



JON S. CORZINE
Governor

State of New Jersey
Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council
100 North Road (Route 513)
Chester, New Jersey 07930-2322
(908) 879-6737
(908) 879-4205 (fax)
www.highlands.state.nj.us



JOHN R. WEINGART
Chairman

EILEEN SWAN
Executive Director

**DRAFT – FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE NOVEMBER 1, 2007
MEETING OF THE HIGHLANDS COUNCIL**

RMP Program: Scenic Resource Protection
Version: October 31, 2007

<p>Issue Overview</p>	<p>Protecting scenic resources and maintaining the visual integrity and scenic beauty of noteworthy viewsheds and natural and cultural features of significance in the Highlands Region is a goal of the Highlands Act and the Regional Master Plan. The essential character of the Highlands is intrinsically tied to the physical environment and how one element relates to another. The scenic character of the Highlands will be a major contributor to the Region’s success as a recreation and tourism destination and its ability to generate economic activity in the form of agri-tourism, eco-tourism and heritage tourism. Preservation of that essential character can best be accomplished through a comprehensive approach to scenic resource protection. Other than a few scenic resource ordinances and even less scenic resource inventories, there has been no comprehensive attempt to address the issue of scenic resource protection in the Highlands Region.</p>
<p>RMP Policies and Objectives Addressed</p>	<p>Policy 4.2.1. To maintain and periodically update the Highlands Scenic Resources Inventory. Policy 4.2.2. To provide a process whereby regionally significant resources may be nominated, considered and included in the Highlands Scenic Resources Inventory. Policy 4.2.3. To ensure that human development does not adversely affect the character or value of resources which are listed on the Highlands Scenic Resources Inventory. Policy 4.2.4. To establish minimum standards to ensure that Highlands Scenic Resources are not impaired by new human development. Policy 4.2.5. To require that the impact of proposed human development on the scenic resources of the Highlands Region be addressed during site plan or subdivision review and approval. <i>Objective 4.2.5.1. All applications for site plan or subdivision approval shall include identification of any scenic resources in the Highlands Region which are listed on the Highlands Scenic Resources Inventory and may be affected by the proposed development.</i> <i>Objective 4.2.5.2. All development which affects identified scenic resources shall comply with minimum standards for the preservation of the affected resources.</i></p>

<p>Program Summary</p>	<p>The program establishes a procedure for identifying regionally significant scenic resources within the Highlands Region and provides methods to preserve these vistas, byways, ridgelines, cultural landscapes and natural features. The program provides for input from local government entities as well as public participation.</p>
<p><i>Inventory of Highlands Scenic Resources</i></p>	<p>Program Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline Inventory – Having identified 131 potential scenic resources, the Highlands Council will evaluate the initial baseline sites, refine the list and seek to add to it through additional nominations. • The Council will establish procedures for nomination, evaluation and inventory of Highlands regionally significant scenic resources. (See the draft Procedures which have been posted on the Council’s website for public comment.) • The Council will establish guidelines for the preparation of the scenic resource inventory, including modifications to the baseline inventory of 131 potential scenic resources. • Encourage municipalities and counties to conduct scenic resource inventories and relate them to their recreation and open space planning. • Encourage municipalities and counties to work jointly with neighboring municipalities and counties to conduct the scenic resource inventories on a regional or sub-regional scale. • Encourage municipalities and counties to include scenic resources in the open space and recreation plan elements of the municipal and county master plan.
<p><i>Scenic Resource Protection Mechanisms</i></p>	<p>Program Description</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council will develop strategies to protect scenic ridgelines, including the identification of key provisions for a Ridgeline Protection Ordinance. • The Council will identify key provisions for scenic resource protection ordinances for use and adoption by municipal and county governments, either as part of Plan Conformance or through independent exercise of municipal and county authority. • The Council will develop review procedures for consideration of scenic resources during site plan and subdivision review. • Municipalities and counties shall be encouraged to develop a Scenic Resources Management Plan for their jurisdictions or sub-regions. • The Highlands Council will prepare a scenic resource protection model ordinance to serve as a template for use by the municipalities in drafting and adopting a local scenic resource protection ordinance. • The Highlands Council will prepare guidelines to assist municipalities in drafting and implementation of scenic resource protection measures in the community. • Relate scenic resource protection strategies and priorities to the open space and recreation component of the master plan and the expansion of recreation facilities.