

PRESS RELEASE

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WOODBINE MAYOR SOLICITS FELLOW MAYORS' SUPPORT FOR PINE BARRENS BYWAY TASK FORCE

Woodbine—Mayor William Pikolycky is pleased to announce he is among the 16 Mayors, from five counties, whose communities are within the Pine Barrens Byway, the State scenic byway that was established in the southern tier of the Pine Barrens in 2005, and has been asked to solicit the support of his fellow Mayors.

Over the past several years, the Pine Barrens Byway Task Force has been working to promote this byway, and has now issued a call to the Mayors of those municipalities it passes through to join in that effort, by appointing a municipal representative to the newly founded by way management body.

The Pine Barrens Byway is a 130-mile long celebration of the unique natural and cultural wonders that our region possesses. It passes through pristine forested lands and historic town centers and allows visitors to enjoy unparalleled river views, vistas of broad, spacious salt marshes and rare historic sites from the Revolutionary War (Batsto) through World War I (Belcoville). Along the route of the byway one can camp in state and county parks, experience wildlife refuges, hike through the Jacques Cousteau National Estuarine Research Reserve and indulge in myriad other recreational opportunities. Where else can one see in a single day an African-American Civil War veterans' cemetery, the remains of an old glasshouse site, a seaport museum and a synagogue that was the focal point of a nineteenth century utopian, agricultural community?

With the aid of a federal grant and through the efforts of some dedicated people, a comprehensive corridor management plan was completed for the Pine Barrens Byway and it was accepted by the New Jersey Department of Transportation late last year. Development of this plan was a requirement for continuation of the formal scenic byway designation status. It identifies the primary intrinsic qualities (natural, cultural and recreational) that the byway possesses and contains a highly detailed analysis of the features along the route of the byway that highlight and support these qualities. It also examines the byway's carrying capacity and its potential for future development, addresses the proper use of signage, analyzes intrusive elements that detract from its scenic qualities and suggests ways to promote the byway and involve the public in its preservation and enhancement.

Many of those dedicated people who have aided in the development of the byway have done so through membership in the Pine Barrens Byway Task Force, an interim group of public officials and private citizens who have guided the byway in its formative phase. However, this group had always intended to cede authority to a permanent managing entity that would take on long-term oversight and improvement of the byway and its facilities. To this end, the task force recently voted to approve a structure for this permanent entity, to be known as the Pine Barrens Byway Association (a copy of an outline of the approved structure is attached for your review). The Association will consist of an oversight board composed of representatives of all five counties and sixteen municipalities along the byway (and four as yet undetermined private groups) and a smaller executive committee with representatives from the five counties and two private groups, which will handle day-to-day affairs and report to the oversight board. There will also be subcommittees that will employ citizens in accomplishing specific initiatives for the betterment of the byway.

The Pine Barrens Byway Association is scheduled to hold its inaugural meeting early in the new year.

“The byway will serve as a way to financially promote our local municipalities and their businesses through ecotourism and to secure byway-related federal funding for road upgrades and other amenities,” noted Mayor Pikolycky.

“Thus it will not only promote eco-tourism, but will continue to preserve access to this natural and historic treasures of our region.”