



**Resolution supporting New York State bill S.4970-A / A.7857-A,
“to amend the environmental conservation law,
in relation to prescribed burning in the Long Island central pine barrens”
which would encourage prescribed fire activities
in the Pine Barrens Maritime Reserve.**

**Commission Meeting of 5/20/2009
Brookhaven Town Hall
Farmingville, NY**

Commission members present:

Mr. Scully (for the Governor),
Ms. Gallagher (for the Suffolk County Executive),
Mr. Turner (for the Brookhaven Supervisor),
Mr. McCormick (for the Riverhead Supervisor),
Mr. Shea (for the Southampton Supervisor)

Peter A. Scully
Chair

Philip J. Cardinale
Member

Linda A. Kabot
Member

Mark Lesko
Member

Steve A. Levy
Member

WHEREAS the Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning and Policy Commission (the "Commission"), having its principal offices at P.O. Box 587, 3525 Sunrise Highway, 2nd Floor, Great River, NY, was created pursuant to the Long Island Pine Barrens Protection Act of 1993 (the "Act") codified in New York Environmental Conservation Law (the "ECL") Article 57; and

WHEREAS the Commission adopted the Wildfire Task Force’s Central Pine Barrens Fire Management Plan (the "Plan") for improved and increased fire management in the Central Pine Barrens; and

WHEREAS the Plan found that prescribed fire is the controlled application of fire to wildlands by specifically trained professionals, and under specified environmental conditions, allowing the fire to be confined to a predetermined area, and producing the fire behavior and fire characteristics necessary to reduce the risk of wildfire in the future and achieve other goals as defined in a written plan; and

WHEREAS the Plan found that “strategically placed prescribed fires offer the opportunity to reduce the threat of uncontrollable wildfires and increase firefighter safety. When a wildfire burns in a recently burned area the rate of spread is slower, the fire intensity is lessened, the access through the vegetation is easier and over-all there is a greater degree safety for the firefighter”; and

WHEREAS the Plan found that “smoke emissions from prescribed fires are generally less than wildfires”; and

WHEREAS the Plan found ecological benefits to prescribed fire because the Long Island Pine Barrens maritime reserve’s natural communities require periodic fire for maintenance of their ecological integrity, including perpetuation, restoration, and management of its many plant and animal communities, and that significant loss of

P.O. Box 587
3525 Sunrise
Highway
2nd Floor
Great River, NY
11739-0587

Phone (631) 224-2604
Fax (631) 224-7653
www.pb.state.ny.us

the Central Pine Barrens' biological diversity will occur if fire is excluded from fire-dependent systems; and

WHEREAS the Plan found that “with effective planning, a prescribed fire management program can benefit the Central Pine Barrens by reducing risks from wildfire and meeting ecological goals”; and

WHEREAS as Long Island's population continues to grow, pressures from liability issues and nuisance complaints inhibit the use of prescribed fire; and

WHEREAS the Department of Environmental Conservation is urged to maximize the opportunities for prescribed burning; and

WHEREAS New York State bill S.4970-A / A.7857-A, “to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to prescribed burning in the Long Island central pine barrens” addresses liability standards and hazardous fuel reduction procedures; and

WHEREAS the Central Pine Barrens Wildfire Task Force has indicated its support for this proposed legislation by communication with the Central Pine Barrens Commission,

Now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Commission supports policies that encourage prescribed fire activities that lead to hazardous fuels reduction and ecological benefits; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Commission supports and encourages passage of New York State bill S.4970-A / A.7857-A, “to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to prescribed burning in the Long Island central pine barrens.”

Motion by:	Mr. Turner
Second by:	Mr. Scully
Ayes:	Unanimous
Nays:	None