Good Stewardship Means More than Clearcuts

by Amy Karpati, Director for Conservation Science

Last fall, a bill calling for the stimulation of New Jersey's timber market (S1954/A4358) moved through the state legislature and was ultimately held up in the Assembly. The bill was re-introduced in the beginning of 2012 as S1085, the "Forest Harvest Program on State Lands" bill. While our state's forests would certainly benefit from improved management practices, the current form of this bill has been opposed by a large coalition of conservation groups, ecologists, and forest biologists for its lack of stewardship provisions built around science-based ecological goals and information.

New Jersey's state forests are held in the public trust and should not be used for the generation of commercial income via the harvest and sale of trees. The original language of this bill indicates that its primary purpose is to stimulate a timber market by harvesting large trees from our state forests in the name of forest "stewardship." The bill currently requires no subsequent management of the inevitable invasive species encroachment and intense deer herbivory known to prevent regeneration of native forest plants, including seedlings of the trees themselves. Additionally, the bill continued on page 5
New Jersey has a rich botanical heritage with nearly 2,200 native plant species occurring in the state. However, approximately 39% of our native plant species are currently considered endangered or imperiled to some degree.

Native plants are important for so many reasons. Plant diversity is a critical component of overall biodiversity, which provides us with such things as food, maintenance of air and water quality, waste decomposition and soil generation, nutrient cycling, pollination services, natural pest control, climate stabilization, flood and erosion control, and medicines and pharmaceuticals. Plant diversity also provides the foundation for animal diversity; we cannot fully protect our wildlife if we ignore our flora. In addition to all of the services our native plants provide, the diversity of our flora can be thought of as possessing intrinsic value. This means that the species with which we share our environment can be appreciated for their own sake of existence – for being living examples of the wonder of nature and for making our world feel full and whole and interesting.

A great way to help preserve our native flora – and our environment in general – is to plant native vegetation around our homes and businesses. Luckily, New Jersey residents have lots of beautiful and interesting native plants available to them through local nurseries. When you landscape with natives, not only are you likely to save money and resources by using less fertilizer, soil additives, and water, you are also helping to strengthen the complex web of connections linking native species and ecological processes in your local ecosystem.

Every April, Pinelands Preservation Alliance holds a Native Plant Sale at our Bishop Farmstead in Southampton. This year, our PPA members-only plant sale will be Friday, April 27, from 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm, and our plant sale open to all members of the public will be held Saturday, April 28, from 11:00 am – 3:00 pm. We’ll have lots of plants to choose from, including natives of the Pinelands and of New Jersey in general – from Asters and Bearberry to Vervain and Winterberry. PPA staff will be on hand to provide you with information about choosing the right natives for your home. We hope to see you there!
Remembering Rick Walnut

by Theresa Lettman, Director for Monitoring Programs

Richard Walnut, a staunch advocate of Pinelands preservation and a great friend of PPA, passed away in February. He was 88. Rick is survived by his wife of 52 years, Nan Hunter-Walnut, who is a founding PPA board member.

Rick was born in Camden County, New Jersey and had been a long-time resident of Southampton Township before moving to Whiting six months ago. A graduate of William Penn Charter, Rick was the co-owner of Walnut Miniatures of Barnegat Light.

In 1975, Rick and Nan formed the group called Concerned Citizens of Southampton to fight the rapid growth of new construction applying for development approvals in Southampton Township. Rick was appointed to the Southampton Zoning Board where he was a member for many years.

Ted Gordon, a long-time resident of Southampton Township said, “Rick made major contributions to preserving the rural character and quality of life of Southampton Township through his dedicated service as a member of Concerned Citizens of Southampton Township and while serving on the Southampton Township Environmental Commission and Zoning Board.”

During the late 1970’s Rick was also a regular attendee at public meetings for the creation and implementation of the Pinelands Protection Act. He was an eloquent speaker and letter writer, urging public and governmental support for the protection of the Pinelands.

PPA Board member Michael Gallaway said, “Rick and Nan were the 'First Family' of pinelands protection for over 40 years, always supporting each other and a great cause. Their work was at the forefront of the citizen involvement in the 70’s that helped lead to the Pinelands Protection Act, and ultimately PPA.”

Rick’s letters to the editor in Pinelands newspapers were legendary. They were unapologetic and right on point about social justice, population, peace and the environment, all issues he cared deeply about.

Rick was also a founding member of the Rancocas Creek Watershed Association, which later became the Rancocas Conservancy. Among his many contributions he was responsible for editing and distributing their quarterly newsletter. Rancocas Conservancy board member Mark Thomas said, “For twelve years, ending in 2011, Rick brought his keen eye, flawless mastery of grammar, and conciseness to editing the Rancocas Journal periodical of the Rancocas Conservancy. With diligence and consistency, he crafted the public voice of the organization, in his usual quietly effective fashion. Thus he brought bell-like clarity to the expression of our work and to the good-will that underlies the effort.”

In 1999, Rick and Nan Walnut were recipients of the Church of the Holy Eucharist’s Pine Barrens Festival Award for their more than quarter of a century of volunteerism fostering a better appreciation of the precious land and water resources of the New Jersey Pine Barrens.

Rick was also member of the South Jersey Campaign for Peace and Justice, and his commitment was very publicly evidenced when he and his fellow activists perched along local highways delivering the message of peace to passing motorists.

A truly kind and decent man, Rick’s soft-spokenness belied a determination to ensure that the right thing was always done.
Chain Pickerel - The Water Wolf

by Frank Pignataro, PPA Member

Amid the pristine waters of southern New Jersey’s Pinelands National Reserve’s unique ecosystem of rivers, streams, lakes and bogs resides one of its most fascinating creatures, *Esox Nigen*, the Chain Pickerel. Perfectly suited to the acidic, low–ph waters of the Pine Barrens, this ubiquitous freshwater predator is Nature’s water equivalent of a ravaging wolf. Active year-long, this pugnacious assailant where it is found usually occupies the top of the aquatic food chain and has few natural enemies other than itself. Possessed of a long, torpedoed–like body frame it easily moves through the dense vegetative morass of the normally shallow waters of the Pine Barrens.

The average size for a sexually mature chain pickerel is 2-3 pounds with a length from 18 to 24 inches. It possesses upward facing eyes on a somewhat flattened snout and is distinguished by a chain-like pattern on its greenish sides, with a white belly and large head. Its dorsal and anal fins are further back than most fish and its tail’s prominently forked caudal fin provides incredibly powerful bursts of speed. “Lunkers” of the species are rare in the Pinelands, but it’s not unusual to hear of fish beyond 30 inches. This ravenous specimen’s diet is not particular, either. Its normal food supply consists of insects, worms, lizards, any fish species swimming within its territory, and a wide variety of frogs such as the Carpenter Frog (*Rana virgatipes*), Green Frog (*Rana clamitans melanota*), and the ever boisterous Bullfrog (*Rana catesbeiana*). It has even been known to take as its prey small turtles, field mice, and mallard duck chicks.

The chain pickerel is a solitary, stealthy, sight-oriented attacker. It usually awaits its hapless victims in the shallows near shore while lying almost motionless among sunken tree limbs and aquatic vegetation, particularly white and yellow water lilies (*Nymphaea*), and the wide varieties of bladderwort, milfoils, and assorted submerged weeds typical of the Pinelands waters. With lightning speed it strikes and takes its quarry down in a spiral motion reminiscent of alligator rolls. Its long mouth is huge relative to its size with large, extremely sharp, serrated teeth on the rim of its lower mandible and hundreds of smaller incisors on the underside roof of its upper jaw that grip and mercilessly shred its prey. Mortally wounded by the pickerel’s vicious strikes few can escape its powerful grasps.

One of the real advantages that chain pickerel have over their aquatic companions and which enables them to maintain their status at the top of the food chain is that they spawn earlier and can concentrate on the smorgasbord of other fry and newborns of fish like perch, bluegills, catfish, and largemouth bass than spawn much later in the year.

Stop by the PPA table and check out our selection of books, DVDs, clothing, and gift items!

Or go to www.pinelandsalliance.org/store to browse our online store
Good Stewardship Means More than Clearcuts

continued from cover

If we are to be responsible stewards of our state forests, we cannot have as our primary focus the harvest and sale of timber and simply call it "stewardship." Pinelands Preservation Alliance, New Jersey Conservation Foundation, New Jersey Highlands Coalition and several other organizations have offered amendments to the proposed forestry bill that would actually make science-based ecological management a priority, with any associated timber harvests viewed as an ancillary benefit to generate funds for more stewardship. Specifically, we have requested that the following provisions be at the central theme of any forest management bill:

1. A requirement for landscape-scale planning in each region of New Jersey, combined with unambiguous guidelines for public participation and input. Project proposals should be guided by the NJ Wildlife Action Plan, rare species and rare habitat restoration and recovery plans for plants, animals, and natural communities, and other activities critical to enhancing the ability of our forest lands to deal with mounting ecological stressors.

2. Certifiable written standards by which landscape-scale forest plans must be evaluated and met before, during, and after projects are conducted, in order to ensure project success through the ability to conduct adaptive management.

3. Development of a strategy to employ ecological burning statewide as an important tool in restoration and regeneration of certain forest communities. In the New Jersey Pinelands in particular, any forestry projects involving timber harvest should serve as a means of transitioning into an ecologically-appropriate regional fire management program to perpetuate fire-dependent Pine Barrens forest types and plant communities.

Landscape-scale planning for our state forests should ensure significant acreage is set aside as undisturbed lands and natural areas; that removal of trees is based on fair market value so New Jersey will be properly compensated for any harvesting; and that recreational use of the land is not impeded. The current problems confronting our publicly-owned forests must not be treated in an ad-hoc and piecemeal fashion, but rather must be approached with science-based, comprehensive, objective plans that begin with a detailed inventory of our public resource forest holdings, evaluates their values and their conditions, and makes policy recommendations as to their management and stewardship to benefit both future generations of New Jersey residents and our shared ecosystems.

Senator Bob Smith, primary sponsor of S1085, is considering a number of changes proposed by our groups and is convening an open stakeholder forum for the public on Thursday, April 26 at the State House in Trenton. PPA will be present and has outlined very specific recommendations for managing our state lands. If you are interested in learning more about the specific changes or attending the meeting in Trenton, please contact Jaclyn Rhoads at jaclyn@pinelandsalliance.org
Tom Besselman is a fixture here at PPA, regularly attending our programs and helping out with important tasks like transporting the Jersey Devil to its local appearances! Tom is currently the Chair of the Pemberton Township Environmental Commission, a volunteer with the Whitesbog Preservation Trust, and will be assisting PPA with our Pemberton Summer Teacher Institute this year.

**PPA:** How long have you been a member of PPA?

**Tom Besselman:** I have been a member of PPA for three years. I also joined the Pinelands Photography Club at the same time and have a great time with them.

**PPA:** What PPA programs or events have you attended?

**TB:** I attend as many programs as possible so I can learn all the things that the Pinelands has to offer and how I can help to protect them. This will be my third year taking the Pinelands Special Plants Course. I have learned a lot about Pinelands plants from the course, but I have also become friends with some great people with other areas of expertise who are willing to share information.

**PPA:** What specific PPA activity has really impressed you?

**TB:** I’m glad to see the Summer Teachers Institute has now included the Pemberton Twp. schools. We have many interesting areas in our township and I would like our teachers to show the students how many interesting things they have in their own backyard.

**PPA:** What has PPA done for you? your family? your town?

**TB:** PPA has helped me become more well-rounded in my knowledge of the Pinelands, info that I can pass on to my family. Since I started going to Township Council meetings I have seen first hand how PPA works to protect my town and every other town in the Pinelands.

**PPA:** Why would you urge others to join PPA?

**TB:** We live in an area that is unlike anywhere else on the planet and so many people don’t realize it. Getting more people educated and caring about it is one of the ways to help preserve it.

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**Forked River Mountain Clean-up**

**Sunday, April 22**

**9:00 am – 1:00 pm**

Bring lunch and dress appropriately. 4-wheel drive vehicles especially needed. Sponsored by Forked River Mountain Coalition, Ocean County Parks and the Pinelands Preservation Alliance.

Pre-registration required; please call for information and directions: (609) 971-1635

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**Pinelands Watch Network**

Through PPA’s Pinelands Watch program citizens keep up to date on important issues and also engage with local planners and officials to advocate for Pinelands protections. Learn about current issues and receive issues of the Pinelands Watch Newsletter.

Contact Theresa at (609) 859-8860 x24 or theresa@pinelandsalliance.org to sign up.
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Pinelands Calendar of Events

April & May 2012

Lighthouse Center for Natural Resource Education Waretown (609) 971-7002
3:30 – 7:30 pm. You will receive: A variety of field trips and classroom presentations, a light dinner, networking opportunity, FREE resource sharing table and door prizes. $20.

Saturday, May 5
Whitesbog Village Tour
1:00 pm. Whitesbog Village, 120-34 Whitesbog Road, Browns Mills. $5 donation/person requested. Reservations requested. 609 893-4646

Canoe/Kayak the Wading River (Burlington Co)
9 am. Viva the Fifth of May! Our annual paddle is 10 miles from Hawkwin Bridge to Beaver Bridge. Boats can be rented from Mick’s Canoe and Kayak Rental www.mickscanorental.com/ or 800-281-1380. Meet at Hawkwin Bridge. Contact leaders to confirm trip and participation. George & Leona F. 609-259-3734 or Leona@pineypaddlers.com Sponsored by the Sierra Club - West Jersey Chapter. 609-259-3734

Sunday, May 6
Whitesbog Quarterly Lecture Series: “Lure of the Pines”
1 pm. Whitesbog Village, 120-34 Whitesbog Road, Browns Mills. 609 893-4646

Wednesday, May 9
Barneget Bay Blitz
Volunteers will clean up dozens of areas in the Barneget Bay watershed. www.nj.gov/dep/barnegat-bay/blitz.htm

Wednesday, May 9
Buddy Adventure
8 – 10 pm. Woodford Cedar Run Wildlife Refuge, 4 Sawmill Road, Medford

As the sun sets, we’ll take a hike through the woods in search of the wide variety of insects that make their home at the refuge. With the help of some special lights, we might be able to attract some of the more unusual nocturnal insects. Cost is $10 per adult and $5 per child. Advanced registration required. Erin, 856-983-3229 x103

Jackson Township Green Expo
9:00 am - 4:00 pm. Jackson Memorial High School, located on Don Connor Blvd.

Wednesday, May 30
Ocean County Soil Health Conference
Call (609) 971-7002 for details.

If your organization is having an activity you would like to see listed, contact Inside the Pinelands, 17 Pemberton Road, Southampton, NJ 08088; ph: (609) 859-8860; e-mail miken@pinelandsalliance.org. Next deadline: May 15, 2012.

Go to the Events Calendar on PPA’s website for a comprehensive listing of events.
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Membership Categories
Basic ☐ $35
Family ☐ $60
Sponsor ☐ $100
Patron ☐ $250
Benefactor ☐ $500
Chairman’s Circle ☐ $1,000
Other ☐ ______

ALL MEMBERS RECEIVE:
A PPA membership card
A year’s subscription to Inside the Pinelands
A PPA window sticker
Discounts on PPA merchandise and events

Sponsors receive a copy of The Pine Barrens: Up Close & Natural DVD
Patrons receive John McPhee’s seminal book The Pine Barrens
Benefactors receive The Pine Barrens of New Jersey, a photographic history of this region
Chairman’s Circle members receive the book Seasons of the Pines and a personalized tour of the Pinelands

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