

**EAST HAMPTON IS SUED AGAIN FOR DEVELOPMENT OVER THE AQUIFER
Environmentalists Decry Continued Approvals Without Cumulative Review**

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Environmentalists have filed suit in New York State Supreme Court against the Town of East Hampton for approving two more development projects in the South Fork Pine Barrens and state-designated Special Groundwater Protection Area. It is the ninth such lawsuit against South fork towns in the past year-and-a-half.

The suit asserts that the town violates state environmental law by considering the environmental impacts only of the projects individually and not the collective impacts of the approved projects in addition to 82 other recently-approved or contemplated projects in the same environmentally-sensitive areas.

"East Hampton Town government just keeps approving development that threatens drinking water, so environmentalists will just keep challenging those approvals in court," said Pine Barrens Society Executive Director, Richard Amper.

The approvals challenged the Conklin Farm preliminary subdivision approval granted June 27 by the East Hampton Town Planning Department. The project would create 10 lots on 6.5 acres on Old Accabonac Highway. The second approval involves the construction of a commercial industrial building on the northwest side of Springs/Fireplace Road at Pennsylvania Avenue. The site plan approval was given the same date to project sponsor, Phyllis Morgano.

"Taken individually, these projects may or may not have an impact on the South Fork drinking water supply, but in combination with 82 other projects, they definitely do," Amper said. "If the current administration is so committed to protecting groundwater, why does it refuse to produce a drinking water plan and why is allowing development to move ahead above the aquifer?"

The action was brought by the Long Island Pine Barrens Society and the South Fork Groundwater Task Force. The groups called on East Hampton to agree to the cumulative impacts study required and to stop wasting taxpayer money by hiring outside attorneys to defend the case. East Hampton's legal fees are estimated to now exceed \$100,000. "When he was Supervisor of Southampton, now Assemblyman Fred Thiele pulled his town out of a similar lawsuit and successfully conducted a cumulative assessment in the western part of Southampton," Amper reminded, "Why won't Supervisor Schneiderman do the same?"