

THE NEW JERSEY HIGHLANDS



Clinton Reservoir- Photo by Dwight Hiscano

“The Highlands watersheds are the best in the State in respect to ease of collection, in scantiness of population, with consequent absence of contamination, in elevation, giving opportunity for gravity delivery and in softness as shown by chemical analysis. These watersheds should be preserved from pollution at all hazards, for upon them the most populous portions of the State must depend for water supplies. There has been too much laxness in the past regarding this important matter.”
1907 Potable Water Commission Report.

**2004 Annual Report of the New Jersey
Highlands Water Protection and Planning
Council**



Dear Friends,
I am pleased to introduce the 2004 Annual Report of the New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council. The Council was created last year to protect vulnerable open space in the New Jersey Highlands, a region that supplies drinking water to over 5 million people in 292 municipalities and 16 counties throughout the State.

The important planning and preservation work that the Highlands Council is undertaking will have a lasting impact on both the quality and quantity of New Jersey's water supply, as well as the quality of life of all New Jerseyans, for years to come. I look forward to continue working with the Council in 2005.

Richard J. Codey
Acting Governor

"The Highlands region contains a complex ecological and social system with characteristic physical, biotic, and social components. To sustain these characteristics, a holistic approach that integrates these components is needed. Because ecosystem processes cross jurisdictional and political boundaries, conservation measures must be applied not only at the local level but also at the landscape and regional levels." **USDA Forest Service Highlands Regional Study- 2002 Update.**

Dear Friends,

The New Jersey Highlands is a place of enormous beauty and abundant environmental treasures. Covering over 800,000 acres, more than 13 percent of the State's total area, the region provides clean drinking water to over half of New Jersey's population. When the Legislature passed the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act and the Governor signed it last August, they recognized the need to protect the resources of the Highlands, most notably the water supply, while also strengthening the economic viability of Highlands communities and protecting the rights of property owners.

The Highlands Council only began its work in December 2004 but our short year was productive. We held our first meeting on December 16 at our office in Chester Township. The Council members include elected officials from Highlands municipalities and counties, as well as individuals with diverse backgrounds and area perspectives, all of whom are excited to be part of this innovative approach to regional land use planning and management.

As the coordinated planning authority for the Highlands Region, the Council is charged with the formidable task of producing a Master Plan for the area by June 2006. At the same time, we know that the plan we produce will benefit from the input of many more individuals and groups with knowledge and varying points of view about the Highlands Region. As a result, we have begun an extensive public outreach and participation program.

We are challenged by the lofty goals of the Highlands Act and excited to be part of the process to make them real. We look forward to a productive and exciting 2005.

John R. Weingart
Chairman

Adam J. Zellner
Executive Director

“This is a historic achievement and major victory for the preservation of the New Jersey Highlands, one of the last open space treasures in the most densely populated area of the country. Now, with the President's signature, we've established a national model for the preservation and protection of open space, drinking water supplies and recreational lands that our families will be able to enjoy for generations to come.”

Congressman Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, Representative for New Jersey's 11th Congressional District and House author of the \$110 million Highlands Conservation Act, November 2004.



Upland Pond- Photo by Dwight Hiscano

“The Highlands is under threat, though, from population growth, large-lot residential subdivisions, increased deforestation and fragmentation and sprawl. Within the five-year period between 1995 and 2000, the Highlands lost -- perhaps forever -- 17,000 acres of forest and 8,000 acres of farmland. Growth pressures continue in the region with the trend for land consumption expected to average 3,000 acres every year. Unless these trends are altered and an effective regional approach to the Highlands adopted, the harm to the region will be severe and permanent.”

Highlands Task Force Report Executive Summary 2004.

The New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council

The New Jersey Highlands region is a place rich in natural resources. The unspoiled forests, streams and rivers of the Highlands provide beautiful landscapes enjoyed by residents and visitors alike. Perhaps more importantly, however, the forests of the New Jersey Highlands collect rainwater, filtering it before it makes its way to the streams, rivers and reservoirs. These reservoirs provide drinking water to millions of people throughout the State, most of whom live outside the Highlands.

In order to preserve the quality and quantity of this precious resource, as well as the quality of life of the 880,000 people who live in the Highlands, the Governor signed the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act, on August 10, 2004. The Act calls for a fifteen member Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council, five of whom must be municipal officials from the Highlands Region and 3 of whom must be county officials from the Highlands Region. Fourteen members were appointed to the Council in the fall of 2004. The Highlands Council is charged with carrying out the provisions of the Act, including the development of a regional master plan for the Highlands Region within 18 months of its first meeting.

The Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council held its first and only meeting of 2004 on December 16. During this meeting the Council adopted a set of initial bylaws, set a public meeting schedule for 2005, appointed Adam Zellner as the Executive Director, designated official newspapers, and approved a lease for office space at 100 North Road (Route 513) in Chester, Morris County.

New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council Statement of Activities-- Governmental Funds

December 31, 2004

REVENUES:

State of New Jersey Appropriation	\$ 1,867,482.00
TOTAL REVENUES	\$ 1,867,482.00

EXPENDITURES:

Salaries and Fringe Benefits	\$ 2,250.00
Supplies	\$ 1,832.89
Services	\$ 13,957.35
Maintenance and Repairs	\$ 10,300.00
Equipment	\$ 177,158.47
Operating Expense Balance through June 2005	\$ 1,661,938.29
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$ 1,867,482.00

Highlands Water Protection and Planning

Council Members



Kurt Alstede (R-Chester, Morris County)
Mr. Alstede is a lifelong resident of the Highlands and a full time family farmer from Chester Township. A graduate of Delaware Valley College of Science and Agriculture, Mr. Alstede lives in Chester with his wife and two daughters.



Mikael Salovaara (R-Bernardsville, Somerset County) Mr. Salovaara is the Council President for the Borough of Bernardsville and serves on the Bernardsville Planning Board. A graduate of Dartmouth College and the University of Virginia, he lives in Bernardsville with his wife and five children.



Tracy C. Carluccio (Hunterdon County)
Ms. Carluccio is the Director of Special Projects for the Delaware Riverkeeper Network. She has a B.A. from the University of North Carolina and continuing education credits from Rutgers and Villanova Universities. She and her husband have a farm in the Sourland Mountains.



Jack Schrier, Vice Chairman (R-Mendham, Morris County) Mr. Schrier is the Morris County Freeholder Director and a member of the Morris County Planning Board. Mr. Schrier, who attended Fairleigh Dickinson College, lives with his wife in Mendham Township.



Lois A. Cuccinello (D-Hawthorne, Passaic County) Ms. Cuccinello is currently serving her third term as a Passaic County Freeholder. Ms. Cuccinello is a graduate of William Paterson College and Cornell University. She lives in Hawthorne with her husband.



Ben Spinelli (R-Chester, Morris County)
Mr. Spinelli is the Mayor of Chester Township in Morris County. A graduate of Seton Hall University School of Law and Muhlenberg College, he lives with his wife and two children in Chester.



Tim Dillingham (D-Hopewell, Mercer County) Mr. Dillingham is the Executive Director of the American Littoral Society. He is a graduate of the University of Rhode Island and St. Mary's College in Maryland. Mr. Dillingham lives in Hopewell with his wife and three children.



Eileen Swan (R-Lebanon, Hunterdon County) Ms. Swan is the former Mayor of Lebanon Township and served on the council there since 1998. She is a graduate of the University College Dublin. Ms. Swan lives in Lebanon Township with her husband and child.



Janice Kovach (D-Clinton Town, Hunterdon County) Ms. Kovach is a member of the Clinton Town Council and is the Council's representative to the Planning Board and Historic Commission. A graduate of Thomas Edison College, Ms. Kovach lives in Clinton with her husband and three children.



Glen Vetrano (R-Hampton, Sussex County)
Mr. Vetrano is a Sussex County Freeholder. Mr. Vetrano, lives in Hampton with his mother. He is a graduate of Hawthorne High School in Passaic County and attended Passaic Community College courses on fire science.



Mimi Letts (D-Parsippany, Morris County)
Ms. Letts has been the Mayor of Parsippany since 1995. She is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh. Ms. Letts, who is married, has three sons and seven grandchildren.



John Weingart, Chairman (D-Stockton, Hunterdon County) Mr. Weingart is the Associate Director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. He and his wife, who have lived in Delaware Township since 1982, have one daughter.



Deborah Pasquarelli, Treasurer (R-Greenwich, Warren County) Ms. Pasquarelli has been a member of the Greenwich Township Committee since 1997. She also served as Mayor and as a planning board member. Ms. Pasquarelli resides in Greenwich Township with her husband and two children.



Scott Whitenack (D-Morristown)
Mr. Whitenack has been the Chairman of the Morristown Planning Board for nine years, and has served on the board for the last 15 years.