

Environmental Outreach and Communications Division Update

January 2024

Submitted by Tim Motz, Environmental Outreach and Communications Coordinator

Communications

- **The Suffolk County Water Authority widely distributed our video celebrating the 30th anniversary of the Long Island Pine Barrens Protection Act to many of its customers, along with a note from Chairman Charles Lefkowitz touting the close connection between SCWA and the Central Pine Barrens Commission, particularly pertaining to the shared priority of protecting groundwater resources. The distribution was a huge success, garnering (as of Jan. 10) 1,150 views. We are also pursuing a number of other ways to make sure as many Long Islanders as possible view the video.**

“A Day in the Life” Program

- **Met with our partners in the program, the Brookhaven National Laboratory and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to assess the program top to bottom and make any needed changes prior to the 2024 season next fall. I’ll get into any changes in greater detail later in the year, but essentially, we’re looking to make a great program even better, and essential to that effort will be creating a central and easily accessible database of all testing results. We think this will result in a better percentage of schools turning in their test results, more uniformity in what schools are testing for, and more collaborative programs between schools.**

Barrens to Bay Summer Camp

- **Preparation for the 2024 camp has begun, and the primary goal right now is recruiting staff. I expect that we’ll have a minimum of two, and possibly three, of last year’s primary counselors returning. This will go a long way toward providing continuity between the former program run by my predecessor, Melissa Parrott, and the program I will be running this summer.**

Miscellaneous

- **The commission’s 2023 Annual Report has been written and is currently in the design process. As with last year’s design overhaul, this year’s will again highlight, visually and via text, the commission’s major accomplishment for the year and provide important information about the region, all in an aesthetically pleasing**

format. The report will be printed and available for your review by next month's commission meeting.

- **Preparations have begun for the commission's 2024 Cooperators Meeting, and the division again plans to prepare a video for viewing by meeting attendees (and for subsequent broad distribution). In keeping with this year's primary theme, the video will focus on the 30th anniversary of the creation of the Law Enforcement Council, and law enforcement protection of the Central Pine Barrens region in general.**
- **I will also be preparing bios for all of our new commission members and designated representatives for placement on the commission's website, so I'll be in touch in the coming days seeking resumes from you for that purpose.**

Administration

- **Staffing:** Seasonal prescribed fire, fire management specialist and intern positions were posted and advertised to secure candidates for spring prescribed fire operations and field work. Candidates are being reviewed with interviews commencing once clarifications on potential forest management activities this spring are known.
- **Planning:** Planning on developing short and long-term strategic work plans is under development with focus on developing a planning and prioritization map, time and accounting tracking along with the development of staff work plans, to strengthen focus, structure, efficiency and impact related to the mission of CPBC.
- **Budget:** A budget for the division including equipment, meetings, trainings and professional development is being developed to help streamline scheduling, funding and training requests.
- **Performance Evaluations:** evaluations were conducted and successfully completed for division staff.

Prescribed Fire Program:

- *Administration:*
 - Discussions have been initiated with NYSDEC regarding funding needs; status of the northern long eared bat mitigation/permitting, developing a 5 year and long-term stewardship management plan for the Central Pine Barrens.
 - The prescribed fire program has been uploaded to grants gateway and quarterly reports and vouchers are completed and waiting for contract execution.
 - Use of Spinney Road Well Field Building for storage of prescribed fire equipment especially when operations occur on the eastern side of the Central Pine Barrens continues to commence with SCWA.
- *Equipment:*
 - The Type 6 Fire Engine was completed and subsequently inspected and delivered by Ms. Weigand and Ranger Gallagher at the end of November. The engine has since been fully outfitted with equipment, PPE, and accessories and a training orientation was conducted with regional prescribed fire staff in advance of its use. Winterization training of the engine and operational training video on its use have also been initiated. Repairs to the fuel fill port were also coordinated and conducted as the fuel port location did not facilitate proper fueling. The engine was put into operation the first week in January during a pile burning operation as contingency resource and for extinguishing pile burning activities. The final major up-fit will be installing the radio system in the engine.



- **Prescribed Burn Plan Development:**

- Rocky Point East, Sarnoff West and South of Currans burn plans have all been uploaded to iPac and a meeting was held with the USFWS and NYSDEC regarding the status of forest management activities as it pertains to the northern long eared bat, an endangered species which restricts mechanical and fire treatments without defined mitigations.
- The Dwarf Pine Barrens Prescribed Fire Enhancement Zone (633 acres w/11 burn units) remains in final internal review where after it will advance to NYSDEC for final review.
- The Otis Pike/Upton Reserve Burn Unit (4252 acres across 23 burn blocks) in Otis Pike Pine Barrens State Forest (NYSDEC) and Upton Reserve (BNL) is in final internal review and will also advance to NYSDEC for final review shortly.
- SEQRA training was conducted for staff as an orientation to the review process for new staff in order to advance full SEQRA review for the above listed plans.

- **Education and Outreach:**

- Ms. Weigand has been invited to participate on the Northeast Midwest Prescribed Fire Science and Management Conference steering committee that is being held in Albany – August 2024. This is a unique opportunity to showcase the work related to prescribed fire that has been advancing in the region as well as provide critical training to staff.

- **Prescribed Fire Preparation and Implementation:**

- Pile burning has been the focus of prescribed fire operations at the David A. Sarnoff Preserve. Over 70 piles were burned by January 8th as a result of two pile burning operations, with continuous burning scheduled for the month. This effort reduces the heavy fuels and organic matter from the forest floor which in turn helps reduce smoke exposure and mop up during broadcast burn activities. To help facilitate these burns during rainy weather, 9 piles were wrapped in special waxed paper to help keep the piles dry and advance operations through the month.



Ecological Research Initiatives:

- Ms. Weigand and Mr. Whittemore represented CPBC at the bi-annual Sandplain Grassland Meeting hosted by Woodwell Climate Research Center in MA. Ms. Weigand helped coordinate and facilitate the meeting, and Mr. Whittemore presented research related to sandplain grasslands. This meeting was attended by approximately 90 people from across the northeast and highlighted over a dozen research and land management projects across the region.
- Mr. Whittemore completed a second draft for research titled “Flora and Distribution of Northern Coastal Atlantic Plain Heathland and Grassland”, for which he is first author and Ms. Weigand is second author in collaboration with leading botanists, researchers and land managers in the region. Mr. Whittemore is preparing the paper to be submitted to a scientific journal. This research will go a long way to describe species composition and regionally range of this globally imperiled system.
- The Division is participating in the Long Island Mammal Survey to provide up to date occurrence of mammal species in the region. Currently, seven game cameras have been set up in Sears Bellows, Hubbard and Birch Creek County Parks; Rocky Point Pine Barrens State Forest and Red Creek Park (TNC). These cameras have been strategically placed to detect occurrences of less common species. Cameras are maintained and data is reviewed and reported on a monthly basis. In the last six weeks there has been a diversity of common mammals including deer, possums, fox and raccoons as well other wildlife including a diversity of bird species.
- Fall tick monitoring of long-term forest health monitoring plots with a history of wildland fire has commenced to examine tick species distribution and abundance and the influence of wildland fire on populations. The sampled ticks will be provided to the SUNY ESF Fire Lab for analysis by Sam Gilvard, a PhD candidate under the advisement of Dr. Andrew Vander Yacht.
- Vegetation monitoring continues as thinning continues in the David A. Sarnoff Preserve. As planned, the Commission completed eight vegetation transects throughout the thinning units. Once thinning has been completed, the Commission will revisit the transects and record the changes due to the forest thinning early 2024.



Southern Pine Beetle

- Statewide SPB Incident Command System staff, coordinated by NYSDEC’s Forest Health Unit in support by the Division remain active in monitoring SPB outbreaks and dispersion. Surveying is advanced in core and compatible growth areas of the Central Pine Barrens with the help of DEC Forest Health staff. The use of Near map satellite imagery and known locations of infestations from 2022 have focused efforts on marking and recording the expansion of SPB infestations throughout the summer due to no suppression management from the uplisting of the northern long eared bat.
- Surveying for SPB has paused for the season due to winter dormancy and will commence once again in the spring.
- Under the leadership of the USFS Northern and Southern Research Labs, the Commission continues to participate in an SPB early detection lure study to evaluate new lures in attracting SPBs. A total of 12

funnel traps have been installed at Ridge Conservation Area, Manorville Hills County Park and Warbler Woods. These traps are checked bi-weekly and rotated each check to evaluate new lures and combinations to increase efficiency of trap catch success and reduce bycatch. Recent trap checks reveal SPBs populations are present and less abundance as expected with end of the growing season. As of mid-December, there were only a handful of SPB found in the traps indicating dormancy of this insect and accordingly the traps were taken down at the end of the year.

- A field tour of forest management for Hofstra University Field Ecology class was hosted by the Division and NYSDEC at the Demonstration forest. A total of 13 students participated in this tour where pine barrens ecology, forest management (thinning, prescribed fire) and southern pine beetle were highlighted directly through a walking tour of the demo forest. In addition, students already qualified in prescribed fire were added to the prescribed fire volunteer list and information on participating on prescribed fires and training opportunities through NYWIMA were shared, directly increasing participation in prescribed fire activities and inspiring the next generation of forest management professionals.



Restoration:

- The largest known population of Common lupine (*Lupinus perennis*) was expanded through seeding of harvested seed adjacent to the existing population in Rocky Point Pine Barrens State Forest. Invasive species have also been removed from this roadside area to help provide suitable habitat for existing individuals. The area has been flagged to protect the restoration from impact by prescribed fire and driving activities. It is hoped that through this effort, the population will be doubled and resiliency will increase.
- Surveillance assistance continues to be provided in Hampton Bays/Flanders to help abate the frequent dumping that has been occurring in that location.





New York Wildfire and Incident Management Academy

This is a nationally recognized academy which provides wildfire and emergency management training. Academy students are trained to National Wildfire Coordinating Group and National Incident Management System standards by certified instructors from local, state and federal agencies and organizations. The Academy operates for a ten-day period in October and also provides specific group or agency training outside of this training period.

This past year NYWIMA took place at Brookhaven National Laboratory, Suffolk County Fire Rescue Services and Suffolk County Water Authority. During this period, a total of 216 Students participated in 13 classes. They represented 17 states and 80 different agencies at the local, state and federal levels. In addition, we were able to train firefighters from Canada as well.

At a local level, the Academy offered free training to Nassau and Suffolk Volunteer Firefighters in Wildland Firefighter Training. Volunteers from 10 local Fire Departments took advantage of the classes offered.

Classes offered:

FI-210 Wildland Fire Cause and Origin

I-300 Intermediate ICS

I-400 Advanced ICS

S-130/S190 Wildland Firefighter Training

S-130 Field Day

S-131 Firefighter Type 1

S-211 Portable Pumps and Water Use

S-212 Wildfire Powersaws

S-215 Fire Operations in the Wildland Urban Interface

S-219 Firing Operations

UTV Course

UAS – Intro to UAS

UAS – FAA 107 Prep



Agencies represented at NYWIMA: NYSIMT, NYSDEC, USFS, NH DNCR, Suffolk County Parks, Catskill Forest Association, Department of National Defense, Massachusetts DCR, The Nature Conservancy, Albany Pine Bush, NJFFS, USFWS, PADNCR, Rhode Island DEM, NPS, and multiple volunteer fire departments.



Compliance and Enforcement Division Report November - December 2023 Prepared by CAED Chief Enforcement Officer Frank Carbone

- We received eight complaints this period for dumping. The dumping consisted primarily of furniture, household trash and landscaping debris. All these incidents occurred along the roadside in Hampton Bays along Red Creek Rd and in Manorville along North Street.
- None of these incidents were captured on surveillance cameras. Six cases were resolved with cleanups and a total of \$5,950.00 paid in penalties and fines.
- The GIS complaint tracking system has been shared with the sheriffs office and the NYS Police to aid in tracking incidents.
- UAS (Unmanned Aircraft Systems) Part 107 training has stalled while we continue to search for an indoor training location to practice with our small lightweight training drones.

Robert T. Calarco
Chairman

Timothy C. Hubbard
Member

Maria Z. Moore
Member

Daniel J. Panico
Member

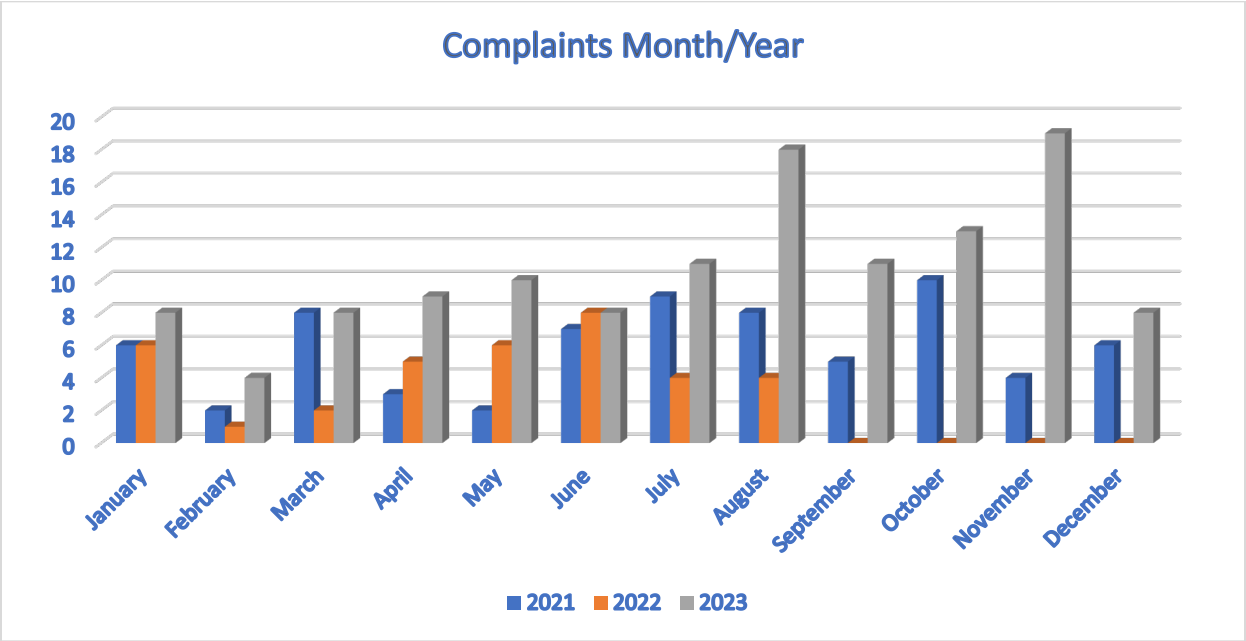
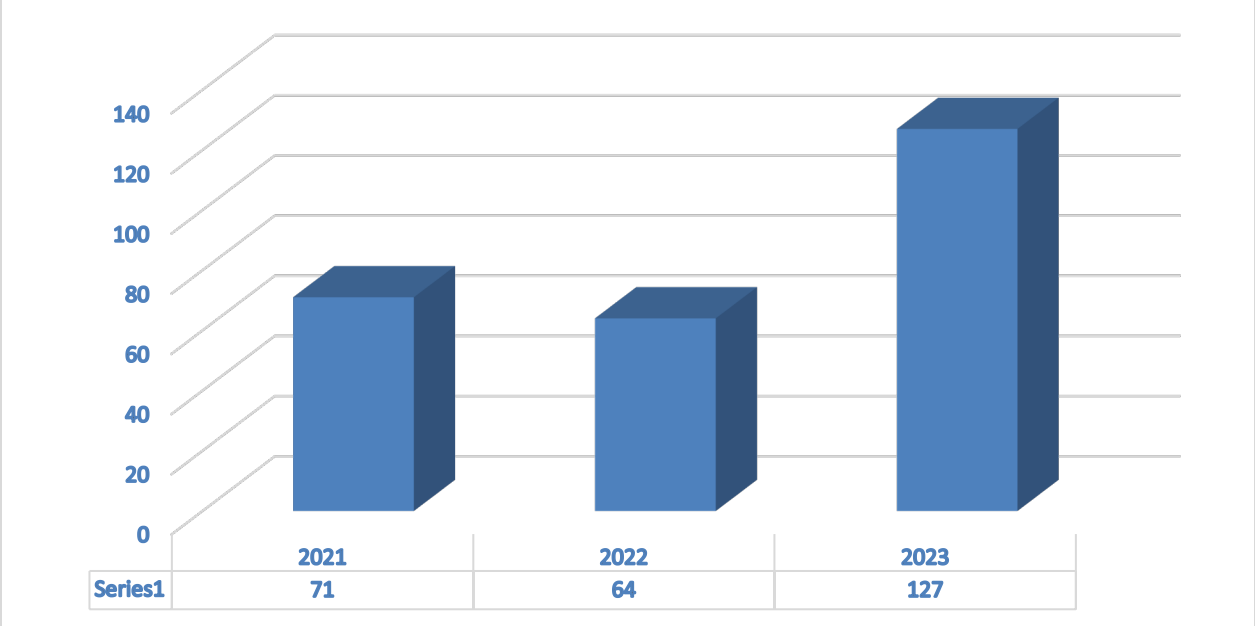
Edward P. Romaine
Member



624 Old Riverhead Road
Westhampton Beach, NY
11978

Phone (631) 288-1079
Fax (631) 288-1367
www.pb.state.ny.us

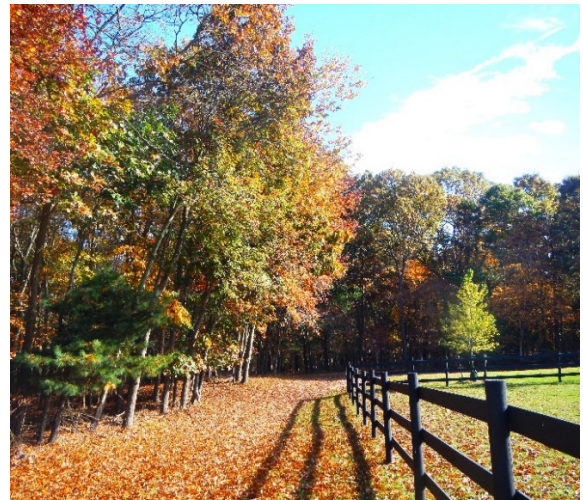
| Incident Statistics - Reporting Period 2021 - 2023 | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Year | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
| Intake | | | |
| Sent by Agency to Commission | 11 | 14 | 17 |
| Discovered by Commission Staff | 48 | 41 | 104 |
| Called in by Individual to Commission | 12 | 8 | 6 |
| Total Incidents Reported | 71 | 63 | 127 |
| Location of Incident | | | |
| Brookhaven | 54 | 46 | 69 |
| Southampton | 10 | 17 | 50 |
| Riverhead | 6 | 0 | 8 |
| Occurring on Public Land | 26 | 21 | 79 |
| Occurring on Private Land | 35 | 22 | 23 |
| Occurring on Public & Private Land | 10 | 20 | 25 |
| Core | 35 | 38 | 78 |
| Compatible Growth Area (CGA) | 18 | 13 | 39 |
| Core & CGA | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Outside CPBA | 18 | 12 | 9 |
| Nature of Incident* | | | |
| Clearing/Encroachment | 24 | 24 | 20 |
| Structures | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| Dumping | 35 | 35 | 103 |
| Mining | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Hunting | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| ATV | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Other | 8 | 4 | 1 |
| <i>*Note-some incidents involve more than one land use issue</i> | | | |
| Referrals* | | | |
| Sent to Town | 17 | 20 | 6 |
| Sent to County | 17 | 12 | 36 |
| Sent to State | 16 | 22 | 33 |
| Commission | 21 | 15 | 8 |
| Sent to AG | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 5 | 37 |
| <i>*Note-some incidents are sent to multiple agencies</i> | | | |
| Status | | | |
| Founded | 60 | 50 | 125 |
| Unfounded | 11 | 13 | 2 |
| Open | 39 | 18 | 52 |
| Closed | 32 | 45 | 75 |
| Inspections | | | |
| Conservation Easement Inspections | | 1 | 0 |
| Development project inspections | | 2 | 0 |



Item 2.b.III Pine Barrens Credit Program Report for January 17, 2024:

Activities in the Credit Program for 2023 included review of applications for Letters of Interpretation, Conservation Easements, Credit Program and FOIL requests management. Some specific work items include:

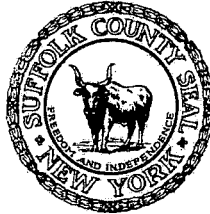
- Letters of Interpretation: 38 LOIs were issued and three parcels were inspected. Staff is following up on past LOIs for interest in the Program.
- Conservation Easements: Review and Monitoring
 - 18 easements were recorded, which generated 5.69 credits.
 - Six easements are currently in progress.
 - 50 easement properties with road access were inspected.



- Pine Barrens Credits
 - Redeemed: 18.63 Credits have been redeemed in the Town of Brookhaven, Riverhead and Southampton.
 - Conveyed: 25.02 Credits have been sold in the Towns of Brookhaven, Riverhead and Southampton.
 - The average price is \$104,809 per credit.
- Pine Barrens Credits Auction: 0.65 credits have been purchased by the Commission. Additional credits are expected to be purchased in 2024.

Pine Barrens Credit Program Statistics Table: represents figures for the total and annual summary of 2023.

| Easement Protected Lands and Pine Barrens Credits As of January 1, 2024 | | | | | | | | |
|---|------------|-------------|-----------|----------|-------------|-------------|---------|-------------|
| | Brookhaven | 2023 | Riverhead | 2023 | Southampton | 2023 | Total | 2023 |
| Parcels | 527 | 9 | 37 | - | 470 | 12 | 1034 | 21 |
| Acreage | 831.69 | 3.32 | 516.78 | - | 885.92 | 9.14 | 2234.39 | 12.46 |
| Average parcel size | 1.58 | 0.37 | 13.97 | - | 1.88 | 1.98 | 2.16 | 0.59 |
| Credits generated | 550.26 | 3.60 | 173.39 | - | 340.26 | 2.09 | 1063.91 | 5.69 |
| Credits redeemed | 423.67 | 7.02 | 145.13 | 2.88 | 189.76 | 8.73 | 758.56 | 18.63 |
| Credits not redeemed | 126.59 | -3.42 | 28.26 | - | 150.5 | -6.64 | 305.35 | -12.94 |
| Credits sold | | 8.1 | | 0.20 | | 16.72 | | 25.02 |
| Total value of PBC transactions through this date | | \$1,000,918 | | \$17,300 | | \$1,604,092 | | \$2,622,310 |
| Average Credits value | | \$123,570 | | \$86,500 | | \$95,939 | | \$104,809 |
| Credits owned by the Clearinghouse | 1.19 | | - | | - | | 1.19 | |
| # of Inspected CE Parcels | - | 28 | - | 3 | - | 19 | - | 50 |
| # of Installed CE Signs | 134 | - | 18 | - | 92 | - | 244 | 0 |



SUFFOLK COUNTY COMPTROLLER

330 CENTER DRIVE RIVERHEAD, N.Y. 11901-3311

Telephone: (631) 852-1501 FAX (631) 852-1507

JOHN M. KENNEDY, JR.
COUNTY COMPTROLLER

January 5, 2024

**Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning and
Policy Commission
P.O. Box 587
Great River, N.Y. 11739-0587**

**Dear Pine Barrens Credit Clearinghouse
Board of Advisors:**

**Attached please find our financial report on the Pine Barrens Credit Program for the
month of December 2023. Thank you.**

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher C. McCarthy 1/5/2024
Christopher C. McCarthy
Senior Accountant

| Suffolk County Comptroller's Office The Pine Barrens Credit Program | |
|--|-----------------------|
| Balance as of December 31st, 2022 | \$2,554,546.05 |
| Additional Deposits | 0.00 |
| Interest (see below for details) | 2,548.83 |
| Disbursements | 0.00 |
| Balance as of December 29th, 2023 | \$2,557,094.88 |

**Interest Earnings & Disbursements
For the Months of January - December 2023**

Interest Earnings

Premier MMA - Public Fund

| | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| January | 223.97 |
| February | 195.99 |
| March | 217.01 |
| April | 196.02 |
| May | 231.04 |
| June | 210.06 |
| July | 217.08 |
| August | 217.10 |
| September | 203.11 |
| October | 224.14 |
| November | 210.15 |
| December | 203.16 |
| | <u>\$2,548.83</u> |

| <u>Interest Period</u> | <u>APR</u> |
|------------------------|------------|
| 01/01/23- 01/31/23 | 0.1000% |
| 02/01/23- 02/28/23 | 0.1000% |
| 03/01/23- 03/31/23 | 0.1000% |
| 04/01/23- 04/30/23 | 0.1000% |
| 05/01/23- 05/31/23 | 0.1000% |
| 06/01/23- 06/30/23 | 0.1000% |
| 07/01/23- 07/31/23 | 0.1000% |
| 08/01/23- 08/31/23 | 0.1000% |
| 09/01/23- 09/30/23 | 0.1000% |
| 10/01/23- 10/31/23 | 0.1000% |
| 11/01/23- 11/30/23 | 0.1000% |
| 12/01/23- 12/31/23 | 0.1000% |

Disbursements

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| None | <u>\$ -</u> |
| | <u>\$ -</u> |

Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning and Policy Commission
 Land Use Division Bi-Monthly Update for the Meeting of Wednesday, January 17, 2024

| Action Municipality | Central Pine Barrens Location | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| | Brookhaven Town | Riverhead Town | Southampton Town |
| Pending Applications, Requests for Determination of Jurisdiction, SEQRA Coordination and other inquiries and activities | None | Venezia Square CGA Development of Regional Significance, Wading River. Development of 37,000 square feet of commercial uses on 6.34 acres. Decision deadline 2/21/24 (CGA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CVE Solar Core Hardship Waiver at Westhampton Property Associates. Lease 25 acres of a 91 acre sand mine for solar development. Decision deadline 1/17/24. Extension request to 2/21/24. • Ralph Schenk Core Hardship Application, CR 31, Westhampton. Development of 4,200 square foot warehouse on 1.3 acres. Suspended review due to enforcement incident. • 4 Old Country Road, LLC. NYSDEC Part 360 Permit, waiting for amended application. (Core) • Riverside Sewage Treatment Plant CGA Hardship Waiver. Schedule public hearing. Decision deadline 5/2/24. |
| Monitoring revegetation and other conditions of decisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildflower, Yaphank (CGA) • 7 Eleven Middle Island (CGA) • LIPA Medford Operations Center (CGA) | None | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gosselin Property, Wildwood Lake (Core) • Lewis Road PRD, East Quogue (CGA, Core) |
| Division Activity, Regional Projects and Participation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and Planning Manager, staff management, budget, voucher and related responsibilities. • Review of land use development projects including Core and CGA Hardship waivers, SEQRA Coordination, interagency referrals, information requests, inquiries, requests for determination of jurisdiction and research. Applications include land use development involving commercial and industrial uses, mixed uses and other site plans, residential and non-residential subdivisions, applications for Developments of Regional Significance, Assertions of Jurisdiction, zone changes and other development activities. • Development project land use surveys, inspections, monitoring sites with conditional decisions. • Technical support on FOIL requests, compliance and enforcement violations and consent orders on development projects, Credit Program items, communications on land use matters, unauthorized development, clearing, encroachments in protected areas and regulated habitats. • Collaborate and coordinate with other Commission divisions. • Annual report contributions and participation in planning the annual cooperators meeting. • Pine Barrens Interpretive Center research, feasibility study and business plan. • Interviews for an environmental planner. | | |

