



LONG ISLAND
PINE BARRENS
S O C I E T Y

547 East Main Street
Riverhead, NY 11901

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LONG ISLAND
PINE BARRENS
S O C I E T Y

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A copy of the last annual report filed with the New York State Department of Law may be obtained by writing to NYS Attorney General's Charities Bureau, Attn: FOIL Officer, 120 Broadway, New York, NY, 10271 or may be obtained directly from the Long Island Pine Barrens Society, 547 East Main Street, Riverhead, NY 11901

Printed on recycled paper.



STAY BACK: It's 60 feet out here!

Pine Barrens TV

The Pine Barrens Society's television program airs on Cablevision Public Access. The air times listed are effective October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2020.

The program can also be viewed on the Society's YouTube page at www.youtube.com/lipinebarrenssociety.

Towns of Babylon, Brookhaven, Huntington, Islip, Riverhead, Smithtown, Southampton & Southold:

Mondays at 5:00 PM (Ch. 20)
Mondays at 8:00 PM (Ch. 115)
Wednesdays at 9:00 PM (Ch. 20)

Town of East Hampton:

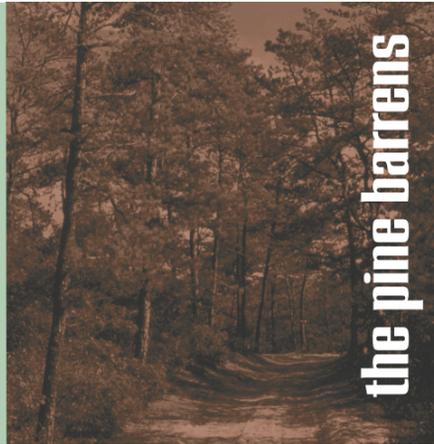
Wednesdays at 6:30 PM
Thursdays at 9:00 PM
Fridays at 3:30 PM



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LONG ISLAND
PINE BARRENS
SOCIETY



today

PINE BARRENS SOCIETY EXPANDS SCOPE

New Education & Exploration Opportunities Offered

Credit: Katie Brown



GET OUTSIDE TODAY: Kick cabin fever and stretch your legs in one of the many Long Island Pine Barrens parks.

Last year, the Long Island Pine Barrens Society announced that the preservation goals of the Long Island Pine Barrens Protection Act, passed in 1993, had been achieved and exceeded – more than 106,000 acres had been protected. 57,676 acres have been added to the Core Preservation Area, where development is prohibited. An additional 48,656 acres were placed in a Compatible Growth Area, where development is allowed, but only under strict environmental guidelines. “After having achieved this goal, we’re inviting Long Islanders and visitors to enjoy the land that Long Islanders have saved,” said Pine Barrens Society Deputy Director Katie Muether Brown.

The organization has used its time during the current pandemic to create all new recreation guides to help families find a trail near them where they can enjoy the Pine Barrens’ natural resources. The Society will be offering guides on the many ways to enjoy the Pine Barrens, including: hiking in the Pine Barrens; bird-watching; kayaking and canoeing; swimming and fishing; camping; family-friendly parks; and dog-friendly parks. “These guides tell you where you can visit and provide you with some of our best tips,” Brown said.

One of the new resources is an all-new Long Island Parks Passport (featured on page three). The Society has also produced a brochure on how to detect ticks and prevent tick bites. Long Islanders should always be mindful of ticks, but not paranoid. If visitors take proper precautions and check themselves after visiting the barrens and remove any ticks within 36-48 hours of the hike, Lyme and other diseases can be avoided.

One of the few things families can do during this time, to leave the house, is to go out and enjoy our parks. State and county officials have



SOCIAL DISTANCING AT ITS FINEST: The trails offer a chance to get outside, without being in contact with others.

encouraged this, by waiving entrance fees to parks. At over 106,000 acres, the Pine Barrens is rife with recreational opportunities — many of which are fairly remote and where it’s rare to see another person.

The Society’s Deputy Director says she has been hiking in the Pine Barrens several times a week, during the pandemic. “Most of the time, I am all alone on the trails. Very rarely do I see another person, and when I do, I usually step a few feet off the trail and let the other person pass,” Brown said. “It’s really been great. I’ve gotten to visit parks that even I, a staff member of the Pine Barrens Society, have never seen before,”

Credit: NYS Pine Barrens Commission

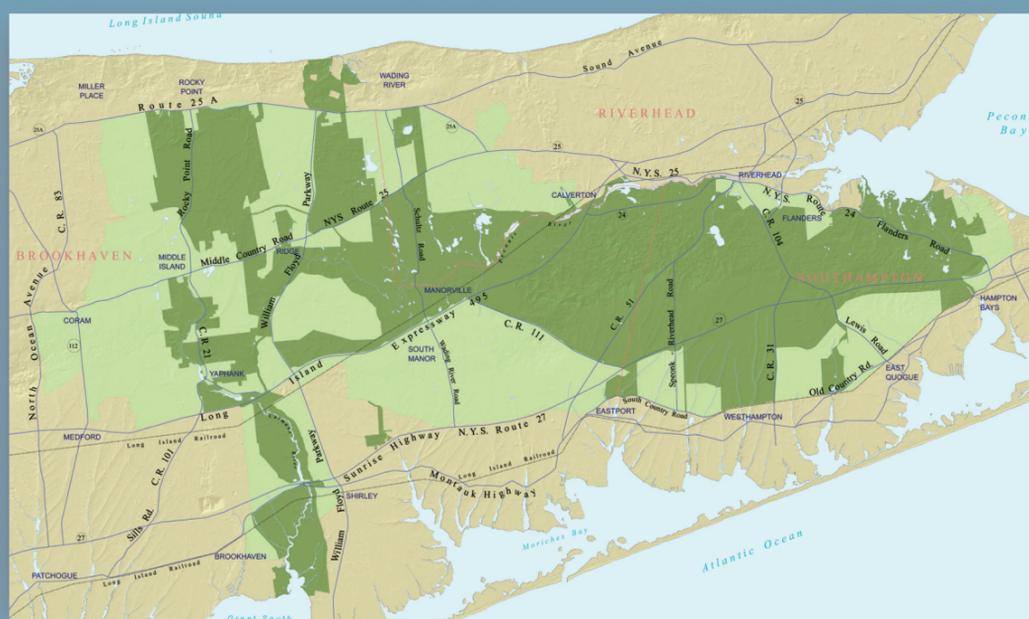
Brown continued. “There really is so much out there to explore.”

“If we want our parks and trails to remain open as an escape, we need to hike responsibly,” she said. “If a trail head is too crowded, pick another park – there are plenty to choose from. Hike by yourself, with your dog, or only members living in your household with you. And of course, practice social distancing – if you see someone on the trail, just stay six feet away,” she said. Even as stay-at-home orders begin to

lift, social-distancing activities, like hiking, may be needed for months to come.

There are many health benefits to getting outside – it is good for you both physically and mentally. You can beat cabin fever, get your heart rate up, reduce muscle tension, and alleviate stress, anxiety and depression. We are also all staring at our screens a lot during this time – it’s good to get outside as a way to refocus.

All of our guides can be found on the Society’s website, www.pinebarrens.org, under the “Recreation” tab.



NATURE’S BOUNTY: At 106,000 acres, the Long Island Pine Barrens is rife with recreational opportunities.



the thicket

Saving Our Trees, Saves Our Water

By Katie Muether Brown

Katie is the Deputy Director of the Long Island Pine Barrens Society.

We colloquially call the piece of legislation that protected over 106,000 acres of Pine Barrens land, the “Long Island Pine Barrens Protection Act.” But, that’s not its formal title. It actually has two formal titles – the “Long Island Pine Barrens Maritime Reserve Act” and the “Peconic Bay Region Watershed Protection Act.” It’s Article 57 of New York State Environmental Conservation Law.

The Act’s legislative declaration is as follows, “The legislature hereby declares it to be in the public interest to protect and manage the Pine Barrens-Peconic Bay system, in the county of Suffolk, by establishing a Long Island Pine Barrens maritime reserve.”

The Act, which has served as a model for other environmental conservation laws across the country, was signed into law by Governor Mario Cuomo in July of 1993.

Well then, what does the preservation of acres of trees have to do with water? The Act’s formal name reflects the Pine Barrens’ important role in protecting our ground and surface waters.

All of Long Island’s drinking water comes from a series of underground aquifers. Three million Long Island residents rely on a fresh supply of water right beneath our feet. This led the federal Environmental Protection Agency to designate our aquifer system as the nation’s first Sole Source Aquifer, requiring special protection. The quality of our drinking water depends, therefore, on how Long Island’s land is used. The more land that is used for homes, lawns, agriculture, business and industry, the greater the contamination of our aquifers.

Long Island’s aquifers are not static – they slowly flow from high ground to low, are recharged by rainfall, and they supply the majority of fresh water entering our streams, lakes and bays. The Pine Barrens contain portions of the watersheds of two major rivers – the Carmans and the Peconic Rivers. The region also interfaces with the Long Island Sound Estuary, Peconic Estuary and the South Shore Estuary Reserve.

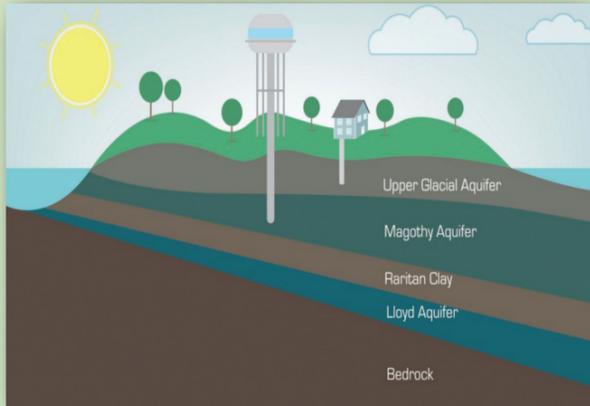
All of Long Island is a watershed, or an area of land that drains to a stream, river, lake, bay or wetland. This also means that all of our activity on land has the potential to impact our waters. Unfortunately, various forms of pollution on land’s surface can runoff and interfere with the health of our watersheds. Have you seen those signs along the Long Island Expressway informing drivers about the particular watershed they are entering? These signs aim to protect our watersheds by reminding us that on Long Island, we must all make a concerted effort to protect our waters by taking careful actions on land to reduce pollution.

Outside the Pine Barrens, water pollution is rampant. Nitrogen pollution from wastewater and fertilizer use on lawns and farms, is entering our aquifers and eventually, flows into our bays, rivers, lakes and streams. There, the nitrogen pollution fuels the growth of harmful algae blooms, which are devastating our marine ecosystems and our economy. Toxic chemicals from industry and household products are also being detected in our water supply.

As scientists survey the levels of nitrogen across Long Island, one fact is abundantly clear: while groundwater beneath the densest developments on Long Island have the highest nitrogen levels, the Pine Barrens Core Preservation Area has the lowest levels of nitrogen on Long Island. Preserving the Pine Barrens has protected the largest quantity of the purest drinking water on Long Island. Creating a Pine Barrens preserve, in turn, created a large untouched watershed area and a pure groundwater recharge area.

Saving the Long Island Pine Barrens protected the habitat of thousands of plant and animal species, many of which are rare and endangered. It also gave us humans an untouched natural place to enjoy and explore. However, perhaps the most important feature of all, protecting the Pine Barrens was vital to protecting our water quality. It is also why we must work to save what open space is left!

Credit: The Nature Conservancy



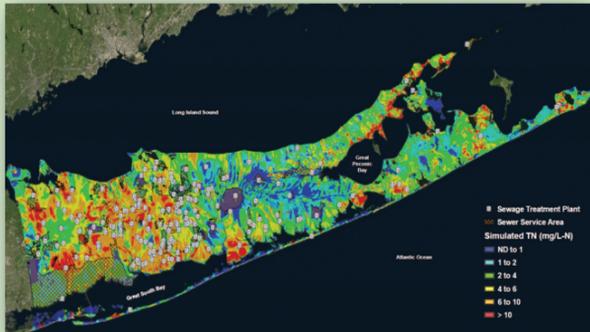
Long Island’s Aquifer System

Credit: LIPBS



Long Island Sound Watershed Sign along the Long Island Expressway

Credit: CDM Smith



Simulated Existing Conditions in Shallow Aquifer and Community Supply Wells – Blue shows no or low concentrations of nitrogen

ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS NOTES

New York State Pine Barrens Commission Holds First Hearing on Lewis Road PRD Project

Credit: Wayne Cook



LOPSIDED OPPOSITION: Long Island residents turned out in force to oppose the proposed mega golf resort and mansion project in the Southampton Pine Barrens on February 19, 2020.

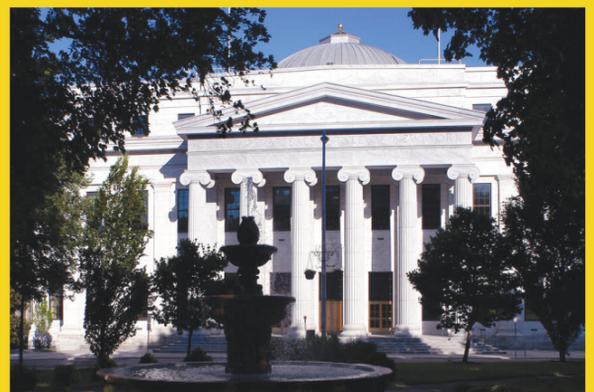
On February 19, 2020, the New York State Pine Barrens Commission held its first public hearing on the Lewis Road Planned Residential Development (PRD), drawing a large community turn-out. The public input was overwhelmingly opposed to the mega-development proposed for the Pine Barrens in Southampton Town. The proposal calls for construction of 130 mansions, a major golf resort, and many other structures on 600 acres of land. New York State Assemblyman Steven Englebright delivered a powerful attack on the proposed project. He was followed by Pine Barrens Society Executive Director, Richard Amper, Group for the East End’s President, Robert DeLuca and Andrea Spilka, President of the Southampton Town Civic Coalition.

The developers have been seeking approval for more than seven years, receiving a disapproval by Southampton Town Board in 2017, and then immediately re-filing another application before the Town’s Planning Board. The Pine Barrens Society, Group for the East End, and many environmental and civic organizations have opposed the Planning Board’s attempt to approve the development. The matter is before the New York State Supreme Court.

As the project moves through the courts, the application heads to the New York State Pine Barrens Commission for review. Numerous environmental concerns were raised at the first hearing, including: lack of adherence to state environmental review regulations, fragmentation of open space, and violations of the nearly 27-year old Pine Barrens Protection Act. The Society has identified at least 25 ways in which the project does not conform to the Pine Barrens Act and Comprehensive Land Use Plan. A follow-up hearing has been delayed repeatedly by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic crises.

Suffolk County Requests NYS Court of Appeals to Review Drinking Water Protection Program Case

Credit: Google



New York State Court of Appeals Building in Albany

Suffolk County has asked the New York State Court of Appeals to review the Society’s landmark legal victory, requiring the return of \$29-million that had been illegally raided from the Drinking Water Protection Program. The likelihood of the Court of Appeals taking the case is very slim. Seven years after the Pine Barrens Society filed suit in New York State Supreme Court, Suffolk County government is still trying to overturn a decision requiring Suffolk to return \$29-million it took from the County’s Drinking Water Protection Program to plug holes in the county’s bloated budget.

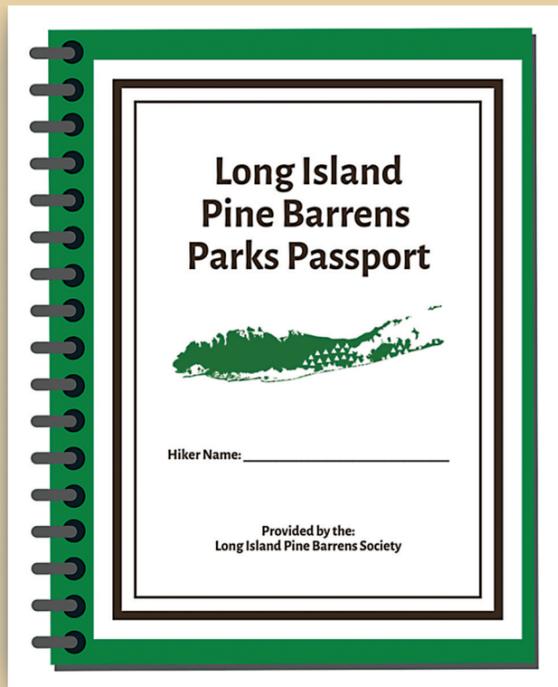
The raid was initiated by the discredited Suffolk County Executive, Steve Levy. A State Appeals Court has twice ruled in the Society’s favor and demanded the return of the money to the Drinking Water Protection Program. Suffolk has appealed the decision to the state’s highest court, which is expected to reject the appeal.



Long Island Pine Barrens Society Launches a New Exploration Mission for Families – the Long Island Pine Barrens Parks Passport

10 parks. 10+ Pine Barrens Lessons. Can your family complete the mission?

As many families work to navigate homeschooling during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Pine Barrens Society has worked hard to produce great Pine Barrens-related educational materials, free for download. Families are able to get outside and learn along the way. One of these new materials is the Long Island Parks Passport. Modeled after the National Parks Passport, the Long Island Parks Passport encourages families to visit ten Long Island Pine Barrens parks. The guide also includes workbook activities for each park for families to complete, in order to “check-off” each park from the list and complete the mission. It’s the ultimate learn-as-you-hike guide for the Long Island Pine Barrens.



A trail map is included for each park. Most trails are easy and short, with options for longer hikes available. The Passport isn’t just for kids – adults may learn something new about this unique ecosystem on Long Island. The Pine Barrens has a lot of lessons to teach, which includes both science and history lessons. Lessons cover topics such as: forest structure; fire-dependent ecosystems; Long Island’s aquifer system; how the Pine Barrens were saved; estuaries; Long Island’s geological history; and more.

The Passport, and the Society's other recreational guides can be downloaded for free on the Society's website, www.pinebarrens.org, by clicking the "Recreation" tab.

Here are some of the parks you will find in the Passport and what you can expect to learn:

El’s Wampmissick Trail, Manorville

Credit: Google



ARMOR: Pitch Pine Bark is thick and acts like an armor for the tree, protecting the sensitive live plant material beneath it.

Along the Wampmissick Trail, the Society teaches explorers about fire-dependent ecosystems and how the Pine Barrens are uniquely adapted to withstand frequent wildfire.

Cranberry Bog County Park, Riverhead

Credit: Katie Brown



HISTORY IN THE PINES: The old pump house, used to control water flow into the cranberry bog.

At Cranberry Bog County Park, hikers will find pieces of history throughout the trail and be able to learn about the park’s previous use as a cranberry farm.

Indian Island County Park, Riverhead

Credit: Katie Brown



SPLIT: Viewpoint between the two forks at Indian Island County Park.

At Indian Island County Park, visitors will be able to stand between Long Island’s two forks. They can also learn about estuaries, which are some of the most productive ecosystems in the world.

The Dwarf Pine Plains, Westhampton

Credit: Katie Brown



GLOBALLY RARE: The Dwarf Pine Plains in Westhampton is a globally-rare ecosystem.

By stepping foot in the Dwarf Pine Plains, visitors are stepping foot in a globally-rare ecosystem. Dwarf Pine Plains only exist in only three areas of the world - one of them being in Westhampton, New York.