

John C. Stokes
Pinelands Commission
PO Box 7
15 Springfield Road
New Lisbon, NJ 08064

Dear Mr. Stokes,

I am an avid off road enthusiast concerned about the lack of development of off road facilities. I speak not only for myself, but for thousands of off road enthusiasts in New Jersey. We enjoy our activity by riding in a safe and environmentally responsible manner. Currently, the only legal family oriented off road facility in the State is the New Jersey Off Road Vehicle Park (NJORVP). NJORVP has leased this property through the New Jersey Conservation Foundation. The lease will expire at the end of September 2008 and the New Jersey Conservation Foundation has made it clear they will not extend or renew the lease.

NJORVP has been working with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for over two years to develop a new off road facility in Williamstown, Monroe Township. This site is an inactive mining facility and is zoned for this type of off road activity. Monroe Township has welcomed the idea of an off road facility. The Township foresees an increase in their tax base from the use of the property and local businesses will benefit from the visitors to the area. Unfortunately, the Egg Harbor Water Shed and the Pinelands Preservation Alliance have carried their agenda far beyond the point of reason. This has caused the Pinelands Commission to become rigid and try to further the misguided agenda of these groups. The Pinelands Commission is withholding the approvals for the establishment of this facility. The Pinelands Commission controls over one million acres of land. NJORVP is asking to use approximately 400 acres which amounts to a minuscule 0.04% of the Pinelands. This small amount of land for off road use would have a minimal impact on the environment and the Pinelands in particular. The Pinelands Commission signed an agreement with NJORVP to assist in relocating the park by 2008. To this point, the Pinelands Commission has reneged on this agreement.

In his News Release of August 28, 2003, DEP Commissioner Bradley Campbell said "Acknowledging that proper Off Road Vehicle (ORV) operation has a recreational value to a growing number of residents in the state, the DEP's new policy also calls for its Office of Natural and Historic Resources to develop appropriate recreational areas for lawful ORV use - while meeting the policy's safety and natural resource protection requirements. Two such facilities will be established and in full operation by 2005." To date, nothing has become of this DEP promise.

Mr. Stokes, I ask that you become involved and convince the Pinelands Commission the establishment of a new off road facility will benefit thousands of off road enthusiasts. Without the new facility in place by September 2008, the state risks thousands of off road riders illegally riding in the Pinelands and other state land.

Sincerely,