

Educational Outreach and Communications Division Update

December 2024

Submitted by Tim Motz, Educational Outreach and Communications Coordinator

Annual Report

- **Work is underway on the Commission's Annual Report, which we redesigned three years ago to make it more dynamic and accessible for readers. This year's report will again feature the highlights of the year of our various divisions, information about the Central Pine Barrens and the Commission's mission and function, a letter from Executive Director Jakobsen touting the highlights of the year and the most interesting news coming out of the commission as a whole in 2024. This year, we're also adding photos from a Commission meeting and news about Commission actions. The report is expected to be ready for distribution by mid-February.**

NYWIMA Promotional Video

- **We're also working on a brief and dynamic video promoting the Commission's New York Wildfire and Incident Management Academy. We took footage and conducted interviews at the fall academy and wrapped up shooting at this week's winter classes at the Suffolk County Fire Academy. Our goal is to produce a video of at most two minutes that conveys, via rapid-fire imagery, why the academy is the best place for firefighters or emergency workers looking to advance in their fields or for those new to these fields to launch their careers.**

Social Media

- **The initiative to provide a more comprehensive and systematic social media program for the Commission is now underway. The project includes creating a more efficient system of password/username access; establishing division-by-division protocols for social media content creation; creating a multi-month schedule of posts to ensure we have a constant presence on social media that covers all aspects of our work; and evaluating ways to boost our social media numbers. I will be updating the Commission periodically on the initiative's progress.**

"A Day in the Life" Program

- **We have concluded another successful year for the "A Day in the Life" of a local river program, adding a junior workbook for elementary schoolchildren, revamping our data collection to make it more efficient and adding new schools to the program at multiple locations. We will be holding a meeting with our partners in the program this week to assess this year's program and make any needed adjustments for 2025.**



SCIENCE AND STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM DIVISION REPORT

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Onboarding and Orientation

October 22, 2024, was my first day with the Central Pine Barrens Commission (CPBC). Day one was spent in Oakdale with SCWA HR and the onboarding staff for orientation.

October 23, 2024, was my first day at the CPBC. I got the chance to meet most of the CPBC staff, took the grand tour of the CPBC office and the Westhampton Beach facilities, and settled into my new workspace. On the 24th, I met with both Judy Jakobsen and Julie Hargrave for my orientation to the CPBC and the Science and Stewardship Program.

Literature Review and Training

Since my orientation I have focused on learning essential background information in a few key knowledge areas and began two different job training programs.

My review of the relevant literature is an ongoing process that is centered on pre-existing conservation and management action plans that have been drafted since the formation of the CPBC. This includes the following:

- Long Island Pine Barrens Maritime Reserve Act (Article 57)
- Central Pine Barrens Comprehensive Land Use Plan
- Central Pine Barrens Comprehensive Prescribed Fire Management Plan
- Natural Resource Management Plan for Brookhaven National Laboratory

Additional management plans have already been identified. For example, location specific plans for the Carmans (Carmans River Partnership) and Peconic (Peconic Estuary Partnership) Rivers as well as the Dwarf Pine Plains (The Nature Conservancy) and overarching plans such as Southern Pine Beetle Management Plan (NYSDEC).

This effort will help me better understand the ways in which the future CPB conservation plan can benefit the whole ecosystem and the services it provides, improve coordination with our partners in conservation, and provide a holistic blueprint for assessing and monitoring the health of the CPB and the species within.

I have also begun two training programs. The first program is through the New York Wildfire and Incident Management Academy (NYWIMA). I have completed the following training classes:

- S-110 (Basic Wildland Fire Orientation)
- S-190 (Intro to Wildland Fire Behavior)
- S-130 (Firefighter Training)
- S-180 (Human Factors in the Wildland Fire Service)
- Intro to Wildland Fuels
- IC-100 (Intro to the Incident Command System)



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- IC-200 (Basic Incident Command for Initial Response)

I supplemented my online fire training by coordinating with Bob Panko for a specific orientation to the fire program at the CPBC. This took place from November 13-15th, 2024. This included a review of the CPBC fire program's capabilities such as a review of existing burn plans, available fire data, general logistics, and an inspection of the equipment that is available for use during the coming fire season. The orientation also discussed the history of fire in the Central Pine Barrens and included site visits to the Dwarf Pine Plains, David A. Sarnoff State Forest, and Rocky Point State Forest to examine the ground conditions of recently burned and mechanically treated areas.



Figure 1: Sarnoff PBSF - Rx Fire on left side of trail and no treatment on right.



Figure 2: Engine 7 stored near Rocky Point.

I also attended the in-person and field day classes of the New York Wildfire and Incident Management Academy on December 10-12, 2024, to complete my initial wildland fire training.

My second training program is for unmanned aircraft system (UAS) operation. In 2018, I was certified under the FAA's Part 107 remote pilot authorization process to operate UAS after completing extensive training through the NYSDEC, NYDHSES, and the NYS Police. Lt. Frank Carbone was my primary instructor at that time, and I was authorized to conduct UAS missions in DEC's Region 2 (NYC area) prior to the pandemic. During the pandemic the DEC's UAS program was restructured into OEM. As a result, I did not renew my Part 107 authorization.

Upon learning of the CPBC's UAS capability I began the steps to refresh my knowledge of UAS operation, the requirements for Part 107 renewal, and updating my information with the FAA to reestablish my FAA authorization to operate UAS so that I may conduct flight operations on behalf of the CPBC.



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As part of that training, I reviewed all training presentations that were developed by NY's UAS instructors for the initial Part 107 knowledge exam for new remote pilots. This included three (3) presentations authored by Lt. Carbone, now retired from NYSDEC and the CPBC. Those presentations were Intro to UAS, Part 107 Small UAS Test Prep Day 1, and Day 2. Additionally, I used knowledge and test prep materials found online at Gleim Aviation as recommended by the NYS UAS Instructors to supplement my UAS operation training.

I took the FAA required renewal training course (ALC-677: Part 107 Small UAS Recurrent) just prior to completing the Part 107 Renewal Exam. As of December 6, 2024, I am authorized by the FAA to operate UAS on behalf of the CPBC.

I will begin flight training on the CPBC drones to familiarize myself with the equipment and capabilities of same to establish currency in the aircraft prior to conducting any CPBC missions. This training will take place in areas previously identified for UAS flight training. Alena Lawston and Edwin Ward both CPBC Enforcement Officers are currently enrolled in NY's initial UAS knowledge training program and are in the process of qualifying to take the Part 107 certification exam. Having three CPBC staff members certified as remote pilots will provide the foundation for a robust UAS program within the Commission.

2025 Seasonal Fire Crew Hiring Process

In November, the hiring process for selecting the 2025 CPBC fire crew was initiated. Judy Jakobson, Julie Hargrave, and Bob Panko met with me to discuss the work responsibilities of the hires, some potential returning employees, the hiring timelines and other details associated with the CPBC hiring process.

During the December Wildland Fire Academy, I had the opportunity to meet with two former CPBC fire crew employees (Ron Bagan and Nate LeClair) who were assisting with the NYWIMA training and will be returning in 2025. It was a great opportunity to introduce myself to them, to see them in action, while getting a head start on developing our working relationship.

Other Activities

On November 7, 2024, I attended the monthly meeting of the Law Enforcement Council as an opportunity to introduce myself to several members of the Council and get familiar with how their compliance and enforcement efforts assist the CPBC.

On December 5, 2024, I attended the Carmans River Partnership's annual meeting which was conducted via an online web conference. Prior to the event, I was contacted by the Partnership and asked to provide a 2024 update on the Southern Pine Beetle. I prepared a brief PowerPoint presentation that provided background information on Southern Pine Beetle, the stages of an infestation, the risk to the Pine Barrens, management techniques with special consideration to the Northern Long-eared Bat and the recent protective measures designed to limit any habitat loss while the species tries to recover from White Nose



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Syndrome, with an emphasis on proactive methods such as forest thinning and prescribed fire to improve forest resilience to future Southern Pine Beetle infestations.

This meeting was also an opportunity to introduce myself to the participants, many of which are partners with the Commission, and will be integral to the development of a Central Pine Barrens conservation plan in the future.



Compliance and Enforcement Division Report October - November 2024

Prepared by CAED Chief Enforcement Officer Alena Lawston

- We received forty-one complaints this period for dumping, encroachment and clearing. The dumping was consistent being primarily furniture, household trash and landscaping debris.
- Eight of these incidents were captured on surveillance cameras and referred to our law enforcement partner agencies. One subject is caught on surveillance dumping landscaping debris and charcoal on five separate dates. One case was resolved with a total of \$500 paid in fines and clean up by violator. Multiple cases are pending.
- Our division is beginning to utilize social media to highlight the importance of citizen stewardship to assist in protecting the Central Pine Barrens. We are providing the 1-877-BARRENS phone number which is staffed on a 24/7 basis by the Suffolk County Sheriff's Office.
- We continue to utilize the Flock surveillance camera and all integrated shared cameras with the outside partner agencies. This type of surveillance enables our division to provide multiple leads to law enforcement for dumping within the Pine Barrens.
- UAS (Unmanned Aircraft Systems) training continues. In October our division attended the two-day UAS Part 107 classroom training provided by the NY Wildfire Academy (NYWIMA) and NYS Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES). Enforcement officer Ward and I are both currently preparing to take our UAS Part 107 test. When time allows, we will begin training on the SYMA training drones in the indoor setting kindly provided to us by the Ridge Fire Department.



Timothy C. Hubbard
Member

Maria Z. Moore
Member

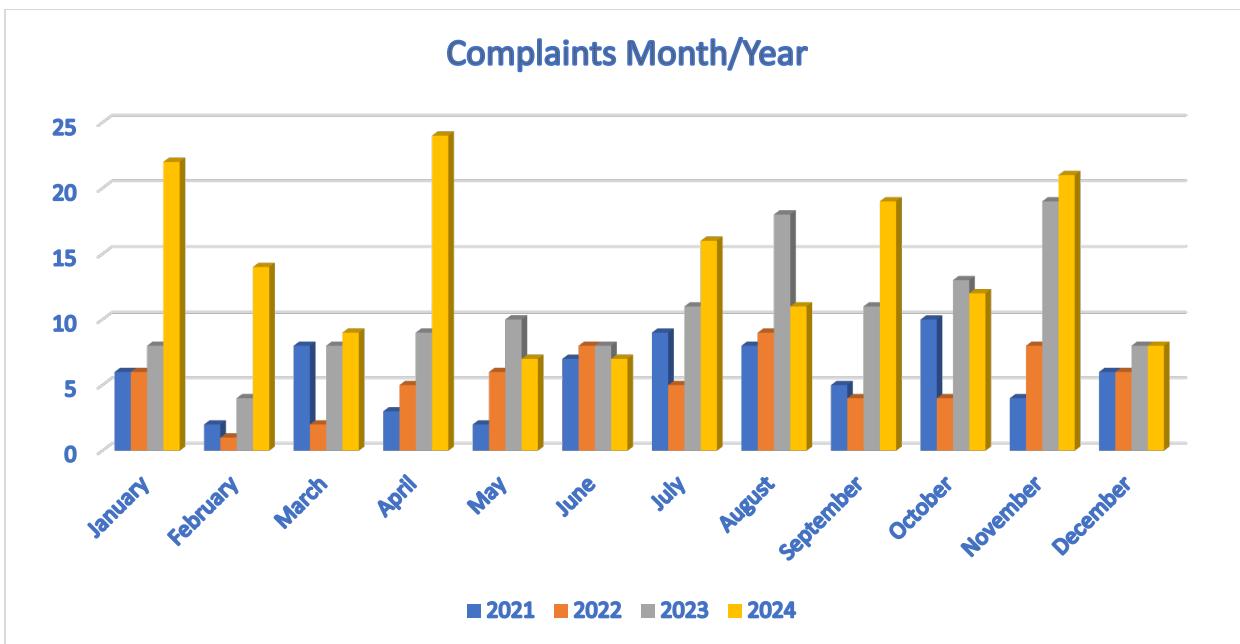
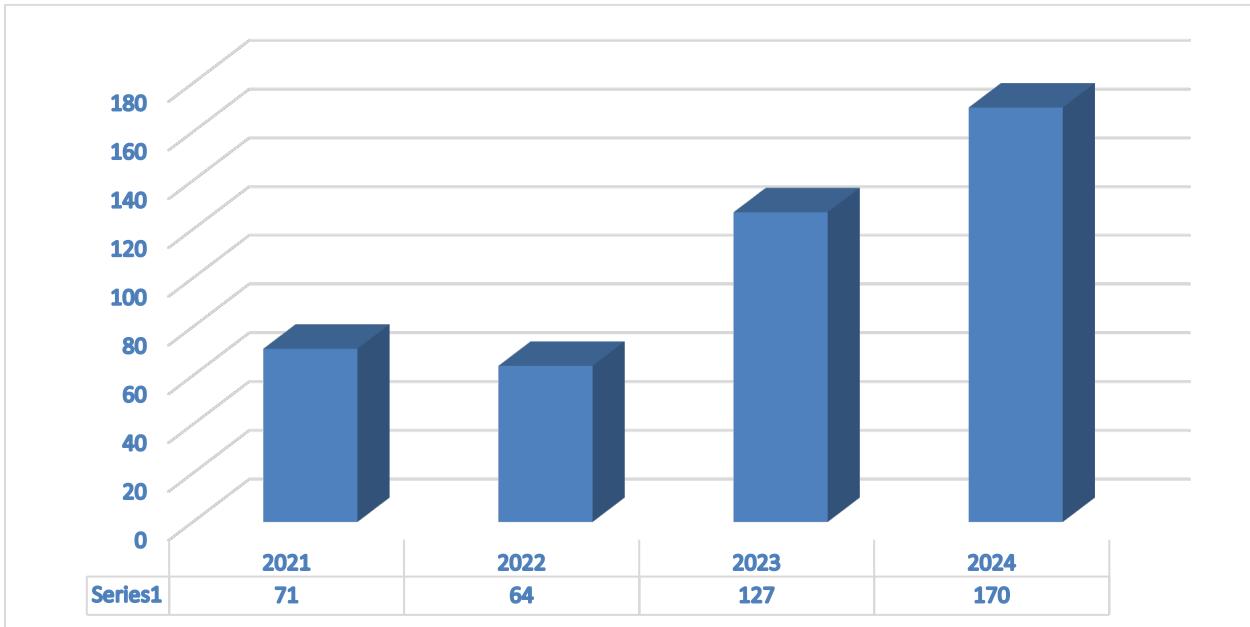
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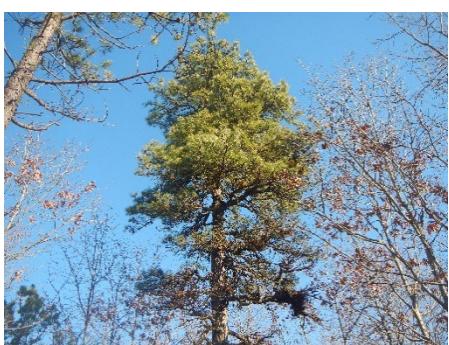
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Incident Statistics - Reporting Period 2021 - 2024				
Year	2021	2022	2023	2024
Intake				
Sent by Agency to Commission	11	14	17	7
Discovered by Commission Staff	48	41	104	154
Called in by Individual to Commission	12	8	6	9
Total Incidents Reported	71	63	127	170
Location of Incident				
Brookhaven	54	46	69	92
Southampton	10	17	50	73
Riverhead	6	0	8	5
Occurring on Public Land	26	21	79	148
Occurring on Private Land	35	22	23	20
Occurring on Public & Private Land	10	20	25	0
Core	35	38	78	133
Compatible Growth Area (CGA)	18	13	39	27
Core & CGA	0	1	1	0
Outside CPBA	18	12	9	8
Nature of Incident*				
Clearing/Encroachment	24	24	20	19
Structures	0	1	2	1
Dumping	35	35	103	143
Mining	1	0	0	1
Hunting	1	0	1	0
ATV	2	1	0	0
Other	8	4	1	2
<i>*Note-some incidents involve more than one land use issue</i>				
Referrals*				
Sent to Town	17	20	6	4
Sent to County	17	12	36	28
Sent to State	16	22	33	15
Commission	21	15	8	1
Sent to AG	0	1	0	0
Other	0	5	37	15
<i>*Note-some incidents are sent to multiple agencies</i>				
Status				
Founded	60	50	125	166
Unfounded	11	13	2	1
Open	39	18	52	63
Closed	32	45	75	107
Inspections				
Conservation Easement Inspections		1	0	0
Development project inspections		2	0	0



Central Pine Barrens Joint Planning and Policy Commission
 Land Use Division Bi-Monthly Update for the Meeting of Wednesday, December 18, 2024

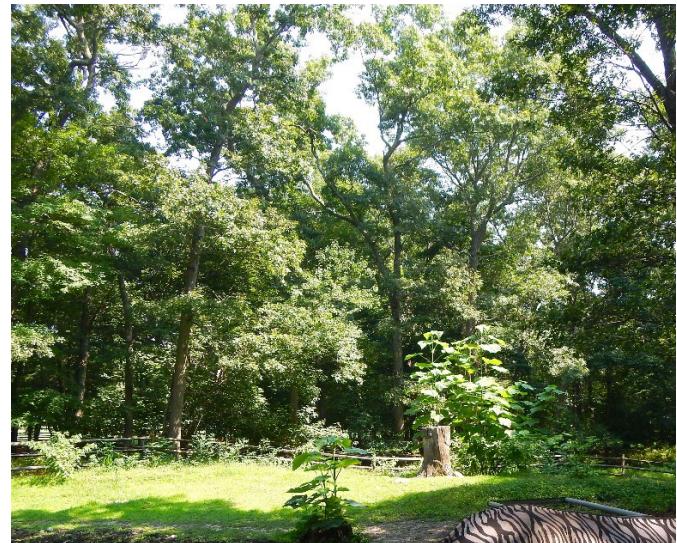
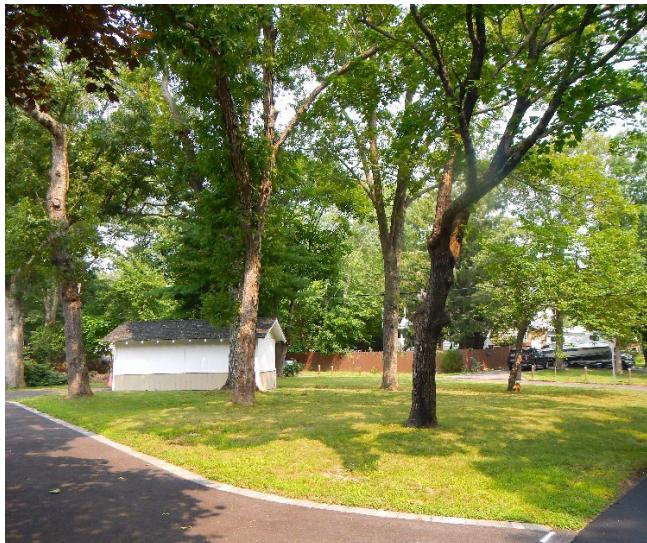
Action	Central Pine Barrens Location		
Municipality	Brookhaven Town	Riverhead Town	Southampton Town
Pending Applications, Requests for Determination of Jurisdiction, SEQRA Coordination, inquiries, proposals and other activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application: Brookhaven Industrial Park Sewage Treatment Plant Expansion, Yaphank, CGA. Inquiry: Garafola three lot subdivision, William Floyd Parkway, Ridge, Core. Referral: Suffolk Muslim Cemetery at former Spadaro Airport, Old Country Road, Eastport, CGA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inquiries: 123 Hidden Pheasant Path and 124 Hidden Pheasant Path, Wading River, CGA. Inquiry: Empire Metals at former site of SAS Industries, Calverton, Core. Requests: Governale, 1,816 square foot residential accessory use barn, River Road, Calverton, CGA; Miloski, 1,600 square foot agricultural barn for farm equipment storage, Calverton, Core; Steiger, pool, Wading River, CGA.. Application: Venezia Square Development of Regional Significance, Wading River, CGA. Extended until 4/16/25. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referral: Busil Properties Site Plan, CGA. 1456 Speonk Riverhead Road Site Plan, CGA. Inquiry: Ketchaponack subdivision, Old Country Road, Westhampton, CGA. Request: Lewis Road PRD Southern Pine Beetle Fire Risk dead tree removal, East Quogue, CGA. Lewis Road PRD project modifications, CGA. Request: PSEG-LI, cut 27 dead trees near utility lines, Eastport, Core.
Division Activity, Regional Projects and Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental review of land use development projects including Core Preservation Area and Compatible Growth Area Hardship waivers, SEQRA Coordination, interagency referrals, information requests, inquiries, requests for determination of jurisdiction and conformance reviews. Applications include 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. Monitor sites for compliance with decisions and conditions of approval. Site inspections and land use surveys for applications. Technical support on FOIL requests, compliance and enforcement violations, consent orders, Credit Program items, communications on land use matters, unauthorized development and clearing activities and encroachments in protected areas and regulated habitats. Collaborate and coordinate with other Commission divisions. USGS two-year contract to monitor surface and groundwater resources, 2024 to 2026. Researching a study on coastal plain pond water resources monitoring. Website updates on land use and planning matters, natural, scenic, historic and cultural resources. Pine Barrens Nature Center Feasibility Study, study to commence in January 2025. 		



Item 3.c. Pine Barrens Credit Program Report for December 18, 2024:

Activities in the Credit Program for 2024 included review of applications for Letters of Interpretation, Conservation Easements, Credit Program and FOIL requests management. Some specific work items include:

- Letters of Interpretation: 44 LOIs were issued and eight parcels were inspected. Staff is following up on past LOIs for interest in the Program.
- Conservation Easements: Review and Monitoring
 - Five easements were recorded, which generated 2.82 credits.
 - Nine easements are currently in progress.
 - 67 easement properties with road access were inspected.



- Pine Barrens Credits
 - Redeemed: 6.39 Credits have been used for commercial, industrial and residential projects in the Town of Brookhaven and Southampton.
 - Conveyed: 12.4 Credits have been sold in the Towns of Brookhaven, Riverhead and Southampton.
 - The average price is \$107,750 per credit.
- Credit Clearinghouse Program Fund Account balance: \$3,296,992.

Pine Barrens Credit Program Statistics Table: represents figures for the total and annual summary of 2024.

Easement Protected Lands and Pine Barrens Credits As of December 10, 2024								
	Brookhaven	2024	Riverhead	2024	Southampton	2024	Total	2024
Parcels	531	4	37	-	471	1	1039	5
Acreage	833.44	1.75	516.78	-	889.51	3.59	2239.73	5.34
Average parcel size	1.57	0.44	13.97	-	1.89	3.59	2.16	1.07
Credits generated	550.26	2.24	173.39	-	340.26	0.58	1063.91	2.82
Credits redeemed	428.77	5.10	145.13	-	191.05	1.29	764.95	6.39
Credits not redeemed	121.49	-2.86	28.26	-	149.21	-0.71	298.96	-3.57
Credits sold		7.57		1.59		3.24		12.4
Total value of PBC transactions		\$903,997		\$100,000		\$332,100		\$1,336,097
Average Credits value		\$119,418		\$62,893		\$102,500		\$107,750
Credits owned by the Clearinghouse	2.19		-		-		2.19	
# of Inspected CE Parcels	-	41	-	4	-	22	-	67
# of Installed CE Signs	139	3	15	-	91	-	245	3