



**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS
OFFICE OF SMART GROWTH
MEMORANDUM**

TO: MEMBERS OF THE PLAN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
FROM: MAURA K. MCMANIMON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DATE: SEPTEMBER 14, 2005
RE: OPEN SPACE AND PARKLANDS

PURPOSE: Staff recommends that the PDC and State Planning Commission defer to the local and county requests to incorporate into the State Plan Policy Map permanently preserved open space and parks not identified on the Preliminary State Plan Policy Map.

BACKGROUND:

The State Planning Commission adopted the Preliminary State Plan Policy Map (PSPPM) that incorporated a series of open space files supplied by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Green Acres Program, including Federal Parks, State Parks, Local Parks, permanently protected government or non-profit easements and some utility land. Existing cross-accepted parks continued to be recognized on the PSPPM.

Counties compared the PSPPM to local plans to identify additional lands that have been permanently preserved through local action and recommended incorporation of that additional open space and parks onto the Final State Plan Policy Map.

Counties and municipalities have expended significant time, money and effort into permanently preserving open space to enhance their communities' quality of life. Parks and natural areas fulfill a broad range of functions from resource conservation to active recreation.

To acknowledge the continued commitment of counties and municipalities to preserve open space with or without the State's assistance, staff recommends that PDC and SPC defer to recommendations of the Counties to incorporate new local and county parklands onto the Final State Plan Policy Map so the map represents the most up to date information on amount and location of permanently preserved open space throughout the State.