

**ASSEMBLY, No. 3714**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**219th LEGISLATURE**

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INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman RONALD S. DANCER**

**District 12 (Burlington, Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean)**

**SYNOPSIS**

Establishes New Jersey Eco-Ag Tourism Council.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



1   **AN ACT** establishing the New Jersey Eco-Ag Tourism Council and  
2       supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

3  
4       **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
5 *of New Jersey:*

6  
7       1. a. There is established a New Jersey Eco-Ag Tourism Council  
8 in, but not of, the Department of State. The council shall consist of 13  
9 members, as follows: the Secretary of State, the Secretary of  
10 Agriculture, and the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, or  
11 their respective designees, who shall serve ex officio; and 10 public  
12 members. Of the public members, six shall be appointed by the  
13 Governor, two by the President of the Senate, and two by the Speaker  
14 of the General Assembly, as provided in subsection b. of this section.  
15 The public members shall include one member from each of five  
16 recognized wildlife or nature groups or organizations, and one member  
17 from each of five recognized agricultural or horticultural groups or  
18 organizations. No more than one member shall be appointed from any  
19 particular group or organization.

20       b. The Secretary of State, or the designee thereof, shall serve as  
21 chair of the council. The 10 public members shall serve for three-year  
22 terms, except the initial appointees shall serve staggered terms of one  
23 to three years. Among the initial appointees:

24       (1) the Governor shall appoint (a) one of the members from a  
25 wildlife or nature group or organization and one of the members from  
26 an agricultural or horticultural group or organization, who shall serve  
27 one-year terms, and (b) two of the members from wildlife or nature  
28 groups or organizations and two of the members from agricultural or  
29 horticultural groups or organizations, who shall serve two-year terms;  
30 and

31       (2) the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the General  
32 Assembly shall each appoint one of the members from a wildlife or  
33 nature group or organization and one of the members from an  
34 agricultural or horticultural group or organization, all of whom shall  
35 serve three-year terms.

36       Each member shall hold office for the term of appointment and  
37 until a successor is appointed and qualified.

38       c. Vacancies in the membership of the council shall be filled in  
39 the same manner as the original appointments are made and a member  
40 may be eligible for reappointment. Vacancies occurring other than by  
41 expiration of a term shall be filled for the unexpired term.

42       d. The members of the council shall serve without compensation,  
43 but may be reimbursed for the reasonable expenses necessarily  
44 incurred in the performance of their duties within the limits of funds  
45 appropriated or otherwise made available to the council for its  
46 purposes.

47       e. The council shall organize no later than 30 days after the  
48 appointment of at least the four public members by the Senate

1 President and the Speaker of the General Assembly and shall meet  
2 periodically at the call of the chair, but not less than six times in each  
3 year. A majority of the members of the council shall constitute a  
4 quorum, but a lesser number may hold hearings.

5 f. The chair shall appoint an administrator for the council from  
6 among the membership, and the Department of Agriculture, the  
7 Department of Environmental Protection, and the Department of State  
8 shall provide the council, equally or as agreed among the ex officio  
9 members, with additional administrative staff and support as may be  
10 necessary to enable the council to carry out its functions.

11 g. The purpose of the council shall be to examine and develop  
12 ecotourism and agricultural tourism opportunities in the State and  
13 develop ways for farmers and stewards of natural areas to make use of  
14 these opportunities.

15  
16 2. One year after the date of the council's organization and first  
17 meeting, and annually thereafter, the council shall make  
18 recommendations to the Department of Agriculture, the Department  
19 of Environmental Protection, and the Department of State  
20 concerning tourism initiatives to be implemented. The council shall  
21 also report to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991,  
22 c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature on these recommendations  
23 and its activities for the preceding year.

24  
25 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

#### 26 27 STATEMENT

28  
29 This bill establishes the New Jersey Eco-Ag Tourism Council, in  
30 but not of the Department of State. The council would have 13  
31 members, 10 of whom would be public members. Of the public  
32 members, six would be appointed by the Governor, two by the  
33 Senate President, and two by the Speaker of the General Assembly,  
34 and they would be evenly divided between environmental and  
35 agricultural groups or organizations. The Secretary of State, the  
36 Secretary of Agriculture, and the Commissioner of Environmental  
37 Protection, or their designees, would complete the membership and  
38 would serve ex officio. The purpose of the council is to examine  
39 and develop ecotourism and agricultural tourism opportunities in  
40 the State and develop ways for farmers and stewards of natural  
41 areas to make use of these opportunities.

42 The bill also directs the council, one year after the date of the  
43 council's organization and first meeting, and annually thereafter, to:

44 1) make recommendations to the Department of Agriculture, the  
45 Department of Environmental Protection, and the Department of  
46 State concerning tourism initiatives to be implemented; and

47 2) report to the Governor and the Legislature on these  
48 recommendations and its activities for the preceding year.