



New Jersey Highlands Coalition

Action Alert

**New Jersey Highlands Coalition
Alliance for Historic Hamlets · ANJEC · Citizens to Save Tewksbury
Musconetcong Mountain Conservancy
New Jersey Conservation Foundation · Sierra Club NJ Chapter
Residents Allied for Neighborhood Preservation, Inc.
Skylands Preservation Alliance · South Branch Watershed Association
Upper Raritan Watershed Association**

Join us to commemorate
the 7th Anniversary of the Highlands Act
with a Highlands Conformance Rally followed by
An Important Highlands Council Meeting

August 3, 2011

**Briefing 2:00pm:
Upper Raritan Watershed Association**

Fairview Farm
2121 Larger Cross Road
Bedminster, NJ 07921

Rally at Highlands Council Headquarters 3:30pm

Highlands Council Meeting 4:00pm

**100 North Road
Chester, NJ 07930**

Come rally in support of Highlands Municipal Conformance on the anniversary of the Highlands Act!

There have been troubling changes to the Highlands Council membership, as two publicly avowed anti-Highlands Act elected officials have joined the Council: Hunterdon County Freeholder Robert Walton, a signee of a petition calling for a repeal of the Highlands Act; and Council Chairman Mayor Jim Rilee, who as mayor of Roxbury frequently expressed contempt for the Act and the Highlands Council in township meeting minutes.

In an alarming decision that sent a chill to Highlands municipalities, the conformance petition of Hackettstown was denied at the June Highlands Council meeting. The months of detailed planning that Hackettstown and the Council staff devoted in order meet the specific standards that conformance requires-funded by our tax dollars-was ignored. Council members Rilee and Walton gave no explanation for their negative votes.

Tracy Carluccio - one of the two remaining original Council members and the Council's sole environmental professional - succeeded with a motion to reconsider Hackettstown's petition at the next meeting. In addition to Hackettstown, the August 3rd meeting agenda includes consideration of petitions from Pohatcong, Alpha, Wharton, Oxford and a redevelopment area designation in Mt. Olive.

On the anniversary of the 2004 Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act, let's remind the Highlands Council that the public expects them to uphold the letter and the spirit of the Highlands Act, that the momentum achieved by Highlands municipal conformance must be supported and not impeded, and that the primary mission of the Council is to protect, restore and enhance the natural resources of the Highlands.

Our presence at the Council meeting will send a positive message to Council members Bruce James and Michael Dressler, whose nominations the NJ Highlands Coalition supported. This will be their first meeting.

An update on the issues will be presented at the briefing along with talking points for public commenting at the Council meeting. At 3:00pm we will head to Chester for the 3:30pm rally. Sponsors and guests, including Assemblyman John F. McKeon, co-sponsor of the Highlands Act, will talk about the need for continued support for the Highlands Council's work, the need for continued public involvement, and the successes achieved since the passage of the Highlands Act.

Please contact Erica Van Auken at erica@njhighlandscoalition.org to let us know that you'll be attending the briefing, rally and the Highlands Council meeting.

Please click for directions to [Fairview Farms](#), and to the [Highlands Council Headquarters](#).

The New Jersey Highlands Coalition represents a diverse network of organizations - small and large, local, regional, statewide and national - and individuals with the common goal to protect, enhance and restore the New Jersey Highlands and to preserve the quality and quantity of drinking water both for the 800,000 people in the Highlands as well as the more than 4.6 million people in surrounding areas who depend on Highlands water. For more information visit our [website](#), like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#).