

Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council

Media Fact Sheet

Highlands Region

- Total area: 859,267 acres (approximately 1,343 square miles).
- Provides drinking water for 70% of New Jersey residents.
- Highlands Act, passed in 2004, divided region into Preservation Area and Planning Area.
- Approximately 415,000 acres in the Preservation Area.
- Approximately 444,000 acres in the Planning Area.
- Development is more strictly regulated in the Preservation Area than the Planning Area.

Highlands Communities

- 88 municipalities (within 7 counties) have lands within the Highlands Region.
- 47 have lands in both Planning and Preservation Areas.
- 36 have lands only in the Planning Area.
- 5 have lands only within the Preservation Area.

Plan Conformance

- Highlands Act requires counties and municipalities to align local master plans and development regulations with the Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP) for Preservation Area lands.
- Conformance for Planning Area lands is voluntary.

Municipal & County Plan Conformance Petitions and Approvals (As of September 2018)

- 61 of the 88 municipalities in the Region have submitted Petitions for Plan Conformance, indicating their intent to conform with the RMP (69%). Of the 61 submitted, 50 have been approved by the Highlands Council (82%).
 - 31 petitions include only Preservation Area lands (26 approved)
 - 20 petitions include Preservation and Planning Area lands (18 approved)
 - 10 are from municipalities that have only Planning Area lands (6 approved)
- Of the 61 municipalities petitioning, 30 have chosen to voluntarily include planning area lands (49%).
- 5 of the 7 counties in the Region have submitted Petitions for Plan Conformance, all conforming for Preservation Area lands only. Of the 5 petitions, 2 have been approved by the Highlands Council.

Timeline of Highlands Act and Regional Master Plan

- 1992 – U.S. Forest Service issues a report on the New York and New Jersey Highlands, which serves as an impetus for efforts to protect the natural resources of the New Jersey Highlands.
- 2002 – U.S. Forest Service study is updated, finding an 11 percent increase in population in the New York and New Jersey Highlands Region from 1990 to 2000.
- 2004 – The Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act is enacted by the State of New Jersey (August) and the Federal Highlands Conservation Act is signed into law (November).
- 2008 – The New Jersey Highlands Regional Master Plan (RMP) is approved by the Highlands Council and becomes effective.
- 2014 – The Highlands Council commences its first-ever review of the RMP with launch of the RMP Monitoring Program.
- 2017 – The Highlands Council releases a Fiscal Impact Assessment and a Draft Monitoring Program Recommendation Report (MPRR).

Highlands Municipalities — Plan Conformance Petition Status

as of September 2018

Blue = Petition includes whole municipality Green = Petition includes Preservation Area lands only

† Municipality has lands in the Planning Area only — Plan Conformance is voluntary * Municipality is authorized to make determinations regarding certain Highlands Act Exemptions

Bergen County - *pending*

Mahwah Township* - *approved 2010*

Oakland Borough* - *approved 2014, Planning Area rescinded 2017*

Hunterdon County - *no Petition filed*

Alexandria Township* - *approved 2012*

Bethlehem Township* - *approved 2010*

Bloomsbury Borough - *approved 2011*

Califon Borough* - *approved 2010*

Clinton Town - *approved 2011*

Clinton Township* - *approved 2015*

Glen Gardner Borough - *approved 2010*

Hampton Borough - *approved 2010, Planning Area rescinded 2017*

High Bridge Borough*† - *approved 2011*

Holland Township - *approved 2011*

Lebanon Borough † - *approved 2010*

Lebanon Township* - *approved 2011*

Milford Borough †

Tewksbury Township - *approved 2011*

Union Township - *pending*

Morris County - *pending*

Boonton Town †

Boonton Township - *approved 2015*

Butler Borough †

Chester Borough † - *approved 2016*

Chester Township* - *approved 2010*

Denville Township - *approved 2011*

Dover †

Hanover Township †

Harding Township †

Jefferson Township* - *approved 2014*

Kinnelon Borough - *approved 2011*

Mendham Borough †

Mendham Township †

Mine Hill Township †

Montville Township* - *approved 2012*

Morris Plains Borough † - *pending*

Morris Township †

Morristown †

Mountain Lakes Borough †

Mount Arlington Borough* - *approved 2011*

Mount Olive Township* - *approved 2011*

Netcong Borough †

Parsippany-Troy Hills Township † - *withdrawn*

Pequannock Township - *pending*

Randolph Township - *approved 2013*

Riverdale Borough †

Rockaway Borough †

Rockaway Township - *approved 2011*

Roxbury Township - *approved 2013*

Victory Gardens Borough †

Washington Township* - *approved 2011*

Wharton Borough † - *approved 2011*

Passaic County - *approved 2010*

Bloomington Borough - *approved 2011, Planning Area withdrawn 2017*

Pompton Lakes Borough †

Ringwood Borough* - *approved 2011*

Wanaque Borough - *pending*

West Milford Township* - *approved 2011*

Somerset County - *approved 2011*

Bedminster Township* - *approved 2011*

Bernards Township †

Bernardsville Borough †

Far Hills Borough † - *pending*

Peapack Gladstone Borough †

Sussex County - *pending*

Byram Township* - *approved 2010*

Franklin Borough †

Green Township - *approved 2011*

Hamburg Borough †

Hardyston Township* - *approved 2011*

Hopatcong Borough* - *approved 2012*

Ogdensburg Borough - *approved 2012*

Sparta Township* - *approved 2011*

Stanhope Borough † - *pending*

Vernon Township* - *approved 2012*

Warren County - *no Petition filed*

Allamuchy Township* - *approved 2011*

Alpha Borough † - *approved 2011*

Belvidere †

Franklin Township* - *approved 2011*

Frelinghuysen Township †

Greenwich Township - *pending*

Hackettstown* - *approved 2011*

Harmony Township* - *approved 2012*

Hope Township †

Independence Township - *pending*

Liberty Township - *pending*

Lopatcong Township - *approved 2012*

Mansfield Township - *no Petition filed*

Oxford Township* - *approved 2011*

Phillipsburg † - *approved 2011*

Pohatcong Township* - *approved 2011*

Washington Borough †

Washington Township* - *approved 2011*

White Township - *pending*

