where they live or from small water companies – for their water. A two hour Well Water Awareness workshop organized by the environmental commission and funded by NJDEP's Environmental Services Program included a hydrologist's presentation on historical and potential groundwater contamination and typical well yields based on local geology. Speakers from NJ Geological Survey and NJDEP Department of Safe Drinking Water, discussed uranium content in local drinking water and well testing, including the 2002 Private Well Testing Act that applies to sales and leasing of properties that depend on private wells with less than 15 connections. Environmental commission members, representatives of the Sussex County Health Department and of the Byram Planning Board, and two dozen residents had questions for the three experts and took away detailed information about well testing.

Well Water Awareness was the third in a series of in-house workshops to help residents and township officials understand the benefits and challenges of freshwater wetlands, GIS mapping and using groundwater as a major water supply source.

Protecting and Enhancing Surface Water

The Dover Township (Ocean) Environmental Commission was busy throughout the last year maintaining, improving and protecting their water supply. A summer water quality-testing program involved regularly sampling water at various locations along the Long Swamp Creek, a major

tributary of Tom's River, which flows into Barnegat Bay. The environmental commission helped prioritize the implementation projects recommended for addressing water quality. For example, the environmental commission and the NJ Department of Agriculture Beneficial Insect Lab worked on a beetle release to control purple loosestrife in the Long Swamp Creek. The lab develops insect rearing techniques and produces mass numbers of beneficial insects for biological pest control. The environmental commission also took baseline photos to assist with ongoing monitoring.

The environmental commission also put together a publication, *What YOU Can Do to Prevent Nonpoint Source Pollution in Dover Township*, and distributed it to many of the residents within the Long Swamp Creek Watershed. The commission eventually hopes to circulate it throughout the township.

An AquaFest

The Millburn Township (Essex) Environmental Commission along with the Millburn High School Environmental Club presented a free educational event to achieve compliance with the Storm Water Phase II rule requirements for public education on storm water runoff and water pollution. The environmental commission organized a logo contest for

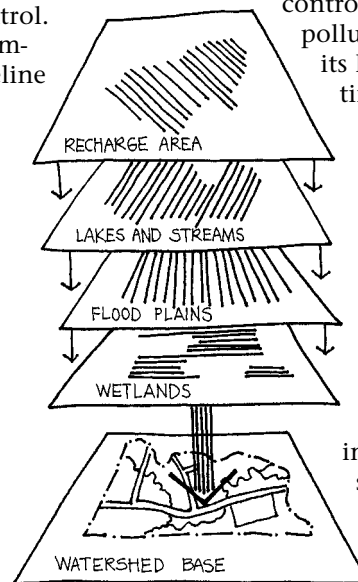
4th and 5th graders to raise public awareness about how residents' activities affect the water they drink and enlisted area high school students to visit schools and present the contest kickoff.

There were activities for both adults and children attending the event. While adults learned about ground-water friendly gardening techniques and where their local source of drinking comes from, the kids played on a fire truck, stepped into a giant bubble and did water relays and water trivia. Residents were also encouraged to bring in their used batteries for recycling. The event brought in 450 visitors and had 100 volunteers. There were 20 different exhibitors, fun play stations and door prizes.

Storm Water Management That Works

In 1987 Stafford (Ocean), a coastal community, began installing complex storm water management systems to control the non point source pollution that had been plaguing its lakes and streams. Since that time the environmental commission reports that the township has experienced only success with improved water quality. Where most towns direct storm water into streams, lakes and/or the ocean, Stafford has for years used a system that removes chemicals, pet waste, garbage and silt and funnels storm water into the ground. The township regularly cleans the filters with vacuum trucks. The system has since won the federal Environmental Protection Agency's

general excellence award. With the 2004 NJ storm water regulations, this system will serve as a model for other municipalities. The environmental commission was instrumental in writing the ordinance. 🌿



ANJEC in the City

By Pam McIntosh, ANJEC Resource Center Co-Director

Urban Farmers' Markets Bring Country to the City

Urbanized municipalities with developed centers make ideal locations for farmers' markets, and are in fact where most are located. People can purchase a wide selection of fresh local produce and NJ farmers can find a profitable outlet for their goods in over 70 communities.

Farmers' markets can positively impact city residents' quality of life. They provide nutritious local produce, along with a service environment where growers can share with customers how to store and cook the produce they sell.

They can also positively impact the local economy by drawing people downtown to shop and eat. Local businesses can take advantage of this draw to hold sidewalk sales or put a few tables outside to make a sidewalk café. This is happening in many municipalities with farmers' markets, particularly in the northern part of the state.

It is estimated, however, that about half of new farmers' markets fail, making it clear how important it is to have a good location and good organization with support and commitment from the municipality and business community.

Steps to Growing a Farmers' Market

Active town support is a prerequisite for success. A first step is to talk with municipal officials and business operators. Does the chamber of commerce or other local business group want this? What is the current business mix in downtown? Are there any businesses that would see a farmers' market as competition, for example a small green grocer or flower shop? Municipal officials will be concerned about planning and zoning issues. Most importantly, if



the market is to succeed, the town needs to provide some staff time to:

- Promote the market through flyers, posters, ads in local papers, and press releases to local media.
- Talk with local business people and act as an ombudsman to keep them happy.
- Work with the local chamber of commerce to come up with some money for advertising. NJ Department of Agriculture's (NJDA) Jersey Fresh Match Funds provide a 50/50 match for advertising costs; current funding for this program, however, is low.
- Ensure operation of the farmers' market stays within zoning and parking regulations.
- Find a location with good foot traffic and good parking, usually in a public area. Some community-oriented urban churches have allowed use of their parking lots for farmers' markets, particularly those near city services to encourage recipients of the US Department of Agriculture WIC (special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants and children) to use their Farmers Market Nutrition Program coupons.
- Research farmers to ensure they are complementary not competitive (i.e. all with the same items), can supply what customers want, and are people who get along with one

another. Currently, the demand for farmers for markets is outstripping supply making it possibly difficult to find farmers. A good contact is the NJ Council of Farmers and Communities (NJFCF) (www.njfcf.org), an organization of about 30 different farmers' markets. They have developed rules and regulations participating farmers must adhere to regarding issues such as growing all produce they sell. Your local county agriculture agent can also be a good source of ideas for possible farmers.

Another key is to start with less. It pays to start with just two or three farmers and when there's more demand than they can meet, expand the market with their help. This way you ensure that the initial farmers are satisfied financially and otherwise.

If you are interested in finding out more about starting a farmers' market, contact Bill Walker of NJDA, 609-292-8854. He is a knowledgeable and enthusiastic source of information.

If you are looking for a farmers' market and there is not one in your town you can search for the closest one on the NJDA's webpage, (www.state.nj.us/jerseyfresh). This site also lets you search to find out which supermarkets are stocking local produce and what they have available in a given week. 🌿



ANJEC's Activities & Accomplishments



By Sally Dudley, ANJEC Report Editor

Publications Help Spread the Word

"ANJEC publications are a wonderful resource for all municipalities,"

— Kathryn Porter, former mayor,
Mendham Township (Morris)

From the very beginning, ANJEC has put together publications to provide environmental commissioners, local officials and citizens with information to help them protect important natural resources through planning, open space acquisition and local and state regulations. We offer both data and guidance as tools to convince local planning boards and governing bodies to support programs and projects that will protect important environmental resources over the long term. We distribute the publications at our workshops, conferences and round tables, so participants will have specific references to use when they are working to generate positive changes in their communities.

For more than 20 years, the quarterly *ANJEC Report* has covered important current issues, complete with facts and "how to" guidance for effective local action. Regular reports on successful commission projects put forth real examples of ways to approach local issues. Starting as an 8-page newsletter in the 1970's, the *Report* has evolved into a 20-page quarterly, with feature articles on topics like planning, open space, water resource protection, and pollution prevention, as well as book reviews, urban environmental news, information and background on major questions asked of our Resource Center staff.



ANJEC also publishes handbooks and manuals with comprehensive information and guidance to achieve long-term environmental protection. We send a copy of each new publication to all member commissions for their local environmental libraries. All aim to deliver technical information in clear, simple understandable language so that people of all ages and backgrounds can use the material. We include lists of additional sources of information including government, academic and non-profit contacts, publications and web sites, applicable state and local laws and regulations.

For example, we recently wrote and published *Pathways for the Garden State: A Local Government Guide to Planning Walkable, Bikeable Communities*, which puts forth tools to counter-attack suburban sprawl by helping people get out of their cars and onto their feet and bicycles. This practical handbook includes guidance on developing and implementing plans and designs for walking and bicycle routes along paths, sidewalks and roadways and greenways, as well as information on how to mobilize support in urban, suburban and rural communities.

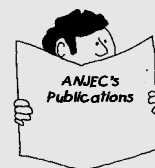
In the early 1990's, ANJEC initiated short, concise pamphlets on specific local environmental topics. The 8-16 page *Resource Papers* present background data, outline how to meet

specific goals, offer guidelines for the process, and list sources of additional information. In 2004, ANJEC dedicated its Resource Paper collection in memory of Mimi Upmeyer, a former ANJEC project director and board member. In the early 1990's Mimi came up with the Resource Paper concept and wrote the first three to help environmental commissioners and local officials put good land use in place. ANJEC's expanding stock of Resource Papers covers a wide variety of topics on commission operations, open space and municipal planning.

To make sure that our products contain relevant information about state laws, regulations and policies, we regularly revise and update handbooks and *Resource Papers*. And to expand access to our publications, we post all *Resource Papers*, as well as current manuals including *Pathways for the Garden State*, the *Public Financing of Open Space* handbook and the *Smart Growth Survival Kit* on our web page at www.anjec.org.

For more than 20 years, ANJEC members have received a 20 percent discount as well as reduced rates for our very reasonably priced publications. Thanks to support from foundations and government agencies including the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Fund for New Jersey, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Schumann Fund for New Jersey, Victoria Foundation, and NJDEP, we have been able to make most of our books available for \$10 or less. 🌱

You can view a complete list of our publications on-line at (www.anjec.org) or call ANJEC (973-539-7547) to receive a paper copy of our publications brochure.





A New Plan for More Environmentally Benign Lawn Management

By Bruce Barbour

Rutgers Cooperative Extension Environmental Program Leader

Representatives from diverse backgrounds including the Scotts Company, National Audubon Society, the National Wildlife Federation, Toro Company and the Las Vegas Valley Water District gathered in San Antonio this spring for a serious discussion on a topic of common interest - lawns and the environment. What spurred such an unlikely gathering is a growing concern about the future supply of clean water in our urban and suburban communities. Reliable evidence from certain parts of the country has cemented the link between the way we manage the developed landscape and the quality of our water resources. In response several water supply authorities in partnership with USDA, EPA, the lawn care industry and assorted environmental interests employed the Center for Resource Management of Salt Lake City, Utah to help move towards a common vision of environmentally friendly lawn and landscape management.

Pesticides and Fertilizers Affect Water Quality

Geoff Brosseau of the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association told of the situation they faced when diazinon and dursban were found to exceed established TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) levels in all tributaries to San Francisco Bay. They determined that the only significant source of these two insecticides in the watershed was landscape, principally lawn, applications. San Antonio Water System representatives related how they were able to observe seasonal fluctuations in nitrogen levels in their aquifer that coincided with lawn fertilizer applica-

tions. To avoid finger pointing and debate, industrial, environmental and educational interests focused on developing two documents that would embody a consensus view of best management practices for residential landscapes. Paul Parker for the Center for Resource Management shared examples of similar environmental conflicts in which the Center had functioned as consensus builder and told the group to expect that the full working of the process could take several years to complete.

The speakers shared many interesting facts.

- Average annual expenditure for all garden-related goods is \$1,000 per household and total expenditure is \$40 billion. (National Gardening Association)
- Only 25 percent of homeowners thought lawn fertilizers and chemicals were safe. (Scotts Company)
- Only 10 percent of households use a professional lawn care company, 40 percent use store bought materials and 50 percent do nothing. (Tru Green/Chemlawn)
- Americans spend \$2 billion a year on insect control and \$4 billion a year on fertilizers. (National Gardening Association).

Bruce Butterfield of the National Gardening Association made some cogent general observations. Most people, he pointed out, mow their lawn too close and rely too much on fertilizers and pesticides to fix problems generated by soil or cultural conditions. What is needed most, he proposed, is a regionally oriented manual for yard owners.

The conference participants agreed to expand the steering committee,

develop a strategic plan, refine two draft documents after a three-month comment period, develop three to five demonstration projects around the country for a one-year test, and convene another conference in 2006 with an expanded interest group.

Ten Tips to Save Money and Protect the Environment While Enjoying a Healthy Yard (conference draft)

1. **Know Your Yard** - Learn about the soils, plants, climate, and wildlife around your home.
2. **Choose The Right Plant For The Right Spot** - Avoid invasive plant species. Know the requirements and ultimate size of the plant. Select species that require less water, fertilizers, pruning, and pesticides.
3. **Be Water Wise** - Water lawn only when needed but to the depth of the root zone, cover bare soil with mulch, use drip irrigation for trees and shrubs, consider reducing irrigated turf with drought tolerant ground covers.
4. **Know Your Pest** - Make sure the pest is correctly identified and use the most appropriate method to control the problem; contact your local cooperative extension service for help.
5. **Prevent Pollution Possibilities** - Prevent fertilizer, pesticides, yard debris, and pet waste from entering water sources or waste water systems. Use pesticides only when and where they are needed.
6. **Read the Label, Follow the Label** - Before using pesticides or fertilizers, know the do's and don'ts. The label is the law. Keep children and pets away


from pesticides. Store and dispose of pesticides properly.

7. Go Natural - Create wildlife habitat at home. Consider using native plant species and remove invasive exotic plants.



8. Pile It On - Build a compost pile with grass clippings, leaves, and other organic material. Use compost as mulch or natural fertilizer to improve soil health.

9. Take It to the Max - Cut your lawn at the highest recommended mower setting and leave the clippings in place.

10. Respect Your Neighbors - Regardless of whether you have a traditional lawn or a more indigenous landscape keep your yard safe, clean, and well-maintained to add beauty to your neighborhood. Add borders around "natural areas" if necessary. 

ANJEC's brochure, *Protection for Streams and Reservoirs Begins in Your Backyard*, aims to help environmental commissions spread the word about the connections between lawn care, water quality and supply. It offers a yearly lawn care schedule and outlines practices like composting, creative planting, and Integrated Pest Management that reduce needs for watering and chemicals. The brochure includes a list of informative websites, books and products for environmentally friendly lawn care.

Available electronically at no cost to ANJEC members, you can insert your town's name in the brochure before printing it out. For further information, send an email to resourcecenter@anjec.org, or call 973-539-7547 requesting a copy of *Protection for Streams and Reservoirs Begins in Your Backyard: An Environmentally Friendly Lawn Care Guide*.

Good Earthkeeping

Information commissions can duplicate to use in their communities

By Kerry Miller, ANJEC Assistant Director

Discover the Other Side of New Jersey

Despite the jokes about NJ being an industrial wasteland, the Garden State offers a rich and varied array of landscapes, intact vistas and vibrant ecosystems that surprises most outsiders. Within a short drive from any point in the state, one can experience the spectacular views of the Highlands and the Palisades, the stark contrasts of the Hackensack Meadowlands, the unique and fragile ecosystem of the Pinelands, the vast salt marshes of the Delaware Bayshore or the Atlantic seashore. NJ also has rich historic resources including many Revolutionary War sites, old iron mines and forges, the Delaware & Raritan Canal, mills and colonial farmsteads.

Fortunately, most residents support preservation of our state's open areas to ensure a supply of clean water and air, protect wildlife, retain rural character and maintain an acceptable quality of life. But too few of us take the opportunity to explore physically the natural areas in our home state, to acquire a firsthand appreciation for the natural systems that sustain life. Reading about endangered species in the newspaper is one thing; seeing a bald eagle or a Pine Barrens tree frog in its natural habitat is something else.

When was the last time you took your kids or grandchildren on a nature walk? Giving children opportunities to explore and understand the natural world is so important; they are the next generation of stewards of our state's environment and open spaces, and they won't protect what they don't understand. At any rate, hiking and walking are a lot more fun than exercising at the health club, and are very low cost family entertainment.

Many books can help you find your way around the state's hills and back woods, to places and views you didn't know existed. A quick trip to the bookstore will reveal up-to-date resources including *50 Hikes in NJ*; *NJ Walk Book*; *Wonderwalks - The Trails of the*

NJ Audubon; *Nature Walks in NJ* and *Best Hikes with Children in NJ*. The NY-NJ Trail conference sells these guides and many more. There are 39 state parks and 11 state forests in NJ (www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests), and over 1500 miles of public trails.

If you set out on your own to explore, take along a pack with water, binoculars, and a trail book or a field guide to local birds and plants. You may want to pack a camera and a snack, too. Stop along the way to admire the view and try to identify birds and plants that you didn't know before. Try walking the same route at different times of the year to note the seasonal changes in the landscape and wildlife. Once you begin to "tune in" to nature, you'll be amazed at what you've been overlooking.

If you prefer guided activities, get in touch with one of the many NJ conservation organizations that schedule walking, hiking, wildlife observation or canoeing trips throughout the year. These groups offer events ranging from simple family nature walks to strenuous hikes and canoe trips, hosted by professional naturalists or dedicated volunteers who gladly share their knowledge and love of NJ nature.

- American Littoral Society, (www.alsnyc.org)
- The Appalachian Mountain Club NY-North Jersey, (www.amc-ny.org)
- Hackensack Riverkeeper, (www.hackensackriverkeeper.org)
- The Nature Conservancy, (<http://nature.org/wherewework/northamerica/states/newjersey>)
- NJ Audubon Society, (www.njaudubon.org)
- NJ Conservation Foundation, (www.njconservation.org)
- NJ Sierra Club, (<http://njsierra.org>)
- NY-NJ Trail Conference, (www.nynjtc.org)
- Pinelands Preservation Alliance, (www.pinelandsalliance.org)
- Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Assn. (www.thewatershed.org)
- Most county park commissions (check the Blue Pages in the phone book). 

Resource Center



By Pam McIntosh, ANJEC Resource Center Co-Director
Illustration courtesy of University of Minnesota

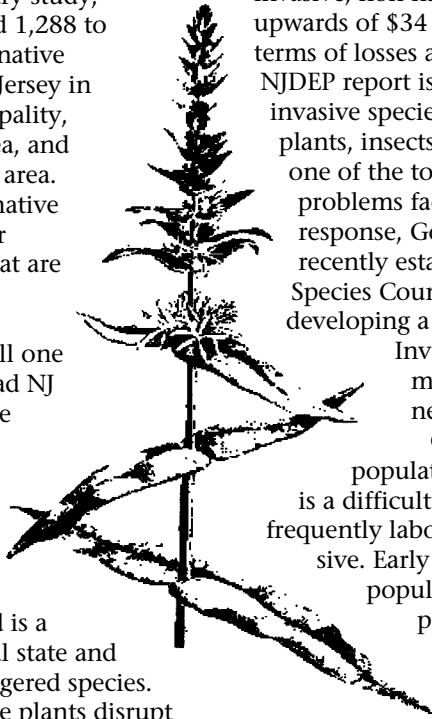
Going Native

Native plant communities in New Jersey are facing a number of threats from habitat loss and fragmentation to takeover by invasive, non-native species and disease threats from exotic pests.

Based on preliminary study, there are an estimated 1,288 to 1,363 species of non-native plant species in New Jersey in every county, municipality, state park, natural area, and wildlife management area. Not all of these non-native species are harmful or invasive, but those that are can cause devastating results. For example, nurseries routinely sell one of the most widespread NJ invasive plants, purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicari*) for gardens and roadside landscaping. It spreads into wetlands throughout much of the state and is a direct threat to several state and federally listed endangered species.

Invasive, non-native plants disrupt natural ecosystems, threaten biological diversity, and decrease food and habitat for native wildlife and insects. Most invasive plant species have been introduced either accidentally or intentionally from other areas of the world. They gobble up space and nutrients, pushing away native plants and resulting in a loss of biodiversity. It is too easy for invasive species to gain a toehold in landscapes that have been fragmented by sprawl.

Nurseries continue to sell a number of invasive plants. Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), one of NJ's most commonly planted street trees, is capable of invading even undisturbed habitats.



Japanese barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*), an ornamental shrub, can grow in low light and invades deep into forests with closed tree canopies.

According to a study done by researchers at Cornell University invasive, non-native plants cost the US upwards of \$34 billion annually in terms of losses and control costs. An NJDEP report issued last year identified invasive species – including invasive plants, insects and other pests – as one of the top four environmental problems facing the state. In response, Governor McGreevey recently established the NJ Invasive Species Council and charged it with developing a comprehensive NJ Invasive Species Management Plan by June of next year.

Controlling established populations of invasive plants is a difficult task at best. It is frequently labor intensive and expensive. Early identification of populations of invasive plants is key to easier and more effective management. Greater public education and support are also


essential. People need to understand the seriousness of the problem in order to buy into planting indigenous plants rather than invasive ornamentals and to support funding initiatives to address the problem.

What Can Environmental Commissions Do?

- Seek information on which species are invasive in your area (see contacts below).
- Organize work groups to remove invasive plant species under the guidance of knowledgeable professionals.

- Request that botanical gardens and nurseries promote, display and sell only non-invasive species.
- Help educate gardeners in your community through newspaper articles and inviting speakers knowledgeable on invasives to speak at schools and community groups.
- Participate in early warning systems by reporting invasive species you observe in your area.
- Promote use of native plants; work with your town to adopt an ordinance, such as Cape May Point's (Cape May) tree ordinance, which promotes retention of natural vegetation and requires planting of native species.
- Work to stop sprawl and consequent habitat fragmentation that makes ecosystems more vulnerable to spread of invasive species.
- Become involved in local implementation of the NJ Invasive Species Management Plan, however possible, once it is created.

For Further Information

- The Native Plant Society of New Jersey, (www.npsnj.org).
- NJDEP's New Jersey Natural Heritage Program and invasive plant species report, (www.nj.gov/dep/parksandforests/natural/heritage/index.html), (609) 984-1339.
- The Nature Conservancy's Invasive Species Initiative, (<http://nature.org/initiatives/invasivespecies/about/index.html>).
- The City of New York Parks and Recreation's *Native Species Planting Guide* (Luttenberg, et al. 1993) gives useful suggestions for native plants that will grow in the New York metropolitan area. Native plant nurseries can also provide information. 

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