

SENATE, No. 3547

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 11, 2021

Sponsored by:

Senator BOB SMITH

District 17 (Middlesex and Somerset)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes working group to evaluate coordination and cooperation between various government entities and private landowners with respect to forest stewardship in pinelands area.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



1 AN ACT concerning cooperation between various government
2 entities and private landowners with respect to forest stewardship
3 in the pinelands area.

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

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8 1. a. There is established in the Department of Environmental
9 Protection the Pinelands Forest Stewardship Working Group. The
10 working group shall evaluate coordination and cooperation between
11 federal, State, and local government entities and private landowners
12 with respect to the development and approval of forest stewardship
13 plans in the pinelands area, and make recommendations as to how
14 such coordination and cooperation can be improved so as to
15 encourage and promote greater forest stewardship.

16 b. The working group shall consist of 14 members as follows:

17 (1) the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, the State
18 Forester, the chairman of the Pineland Commission established
19 pursuant to section 4 of P.L.1979, c.111 (C.13:18A-4), and the
20 chairperson of the Pinelands Municipal Council established
21 pursuant to section 6.1 of P.L.1979, c.111 (C.13:18A-7), or their
22 designees, who shall serve ex officio;

23 (2) five members who shall be appointed by the Secretary of
24 Agriculture, upon the recommendation of the State Board of
25 Agriculture, as follows:

26 (a) two members from recognized Statewide nonprofit
27 organizations that have demonstrated substantial work in the fields
28 of environmental conservation or forest stewardship, as determined
29 by the Secretary,

30 (b) two members who are private landowners in the pinelands
31 area, and who have developed and implemented forest stewardship
32 plans pursuant to P.L.2009, c.256 (C.13:1L-29 et seq.), and

33 (c) one member who is a certified forester; and

34 (3) five public members, including three appointed by the
35 Governor, one appointed by the President of the Senate, and one
36 appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly.

37 c. All appointments to the working group shall be made no
38 later than 90 days after the effective date of this act. Vacancies in
39 the membership of the working group shall be filled in the same
40 manner as the original appointments. The working group shall
41 organize as soon as practicable following the appointment of its
42 members, and the Commissioner of Environmental Protection, or
43 the commissioner's designee, shall serve as chairperson. The
44 chairperson may appoint a secretary who need not be a member of the
45 working group.

46 d. The public members of the working group shall serve without
47 compensation, but may be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred

1 in the performance of their duties, within the limits of funds made
2 available to the working group for its purposes.

3 e. The working group shall be entitled to call to its assistance and
4 avail itself of the services of the employees of any State, county, or
5 municipal department, board, bureau, commission, or agency as it may
6 require and as may be available to it for its purposes.

7 f. The Department of Environmental Protection shall provide
8 staffing and administrative support to the working group.

9 g. No later than one year after its organization, the working group
10 shall prepare and submit to the Governor and, pursuant to section 2 of
11 P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), to the Legislature, a report
12 containing the findings and recommendations of the working group,
13 including any recommendations for legislative, regulatory, or local
14 government action to improve coordination and cooperation
15 between the federal, State, and local government entities and private
16 landowners with regard to forest stewardship.

17 h. The working group shall expire 30 days after issuance of the
18 report pursuant to subsection g. of this section.

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20 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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25 This bill would establish a working group to evaluate
26 coordination and cooperation between federal, State, and local
27 government entities and private landowners with respect to forest
28 stewardship in the pinelands area. The working group would be
29 responsible for making recommendations as to how coordination
30 and cooperation between these parties could be improved so as to
31 encourage and promote greater forest stewardship. The working
32 group would be composed of 14 members representing various
33 government entities, nonprofit organizations, private landowners,
34 and foresters. No later than one year after its organization, the
35 working group would be required to submit a report to the Governor
36 and to the Legislature containing its findings and recommendations.