ASSEMBLY AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4844

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JANUARY 25, 2021

The Assembly Agriculture Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4844.

This bill would provide that local government approval is not required for a forest stewardship plan.

Under current law, a person who prepares a forest stewardship plan pursuant to P.L.2009, c.256 (C.13:1L-29 et seq.) is required to work with an approved forester or other professional, and obtain the approval of the Department of Environmental Protection. Additionally, under the CMP, a landowner who prepares a forest stewardship plan for land in the pinelands area must also obtain the approval of the Pinelands Commission and the municipality in which the forested land is located.

The bill would prohibit a local government unit from enacting any ordinance, rule, or resolution that requires local government approval of a forest stewardship plan. The bill would also provide that the provisions of P.L.2009, c.256 (C.13:1L-29 et seq.) would supersede any municipal ordinance adopted prior to the effective date of this bill. Finally, the bill would provide that, notwithstanding the requirement in the law that a forest stewardship plan for land in the pinelands area comply with the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP), local government approval of a forest stewardship plan is not required.