



*Trenton, the State Capital,  
flooded in April 2005*

## Public Hearing Notice

**Wednesday  
November 9th  
3:30 -5 PM  
NJDEP Office  
401 E State St  
Trenton NJ**

Please join us and speak  
out at the NJDEP  
public hearing to  
increase protections of  
our streams.

**Comment deadline  
Nov 18th**

**Call Chris Altomari for  
more details  
609-737-3735**

**View the Association's  
comments at  
[www.thewatershed.org](http://www.thewatershed.org)**

## Proposal Leaves Local Waterways Vulnerable

On September 19th, the NJDEP proposed amendments to the State Water Quality Standards (NJAC 7:9B) to expand the anti-degradation policies for surface waters. These proposals would provide valuable safeguards for rural streams, but waterways in more urban and suburban areas would unfortunately receive less protection.

### Links to the State Plan

This recent proposal attempts to link the goals of the State Plan with the goals of the Water Quality Planning process. The State Plan encourages future growth to occur in urban and suburban areas (PA1 and PA2 areas), in order to reduce sprawl, preserve farmlands and open spaces in more rural areas, and reduce the public costs for infrastructure such as roads, water and sewers.

The proposed water quality amendments expand on the State Plan to accommodate growth as follows:

- Development in rural areas would be restricted within the 150 foot riparian corridor adjacent to the waterway. Development along urbanized waterways could occur within 50 feet of the waterway. (Note: Stream encroachment rules currently allow development within 25 ft of a stream).
- The amendments would allow some degradation of water quality in urbanized areas to accommodate "*necessary and justifiable social and economic development*" in urban and suburban planning areas (PA1 and PA2).

**View the proposed rules at  
[www.state.nj.us/dep/rules/  
notices/091905a.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/rules/notices/091905a.htm)**

The Stony Brook, Millstone River, and Delaware and Raritan Canal are Category Two (C2) waterways in suburban areas that supply drinking water to over one million people. These amendments could potentially limit the width of protective riparian corridors, increase flooding, and reduce water quality standards in order to accommodate growth.

### Modifying the Amendments

The Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association is urging that these amendments be modified to give urban and rural streams equal levels of protection.

- As proposed, the amendments will not achieve the Overall Planning Objectives of the State Plan to "Conserve the State's Natural Resources, Protect the Environment, and Prevent and Clean Up Pollution."
- The measures provide inadequate protections for riparian buffers and water quality for urban and suburban waterways. This could leave these areas more vulnerable to flooding and property damage, and increased treatment costs for degraded water quality.
- The measures are also inconsistent with state and federal mandates for Environmental Justice Principles, that ensure equal treatment for all citizens.

### NJ Environmental Justice Principles Executive Order #96

The government be "*committed to ensuring that all of its citizens receive equal protection under the law; enjoy a healthy environment; and be given opportunities for consistent input into government decision making.*"



*A river runs through...*

### **Stormwater Runoff Facts**

A one-acre parking lot produces 16 times more runoff than an undeveloped meadow.

An acre of wetlands, saturated to a depth of 1 foot, soaks up 330,000 gallons of water, which can then be slowly released to streams after the storm subsides.

39% of the wetlands in New Jersey have been lost to past farming practices or filled in to accommodate development.

Municipal governments can uphold state regulations by denying building applications in wetland areas.

"The most-cost effective solution to minimizing the impact of nonpoint sources of pollution is by maintaining an [undisturbed] riparian zone."

NJDEP, Sept 2005

## **Re-thinking Flood Management**

The natural storm buffering effects offered by wetlands, stream banks and stream corridors have often been lost, channeled or degraded under existing federal, state and local policies.

With the 14 inches of rain that flooded parts of New Jersey in October, and recent floods along the Gulf Coast, it is time to reconsider these policies to better protect our communities.

### **Response to Hurricane Katrina**

The Watershed Association joins the American Rivers in promoting four national strategies as common sense measures, in response to Hurricane Katrina. The Association is also working to help implement these strategies at the local level.

1. Maintain natural flood protection by restricting development in wetlands, floodplains and stream corridors.
2. Restore degraded natural flood protections, and increase funding for these projects.
3. Adopt policies that encourage re-development outside of flood prone areas.
4. Invest in natural nonstructural flood protection strategies, or where necessary innovative engineering solutions more judiciously.

### **Flood Damage Costs**

Everyone pays the price for pollution and flooding in our streams:

- ◆ the high cost of treating and purifying water for drinking;
- ◆ the lack of recreational opportunities (fishing, swimming and canoeing); and
- ◆ the staggering cost of flood damage.

The American Rivers reports that since 1989, FEMA spent \$7.5 billion annually on flood damage, while the flood insurance industry paid out \$48 billion from 1990-1996. Costs from the recent hurricane season will greatly surpass these figures.

Visit the American Rivers website at [www.americanrivers.org](http://www.americanrivers.org)

Federal and state policy makers know that protecting natural buffers and wetlands is the right and most cost effective approach, but regulations, guidance, and budgets need to better support these natural strategies.

### **Stream Corridor Ordinances**

Since 1996, the Watershed Association has encouraged communities to adopt ordinances to protect stream corridors or riparian zones. The Association requested NJDEP to ensure that these local ordinances pre-empt the proposed less stringent water quality amendments.

Join the nine local communities that adopted these ordinances, and help sustain the natural benefits that protected stream corridor ecosystems provide.

- Preventing flood related damage to surrounding communities;
- Filtering sediment, nutrients, and pollutants;
- Reducing stream bank erosion;
- Helping maintain adequate flows of filtered water to underground aquifers;
- Adding to the natural character and providing viewsheds within the community
- Providing shade that maintains cooler water temperatures;
- Maintaining biological diversity; and
- Providing greenway corridors for people and wildlife.

*Learn more about*

**Stream Corridor Ordinances at**

[www.thewatershed.org/wm\\_resources.php](http://www.thewatershed.org/wm_resources.php)

### **Thank you**

**to the Princeton Water Watch group for their cleanup efforts along Carnegie Lake and the Millstone River in October.**

**Over 20 bags of trash were collected!**

**Contact Allison Jackson, the AmeriCorps Volunteer for the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed to organize a cleanup in your town. Call 609-737-3735.**

# Commuting Perks Payoff

Local commuters face a daily struggle, paying \$50 or more to fill the gas tank, and spending 15 minutes or more stuck in traffic. The \$3 price tag for gas may entice more commuters to seriously consider different travel options.

*Are there local commuting options?*

Plans for local Transit Villages at Princeton Junction, Hamilton, and Ewing are a good start, but they will take years and millions of dollars to construct. The Greater Mercer County Transport Management Authority (GM-TMA) is also working on plans for shuttles and Bus Rapid Transit. But time and funding are both in short supply in New Jersey.

*Local employers can participate more actively in addressing commuting burdens.*

## Increase the Carpool Appeal

Corporate shuttle services may seem more appealing to commuters than riding public buses.

Carpools organized among employees and colleagues may increase participation.

Subsidized carpools, gas cards, and insurance assistance may increase riders.

## Best Workplaces for Commuters

The US EPA sponsors a program to recognize and promote "green commuting options," in order to conserve energy and fuel supplies, reduce highway congestion, improve air quality, and enhance the work place and quality of life.

Visit the website for "Best Workplaces for Commuters," to learn more about commuter actions implemented by the top 20 major corporations.

[www.bwc.gov/campaign/f500\\_sub.htm](http://www.bwc.gov/campaign/f500_sub.htm)

## Green Commuting Options

The commuting options outlined below can serve large corporations, business parks, regional centers, or small companies. The rewards are certainly worth a discussion at your next staff meeting.

- Provide a transportation website on the company intranet to highlight company commuter benefits, internal carpools, with links to shuttle services and mass transit.
- Subsidize vans or carpools, and provide premium parking. Sponsor monthly prizes for employees that ride share or use transit.
- Mass transit subsidies can vary from monthly discounts to free prepaid passes.
- Corporate shuttle services are operating in large cities and suburban communities to provide links to mass transit, where public services are insufficient. Shuttles may be offered at peak times, hourly, or on demand. Shuttles also provide rides between buildings or to multiple campuses.
- Participate in the IRS TEA-21 pre-tax payroll program, allowing employees to use pre-tax dollars to pay for public transit.
- Bike-to-work programs can include bike racks, lockers and showers.

## Join the Best Workplaces in NJ

- Be a leader in employee benefits and environmental programs.
- Attract and retain the best employees.
- Show commitment to improving the local quality of life by reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality.
- Enhance your reputation as a great workplace.

## Encourage companies in your town to join!

Visit the NJ DOT website  
[www.state.nj.us/transportation/commuter/bwc/faq.shtm](http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/commuter/bwc/faq.shtm)

## Useful Website Resources On Sustainability

*Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association*  
[www.thewatershed.org](http://www.thewatershed.org)

*American Planning Association*  
[www.planning.org/policyguides/sustainability.htm](http://www.planning.org/policyguides/sustainability.htm)

*NJ Dept of Community Affairs /Office of Smart Growth*  
[www.nj.gov/dca/osg/](http://www.nj.gov/dca/osg/)

*NJDEP - Bureau of Sustainable Communities and Innovative Technologies (BSCIT)* [www.state.nj.us/dep/dsr/bscit.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/dsr/bscit.htm)

*US EPA -Sustainability Page*  
[www.epa.gov/sustainability/](http://www.epa.gov/sustainability/)

*USEPA Sustainability A-Z*  
[www.epa.gov/sustainability/links.htm](http://www.epa.gov/sustainability/links.htm)

*USEPA Star Grants* <http://es.epa.gov/ncer/grants/>  
[www.epa.gov/sustainability/grants.htm](http://www.epa.gov/sustainability/grants.htm)

*US Green Building Council LEED Certification*  
[www.usgbc.org](http://www.usgbc.org)

## NJ Transportation Partners

*Greater Mercer TMA*  
Serving Mercer and Ocean Counties  
[www.gmtma.org/](http://www.gmtma.org/)  
*Bus Rapid Transit Project*  
[www.gmtma.org/brtunder.html](http://www.gmtma.org/brtunder.html)

*HART Commuter Services*  
Serving Hunterdon County  
[www.hart-tma.com/home/](http://www.hart-tma.com/home/)

*Keep Middlesex Moving*  
Serving Middlesex County  
[www.kmm.org/kmm/kmm\\_home.html](http://www.kmm.org/kmm/kmm_home.html)

*RideWise*  
Serving Somerset County  
[www.ridewise.org/](http://www.ridewise.org/)



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Environmental Center  
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Pennington, NJ 08534

**Watershed Watch**

For Members of the Natural  
Lands Network and  
Concerned Citizens

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**Join**  
**NaturalLandsNetwork**  
[subscribe@yahoogroups.com](mailto:subscribe@yahoogroups.com)

**Natural Lands Network Members  
Getting Involved !**

**Nov 2 Floodplain Management Conference, Somerset NJ**

Speakers from FEMA, NJ State agencies and the private sector will cover floodplain maps and management, hazard mitigation, building codes, NJDEP regulatory issues. View the agenda at [www.awra.org/state/new\\_jersey/floodplain.html](http://www.awra.org/state/new_jersey/floodplain.html)

**Nov 4-5 3rd Annual Volunteer Monitoring Summit - "Using Data for Local**

Community Efforts." Hosted by NJDEP at the Clarion Hotel and Towers in Edison. Learn how groups use stream data to address impaired waterways in their communities. The keynote speaker is Geoff Dates from the River Network. Register for one or both days. Contact Dalynn Knigge at [knigge@cook.rutgers.edu](mailto:knigge@cook.rutgers.edu) or call (732) 932-9271 x622

**Nov 5 Mt. Rose Trails Hike at the Watershed Reserve Sat 10 - 1:00 pm**

Join us for a leisurely hike up the Mt. Rose Ridge to view the seasonal changes. Register at 609-737-9212. FREE

**Nov 9 NJDEP Hearing on the State Water Quality Standards proposed**

amendments. NJDEP office at 401 E State St Trenton. 3:30-5  
Comment deadline is Nov 18th.

**Nov 16 Careers with GIS -Hosted by NJDEP from 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at**

NJDEP. Register with Seth Hackman, NJDEP/GIS 609-633-1262 or [seth.hackman@dep.state.nj.us](mailto:seth.hackman@dep.state.nj.us)

