

**RESOLUTION 2008-9**  
**NEW JERSEY HIGHLANDS WATER PROTECTION AND PLANNING COUNCIL**  
**ENSURING CONTINUATION OF HIGHLANDS-RELATED FUNCTIONS OF**  
**THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

**WHEREAS**, the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (Highlands Act) has created a public body corporate and politic with corporate succession known as the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council (Highlands Council); and

**WHEREAS**, the Legislature declared in the Highlands Act that the approximately 110,000 acres of agricultural lands in active production in the Highlands Region are important resources of the State that should be preserved, and that the agricultural industry in the Highlands Region is a vital component of the economy, welfare, and cultural landscape of the Garden State; and

**WHEREAS**, the Legislature also declared that the maintenance of agricultural production and a positive agricultural business climate should be encouraged to the maximum extent possible wherever appropriate in the New Jersey Highlands; and

**WHEREAS**, the New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) is the State agency charged with promoting, protecting and serving the diverse agriculture and agribusiness industries throughout the Garden State; and

**WHEREAS**, NJDA works closely with the United States Department of Agriculture in bringing natural resources protection and agriculture viability programs to farmers in New Jersey; and

**WHEREAS**, the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) is an organization “in but not of” NJDA; and

**WHEREAS**, SADC is charged with preserving New Jersey’s farmland and promotes innovative approaches to maintaining the viability of agriculture through implementation of the Right to Farm Act and other measures; and

**WHEREAS**, SADC has preserved approximately 34,000 acres of farmland in the Highlands Region; and

**WHEREAS**, Section 9 of the Highlands Act mandates that the Highlands Council consult with certain State agencies, including NJDA and SADC, during the preparation or revision of the Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP); and

**WHEREAS**, the Highlands Council gratefully acknowledges the guidance, cooperation and coordination of NJDA and SADC in the development of the RMP; and

**WHEREAS**, there are many Goals, Policies, and Objectives and associated Programs that address agriculture in the Highlands Region in the RMP; and

**WHEREAS**, Governor Corzine has recommended that the functions of NJDA be allocated to other State agencies;

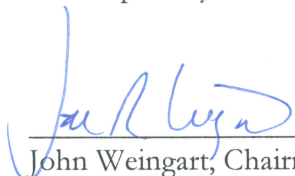
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**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Highlands Council that:

1. The Highlands Council recognizes the importance of NJDA and SADC and their essential functions in sustaining the agricultural industry in New Jersey; and
2. The Highlands Council recognizes that these essential functions of the NJDA and SADC must be preserved in order to the implement the RMP; and
3. The Highlands Council urges the Governor to present a plan for the legislative and administrative actions needed to ensure the continuation of these essential functions of the NJDA and the SADC as they relate to the Highlands Region.

**CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Highlands Council at its regular meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2008.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Weingart, Chairman

**Vote on the Approval of  
this Resolution**

|                           | <u>Yes</u> | <u>No</u> | <u>Abstain</u> | <u>Absent</u> |
|---------------------------|------------|-----------|----------------|---------------|
| Councilmember Alstede     | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |
| Councilmember Calabrese   | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |
| Councilmember Carluccio   | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |
| Councilmember Cogger      | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |
| Councilmember Dillingham  | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |
| Councilmember Kovach      | _____      | _____     | _____          | √             |
| Councilmember Letts       | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |
| Councilmember Pasquarelli | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |
| Councilmember Peterson    | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |
| Councilmember Schrier     | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |
| Councilmember Vetrano     | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |
| Councilmember Way         | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |
| Councilmember Whitenack   | _____      | _____     | _____          | √             |
| Councilmember Weingart    | √          | _____     | _____          | _____         |