



New York CWSRF Makes \$75 Million Land Acquisition Loan in Pine Barrens

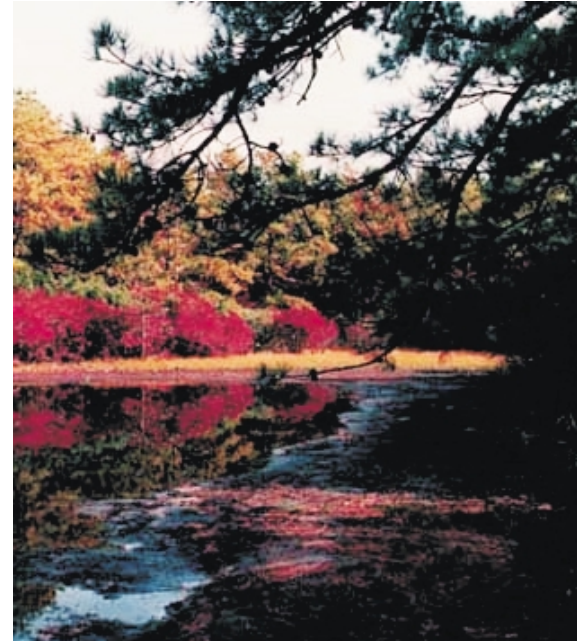
Suffolk County has borrowed \$75 million from the New York CWSRF to protect land in the main recharge zone for its drinking water supply

The New York Clean Water State Revolving Fund made a loan of \$75 million for land acquisition in the Pine Barrens Wilderness and Water Protection Preserve on Long Island. The acquisition is part of a larger plan by state, local and private organizations to protect the main recharge zone for Suffolk County’s drinking water supply. This system is the sole source aquifer for 2.6 million people.

The Pine Barrens is a valuable natural resource because its sandy, porous soil readily absorbs precipitation, acting as a recharge area for the underground water supply. The water is purified as it passes through layers of soil until it reaches the underground water stored in the aquifer system. This characteristic of the porous soil also creates an added risk from leaking septic tank effluent reaching the aquifer untreated.

Road paving, housing and commercial development are disrupting this natural process by vastly reducing the rate at which water is being recharged in the underlying aquifer. At the same time, water continues to be withdrawn at an increasing rate as the population and commercial/industrial activity increases. In coastal areas, when withdrawal increases and recharge cannot keep up with it, salt water intrusion results. A second impact of increased development on the porous soils of the Pine Barrens is that septic tank effluent can reach the aquifer relatively untreated.

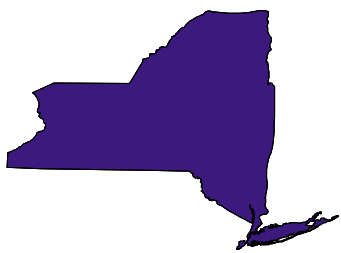
In addition, because development lowers the absorption rate, more of the precipitation becomes runoff. Runoff becomes contaminated by oils, animal



feces, and garbage as it passes over less permeable land and road surfaces before it enters Long Island Sound, Great South Bay, Peconic Bay or the Atlantic Ocean.

The Long Island Pine Barrens aquifers are so precious that in 1993 a referendum was passed to preserve 100,000 acres of the Pine Barrens as the third largest state park. The Pine Barrens hosts the greatest diversity of plants and animals in New York State, including a number of endangered or threatened species.

As part of a statewide partnership to protect the Pine Barrens, New York’s CWSRF has made a loan of \$75 million to Suffolk County to acquire land in priority aquifer recharge areas. The loan addresses nonpoint source pollution and is consistent with the New York’s Nonpoint Source Management Plan. The loan is guaranteed by a General Obligation pledge from the county.



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