

From: [Pinelands Alliance](#)
To: [Moriarty, Sean \[DEP\]](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Pinelands Alliance Action Alert for January
Date: Wednesday, January 10, 2024 4:15:54 PM

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Dear Sean,

We had several wins in late 2023—let's keep the momentum going in the new year! With your help, we repealed the 'redevelopment' plan for the [Pole Bridge Forest](#), and saw the successful appointment of Dr. Jessica Rittler Sanchez to the Pinelands Commission. Let's carry that energy into 2024 to accomplish our other longstanding goals, such as ensuring that NJDEP implements commonsense protections for Wharton State Forest. Find more information on that, as well as other opportunities to learn, get engaged, and speak out for the Pinelands in the email below!

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National Climate Assessment Webinars: Various Dates Through March 15

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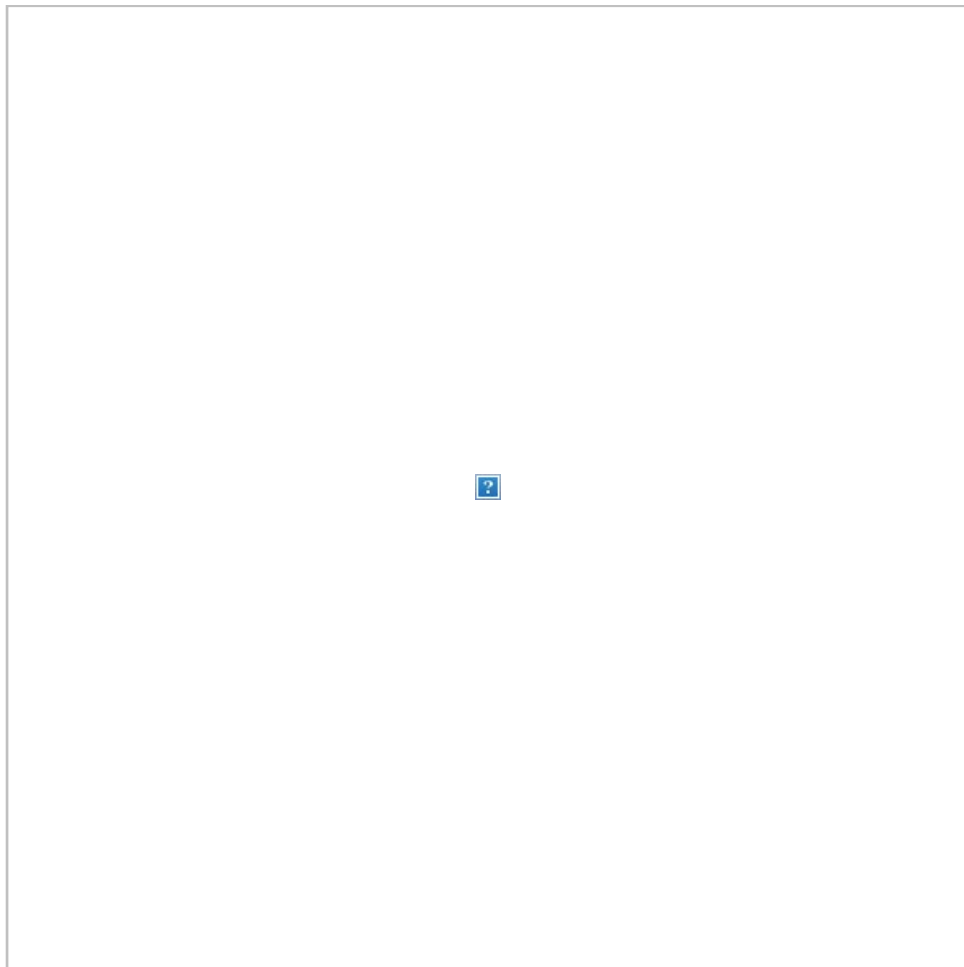


Image of Pole Branch Forest by Jon Holcombe

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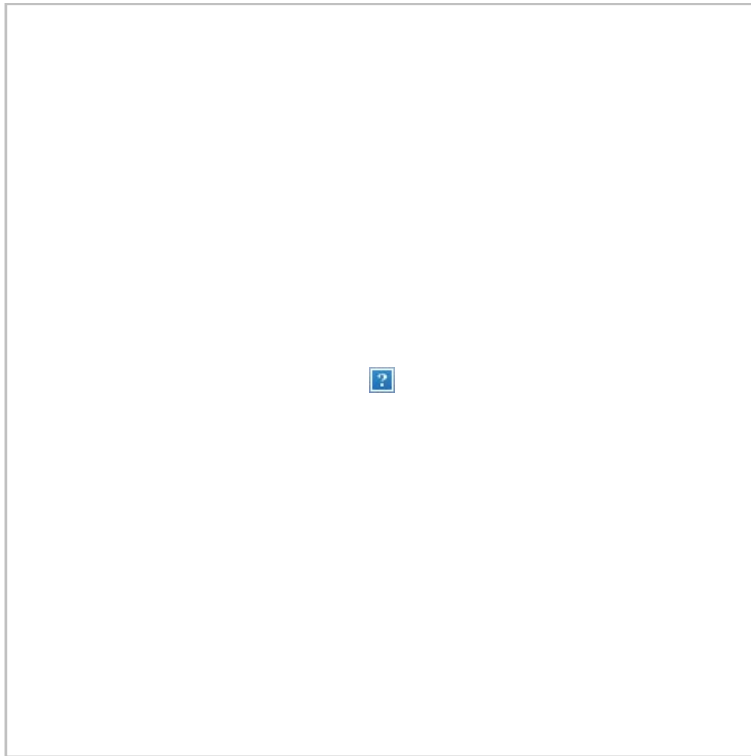
Date: January 10th, 7:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Location: Online Via Zoom

Join us on January 10th for our next Access Nature Forum. In this forum, we will hear from Peter Dolan, Trail Program Manager for the [New York-New Jersey Trail Conference](#). Peter will be offering a presentation on how the sustainable design elements incorporated into modern trail building often align with accessible best practices, making it easier than ever to create natural surface opportunities for trail users with disabilities. There will be time to ask questions at the end of the discussion.

RSVP For Jan 10th!

Also, check out [this article](#) on the new all-terrain wheelchair that will soon be available for use at Wharton State Forest!



Day Of Action - Fix Our Parks

Date: January 17th, All Day

Tell Governor Murphy to [FIX OUR PARKS!](#)

For more than a half a century, New Jersey has invested billions of dollars creating a public lands system which houses tremendous beauty and biodiversity and should be the envy of every state in the union. It is critical to our society to have a well-funded and well-managed park system.

We need to keep these places open and available for wildlife to thrive and for the public to have safe access for eco-friendly recreation. The public should be able to safely travel the roads and trails, enjoy the serenity of nature, and have ample interpretive resources to understand our parks and forests through naturalist tours and educational materials.

But, New Jersey Parks and Forest are used, abused, and underfunded.

The [Fix Our Parks Campaign](#) is advocating for an increase to the state budget from \$16 million annually for park operations and law enforcement, to \$52 million annually, on par with the national average; and to increase capital spending by \$40 million annually, to \$60 million annually, to end the \$600 million dollar maintenance backlog in ten years by 2033.

We need to flood Governor Murphy's office with phone calls asking him to fix our parks by increasing funding for park operations and capital improvements.

Call or Text - Governor Murphy on January 17th! Please make sure to say "Fix Our Parks" in your message.

Call - 609-292-6000

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Wharton Savanna by Jason Howell

Support Wharton Visitor Use Plan

Date: January 24th, 12:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Location: Batsto Visitor Center, 31 Batsto Road Hammonton, NJ 08037

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location.

An online **public comment period will be available for 45 days, from Jan. 24 until Mar. 9**, for those who are unable to attend in person.

Virtual Tour of the New Visiting Vehicle Use Map In Wharton State Forest

Date: January 30th, 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM

Location: Pinelands Preservation Alliance, 17 Pemberton Rd, Southampton, NJ 08088, or Online

The PPA will be hosting a meeting to discuss the Visiting Vehicle Use Map and to collaborate on the submission of comments that best protect the natural resources and habitat of the largest state forest in NJ, while maintaining reasonable accommodations for recreation and sight-seeing, once the draft is released. We will be doing this meeting in person at Bishop Farmstead in the big red barn, but a remote video link is available for those who can not attend in person. If you are interested, RSVP below!

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Governor Murphy is planning to slash \$60 million of annual state funding for environmental programs. The Corporate Business Tax (CBT) is set to sunset at the end of 2023, cutting approximately \$60 million annually for land preservation and cleanup of hazardous polluted sites. The New Jersey Legislature can correct this in the lame duck session between now and early January 2024. Contact your state senate and assembly representatives to let them know that you oppose the sunset of the CBT.

The Association of NJ Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) has prepared a resolution for Environmental Commissions and municipalities to adopt to encourage state legislators to support Open Space. Please urge your municipal leaders to adopt a resolution based on [this model language](#).



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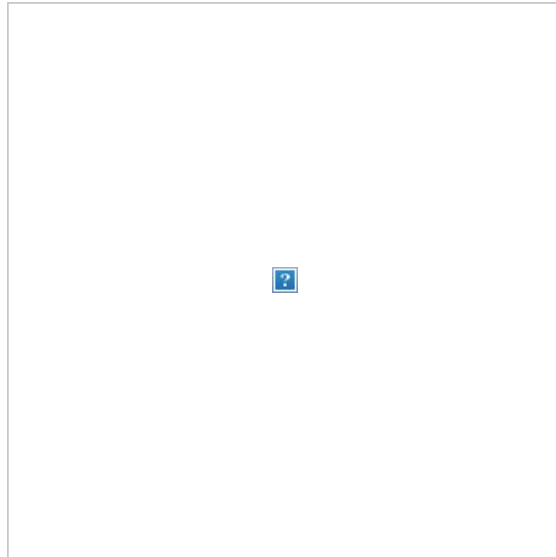
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Date: January 31, 9:30 AM –12:00 PM

Location: Ocean County College, Gateway Bldg. Lecture Hall, Lot 1, College Drive, Toms River, NJ 08753

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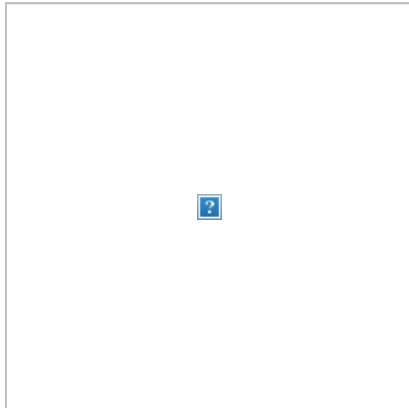
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Phone: 609-859-8860 ext. 122
Email: xxxxx@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx.xxx

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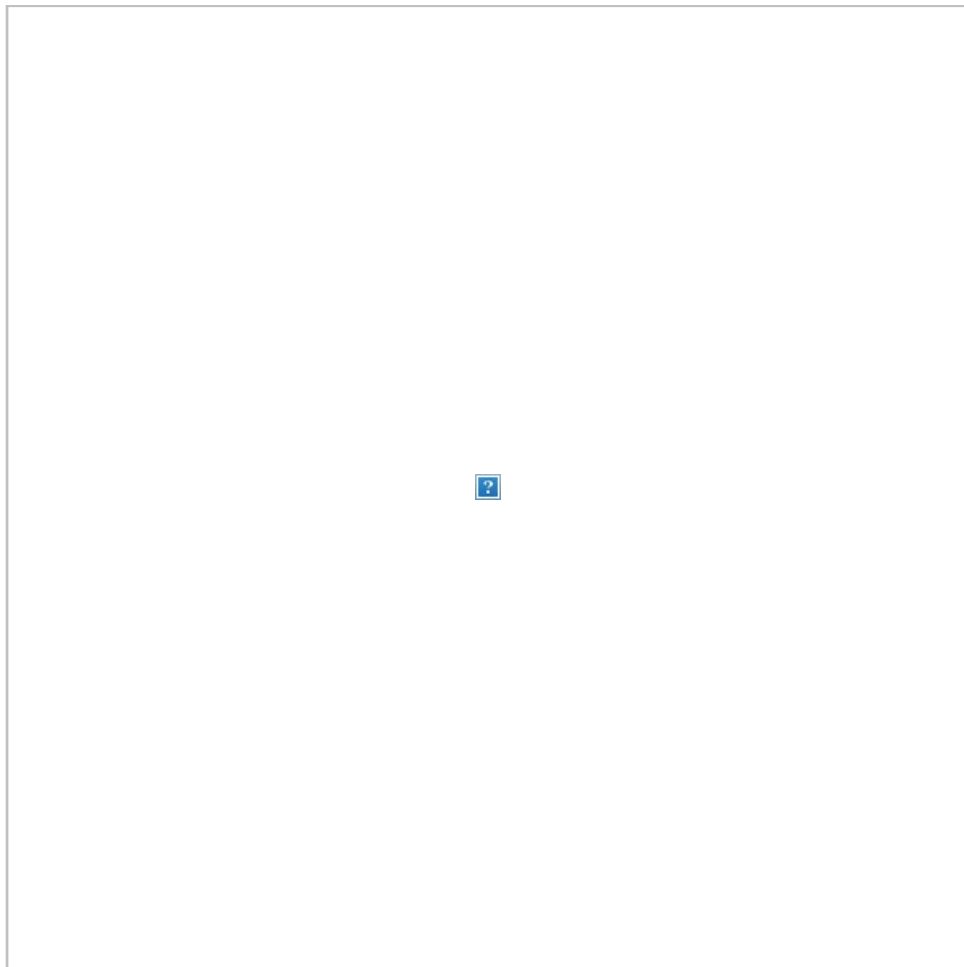


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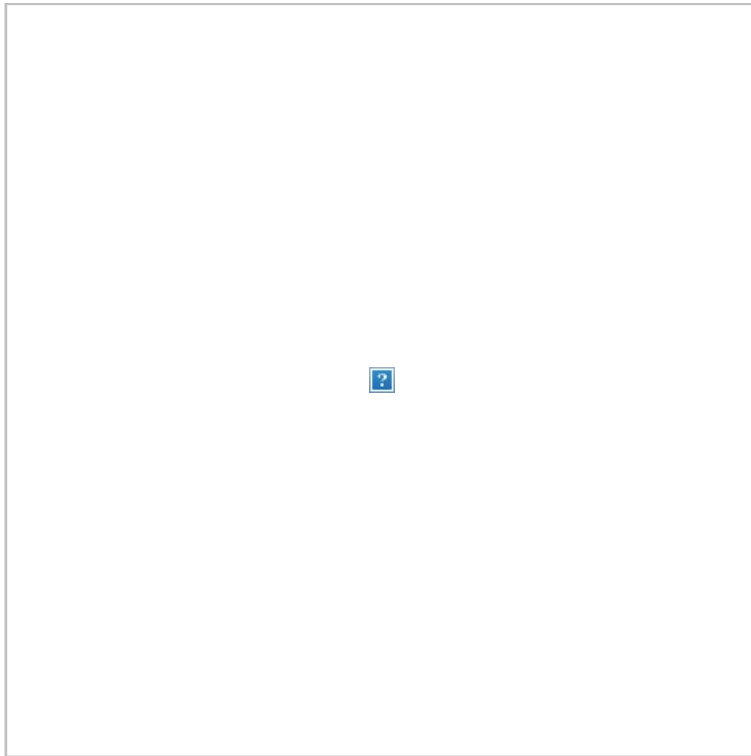
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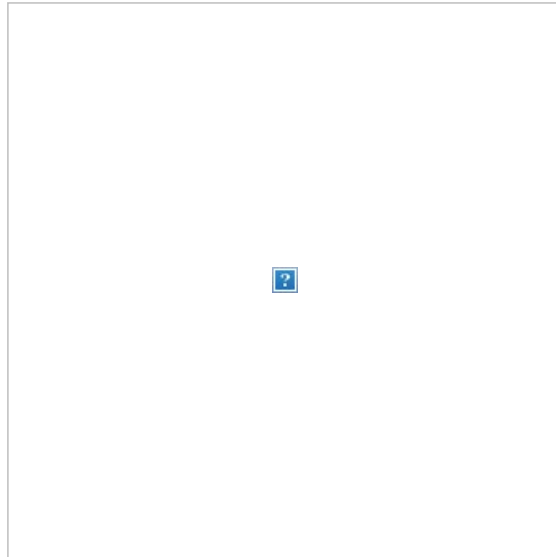
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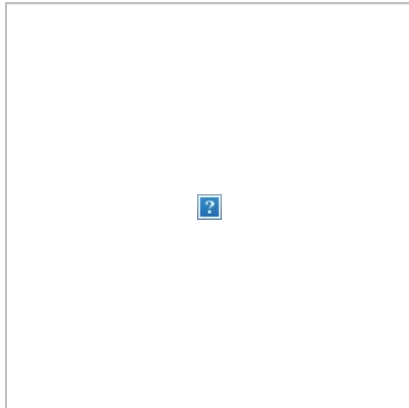
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Date: Monday, January 22, 2024 3:04:44 PM

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Pinelands Preservation Alliance





Wharton State Forest - a bird's eye view!

Friend,

Wharton State Forest is prized by millions of people for its vast wilderness areas, protected rare species habitat, historic sites, and its recreational opportunities, including paddling, hiking, and horseback riding across 125,000 acres. Wharton is the largest state park in New Jersey and the keystone of the Pinelands National Reserve.

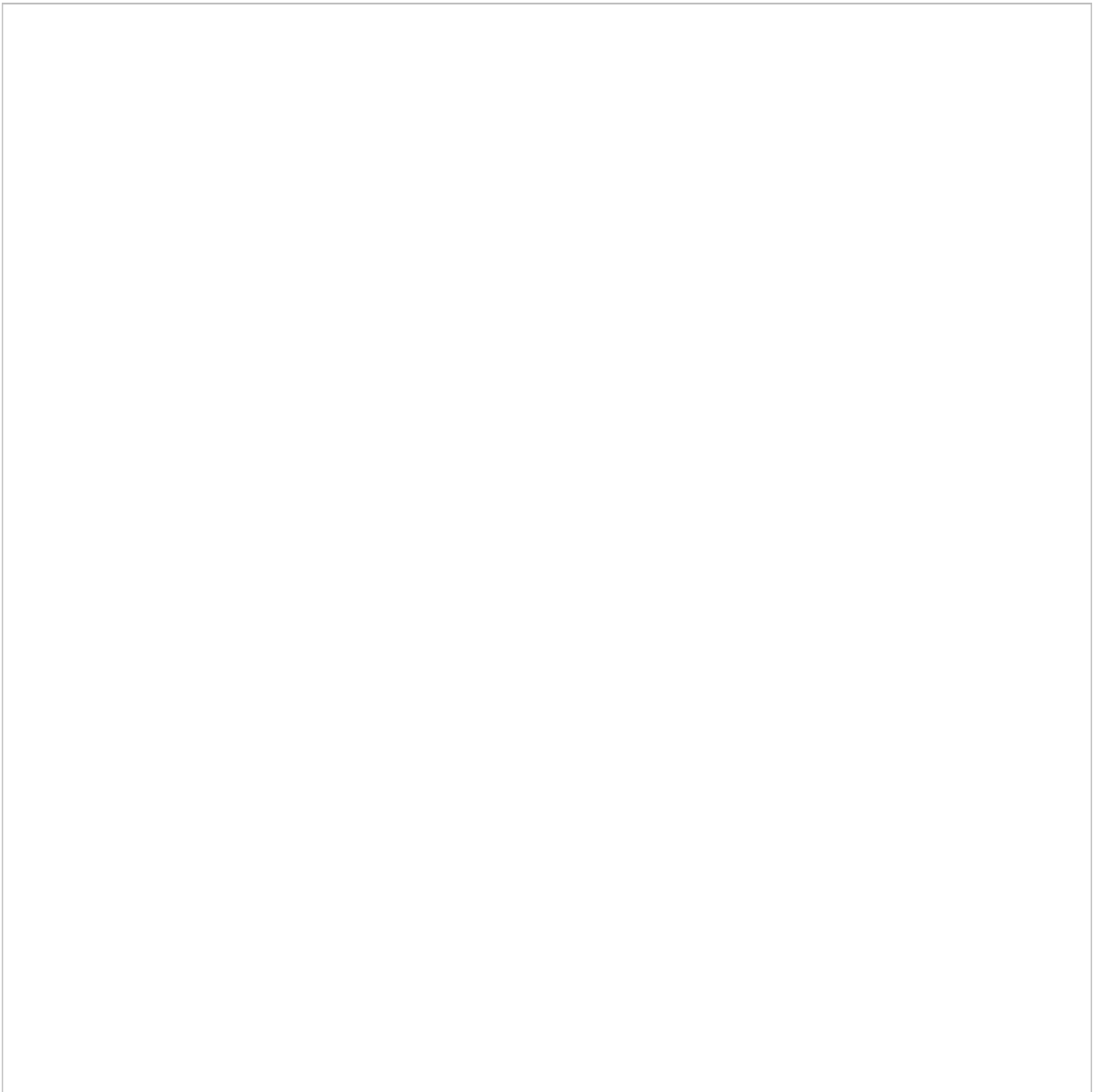
Along with increases in human population around the edges of the Pines and increased visitation to natural areas overall, Wharton has also seen increases in the rate of some issues that affect the quality of the visitor experience and habitat integrity of this special place. These include illegal dumping, vehicle break-ins, illegal off-road vehicle use, and vandalism of historic sites. That is why it has never been more important to have effective visitor management and enforcement of rules and regulations on our public lands. Pinelands Preservation Alliance and much of the visiting public have been pressing the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the State Park Service to enact solutions for many

years. They are now taking a big step in releasing a draft Visitor Map that can guide visitors on their adventures while maintaining the character of this special place.

The DEP and the State Park Service began this process in 2022 by gathering public input through stakeholder meetings and conducting a web-based survey that leveraged mapping tools. Over 1,600 people submitted feedback through this process. Survey results were then compared to the known location of wetlands, threatened and endangered plant and animal species of conservation concern, historic/cultural resources, and other critical conservation information. All of these factors were considered to create a visitor use plan and map for Wharton that balances conservation needs while facilitating sustainable forms of recreation like hiking, biking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, and more.

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The DEP will accept public comments on the draft map between January 24th and March 9th. Please share your written comments with the DEP to ensure that they understand how important it is that Wharton State Forest is protected and that visitors can easily obtain information about how to enjoy its natural wonders!



Volunteers in November 2023 removed trash from Wharton State Forest.

TAKE ACTION & LEARN MORE:

Wharton State Forest Visitor Use Map Open House

(Hosted by the DEP)

Location: Batsto Visitor Center, 31 Batsto Rd, Hammonton NJ

Date: January 24th from 12 noon to 7:00 PM

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[Sign up for the January 30th session here.](#)

Submit Public Comments on the Wharton Visitor Use Map by March 9th

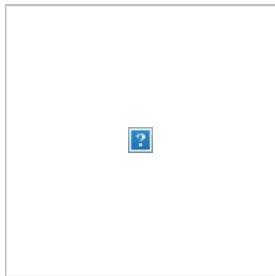
[Sign up here](#) to provide comments to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection on the visitor map. We will contact you directly.

Listen to The Pine Barrens Podcast

The January 9, 2024 episode is called [Wharton State Forest – Navigating the New Visitor Use Map with Russell Juleg](#) of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation.

Read our latest blog post "[Why do we want a Visitor Map for Wharton State Forest](#)".

Thank you for working with us to protect the Pinelands,



Jason Howell
Public Lands Advocate

Pinelands Preservation Alliance



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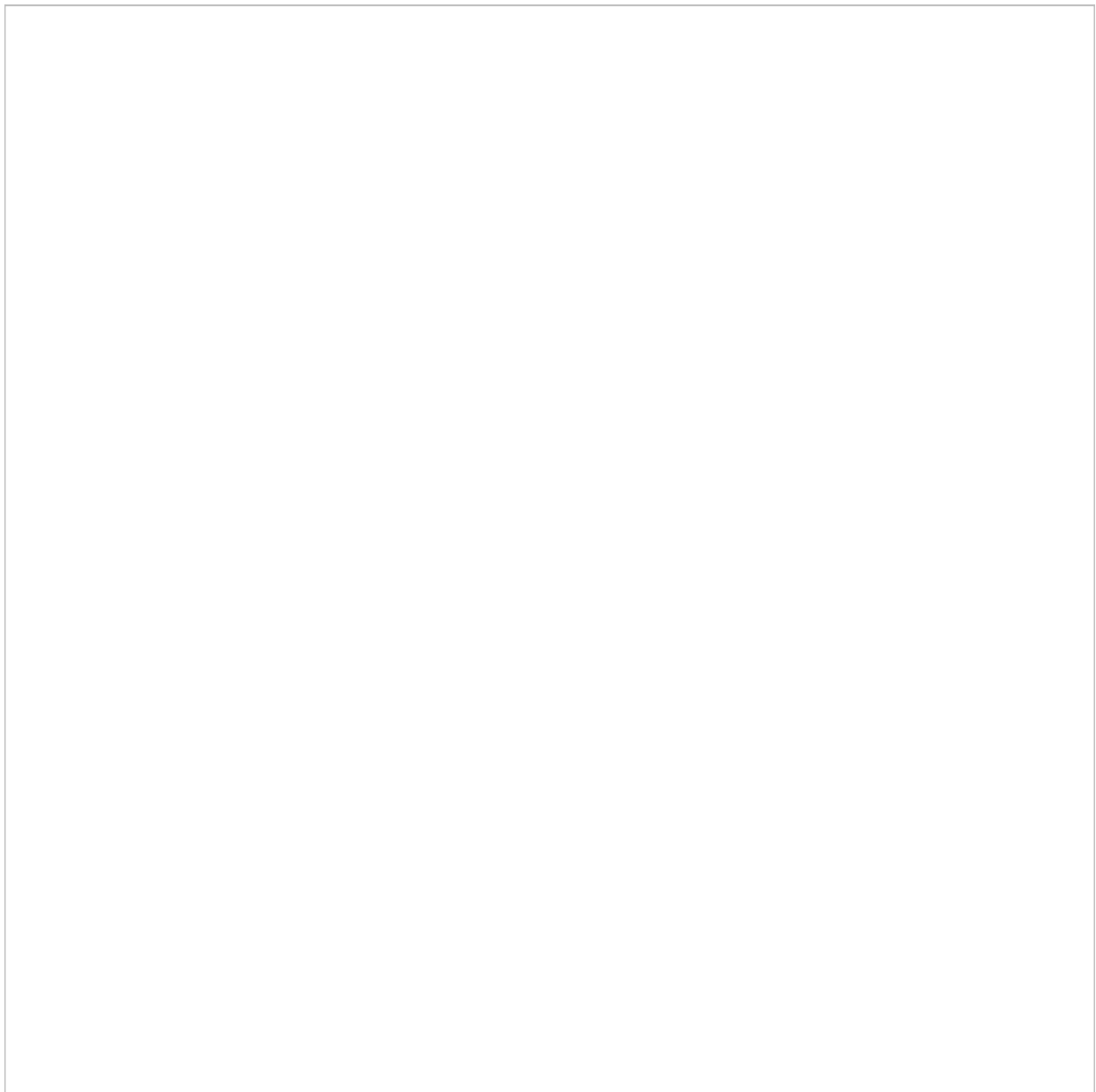
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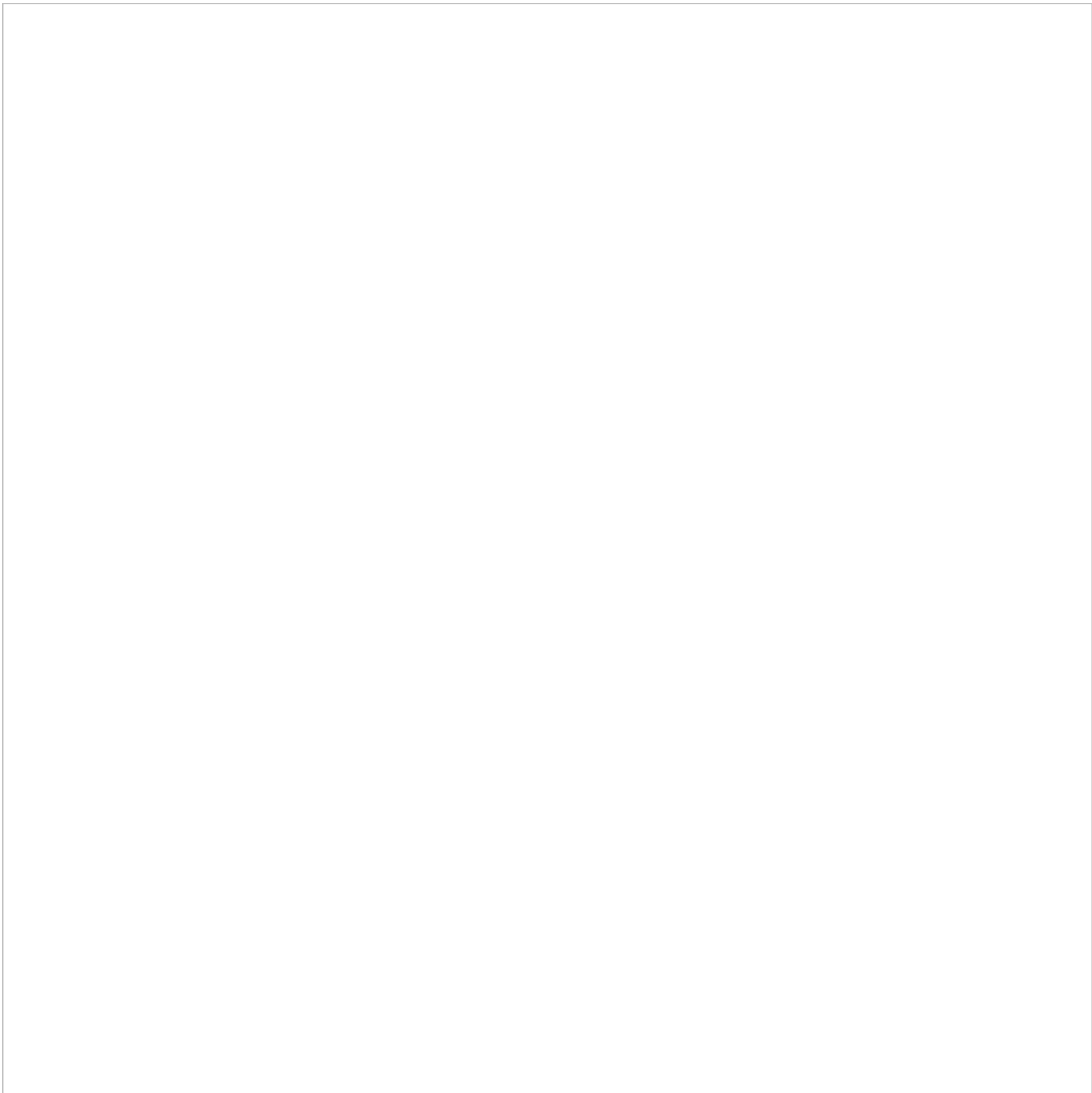
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Submit Public Comments on the Wharton Visitor Use Map by March 9th

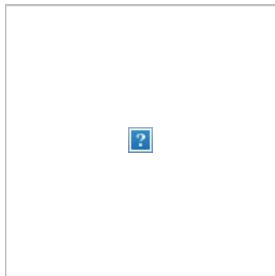
[Sign up here](#) to provide comments to the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection on the visitor map. We will contact you directly.

Listen to The Pine Barrens Podcast

The January 9, 2024 episode is called [Wharton State Forest – Navigating the New Visitor Use Map with Russell Juleg](#) of the New Jersey Conservation Foundation.

Read our latest blog post "[Why do we want a Visitor Map for Wharton State Forest](#)".

Thank you for working with us to protect the Pinelands,



Jason Howell
Public Lands Advocate

Pinelands Preservation Alliance



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From: [Pinelands Alliance](#)
To: [Auermuller, Robert \[DEP\]](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] What's Happening in the Pines? ❄️❄️
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 10:00:32 AM

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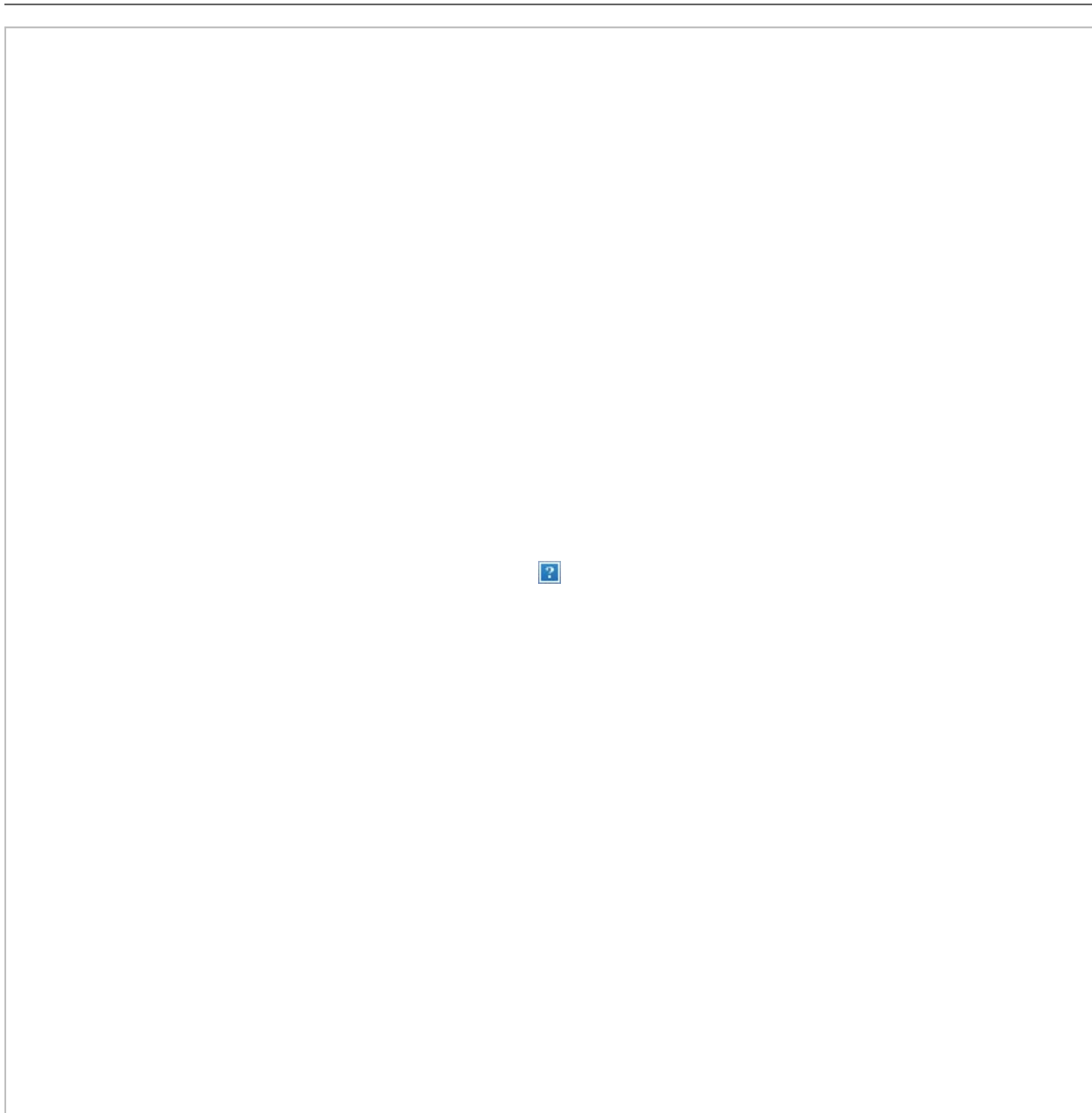


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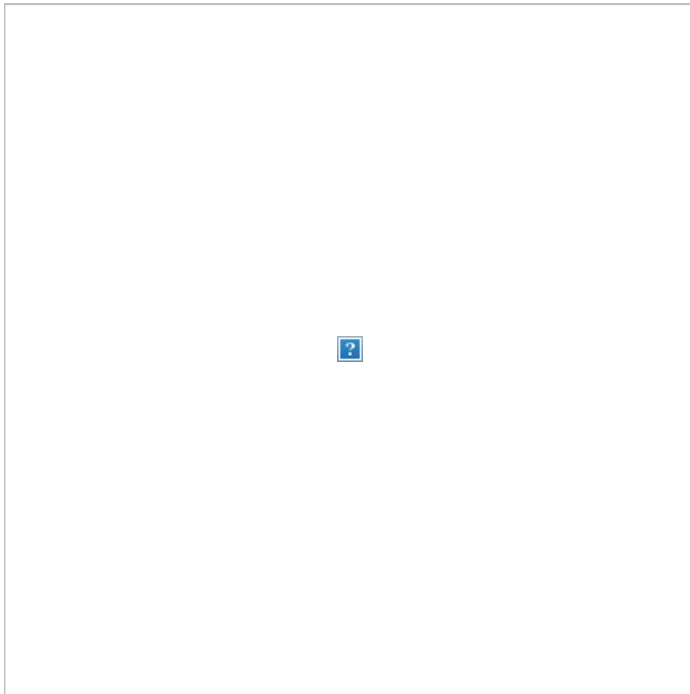
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From: [Pinelands Alliance](#)
To: [Moriarty, Sean \[DEP\]](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] What's Happening in the Pines? ❄️❄️
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 10:00:52 AM

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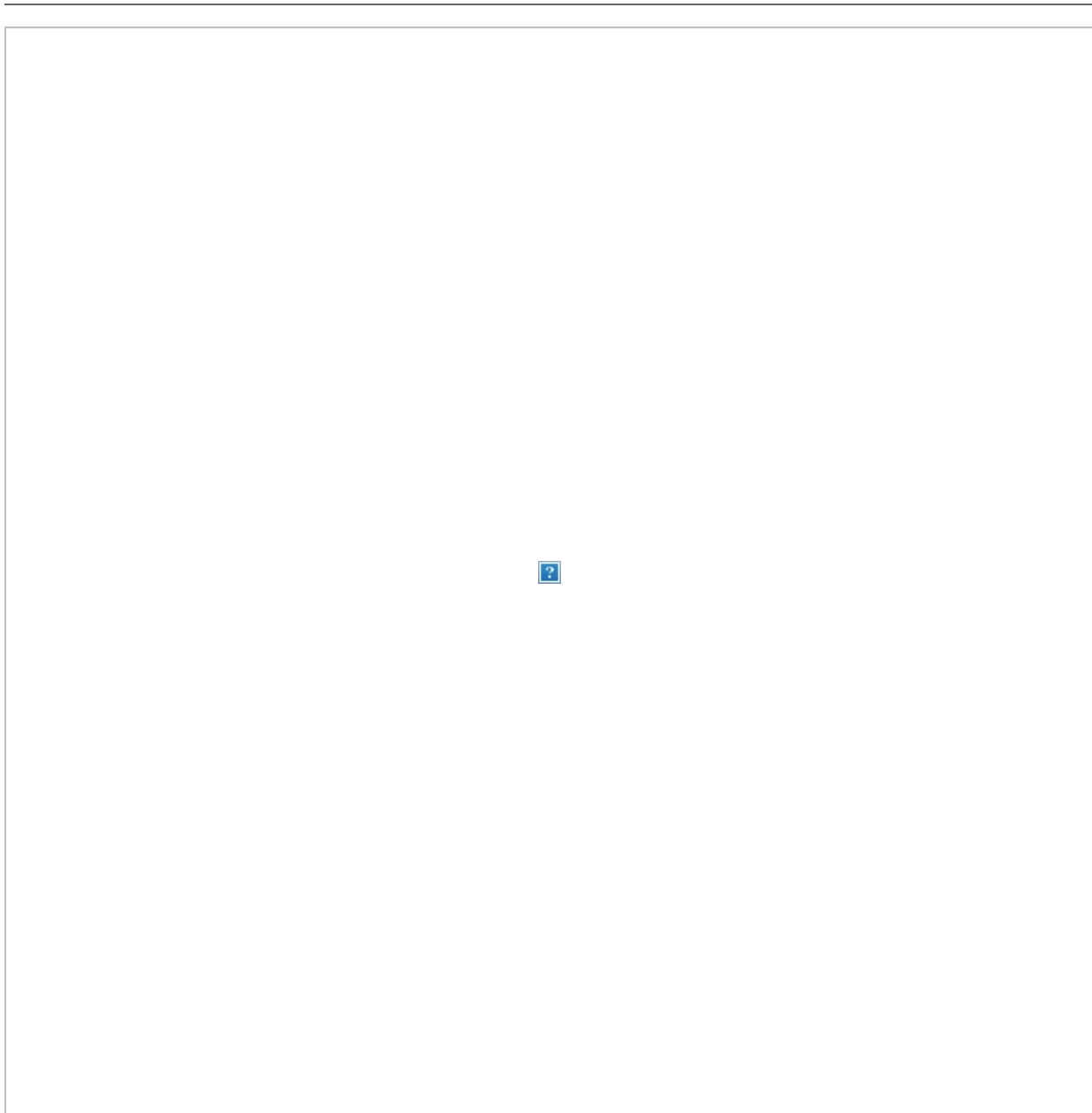


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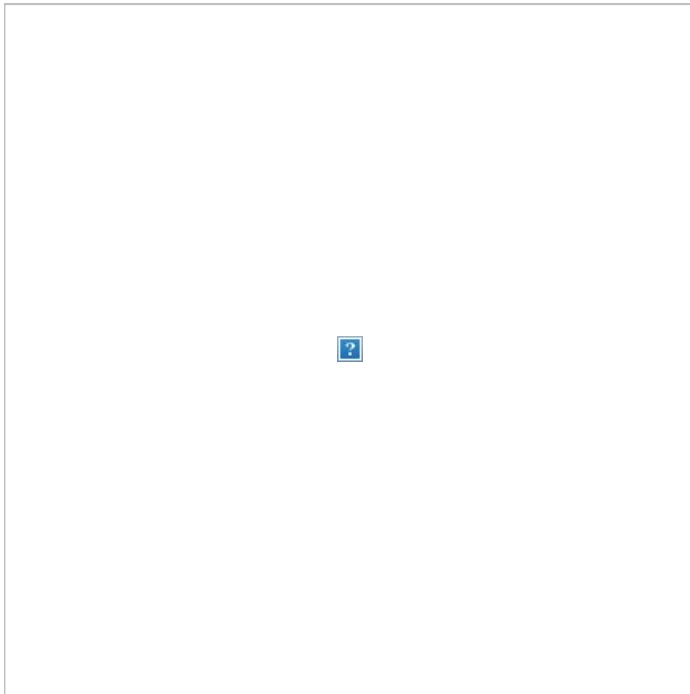
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From: [Pinelands Alliance](#)
To: [Cecil, John \[DEP\]](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] What's Happening in the Pines? ❄️❄️
Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2024 10:00:55 AM

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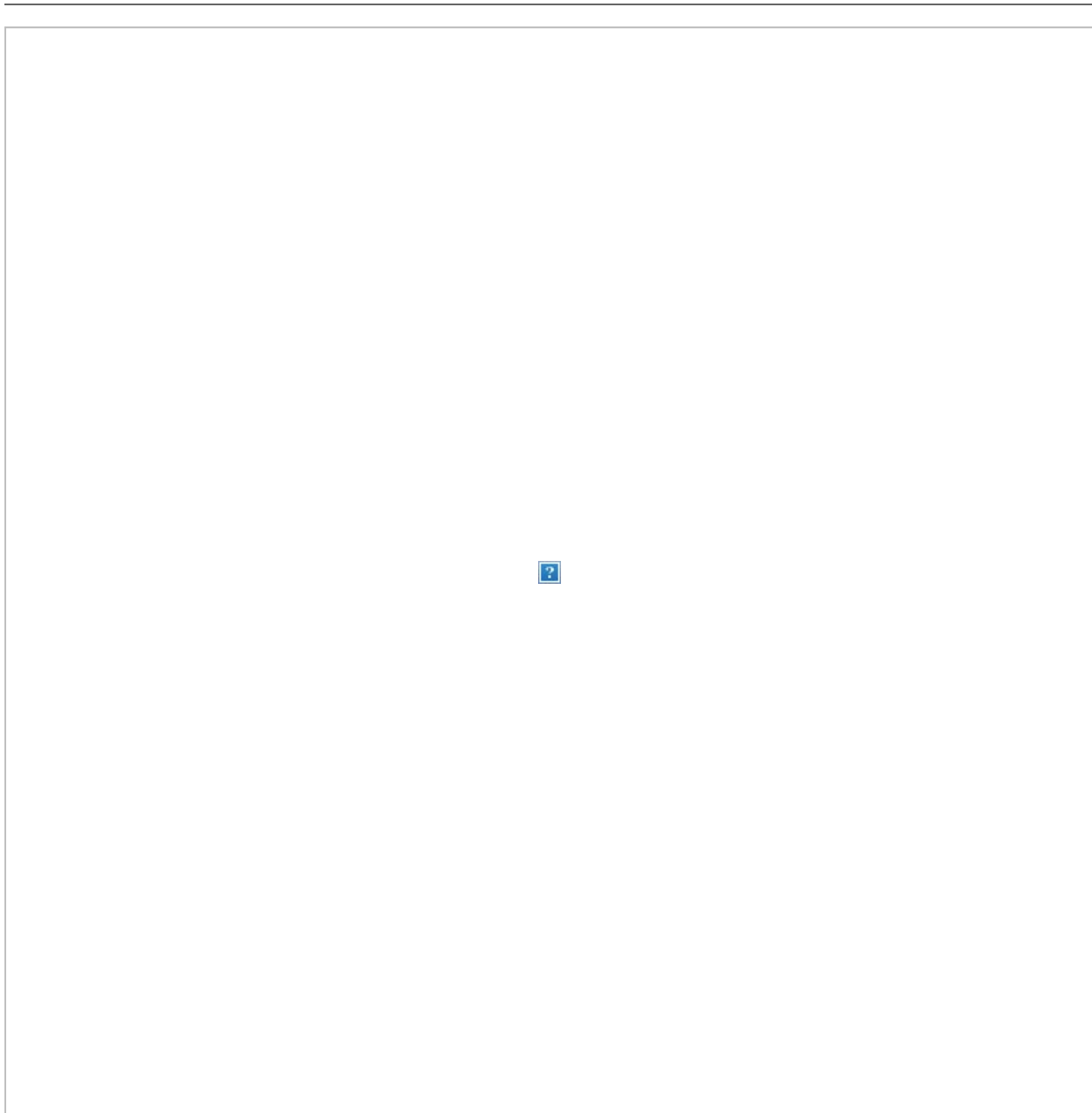


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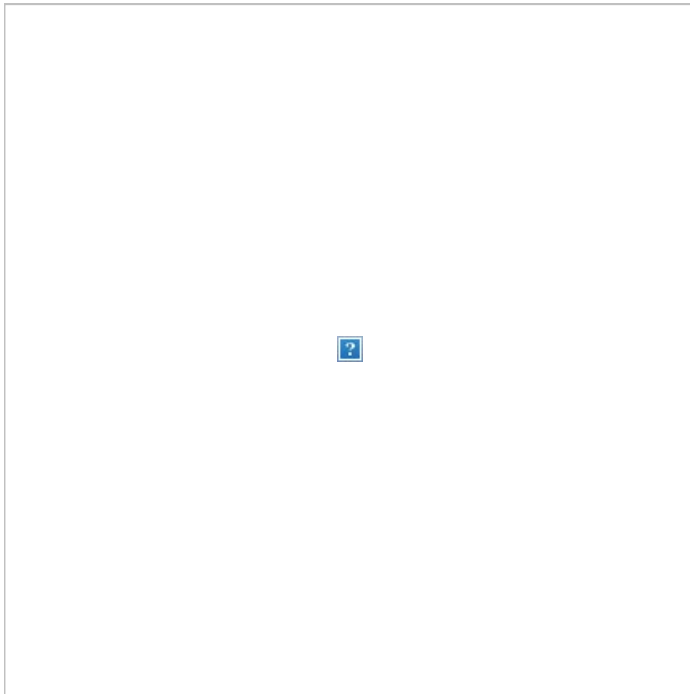
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