



2022 Farmland Preservation Plan for the County of Cumberland, New Jersey

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The Cumberland County
Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs**

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2022 CUMBERLAND COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION PLAN



AGRICULTURAL LAND BASE

Location and Size of Agricultural Land Base

Cumberland County is located in the southwestern corner of New Jersey, encompassing nearly 678 square miles of land. It is one of the larger counties in the state by land mass. Comprised of large swaths of wetlands and estuarial landscape and active farmland in equal measure, the county contains 14 municipalities: 3 incorporated cities, 10 townships and 1 borough. The three cities of Bridgeton, Millville and Vineland contain a full three quarters of the population (75%). Farmland exists to some capacity in every municipality and region of the county and currently comprises about 66,256 acres or 15% of the county.

While New Jersey faced rapid decline of agricultural lands in the latter half of the 20th century due largely to suburban sprawl, Cumberland's agricultural land base remained relatively stable. This trend has remained consistent into the 21st century, with agricultural lands comprising about 71,000 acres in 2002, a change of only 7%.

Soils

Cumberland County contains excellent soils for crop growing. The vast majority of all soils in the county (86%) are considered important agricultural soils. Over 131,000 acres in the county (41%) are classed as prime farmlands. Prime farmlands are lands that have the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. They can sustain high yields of crops when managed with correct farming methods. Prime farmlands are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods of time and do not flood frequently.

Another 17% of Cumberland County's soils are classed as farmland of statewide importance. Statewide importance soils are close in quality to prime farmland and can sustain high yields of crops when correctly managed with favorable conditions. Many of the soils bordering the Delaware Bay and other waterways in Cumberland County are ranked as farmland of unique importance. Which make up 28% of soils in the county. Unique importance soils are those that can support the production of high value regional or specialty crops such as horticultural crops or indigenous foods.

Water Resources

Cumberland County is entirely within Watershed Management Area 17 (WMA 17), which includes Stow Creek, the Cohansey River, Maurice River, Manumuskin River, and Salem River as well as a number of smaller creeks and runs. Cumberland County is also entirely within the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer system, which is a large unconfined aquifer composed of clay, sand, and quartz of fine to course grain size. This aquifer is recharged directly by precipitation, since there are no confining layers above the aquifer. Depths range from 20 to 350 feet moving from the western side of the state moving southeast to the Atlantic coast. The water is of good quality and is utilized by Cumberland County residents for their drinking water. Farmers in Cumberland County who irrigate land from wells are tapping the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer for their irrigation water.

Irrigation

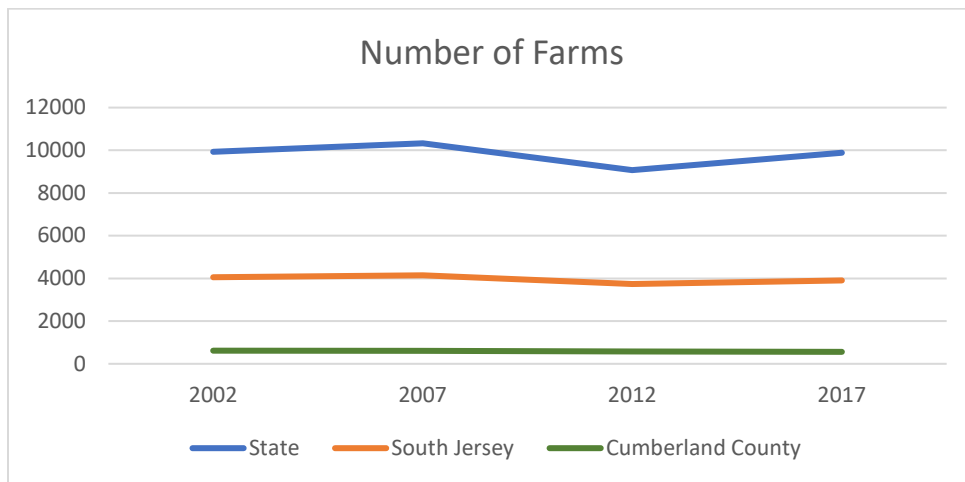
The ability to irrigate is a critical component to farming in Cumberland County. Irrigation generally has a direct correlation to agricultural output and yields per acre.

Water Allocation Rules of the NJDEP require that farmers must obtain a water use registration or certification to withdraw surface or groundwater in large quantities for agricultural, horticultural, or aquaculture use. If an applicant has the capacity to divert and/or withdraw 100,000 gallons per day (equivalent hydraulically to 70 gallons per minute) even if he/she does not need to do so, a water use registration is required. If that amount or greater is actually proposed to be withdrawn, the applicant must obtain water use certification, which lasts for five years. The forms for applying for these usages are submitted to the Rutgers Cooperative Agricultural Extension Agent in the County Extension office and are forwarded to the NJDEP Bureau of Water Allocation. Annual reporting of usage is also a requirement. The program includes the

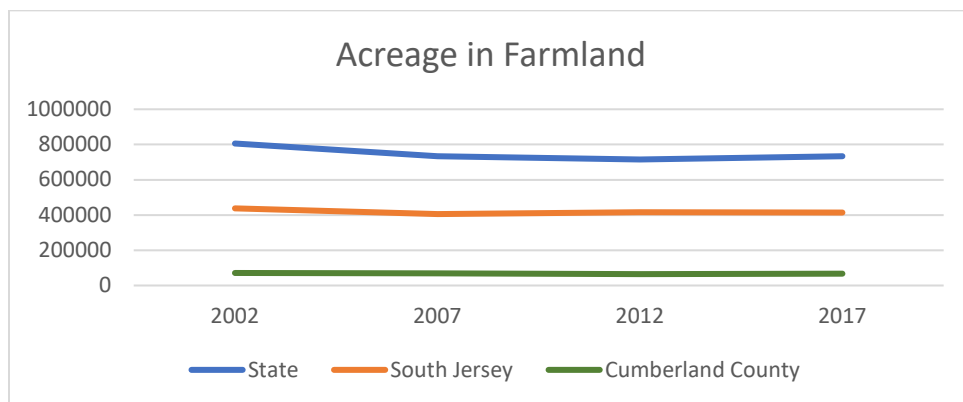
right to construct, repair, or reconstruct dams or other structures, in addition to the right to divert water for irrigation, frost protection, harvesting and other agriculturally-related purposes.

Farmland Assessment and Census of Agriculture Statistics and Trends

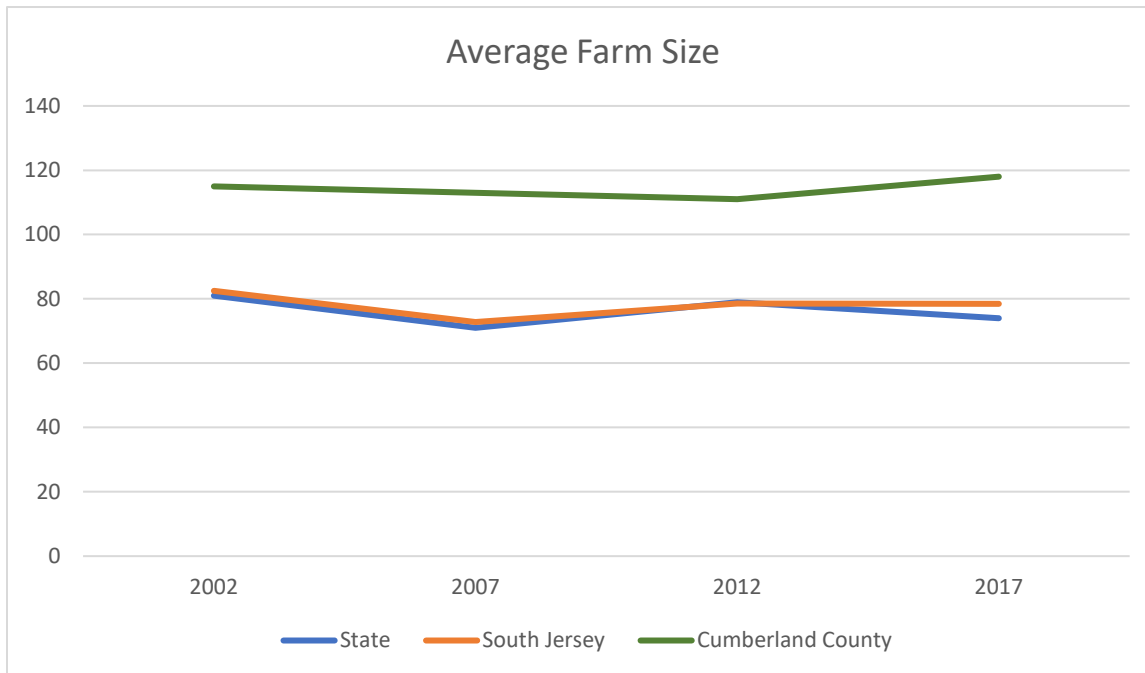
Being that such a large proportion of Cumberland County's GDP originates in agricultural production, the County regularly studies the demographic, economic and development trends relating to this industry. Some of these statistics will be expanded upon in the next section of this plan, but for an overarching understanding of the trends happening in Cumberland County, some key demographics are to be considered.



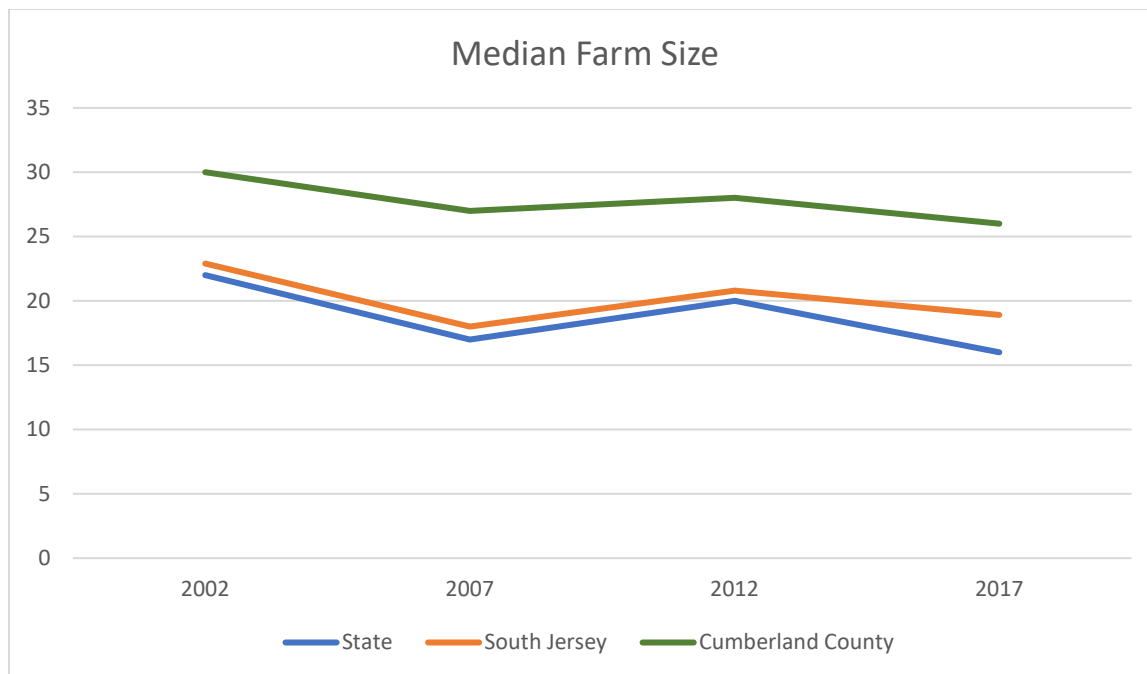
The chart above shows farm numbers over the last 4 U.S. Censuses of Agriculture. The numbers, while fluctuating over 15 years, have hardly changed overall in this period. In 2002, Cumberland County contained about 6.2% of all the farms in New Jersey, and 15.2% of all the farms in South Jersey. These figures reduced slightly through 2017, to 5.6% and 14.3% respectively. The interesting trend to note in these farm figures is that during this 15-year period, South Jersey notably lost overall percentage in individual farms versus the rest of the state – holding 40.8% of all farms in 2002 and 39.5% in 2017. This trend indicates that either non-farmland development occurred at a higher rate in South Jersey than the rest of the state *or* farms consolidated at a higher rate in South Jersey. To determine which is true, additional analysis of acreage needs to be considered.



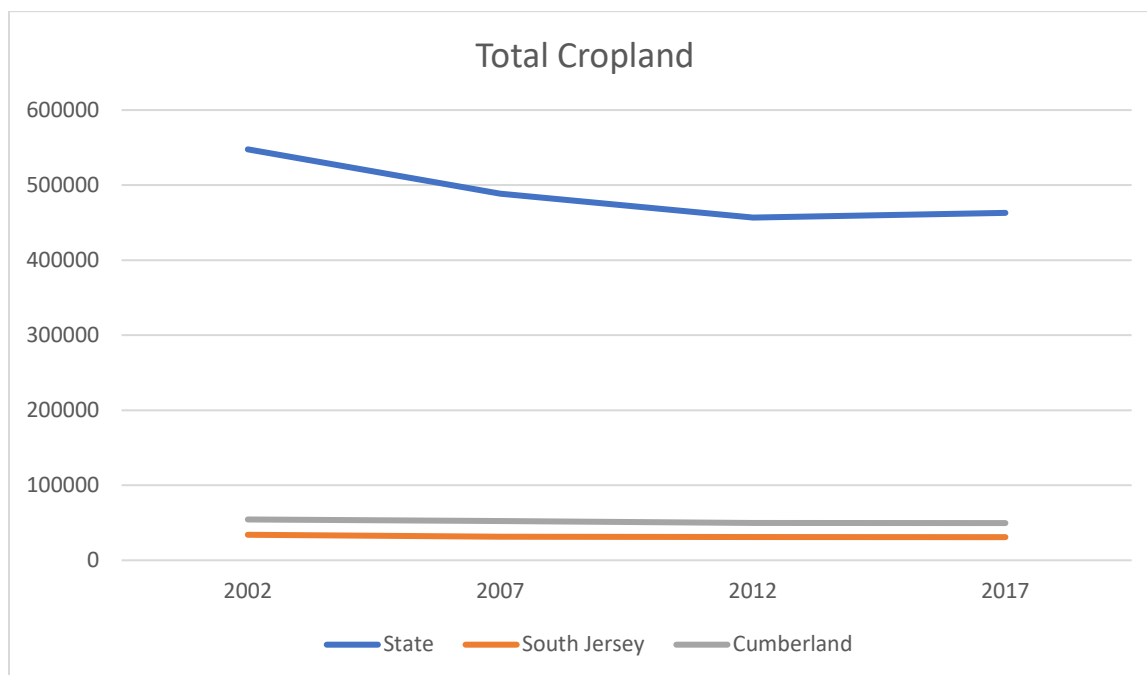
The picture becomes clearer when acreage is studied. Over the 15-year period from 2002 to 2017, New Jersey lost about 8.9% of its agricultural acreage, while South Jersey lost 5.4% and Cumberland County lost 6.8%. Areas of the state outside of South Jersey lost farmland at a faster rate. In 2002, South Jersey held 54.3% of all New Jersey's agricultural acreage, which increased to 56.4% in 2017. Similarly, Cumberland County contained 8.8% of the state's agricultural acreage in 2002 and 9.0% in 2017. These figures indicate that farm consolidation was the primary factor in the reduction of the number of farms in Cumberland County, not increased development pressure.



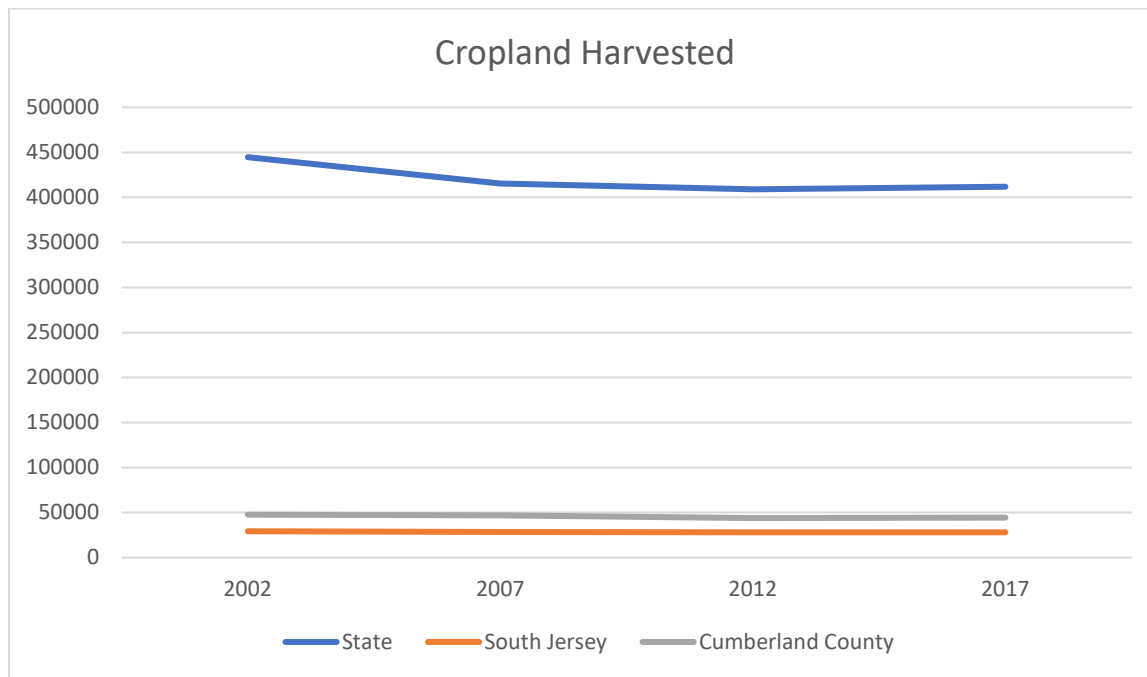
Average farm size over the last 15 years has fluctuated for the state and South Jersey, while for Cumberland County a gradual decrease through 2012 rebounded in 2017. In South Jersey, Salem County has the largest average farm sizes while Ocean County has the smallest. Cumberland County's average farm size is considerably larger than South Jersey's average as well as the State's average.



Cumberland County's median farm size has trended with the state and South Jersey, generally falling since 2002. Cumberland County has the largest median farm size in South Jersey, and Ocean County has the smallest. The fact that Cumberland County has the highest median farm size indicates that the farms in Cumberland are generally larger than elsewhere in the state, as the average figure is likely distorted due to outliers.



While the state has been consistently losing cropland since 2002, South Jersey and Cumberland County have remained fairly stable, with South Jersey losing about 9% since 2002 and Cumberland County losing about the same. The state lost about 15% in this same period.



A slightly different trend is apparent in the amount of cropland harvested, with South Jersey losing only about 4% while Cumberland County and the state lost about 7%. In harvested acreage in South Jersey, Burlington County lost the most, a full 21% since 2002, while Salem actually increased harvested cropland the most in this period, improving by 12%. This shows Cumberland County to be about in the middle in South Jersey – while harvested cropland was lost in the county, the extent of that loss was less than other counties.

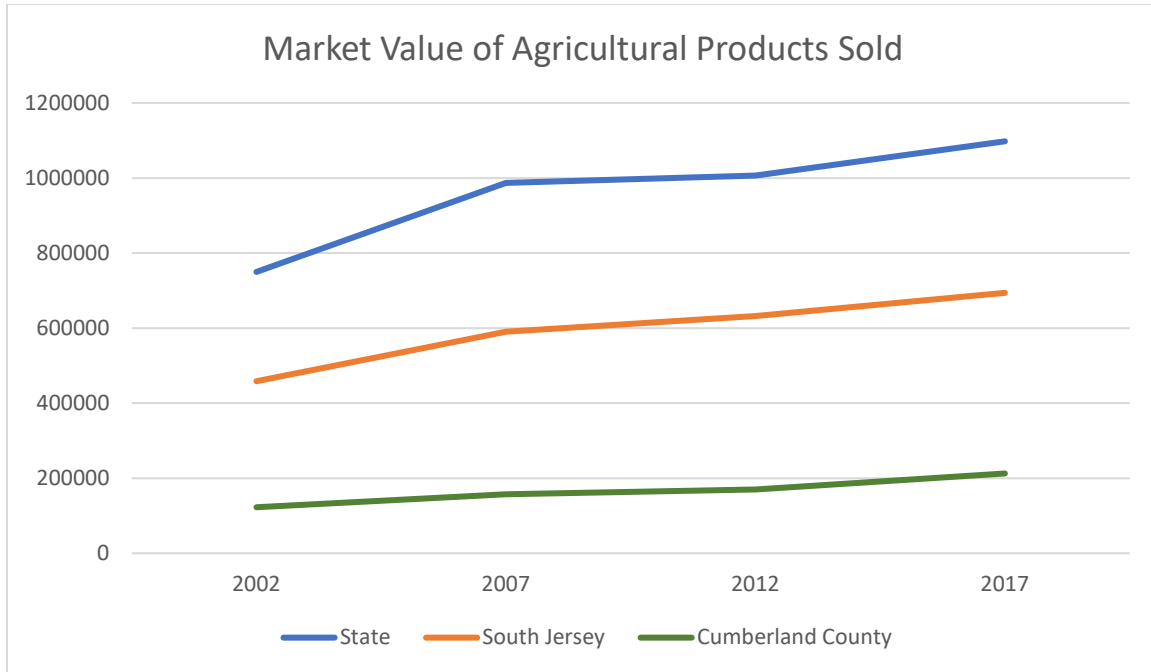
Demographic Summary

Observing non-income statistical data alone provides a fascinating story of what is happening in agriculture in Cumberland County. To summarize:

- ☯ There has been cropland loss in New Jersey for the last 15 years, including in Cumberland County; however, the rate of loss in Cumberland County and South Jersey has been less resulting in increasing concentration of statewide cropland in South Jersey. Cumberland County currently contains 9% of the state's total farmland.
- ☯ In general, farms in Cumberland County are either getting smaller (< than 10 acres) or consolidating into larger operations (> than 180 acres). The middle-sized farms (10 to 179 acres) in the county are declining with an average 16.7% loss of this size farm since 2002.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY

Market Value of Agricultural Products Sold



One of the most significant figures that Cumberland County tracks is the Market Value of Agricultural Commodities Sold as this provides insight into the economic health of the agricultural industry. From 2002 to 2017 New Jersey has seen a 46.4% increase in this figure. South Jersey has grown at a slightly faster rate, with 51.4% growth. Cumberland County has seen a 73.3% increase in this same period and in 2017 represented a full 30.6% of South Jersey's agricultural economy and 19.4% of the state's agricultural economy. Interestingly, in South Jersey, Cape May is the only county to have seen a loss of market growth during this period, with a reduction of 12.6% and Ocean County has experienced the greatest growth, 129.7% in this same period. Nonetheless, Cumberland County remains the powerhouse in South Jersey and the entire state when it comes to agricultural commodity value – leading all other counties and increasing the gap between its number one position and other counties throughout the state.

Crop and Production Trends

Crop trends have been fascinating over recent years in Cumberland County. Since 2002 for instance, while milk cows have dropped almost 50%, beef cows have increased by almost 50%. Sheep and lambs are up 81% since 2002, which may be due to a growing Hispanic population which utilizes the wool and meat. While corn is up, wheat and soybeans are down. Acreage in vegetables is down 32% while orchard acreage is up 41%. Generally speaking, crops continue to be both diverse and lean towards those with high market commodities for both wholesale and retail.

Support Services Within Market Region

Cumberland County stands out in the amount of support services headquartered within the county. Cumberland County farms are served by many businesses on both the input and output side of the agricultural and food industry. On the input side, there are numerous businesses in the Cumberland County region that offer agricultural supplies and services such as farming equipment and supplies, seeds, fertilizer, animal feed, and irrigation systems. Many of these agricultural support businesses are quite large in scale, such as Lee Rain, the largest irrigation supplier on the East Coast and Nutrien, the world's largest crop inputs company, with a facility located in Bridgeton – the only location south of North Brunswick, New Jersey.

On the output side, local farms are well-served by food processors and distributors, produce and livestock auctions, produce wholesalers, and cold storage warehouses in addition to local roadside and farmers markets. For example, the Vineland Produce Auction is one of the largest fruit and vegetable auctions in the country. Additionally, South Jersey has one of the greatest concentrations of cold storage warehouses on the East Coast due to its strategic location within the metropolitan Northeast corridor. Cumberland County's vast agricultural base, rail and highway accessibility, and proximity to major cities are major factors for attracting and maintaining agricultural and food businesses. Highway accessibility in particular is extremely important since goods trucked out of Cumberland County can easily reach cities across the country through the interstate network. The agricultural land base is also a key factor in attracting food and value-added agricultural businesses, many of which use produce or meat from local farmers.

There is a long and significant history of value-added agricultural products and general food processing in Cumberland County. The processed fruit juice industry began in Vineland in 1869 when Dr. Thomas Branwell Welch began making nonalcoholic wine for services at his local church. After being first introduced by Dr. Welch's son at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, Welch's grape juice quickly gained national popularity. Since 1912, Cumberland County has been home to the Seabrook Farms industry, which operated on an international level and occupied 19,000 acres at its height. Seabrook Farms recruited cultivators and workers from many parts of the world to Cumberland County, including large numbers of Japanese-American internees during World War II. Cumberland County continue to be home to many food processing companies with national or international distribution, including Oatly and Rovagnati, which are both discussed later in this plan.

LAND USE PLANNING

New Jersey Development and Redevelopment Plan

The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan (the State Plan) was created to accommodate a growing population while protecting the state's diversity, natural features, agricultural production, economic interests, and quality of life. The State Plan is a policy guide to be used by state, regional, and local agencies to increase the consistency of planning efforts. Municipal, county, and regional plans are intended to be reviewed by the State Planning

Commission to evaluate consistency with the State Plan. There is a 10-step Plan Endorsement Process that encourages municipalities to engage in cooperative regional planning.

The State Plan has designated planning areas that share common development and environmental conditions and that provide a balance between growth and conservation. The seven planning areas (excluding water) delineated in the State Plan are, in decreasing scale of development: Metropolitan (PA1), Suburban (PA2), Fringe (PA3), Rural (PA4), Rural Environmentally Sensitive (PA4B), Environmentally Sensitive (PA5), and Parks or Natural Areas (Parks). According to the State Plan, Cumberland County contains all seven planning areas, as well as four Pineland Management Areas.

Within Cumberland County, Metropolitan Planning Areas (PA1) are located within and around Bridgeton, Millville and Vineland. The State Plan proposes that growth be promoted in Centers and appropriate areas in the Metropolitan Planning Area. Where agriculture in the PA1 area is appropriate, the State Plan recommends, “intensive agricultural production, packaging and processing, value-added operations, marketing, exporting and other shipping. Provide opportunities for farms, greenhouses, farmers markets and community gardens.” The Metropolitan Planning Areas in Cumberland County are surrounded by Suburban Areas (PA2), as well as a small Fringe Planning Area (PA3) located in Upper Deerfield. Regarding agriculture in Suburban and Fringe Planning Areas, the State Plan recommends strategic retention of productive farmland and the promotion of “more intensive, new-crop agricultural enterprises [to] meet the needs of agricultural industry for intensive packaging, processing, value-added operations, marketing, exporting, and other shipping through development and redevelopment.”

Park or Natural Areas (Parks) correspond with preserved Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), such as the large Millville/Bevin WMA covering over 12,000 acres. Rural Planning Areas (PA4 and Rural Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas (PA4B) are mostly in the western part of the county. Within the two Rural Planning Areas, the State Plan intends to preserve large contiguous areas of farmland and other lands and to restrict sewer and public water service to Centers. Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas (PA5) are located mostly in wetlands areas near the Delaware Bay and along the Cohansey and Maurice Rivers. In both Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas PA4B and PA5, the State Plan recommends the promotion of “agricultural practices that prevent or minimize conflicts with sensitive environmental resources.”

In addition to Planning Areas, the State Plan has designated Centers where growth should be concentrated. Within each center, there are three components: Center Boundaries (or edges), Cores, and Neighborhoods. These Centers are existing areas of development and serve as hubs for commerce, government, culture, residences, and community life. In more rural areas, sewer service is only to be extended to designated centers. The five types of Centers in order of decreasing scale are Urban Centers, Regional Centers, Towns, Villages, and Hamlets. There are four designated Center in Cumberland County as well as five Certified Pinelands Villages and State Plan Centers.

According to the State Plan, areas outside Centers are called “Environs.” Environs include large continuous areas of open space, forests, and farmland. These areas are typically found in the Fringe, Rural, and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas. In order to protect Environs from development, a number of actions can be taken, including density transfer to Centers, the purchase or donation of development easements, restricting the extension of sewer and water infrastructure, and adopting ordinances to limit development.

Pinelands

The eastern portion of Cumberland County, including most of Maurice River Township, is within the Pinelands National Reserve, also known as the Pine Barrens. The 1.1 million acre reserve was dedicated by Congress under the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978. The following year, the state passed the Pinelands Protection Act, which created the Pinelands Commission. The mission of the Pinelands Commission is to protect the significant natural resources of the Pinelands and to accommodate growth responsibly. The Pinelands Commission administers the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP) in cooperation with local, state, and federal governments. The CMP designates nine different Pinelands Management Areas, each of which varies in recommended density and permitted uses. Within Cumberland County, there are four Pinelands Management Areas: Forest Area, Agricultural Production Area, Rural Development Area, and Pinelands Village.

Forest Areas are composed of undeveloped lands containing high quality water resources and wetlands and provide suitable habitat for many threatened and endangered species. There is a permitted density of one home for every 28 acres on Forest Area lands. Agricultural Production Areas are active agricultural lands in which farm housing on 10 acres and non-farm housing on 40 acres are allowed. Rural Development Areas are transitional lands that balance conservation with growth, with residential density averaging one home for every 5 acres. Pinelands Villages are existing settlements appropriate for infill development. Residential development is permitted on 1-acre lots if not sewered. Within Cumberland County, there are 9,872 acres of farm-assessed land within the Pineland located within all four of these types of Pinelands Management Areas. Most of this farm-assessed land, however, is classified as forest under woodland management plans. Only about 2,000 acres are tilled agricultural land, based on land cover data. The preservation of agricultural land in the Pinelands through the Pinelands Development Credit (PDC) is an option within the limited Project Areas located within the Pinelands.

Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA)

The Coastal Area Facilities Review Act (CAFRA) was passed by the state in 1973 to regulate development and land use along New Jersey’s coastal wetlands and shores to protect public safety and the environment. CAFRA covers the Delaware Bayshore, an important stopover for migratory birds who feed on the eggs of horseshoe crabs in the spring. CAFRA regulations help protect the Delaware Bayshore in Cumberland County from overdevelopment, preserving this

sensitive habitat for birds and other plant and animal wildlife. CAFRA law regulates nearly all development activities involved in residential, commercial, public, and industrial developments. Such activities include excavation, grading, construction, relocation, and enlargement of buildings and structures. Within 150 feet of the mean high water line, CAFRA regulates any new developments, residential projects with three or more units, and commercial projects with five or more parking spaces. Beyond 150 feet of the mean high water line, CAFRA regulates residential projects with 25 or more units and commercial projects with 50 or more parking spaces.

Ten municipalities in Cumberland County, both coastal and inland, are partially or completely within the CAFRA boundary. There are 34,664 acres of farm-assessed land within the CAFRA boundary in Cumberland County. Much of this farm-assessed land is composed of wetlands or forest, although about 21,000 acres are classified as agricultural land based on land cover data. Appraisers are made aware of CAFRA boundaries when valuing land for farmland preservation, although CAFRA has never been cited as a specific limitation on value. More significant than CAFRA in limiting property values are municipal zoning regulations, as well as ordinances, including those ordinances in Greenwich, Hopewell, and Stow Creek prohibiting construction of new roads.

Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Plan

The Cumberland County Farmland Preservation, Open Space, Parks, and Recreation Trust Fund Plan, published in 1996, was an implementation plan for the county's Open Space and Farmland Preservation Tax approved by referendum in 1994. This plan was updated in 2005 with the Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Plan, which provided data on farmland preservation in the county and described the various preservation techniques and programs that were available to the county and its municipalities. It also identified planning and zoning measures to promote and develop the agricultural industry within the County. The 2008-09 Farmland Preservation Plan, completed by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, was an update of the 2005 plan. This 2022 plan is itself an update of the 2008-09 plan and satisfies the content requirements of the SADC.

Cumberland County Master Plan

Cumberland County's most recent Master Plan was drafted in 1967. Although the plan is over fifty years old, it contains many concepts which are still relevant, such as the recommendation for large lot zoning. While various components of the Master Plan have been updated over the years, a comprehensive rewrite of the overall plan has not been undertaken.

Development Review Standards

Cumberland County's Development Review Standards were last updated in 2011 and primarily establish standards to promote a safe and efficient county road system and to promote land

development that is consistent with county plans, infrastructure and facilities, and that avoids adverse impacts from proposed development on County roads, drainage facilities and lands. The subdivision and site plan applications reviewed by the County Planning Board in 2022 are included as an appendix.

Current Land Use and Trends

According to the most recent NJDEP land cover data, only 12 percent of land in Cumberland County is classified as urban, or developed, land. Nearly one-third (32%) of Cumberland County is forested, which is concentrated mostly in the Pinelands and the central portion of the county. Wetlands cover 30 percent of the county, located mostly along the Delaware Bayshore and along waterways such as the Maurice and Cohansey Rivers. About 19 percent of Cumberland County is occupied by agriculture, which is mostly concentrated in the northwestern part of the county near the border with Salem County. Another 6 percent of the county is water, and barren land occupies the remaining 1 percent of land. These figures remain nearly unchanged since 2002, when agriculture encompassed 19% and urban was 12% - the same as today.

Development interest declined during COVID, but pent-up demand was apparent in 2021, with near record square footage in applications. While this demand subsided a bit in 2022, it remained a higher than average year for development interest. Much of the development revolved around cold storage and warehousing related to food processing, which can be associated with agriculture. Another significant category of development interest was in cannabis cultivation, which is also associated with the agricultural sector.

Sewer Service Areas / Public Water Supply Service Areas

The County includes three community wastewater systems that serve 14 percent of the total County area and **80 percent** of the total County population. Sewer service areas may include industrial businesses that discharge process wastewater to the collection system for treatment by a facility not owned by that business. Those systems include the Cumberland County Utilities Authority, the Landis Sewerage Authority, and the City of Millville Sewer Utility. Residential wastewater management in the Rural District relies on individual subsurface septic systems under the jurisdiction of the Cumberland County Health Department. Commercial and industrial wastewater discharges in the Rural District are primarily from agricultural and seafood processing plants and sand mining operations. There is one state-owned surface water discharge from a prison facility in Maurice River Township (Bayside State Prison). The Cumberland County Improvement Authority's Solid Waste Complex in Deerfield Township has a treatment facility onsite that treats all of the leachate collected at the landfill. The treatment system consists of two phases. The first phase utilizes an Ultra-Filtration (UF) system. The second stage is a two-pass reverse osmosis system. The treated leachate is then discharged to a detention basin on site which eventually percolates back to ground water. The Cumberland

County Solid Waste Facility is the only facility in New Jersey that is permitted to discharge treated leachate to ground water.

The lack of wastewater infrastructure within the Rural District can be attributed to issues involving fiscal constraints, environmental conditions and limited regional demand. However, because of the small concentration of population and development in Fortescue and Gandy's Beach, Downe Township, these two villages are proposed as Sewer Service Areas assigned to the proposed Fortescue Package Plant.

Two other areas of Cumberland County are also being considered for Sewer Service Areas as well.

The Laurel Lake areas of Commercial Township and Millville have long been troubled with failing septic systems, small lots and a high population density. The Township of Greenwich is considering an area of approximately 600 acres for Sewer Service. The village of Greenwich has been experiencing failing systems. The Commercial Township side of Laurel Lake and Greenwich are unassigned.

Public water is available in the same general areas as approved sewer service, although the piping infrastructure, like that for sewer, does not necessarily exist throughout all parts of the area. There is public water in Bridgeton and parts of Fairfield, Hopewell, Millville, Shiloh, Upper Deerfield, and Vineland. There are also larger water systems serving the NJ bayside Prison, the town of Port Norris, and the Fairview Manor Mobile Home Park. Some smaller water supply wells serve eight other facilities and mobile home parks in the county. All of these public systems tap the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer.

Most residents within agricultural areas rely on wells that also tap the Kirkwood-Cohansey aquifer. This aquifer has abundant water in this part of southern New Jersey, but its unconfined nature makes it subject to potential contamination from both surface sources and septic systems. Recharge of the aquifer is also heavily dependent on maintenance of open land that has high permeability. Such land also tends to be the best farmland in the region, which makes farmland preservation and protection of soils a particularly high priority.

Municipal Master Plan and Zoning

Various innovative zoning ordinances that provide incentives to preserve farmland can be adopted by a municipality. Most municipalities in Cumberland County have some form of agriculture-specific zoning. This can mean zoning for very low density or the creation of zoning districts with an average minimum lot size of at least three acres.

Commercial Township has a Residence-Agriculture District (R-A) that requires a minimum of one acre for a single family dwelling unit and a minimum of five acres for a farm. Permitted land uses in the R-A District include single family detached dwellings, agricultural uses, home

occupations, and housing facilities for transient or migrant farm workers. Nurseries, small animal, and livestock-raising are permitted agricultural uses, although pigs must be grain fed, not “garbage fed.” There is a maximum of 15 percent building coverage allowed in the R-A District.

Deerfield Township has an Agriculture District (A) that requires a minimum of six acres for a farm. Deerfield Township also has an Agricultural Industrial and Commercial Overlay that requires a minimum lot size of 5 acres for a farm and 20 acres for a processing plant, warehouse, distribution center, or other type of facility. According to Deerfield’s municipal ordinance, the purpose of this Overlay District is “to provide for innovative and necessary industrial and commercial activities directly related to agriculture use of the lands of the Township by permitting such activities to occur within specific areas of the municipality’s agricultural lands so as to promote and encourage the continued viability of farming within the Township and surrounding area.”

Downe Township has a Rural Residential District (R-1) which permits customary and conventional farming operations and farm dwellings, farm storage buildings, and roadside farm stands. The Rural Residential District requires a minimum lot size of one acre. Downe also has a Rural Conservation District (C-1) which requires a minimum lot size of five acres and which permits the same agricultural uses as the Rural Residential Zone.

Fairfield Township has an Agriculture District (a) with a minimum lot size of five acres.

Hopewell Township has an Agricultural District (a) that permits agricultural materials and equipment, sales and service, and agricultural product processing of crops produced on the farm of the processor. The Agricultural District also allows conventional agriculture and accessory agricultural buildings, although it does not allow livestock feed lots or other intensive animal feeding operations. Hopewell also has an Agricultural Industrial District (A-I) with minimum lot sizes of 1.5 acres for residential use, 2 acres for a farm, and 10 acres for food processing, storage, packaging and distribution facilities. Some of the many conditional uses in the A-I District include wholesale warehousing and distribution, light manufacturing, scientific and research laboratories, and cultural uses.

Lawrence Township has an Agricultural District (A) that requires minimum lot sizes of three acres for general purpose agriculture, recreation or open space, public uses or facilities, or single-family detached dwellings. This district also requires minimum lot sizes of five acres for environmental conservation uses and six acres for a farm. There are fifteen conditional uses for the Agriculture District, including agricultural employee housing, kennels and animal hospitals, farming businesses, and riding academies and stables.

Millville’s Agricultural Conservation District is intended to preserve and enhance the economic viability and quality of existing agriculturally productive lands, farms, and agricultural homesteads in outlying areas of the City of Millville. This district permits agricultural or horticultural uses, farms, single-family detached dwellings or five acres, planned agri-

community development, forests and wildlife conservation, parks and recreational facilities, educational facilities, and cemeteries. Agri-community developments require a minimum of 100 acres and must consist of at least 50 percent open space. These communities are intended to incorporate both residential and farming uses to accommodate new growth while preserving rural character.

Shiloh Borough has a Residential-Agriculture District (R-A) which requires at least five acres for a farm. Farms are to be used for general purpose agriculture which includes the raising of agricultural or horticultural products, livestock, poultry and their resultant products. Farms may include small retail outlets, business offices, aquaculture facilities, hydroponic, and other new technological innovations that advance the science of agriculture and the production of agricultural commodities. Intensive feed lots for raising of poultry, cattle, or other livestock are not permitted.

Stow Creek Township has an Agricultural District (A) that permits farms and agricultural activities including nurseries, small animals, and the raising of livestock. This district also allows for the sale of farm or dairy produce which has been raised on the farm from which it is to be sold. *This condition has recently been amended to identify at least 51% of the produce must be raised on the farm, bringing it into alignment with general AMP standards.* Single family detached dwellings for those not employed in agricultural production shall be permitted as a conditional use. In Stow Creek Township's Residential District (R) and Historic Residential District (HR), all agricultural uses allowed in the Agricultural District are permitted except the commercial raising of livestock and fowl.

Upper Deerfield Township has an Agricultural District (A) that permits parks and recreational facilities, conservation areas, farms, commercial stables and riding academies, kennels and animal hospitals, and warehousing or storage facilities for farm produce or products. These uses require minimum lot sizes or two to fifteen acres depending on use. There are a number of conditional uses allowed in the Agricultural District, including rural residences, home occupations, food processing plants, and agricultural or open space experimental or research centers. Minimum lot sizes for these conditional uses range from one acre for a rural residence to 25 acres for land mining and earth extraction. Accessory uses include agricultural buildings, farm residences, windmills, and roadside stands. The Residential District (R-1) in Upper Deerfield also permits farms and roadside stands.

Vineland has two Agricultural Districts: A-5 and A-6. The A-5 Agricultural District requires minimum lot sizes of 250,000 square feet (about 5.7 acres) for a farm and 100,000 square feet (2.2 acres) for a single-family detached dwelling or other uses. Vineland's A-6 Agricultural District requires minimum lot sizes of 250,000 square feet for farms, single-family detached dwellings, and other uses.

Greenwich Township also has an Agricultural District which encompasses the majority of the township. It requires 6-acre lot size and permits all the usual agricultural and detached dwelling uses.

Only three municipalities in Cumberland County, Deerfield, Hopewell and Upper Deerfield, require a buffer around agricultural areas.

Bridgeton and Maurice River Township do not have agricultural zoning per se, although agricultural uses are permitted in limited residential locations.

Cluster Zoning

Nine municipalities in Cumberland County permit cluster developments. A zoning ordinance may have a provision that allows residential development to be clustered on smaller lots than the ordinance allows by-right, with the same number of units permitted as would be allowed under conventional development. Clustering involves a requirement to preserve a percentage of the site's land as open space, or as farmland. To the greatest extent possible, prime agricultural lands should be preserved as farmland. This open space portion may be protected with a conservation easement and is typically owned by a homeowners association or by the municipality. This technique can be used on a mandatory basis, or can be voluntary with incentives for the developer. A cluster ordinance can include elements of conservation design, discussed below. Set-asides on adjacent properties could be sited in a way that could preserve the greatest amount of contiguous agricultural land. In the same way, clustered development could be sited next to developed areas on adjacent properties, ideally with connecting streets and consistent form and design.

Homeowners in a cluster development may object to the preserved open land being used for commercial agriculture due to the noise, dust, and odors. Conversely, housing units may be, and often are, of higher value in clustered subdivisions because of the adjacent farmland views and rural feel. The protected land may also not be large enough to support agriculture, and access to the site by equipment and trucks could be limited. Clustering does protect open space and farmland where development is inevitable and does so without the use of public funding. It does not reduce the number of residential units that are possible or direct their placement in planned growth areas, however. Clustering is not always a popular technique because of these factors and because density bonuses encouraging clustering may allow what some consider to be too many additional units. The thoughtfulness of ordinance provisions and the design and placement of clustered housing are important components for successful clustering.

Non-contiguous Cluster Zoning

Non-contiguous cluster zoning allows a parcel to be preserved by transferring its development potential to a non-contiguous parcel. This technique first authorized in 1996 by the New Jersey Municipal Land Use Law, allows a "sending area" parcel to be preserved as open space or

farmland, and the “receiving area” parcel is allowed to be developed at a higher density than would otherwise be permitted. This technique is much simpler to administer than conventional TDR programs since it can involve as little as two parcels, although it has not been used in Cumberland County. Unlike TDR, non-contiguous cluster zoning must be implemented through planned development or between properties under common ownership. Townships can identify areas where development can be increased and preserved through non-contiguous clusters. This development option must be voluntary. The 2013 MLUL amendments expanded use of non-contiguous clustering outside of planned development areas. The “sending” and “receiving” parcels must be considered as part of one development application but not necessarily under common ownership.

Lot Size Averaging

Lot size averaging is a way to allow flexibility in lot sizes on relatively smaller parcels (about 10-20 acres) that are slated for subdivision and development. Like cluster zoning, flexible lot sizes can situate development to allow for the greatest conservation of resources. Stow Creek is the only municipality in Cumberland County to have adopted lot size averaging.

Transfer of Development Rights

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) is a municipal planning technique that allows for increased development while preserving farmland and is discussed in further detail in the next section.

Cumberland County supports cluster zoning, conservation design, TDR, and lot size averaging, although these techniques are adopted at the municipal level. However, in practice, many of these methods are rarely applicable and in the case of TDR, cost prohibitive.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM

County Agricultural Development Areas Designation Criteria

The ADA is the area within which farms are eligible for preservation funding by the county and state. An ADA is an area of relatively contiguous productive agricultural land that has a strong potential for continued productive use in the future and where agriculture is the preferred but not necessarily exclusive use. The statutory criteria for ADAs are described in N.J.S.A. 4:1C-18 and N.J.A.C. 2:76-1. On the county level, the CADB approved the location of the ADA on the basis of specific criteria, amended in 2004 and again in 2022. Those criteria are:

1. The ADA encompasses lands that are currently in production or have a strong potential for future production in agriculture, and in which agriculture is a permitted use under the current municipal zoning ordinance or in which agriculture is permitted as a non-conforming use;

2. In the Pinelands Area, the ADA encompasses lands that are located within Pinelands areas in which agriculture is a permitted use;
3. The ADA land is reasonably free of suburban and conflicting commercial development;
4. The ADA comprises not greater than 90 percent of the agricultural land mass of the county;
5. The ADA encompasses entire tax lots only, and if any part of the tax lot meets the criteria for the ADA, then the entire tax lot shall be included within the ADA;
6. The ADA only incorporates tax pa
7. rcels that are eligible for Farmland Tax Assessment;
8. The ADA consists of those area where a majority of the land has been classified by the USDA-NRCS as prime soils or soils of statewide importance and those that are located in State Planning Areas 3, 4, 4B or 5.

It is important to note that Cumberland County's ADA is criteria-based, not map-based, and as components of the criteria alter, say for instance, municipal zoning changes, then the mapped ADA areas will change accordingly. As such, the ADA map provided in this plan is a reference of the criteria as existing at the time of the plan, and may change.

Farms outside of the ADA can be preserved with state and county funds, but the ADA must first be amended to incorporate them. Amending the ADA for farms that are outside, although contiguous to, the ADA boundaries is a relatively simple process, if they meet the criteria.

Description of County ADA

Cumberland County has 62,928 acres that are assessed as farmland for tax purposes according to farmland assessment data from tax year 2021. Of this, 1,288 parcels (63%+/-) are greater than 10 acres in size. Approximately 80% of all farmland-assessed land in the county is encompassed within the current ADA.

County Agriculture Development Board (CADB)

The CADB is a seven-member board authorized by the Agriculture Retention and Development Act, with members appointed by the Cumberland County Board of County Commissioners. The voting members represent both local farmers and non-farmer residents, and includes ex-officio representation from the County Planning Board, the Soil Conservation District, and the County Agricultural Extension Service. In Cumberland County, the CADB is staffed through and managed by the Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs, with legal assistance provided by the County Counsel's office.

The main responsibilities of the CADB are to develop minimum standards for the Agricultural Development Areas (ADAs); review, approve, and coordinate applications for farmland preservation; coordinate SADC grants and request county cost share allocations; ensure compliance with the requirements of the farmland preservation program; and act in a judicial

capacity related to Right-to-Farm actions. The Cumberland CADB works collaboratively with the County Board of Agriculture to serve the agricultural community and promote agriculture as a significant component of the county's economy.

County Easement Purchase Program

The most common technique for farmland preservation in Cumberland County is the purchase of development easements through which landowners sell the development rights on their land. Since 1992, over 21,000 acres of farmland in Cumberland County have been preserved through this option. Once the development rights are purchased, the land is deed-restricted by a development easement while the land continues to be privately owned. The easement value is determined by two independent professional appraisals and is equal to the difference between fair market development value of the land and the value of the land as farmland. The land continues to be farmed and can be sold to another farmer in the future at whatever market price is then current for preserved farmland in the area. Land must be farm-assessed to be eligible and taxes continue to be paid on the land.

Landowners may sell development easements either through the Cumberland County program, which is administered by the CADB, or directly to the State of New Jersey through the State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC). In both cases, the farmland is ranked on a number of criteria and high-ranking farms may be approved for purchase of development easements. An offer is then made to the landowner who can accept or reject it.

Within state and county programs, appraisal rules dictate that the value of an easement is to be based on comparable recent sales of farmland in the area and cannot be speculative. In other words, development potential is determined by on current zoning restrictions and does not include potential development which would require variances to the standards. This often puts the preservation programs at a disadvantage in relation to the higher, speculative land offers that can be made by developers. In addition, easement acquisition offers by the state or county are only for the easement value, not for the entire value of the land.

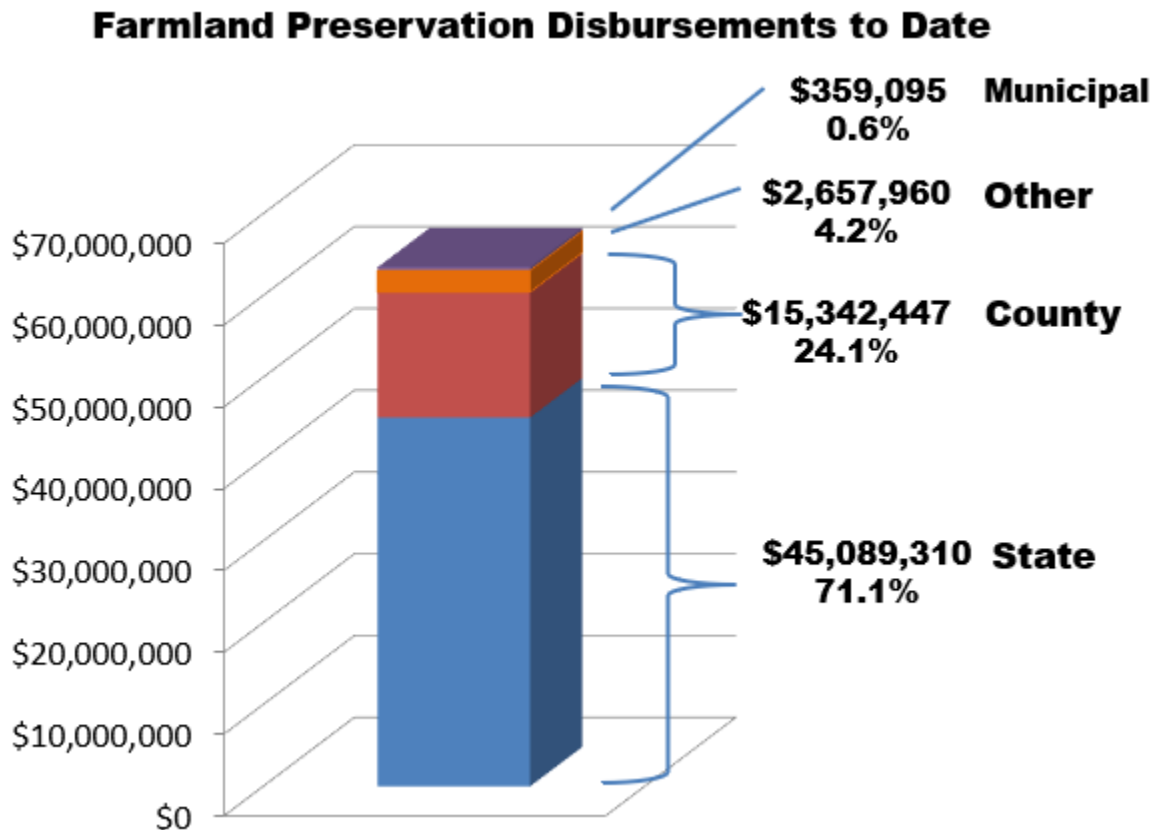
While this situation can be construed as a disincentive for landowners, the farmland easement program is perfectly established as an agricultural financing tool, as it liquidates part of the real asset of an agricultural operation, allowing for re-investment in the operation. Since the farmland preservation program targets parcels within primarily agricultural municipal zones, away from infrastructure amenities like sewer and water lines, it is relatively rare for developers and the preservation program are competing for the same parcel.

In Cumberland County, of which a full 1/3 of the land mass is permanently preserved open space and an additional 1/3 is environmentally constrained or restricted in some way, the farmland preservation program is not considered an open space preservation tool, but rather an agricultural business financing tool to bolster the industry.

County Planning Incentive Grants

The SADC has established a farmland preservation Planning Incentive Grant (PIG) program to provide grants to eligible counties and municipalities. PIG grants are now the primary means of preserving farmland in the state. This funding has as its goal the protection of large areas of contiguous farmland on high quality soils in order to enhance the long-term viability of the farming industry in a given area. PIG funding requires development of a Farmland Preservation Plan that meets current SADC standards. This Farmland Preservation Plan is an update of the plan completed in 2009 by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, which was itself an update of a plan developed by Cumberland County in 2005.

The Planning Incentive Grant program is the funding source for the state cost share of farmland easement acquisitions within Cumberland County. Cumberland typically ranks high statewide in the use of PIG funds and typically utilizes the entirety of its base grants and often draws significant funds from the PIG's competitive bank of funds. The below table shows the use of funds by Cumberland County since the inception of the program.



Municipal Planning Incentive Grants

On the municipal level, to be eligible for PIG funding, a municipality must adopt a farmland preservation plan element into their municipal Master Plan, appoint an Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC), and delineate one or more project areas where farms are “targeted” for preservation if owners are interested. In addition, the AAC is expected to consider measures that the municipality could take to promote the farm industry and remove barriers to farming. Two other eligibility requirements for the municipal PIG program are a dedicated source of funding and a Right to Farm Ordinance consistent with the Right to Farm Act and the SADC model.

In Cumberland County, only Hopewell and Upper Deerfield Townships are eligible and receive municipal PIG grants. While the municipalities maintain their eligibility criteria, the use of the municipal funds go towards easement transactions facilitated by the county through the County Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs. This municipal funding is very helpful to the County’s overall efforts to preserve farmland, as Hopewell and Upper Deerfield Townships include some of the best farmland in the county and also are the homes of some of the highest interest in the preservation program.

SADC Direct Easement Purchase

For farms that meet certain conditions, particularly as to size (see chart), the SADC can purchase the development easement through their Direct Easement Purchase Program. This program is extremely useful in Cumberland County, as there are many farms eligible for preservation, and the more partners and methods for preservation, the better. The Direct Easement method is also often a more rapid process, as there is a single funder, the SADC, rather than multiple funding partners which require individual approval processes.

SADC Minimum Standards - State Acquisition Program													
"Priority" "Alternate" "Other" Prioritization System													
	FY2018 Average Quality Score	FY2019 Average Quality Score	FY2020 Average Quality Score	FY2021 Average Quality Score	FY2022 Average Quality Score	FY2023 Average Quality Score	Average Acres 2012 Census	Average Acres 2017 Census	<i>Priority</i>		<i>Alternate</i>		
									**75% of Average Census Acres	**90% of Average Quality Score	**55% of Average Census Acres	**70% of Average Quality Score	
Atlantic		****	****	****	****	****	73	64	48	****	35	****	
Bergen	****	****	****	****	****	****	24	14	10	****	7	****	
Burlington	68.99	69.41	68.5	67.82	67.8	67.02	114	105	78	60	57	46	
Camden	****	****	****	****	51.29	51.30	41	47	35	46	25	****	
Cape May	59.19	55.91	59.89	59.89	65.72	<<<<<	48	50	37	59	27	46	
Cumberland	63.23	64.08	60.93	60.85	60.43	61.73	111	118	88	55	64	43	
Gloucester	60.88	61.25	65.29	65.21	66.63	64.19	74	85	63	57	46	44	
Hunterdon	67.35	64.87	64.85	64.9	64.12	65.92	66	63	47	59	34	46	
Mercer	71.58	70.48	70.48	68.96	66.13	64.74	73	78	58	58	42	45	
Middlesex	64.29	****	64.29	66.04	62.36	<<<<<	87	74	55	56	40	43	
Monmouth	77.72	74.81	70.83	71.47	68.62	64.77	47	47	35	58	25	45	
Morris	66.04	62.48	63.24	62.85	62.16	<<<<<	40	35	26	55	19	43	
Ocean	61.65	62.14	65.89	65.89	<<<<<	<<<<<	45	33	24	59	18	46	
Passaic	54.37	****	****	****	****	****	19	21	15	****	11	****	
Salem	68.65	69.33	70.19	69.78	69.61	67.87	123	126	94	61	69	47	
Somerset	68.12	****	73.7	73.7	67.72	61.25	87	79	59	55	43	42	
Sussex	58.37	57.77	46.91	46.91	<<<<<	<<<<<	69	59	44	42	32	32	
Warren	62.94	66.19	64.15	63.42	63.43	68.03	92	80	60	61	44	47	
These standards are effective January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023													
<<<<< to decrease processing time, the SADC utilize the average quality scores adopted in 2021 or 2022													
** all numbers are rounded down to the nearest whole number													
**** Independent review and approval by SADC to secure preliminary approval.													

Fee-Simple Acquisitions

Farmland can be purchased outright through a fee-simple sale. This approach is sometimes used when a landowner wishes to retire but has no heirs to continue farming, or does not want to go through the process of severing the development rights and then selling the land to another farmer.

Fee-simple acquisition is available to the Cumberland County program but has not typically been used due to limited financial resources as it is more expensive than the purchase of development rights. Only about 660 acres in Cumberland County have been preserved through fee-simple acquisition. The State of New Jersey through the SADC can also purchase farmland outright, especially in cases where there is an imminent threat of development. After severing the development rights, the state then re-sells the land to interested farmers through an auction.

Nonprofit Organizations

Some nonprofit land trusts are actively preserving farmland in southern New Jersey, either through fee-simple acquisition or purchase of development rights. Funding for nonprofit preservation has largely been through Green Acres Planning Incentive Grants, but the SADC will also provide PIG funding for delineated planning areas. NGOs such as Natural Lands, New Jersey Conservation Foundation and the South Jersey Land + Water Trust have helped to preserve hundreds of acres of farmland since the inception of farmland preservation in Cumberland County. The SADC has a separate program to provide cost share grants to non-profit organizations for either fee-simple or development easement acquisitions.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

A TDR program involves the establishment of a geographical sending area within a municipality where development is to be restricted, and of a receiving area where development is to be encouraged. Sale of the transferred development rights involves establishing a TDR bank or other financial mechanism by which landowners in a sending area are compensated for purchased. The development rights generate greater density of development in the receiving area, which is the principal incentive for their purchase by a developer. Sending and receiving areas must be approximately equal in development potential for the TDR program to work, and the receiving area generally needs water and sewer infrastructure in order to support the increased development density.

A TDR program has the distinct advantage of preserving land and containing sprawl development without any expenditure of public funds. However, TDR programs due to their complexity and high establishment costs and added procedural considerations for the developer are best utilized where development interest, particularly in higher density development is extensive. This level of interest does not exist in the agricultural municipalities of Cumberland County, which is high although Hopewell Township was identified in 2005 as one of only six municipalities selected by the state to develop their own TDR programs as demonstration projects, the township ultimately did not complete the process or establish a program which was utilized by a developer.

Other Programs and Partnerships

Donation

Land, or the development rights to the land, can be donated by a landowner to a public entity or a non-profit organization, either directly or through a will. The contribution is tax-deductible and can be used effectively in estate planning. This method is rarely used in Cumberland County.

Term Farmland Preservation Programs

Farmers can participate in an eight-year or sixteen-year farmland preservation program to temporarily preserve their land for eight years. This program can serve as a trial period for farmers to see if preservation is the right choice for them. There is both a municipal and non-municipal eight-year program, although Cumberland County utilizes the non-municipally approved eight-year program. This program requires that the property remain in agricultural production and places restrictions on allowable non-agricultural development on the property during the eight-year period. Although this program offers no direct compensation, farmers are offered a number of incentives to participate in the program, including grants covering a portion of soil and water conservation projects. Cumberland County currently does not have any farms participating in either term program.

Coordination with Open Space Preservation Programs

While Farmland Preservation can and is utilized as an open space method in many parts of the state, in Cumberland County its primary use is as a financing tool for the significant agricultural sector of the county's economy. With that being said, there remains a priority within the county effort to preserve large contiguous tracts of farmland in order to reduce the chances of conflicting development and to establish a critical mass of permanently preserved farmland in key communities. Since the program is directed away from areas with existing or planned development infrastructure, farmland preservation occurs almost exclusively in rural areas in which it shares space with open space initiatives.

In October 2011, the County of Cumberland completed its Open Space & Recreation Master Plan, which specifically studied the prospect of expanding the use of the county's Farmland & Open Space Trust Fund to open space acquisition. Up until 2011, the fund had been used exclusively for the Farmland Preservation Program. The plan established a County Parks and Open Space program and laid out criteria for evaluation of applications. The intent of the plan and program was to assist municipalities and non-profits through cost share funding from the Trust and county awards of Green Acres funding to acquire open space primarily for active recreation purposes, since fully 1/3 of the county's land mass is permanently preserved open space primarily for habitat protection. Notably, since part of the initiative of the Open Space & Recreation Plan was to build equity in the use of the trust funds amongst the 14 municipalities, the criteria provided for additional scoring points for open space projects occurring *outside* of the Farmland Preservation project areas. Since the farmland program has utilized the great majority of trust funds during its lifespan and farmland preservation is concentrated in mostly in the more rural municipalities on the western side of the county where the best soils and highest concentration of the agricultural industry exist, open space utilizing trust funds was prioritized for more urban and densely populated areas of the county.

Interestingly, since 2011, several open space projects have been funded through the county's Farmland & Open Space Trust, with a majority occurring within municipalities which also have a high concentration of preserved farmland, although the open space projects are located in different neighborhoods than the farmland acquisitions in most cases. Below is a table showing the open space acquisitions funded partially through the trust since 2011.

Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Program

According to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, Cumberland County contains 560 farms on 66,256 acres of active farmland. Of this, over 230 farms covering 22,160 acres (33% of all farmland) has been preserved as of November 2022.

The Farmland Preservation Program, since it is based largely on soil quality and existing locations of active agricultural, has been concentrated in municipalities where agriculture primarily exists. These municipalities are Hopewell and Upper Deerfield Townships, although

all municipalities are encouraged to have their farmers apply for preservation. The cities of Bridgeton and Millville are currently the only two municipalities in Cumberland County without preserved farmland within their boundaries. The table below shows the amount of preserved farmland in each municipality in Cumberland County.

Rank	Municipality	# of Parcels Preserved	Acreage Preserved	% of County Total
1	Hopewell	69	5,636	25.4%
2	Upper Deerfield	61	5,023	22.7%
3	Greenwich	26	2,938	13.3%
4	Stow Creek	33	2,110	9.5%
5	Lawrence	17	1,873	8.5%
6	Fairfield	14	1,716	7.7%
7	Maurice River	1	1,083	4.9%
8	Vineland	9	834	3.7%
9	Deerfield	10	560	2.5%
10	Shiloh	8	247	1.1%
11	Commercial	1	84	0.4%
12	Downe	2	57	0.3%

Farmland Preservation Program Funding To Date

Preservation of the 22,000+/- acres of preserved farmland in Cumberland County as of late 2022 has been achieved primarily through the efforts of the county and state. Some additional funding has been provided by nonprofit partners and through a period of when federal funds from the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program were utilized, although due to restrictions relating to nursery operations and sod production on lands preserved with federal funds, this source is no longer a viable option for Cumberland County.

The total cost of farmland preservation in Cumberland County has been over \$63 million, of which over \$45 million has come from the state. The county's funds are generated by the Cumberland County Farmland & Open Space Trust Fund tax, which is discussed in more detail under the County Funding Sources section. As well, both Hopewell and Upper Deerfield Township's have provided approximately \$360,000 in municipal cost share through April 2022.

Monitoring Preserved Farmland

The Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Program conducts annual monitoring of preserved farmland through its regular monitoring program. The CADB, through the Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs, is responsible for monitoring easements held by the county, and the SADC is responsible for easements held by the state.

Each farm that has been in the Farmland Preservation Program for at least 12 months is inspected to ensure compliance with the requirements of the program. The monitoring program checks to make sure that no new non-agricultural buildings have been constructed without prior approval, that pre-existing non-agricultural uses have not been expanded, and that the site appears to be a functioning and viable agricultural operation.

Over the last several inspection cycles, Cumberland County has moved to utilizing drone technology for these inspections. A letter and questionnaire is mailed to each preserved farm indicating that a drone inspection will be occurring and providing an opt-out option for those farms which would prefer to not be inspected by drone. To date no farm has requested to opt-out. In the letter it indicates that the drone will not fly less than 100 feet off the ground while over the farm. The questionnaire, which includes a self-addressed and stamped return envelope, asks a variety of questions relating to the operation of the farm, including questions related to soil erosion, ownership changes, structure additions and changes, and the like. Staff of the Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs then maps out all preserved parcels and determines launch locations for the drone. The intent is to capture as many images of preserved farms in a single flight as possible. Images of preserved farms are taken while in flight, with several examples provided in this plan. The images, an inspection form and the questionnaire are filed for each farm annually. Cumberland is one of the last counties to input this data into the SADC's e-form database; however, the county is actively working to move to the e-form system over the next few inspection cycles.

To date, the majority of issues found during inspections revolve around maintenance of tillable acreage – farms going fallow and needing to be mown or otherwise maintained from encroaching non-farm vegetation. These issues are relatively easy to resolve and all instances have been corrected in a timely manner to date.

FUTURE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM



Soybeans being grown in Cumberland County

Farmland Preservation Planning Goals and Objectives

The Farmland Preservation Program in Cumberland County has been in existence for the past 30 years. During that time a full 22,000 acres have been preserved through the program. Due to the high amount of acreage dedicated to agriculture in the county, previous preservation plans have set iterative goals of approximately 1,000 acres per year, recognizing that the projected 10-year windows of the plan would not begin to reach the culmination of the effort. However, in analyzing those farms yet to be preserved, this plan projects a substantive culmination to preservation of farmland within Cumberland County.

It can be projected, that if the farms targeted within this plan are able to be preserved, the Farmland Preservation Program will have achieved its overarching goal of protecting enough active agricultural lands to ensure the future viability of farmland within Cumberland County. While sporadic preservation may occur after this goal is met, the fundamental goal will have been achieved and a redistribution of funding at that time will be in order.

In the 2005 Farmland Preservation Plan, the main goal of the preservation program was “to preserve, to the greatest extent possible, lands that make up the core areas of the Cumberland County agricultural industry.” The plan proposed a one year goal of 600 acres, a five year goal of 5,000 acres, and a ten year goal of 10,000 acres.

In 2009, when the plan was updated, these goals were increased to a one year goal of 1,050 acres, a five year goal of 5,250 acres, and a ten year goal of 10,500 acres. As well, the objective statement was modified to read:

Agriculture is a leading industry and way of life for Cumberland County and of the region's character. Preservation of the lands essential to that industry is a major purpose of this Plan, along with strengthening efforts to support farmers, farming, and the agricultural industry of Cumberland County whenever possible.

The objective statement from 2009 remains applicable to the work of the Cumberland CADB and the goals and objectives of the county as a whole and this plan does not recommend any variation to the objective statement.

The following sections will detail the preservation objectives for the following ten years, which are projected to be the last stretch prior to attainment of the overall goal of the program.

Description of Project Areas

“Project areas” are areas with high concentrations of farm-assessed parcels, preserved farmland, and high quality farmland soils. A total of ?? project areas have been identified in Cumberland County. These project areas are consistent with the State Plan because they are within the Rural, Rural Environmentally Sensitive, and Environmentally Sensitive Planning Areas. The summaries in this section describe four categories of land within each project area:

- i. Target farms
- ii. Parcels from which an application for the sale of a development easement has been granted final approval
- iii. Parcels from which development easements have been purchased
- iv. Other permanently preserved lands dedicated for open space

Target farm parcels are those with the highest priority for preservation (and only farm designated as targeted are eligible for preservation under the SADC's Planning Incentive Grant program). Farm-assessed parcels were identified as target farms based on contiguity with preserved farmland, size (greater than twelve acres), high-quality farmland soils, and local knowledge. In some cases, parcels less than twelve acres were targeted if they were contiguous to one or more parcels with the same owner, and the aggregate size is greater than 12 acres, although this plan attempts to limit this except for critically-located farms. The density of each project area is expressed as a ratio between the total area of all properties listed in categories i through iv and the total area of the project area.

The Project Areas within Cumberland County are depicted on Map 19 and are shown individually on Maps 20A through 20O.

Commercial South

The Commercial South project area encompasses 230 acres in the southern area of Commercial Township. This project area contains 3 targeted farm parcels all contiguous with the preserved Chando Farm on Strawberry Avenue. Targeted acreage totals 27 acres, or 12% of the total project area. The preserved Chando Farm is approximately 83 acres in size, so about 36% of the project area is permanently preserved farmland. The density of this project area is 48%.

Deerfield South

The Deerfield South project area encompasses highly active farmland (including the Cedar Rose preserved winery) and includes a major east-west travel corridor through the county (Irving Avenue). This area will likely grow to be a mix of both farm and non-farm development, so targeted parcels are limited to encourage iterative development. There is approximately 324 acres of preserved farmland, about 11% of the 3,041-acre project area, with an additional 332 acres, or 11%, targeted.

Deerfield-Upper Deerfield North

This is perhaps the primary project area within Cumberland County. Within its boundaries are some of the most concentrated and contiguous farmed lands within the entire county. At almost 10,000 acres in size (9,748 acres) a full 48% of this project area (4,699 acres) are currently preserved with another 24% targeted (2,380 acres). Nearly every remaining farm-assessed parcel meeting minimum eligibility has been targeted in this project area. The density ratio for this project area is consequently high, at 73%.

Downe

Downe Township is located along the Bayshore and while mostly comprised of largely preserved wetlands, does include a few pockets of active agriculture. Perhaps the most significant such pocket is encompassed by this project area, which includes a preserved farm facilitated by a non-profit and a farm with final approval for preservation. This project area also includes the thoroughfare to Fortescue, a bayfront community popular for fishing and ecotourism and one of the last developed portions of the Bayshore. At a total acreage of 538 acres, this project area includes 217 acres, or 40% preserved farmland and 222 acres, or 41% targeted acreage giving a density ratio of 82%.

Fairfield-Lawrence

This project area captures the heart of the agricultural belt located on the eastern side of the Cohansy River. The soils in this region are sandier than those found in the western and northern areas of the county, which lend themselves well to vegetable production, particularly asparagus, tomatoes, peppers and the like. This project area includes the major route to the

Bayshore communities, Main Street (County Route 553). There are 1,773 acres preserved in this project area, or 30% with another 2,023 acres targeted, or 35%, giving a density of 65%

Fairfield-Millville

This project area is located on the southern side of State Route 49 (Bridgeton-Millville Pike). It is comprised of two farms. The first, Cumberland Nurseries has been preserved, while the second, a portion of Hopewell Nursery, is targeted for preservation. Preserved acreage comes in at approximately 206 acres (21%) while targeted acreage is 624 acres (62%).

Greenwich

This project area encompasses almost the entirety of Greenwich Township. This project area's importance is not only agricultural, but historical, as in the heart of the project area is the village of Greenwich, which was established in 1685 and to this day exhibits its 18th century charm of being a small village of less than 1,000 residents surrounded by active agricultural lands. Only a few large tracts of unpreserved farmland remains in this project area, with 2,905 acres already preserved (54%) and a remaining 1,302 acres targeted (24%). The density ratio for this project area is 78%.

Hopewell South

The Hopewell South project area is located on the western and northern shore of the Cohansey River and includes light residential interspersed among large contiguous tracts of farmland. This project area is targeted by Cumberland County as well as Hopewell Township, which has a municipal Planning Incentive Grant for this same targeted area. The total acreage of the project area is 5,153 acres, with 2,214 acres preserved (43%) with another 1,097 acres targeted (21%).

Lawrence Central

Lawrence Township is a Bayshore community that runs from Delaware Bay deep into the county in a generally rectangular shape. Due to its length, it includes several smaller projects areas. Lawrence Central captures a large preserved farm of 171 acres (19% of project area) and includes 176 acres of targeted lands (20%), giving it a density of 39%.

Lawrence East

Just south with its border on the City of Millville, this Lawrence Township project area includes a neighborhood of farms surrounding the Hogbin Road/Ramah Road intersection. This project area includes 110 acres of preserved land (25%) with another 211 acres targeted (49%) giving it a density percentage of 74%.

Lawrence West

This project area includes large swaths of modified agricultural lands, which were diked or otherwise drained generations ago to produce farmland. Largely owned by the Sheppard brothers under the moniker of East Fresh Growers, this tract includes 1,009 acres of already preserved farmland (48%) and 635 acres of targeted parcels (30%) giving it a density ratio of 78%.

Maurice River Central

This project area was created to support the preservation of a single huge farm operation which is currently on the market. It currently includes no preserved farmland, and the targeted farm is approximately 2,382 acres in size (64%).

Maurice River South

Prior to Maurice River Central being established, the township was interested in participating in the Farmland Preservation Program, and through discussions with the County Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs selected a few farmed parcels along Hoffman Mill Road on its border with Cape May County to target, since it abuts preserved farmland on the Cape May side. There are 128 acres targeted (5%).

Shiloh-Hopewell Central

This area incorporates the farmland south of the Borough of Shiloh and State Route 49, including both sides of Roadstown Road and running all the way south to nearly Greenwich. This area includes 760 acres of preserved farmland (27%) with another 953 acres targeted (34%), giving a density figure of 61%.

Shiloh-Hopewell North

This project area in combination with Hopewell South encompasses almost the entirety of Hopewell Township except for the development corridor on either side of State Route 49 as it runs through the township. The project area includes 2,677 acres of preserved farmland (44%) with another 1,926 acres targeted for preservation (31%) giving a density figure of 75%.

Stow Creek

Stow Creek is a rural municipality with massive amounts of agricultural acreage. Interestingly, it is relatively sparsely preserved and therefore includes over 3,000 acres of targeted acreage. Between this project area and Stow Creek North, nearly the entirety of this township is located within a project area. There is currently 1,563 acres preserved in this project area (19%) with 3,123 acres targeted (38%), giving a density ratio of 57%.

Stow Creek North

Stow Creek North captures a small northern point that is separate from the larger Stow Creek project area. There is about 382 acres preserved in this project area (36%) with another 284 acres targeted (27%) giving a density of 63%.

Vineland

Vineland was founded by Charles Landis as a utopian agricultural community, due in part to the astounding soils found there. Some of the most intense and highest production value farms are located in the eastern section of the city. This project area has sporadic participation in the preservation program, partially because of high levels of interest in development and high property values and also because the farms are themselves so productive that the need for liquidity is limited. Nonetheless, this project area attempts to capture the entirety of these lands another 432 acres targeted (15%), giving a density percentage of 26%.

Minimum Eligibility Criteria

The SADC's rules at N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.20 set forth minimum eligibility criteria for all farms participating in preservation programs such as the Planning Incentive Grant, and Cumberland County's program is consistent with these criteria. According to these standards, all participating farms in Cumberland County must meet the following criteria:

For lands less than or equal to 10 acres in size:

- The land must produce agricultural or horticultural products of at least \$2,500 annually;
- At least 75 percent of the land must be tillable or a minimum of five acres, whichever is less;
- At least 75 percent of the land, or a minimum of five acres, whichever is less, must consist of soils that are capable of supporting agricultural or horticultural production; and
- The land must exhibit development potential based on certain standards.

For land greater than 10 acres in size:

- At least 50 percent of the land or a minimum of 25 acres, whichever is less, must be tillable;
- At least 50 percent of the land, or a minimum of 25 acres, whichever is less, must consist of soils that are capable of supporting agricultural or horticultural production; and
- The land must exhibit development potential based on standards set forth in the rule.

Cumberland County has chosen 12 acres as the minimum size for Target Farms. However, farms less than 12 acres will also be considered if they meet the other criteria and are in a strategic location adjacent to two or more preserved farms.

Ranking Criteria

The Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) has developed an Easement Purchase Program Scoring Worksheet that ranks farms based on six criteria: soil quality, boundaries and buffers, local commitment, size and density, degree of imminence of change, and special considerations.

This ranking criteria remains unaltered from the last plan and has been utilized effectively by the CADB to select the most appropriate farms for preservation for over a decade.

Policies Related to Farmland Preservation Applications

Approval of Housing Opportunities

Agricultural labor housing must be approved by the SADC and the CADB, who both recognize the need to house those who work on farms. The housing must be determined to be for an agricultural purpose and shall not be used as a residence for the landowner or contract purchaser or their family members. The application shall be submitted directly to the agency that holds the easement, either the County or the SADC. The location and construction of the residential unit must be in compliance with all municipal ordinances. As discussed in Section 6.2.1: Farmer Support, there are a number of financing opportunities to enable farmers to construct housing for agricultural labor.

Replacement housing must also be approved by the SADC and the CADB. The county has no additional policies on replacement housing beyond the state requirements.

According to SADC Policy P-31, the intent of a Residual Dwelling Site Opportunity (RDSO) is to provide the limited future construction of a residential unit or units for agricultural purposes on presently preserved farms. Each request must first be approved by the CADB and then evaluated by the SADC. The landowner must complete a CADB/SADC application and adequately explain how the construction and use of the residential unit is for agricultural activities, including production, harvesting, storage, grading, packaging, processing, or sale of crops, plants, or animals. The location of the dwelling unit must be approved by the municipal planning board. RDSOs are to be allocated at a density not to exceed one unit per 100 acres, including existing dwellings. There are no restrictions on the relationship of the occupant(s) of the unit and the owner of the premises therefore, the unit can be used for agricultural labor housing. If approved, the applicant has up to three years from the date of approval to construct the residential unit. The RDSO approval is not transferable should the property be sold, and the new owner must apply separately.

Division of the Premises and Approval of Exceptions

Cumberland County policies pertaining to division of premises, and approval of exceptions will align with all state requirements. The application for farmland preservation allows for a portion

of the property to be excepted from (not included in) the preservation. This exception can be either severable or non-severable. A severable exception can be sold separately from the remainder of the premises and can be subdivided, neither of which is possible with a non-severable exception.

As described in SADC Policy P-30-A, a landowner wishing to divide a permanently deed-restricted parcel must receive the joint approval to do so from the CADB and the SADC. A landowner requesting a division of premises must answer a series of questions relating to the current and proposed lot lines of the parcel, the current and proposed agricultural use of the parcel, and future agricultural viability, such as access and soil quality, of the preserved parcel(s). The division must also be for an agricultural purpose, and not for instance, for estate purposes. If a landowner can satisfactorily demonstrate that the new parcels can support a variety of viable agricultural operations, the CADB and the SADC may approve the division.

The Cumberland CADB does not have any additional restrictions or policies regarding divisions or approval of exceptions beyond those established by the SADC. The CADB recognizes that each applicant's interest is unique and so long as applicants are clearly educated on the conditions of each component, the decision-making process of the need for exceptions or divisions are left to the discretion of the applicant.

Funding Plan

County Funding Sources

Farmland preservation in Cumberland County has been primarily funded by state and county sources. Non-profit conservation organizations, the federal government and certain municipalities have provided a smaller proportion of the funds used to date.

Cumberland County funds come from the Cumberland County Farmland and Open Space Preservation Trust Fund Tax, which is generated from a one-cent tax on every \$100 of assessed property and which is dedicated to preserving farmland and open space in the county. The Trust Fund was established after it passed a ballot resolution in 1994. The Trust Fund began accumulating income in 1995 while expenditures began in the following year. The chart below indicates income and expenses by year related to the Trust account. In 2021, the Trust Fund yielded \$878,057 From tax and accumulated interest.

Financial Policies Related to Cost-Share Requirements

Cost share requirements through the SADC Planning Incentive Grant Program are determined by a sliding scale ratio as shown below. Over the last 2 years, the county share has averaged 32% based on an average certified value of \$4,838.

Landowner's asking price

Percent SADC cost share

From \$0 to \$1,000	80% above \$0
From > \$1,000 to \$3,000	\$800 + 70% above \$1,000
From > \$3,000 to \$5,000	\$2,200 + 60% above \$3,000
From > \$5,000 to \$9,000	\$3,400 + 50% above \$5,000
From > \$9,000 to \$50,000	60%
From > \$50,000 to \$75,000	\$30,000 + 55% above \$50,000
From > \$75,000 to \$85,000	\$43,750 + 50% above \$75,000
From > \$85,000 to \$95,000	\$48,750 + 40% above \$85,000
From > \$95,000 to \$105,000	\$52,750 + 30% above \$95,000
From > \$105,000 to \$115,000	\$55,750 + 20% above \$105,000
From > \$115,000	\$57,750 + 10% above \$115,000

In Cumberland County, both Hopewell and Upper Deerfield Townships have established preservation fund accounts, which are funded through annual allocations from the operating budget of each municipality. In preservation transactions which utilize the municipal Planning Incentive Grant funding and are located within the municipality's project area, the townships are asked to provide a 5% cost share to the acquisition cost to go towards the local share, thereby reducing the county cost share. This is not a requirement however, and the county typically will commit to the full local cost share amount in its resolution of final approval.

Cumberland County Preservation Goals, Cost Projections and Funding Plan

Targeted farms in all the county Project Areas total 17,254 acres, of which 91 acres are currently under final preservation approval, leaving 17,163 acres of target farms. Since the goal has been to reach 50% of the total farmed acreage in Cumberland County in preserved acreage. It was felt that if the county could permanently preserve 50% of its total tillable acreage, it would secure agriculture as a viable component of its economy into the future. The USDA Census of Agriculture for 2017 identified 66,256 acres dedicated to farming in Cumberland County. Fifty percent of this figure is 33,128 acres. If you subtract the current figure of preserved farmland, which is 21,821 acres, in order to reach this 50% threshold, the county needs to preserve an additional 11,307 acres of farmland. This constitutes 64% of all targeted acreage in this plan and is the basis for determining cost projections over the next ten years.

Goals of the Plan – Easement Acquisitions

One year = 1,131 acres

Five years = 5,654 acres

Ten years = 11,307 acres

The estimated cost to preserve farmland within Cumberland County's project areas is based on an average per-acre price of \$4,811. This price is the average per-acre certification value of easements on Cumberland County farms certified by the SADC and currently in queue for closing and with final approval. In each case, the value of the farm easement is based on appraisals by two independent state-certified appraisers. They each determine a fair market value for the farm based on comparable sales and also determine the agricultural value for the

farm. The easement value or “development value” is the difference between these two market values. The two sets of appraisals are then reviewed by the SADC and a certified fair market value of the easement is established, which can range from the lowest to the highest appraisal. This certified value becomes the offering price to the landowner.

The following table illustrates the amount of funding needed to preserve 64% of the Target Farms in Cumberland County’s Project Areas over a ten-year time period, using the average per-acre easement value of \$4,811 as a starting point. To calculate estimated costs for the ten-year period, the acreage per-acre price has been increased by the ten-year average inflation rate of 3.0 percent for each year following the first year.

Year	Acreage Goals	Per Acre Price	Total Cost	State Share	County Share
2022	1,131	\$4,811	\$5,441,241	\$3,717,145	\$1,724,096
2023	1,131	\$4,955	\$5,604,105	\$3,814,863	\$1,789,242
2024	1,131	\$5,104	\$5,772,624	\$3,904,212	\$1,868,412
2025	1,131	\$5,257	\$5,945,667	\$3,990,734	\$1,954,933
2026	1,131	\$5,415	\$6,124,365	\$4,080,083	\$2,044,282
2027	1,131	\$5,577	\$6,307,587	\$4,171,694	\$2,135,893
2028	1,131	\$5,744	\$6,496,464	\$4,266,132	\$2,230,332
2029	1,131	\$5,916	\$6,690,996	\$4,363,398	\$2,327,598
2030	1,131	\$6,093	\$6,891,183	\$4,463,492	\$2,427,691
2031	1,131	\$6,276	\$7,098,156	\$4,566,978	\$2,531,178
TOTAL	11,310		\$62,372,388	\$41,338,731	\$21,033,657

Revenue from the Cumberland County Farmland and Open Space Preservation Trust Fund Tax in 2021 was \$878,057, which is not adequate to meet the 2022 goal of preserving 1,131 acres.

The Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board and County Farmland Preservation Program have successfully protected over 21,750 acres of farmland since 1992 and the inception of the program. The funding philosophy for farmland preservation throughout this period has been one of “pay-as-you-go,” with the amount spent and the number of farms acquired being only as great as trust fund revenues allowed directly. No form of indebtedness through bonding or other means has been necessary.

As well, the calculations in the above table do not calculate those acres to be preserved through the Direct State program nor does it calculate the municipal cost share contributions projected from Hopewell and Upper Deerfield Townships. Within the two project areas for the municipal Planning Incentive Grant Programs there are approximately 3,347 acres targeted. Roughly, 5% municipal cost share over the ten-year period on these acres would total \$927,956, which reduces the county 10-year cost commitment by 4.4%.

Farmland Preservation Program Administrative Resources

The Cumberland County Planning Incentive Grant and the Cumberland CADB are administered through the Cumberland County Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs. The County Planning Director/Department Head, Matthew E. Pisarski, AICP, PP currently manages the CADB and its responsibilities. The department also includes GIS support and handles shared services, many municipal interactions, demographic analysis, and development review. These other responsibilities pair well with the work of the CADB, allowing the department to take a comprehensive approach with planning and balancing preservation with development. Legal support for the CADB and its work is provided by the County's Legal Department, specifically County Counsel, John Carr.

Farmland Preservation Program Limitations

Given the success of the Farmland Preservation Program over the last thirty years, limitations are considered very limited in Cumberland County. While the dedicated tax at the county level can be considered limiting, it has not outright prevented preservation of any parcel. Every parcel approved by the CADB has been supported with a resolution of final approval by the County Commissioners, and while closings may have been delayed due to availability of funds, no farm has been denied preservation due to it.

Interest in preservation among the farming community has definitely seen ebbs and flows over the years, but never has interest entirely disappeared. As the county approaches its overall goal of 50% of farmable land under preservation, the intensity of the program may wane, but it will always be available for farmers in Cumberland County. The CADB receives an operating budget from the County Commissioners each year, which can be used for marketing and advertising efforts. While not used for that purpose in recent memory, it can be used when interest from farmers is lower than usual through targeted outreach and general publicity of the program.

Presently, the funding at both the state and county levels are stable and available, and the modus operandi of the program supports long-term stability by eschewing indebtedness.

Staffing of the Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs is very experienced with the Farmland Preservation Program and with maintaining the easements for which the county holds. This is not expected to change in the foreseeable future and multiple levels of staff have been trained in this work, to ensure that eventual retirements do not negatively impact the program. In other words, there is a long bench of staff capable of handling most aspects of the program.

The inflationary projections of the last comprehensive plan did not materialize, and even with average inflationary figures calculated into the projections of this plan, it is not likely that land valuations will increase to an extent in Cumberland County which will threaten the ability of the program to operate successfully.

AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Cedar Rose Vineyards, Deerfield Township

According to New Jersey Future, farmland is a key economic and economic resource for New Jersey, ranking third in importance to the state's economy behind pharmaceuticals and tourism. The agricultural industry is recognized in the *New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan* as an important industry which should be enhanced and sustained through state and local policies and actions.

Each year, the delegates of the State Agricultural Convention endorse economic development strategies for different sectors of New Jersey's food and agricultural industry. For each sector, this plan will provide a synopsis of the state strategy and then indicate how Cumberland County is playing a role.

Produce

The State Department of Agriculture cites New Jersey's proximity to large, affluent markets as an advantage for produce growers, but notes that competition is increasing and recommends a variety of strategies related to branding, new market development, expansion of community markets, encouraging alternating crops, and addressing ongoing labor issues. Cumberland

County is recognized as having a diverse selection of produce operations, ranking first in the state for the production of such commodities as beets, cabbage, collards, escarole, kale, lettuce, radishes, tomatoes, and peaches.

In 2021, the County of Cumberland applied for and received a Specialty Crop Marketing Grant from the USDA to support a three-year marketing campaign for specialty crops in Cumberland County. As well, efforts are underway to at the county administrative level to combine and connect all agriculturally-related efforts in the county, but connecting administration of the County Agriculture Development Board with the County Board of Agriculture, the Rutgers Extension Center and 4-H Programming. The intent is to encourage collaboration and invest in agricultural education and programming in order to support this economic sector within the county.

Horticulture

The Department of Agriculture notes that the horticultural industry is the state's leading agricultural sector, representing almost 40% of New Jersey's total agricultural production. Cumberland County produces a full 28% of the state's total horticultural sector. To that end, the Cumberland CADB advocates for horticultural considerations in farmland preservation policy and does not participate in the Federal ALE program due to restrictions related to this sector.

Most of the strategies promoted by the NJ Department of Agriculture relate to marketing, of which nurseries in Cumberland County need relatively little assistance.

Aquaculture

New Jersey has the second highest number of molluscan farms in the Northeast and ranks third in sales from those farms. The state is located in the second largest market for seafood products in the nation. Cumberland County is located on the Delaware Bay and is home to significant numbers of oyster operations. The county works closely and is represented on the Delaware Bayshore Council, which advocates for aquaculture and the communities which rely on this sector.

Dairy

The Department of Agriculture notes that dairy farming is trending downward throughout the state due to commodity pricing fluctuations and the high cost of doing business. Cumberland County is not a significant producer of milk and milk products, although artisanal production could become a niche market.

Field Crops

It is cited in the Department of Agriculture’s discussion of field crops that due to the state’s high land values, property taxes and labor rates, the cost to grow field crops in New Jersey is higher than in more other production areas of the country. Consequently, field crops, while used for rotational nutrient management, are not often used as the primary agricultural income for farm operations, particularly on owner-occupied parcels. There is a sizeable field rental use of field crops, but Cumberland County ranks low statewide on field crop production as a sector.



Haystack in Cumberland County

Livestock

Cumberland County is one of the most ethnically diverse counties in South Jersey, and as such has experienced growth in livestock production, including goats, chickens and waterfowl. Backyard chicken raising is allowed in most communities, including the three cities of Bridgeton, Millville and Vineland, with Vineland being historically known for chicken production in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Cumberland County’s 4-H programs center around livestock curricula, with multiple clubs on goats, rabbits, cows, pigs and other livestock.

Organic

Organic farming continues to grow both statewide and within Cumberland County.

Equine

Cumberland County is home to a diverse equine industry. Equine-related assets within New Jersey continue to grow, and Cumberland County is no exception. A growing subsector of this industry within Cumberland County is the Hispanic Vaqueros culture, and it is not uncommon to see scenes reminiscent of the southwest, with men and women donning cowboy boots and hats on horseback in the streets of Bridgeton and the surrounding countryside.

Wine

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture notes that the state's wine industry continues to build in sophistication and prowess. Cumberland County is no exception. With Terra Nonno, Cedar Rose and Sunny Slope wineries along with a rum distillery, floor malting facility and a very successful brewery, Cumberland County has many local components of alcohol production. And not just wine grapes, but table grapes as well, with Aylano Farm in Upper Deerfield producing a wide variety of beautiful table grapes for sale at farm markets throughout South Jersey.

Agricultural Industry Retention, Expansion and Recruitment Strategies

Cumberland County considers agriculture, food processing and ancillary services to be a major component of its GDP. Economic development trends have been led by food manufacturing, cold storage and marijuana cultivation facilities. Cumberland County supports all aspects of food production, from an active Farmland Preservation Program, ensuring the raw resource of the land itself for agricultural commodity production, to support of agricultural/food processing labor with supportive immigration policies, to extensive commercial/industrial facilities for value-added food production and cold storage, to educational opportunities from gradeschool through post academic opportunities at the Rutgers Food Innovation Center. This chain of support has been methodical in its development and has resulted in Cumberland County being a logical location for food development. Two recent examples are provided below.

Oatly

Oatly is a Swedish-owned producer of oatmilk and oatmilk products. In 2019, the company chose the City of Millville in Cumberland County to establish its first North American production and processing facility. Phase One in 2019 was the rehabilitation of an existing 19,000 square foot warehouse. Phase Two began in 2021 with the construction of a 71,866 square foot main plant and by the end of 2022 the total facility included four buildings encompassing 125,286 square feet of production space. The facility supports a "low-acid aseptic" production technology – the only such facility in New Jersey and one of only 25 in the United States. Low-acid aseptic facilities can take a sterile food product and put it into a sterile package, resulting in a product that does not need refrigeration, lasts longer, and uses more environmentally sustainable packaging.

Rovagnati

Rovagnati is an Italian cured meat producer founded in 1962. Now the lead producer of prosciutto and other cured meats such as soppressata, salami and mortadella in Italy, in 2021 the company established its first North American production facility in the City of Vineland, Cumberland County. The 70,000 square foot facility provides Rovagnatti product to the North American market, including Eataly's, itself an Italian-based company, throughout the United States.

These two examples show the synergy being created in Cumberland County related to agriculture and food production. The attractors to these international companies include a large agricultural base within the county, communities which are amenable to large industrial/manufacturing development, relatively low land costs, a workforce which is well versed in food manufacturing and processing, and a governmental structure which is supportive of development. In addition, there are numerous existing programs which support the agricultural community.

Farmer Support

Agricultural Education

As shown below, the educational path for those interested in agriculture starts in Kindergarten and runs comprehensively all the way through to graduate degree studies. Most of this system is available without ever having to leave Cumberland County.

4-H

4-H youth development, in New Jersey managed by Rutgers Cooperative Extension, is a program that uses a learn-by-doing approach to enable youth grades K through 13 (one year out of high school) to develop the knowledge attitudes, and skills they need to become competent, caring, and contributing citizens of the world. In Cumberland County there are currently 22 4-H clubs, concentrating on livestock, horses, apiary, poultry and other agricultural themes.



Horse Show at Cumberland County Fairgrounds

High School Education

Cumberland Regional High School, which is a regional school encompassing the rural municipalities within Cumberland County includes an active Future Farmers of America (FFA) branch. Founded in 1928, FFA is an intracurricular student organization for those interested in agriculture and leadership. FFA is part of Cumberland Regional's Agricultural Sciences Academy, which offers two, four-year pathways of study (Plant Science and Animal Science) utilizing the nationally recognized Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education. Students in this program are also able to earn dual credit through partnerships with Rutgers University and Rowan College of South Jersey.

In 2019, the City of Vineland School District received a land donation of 48 acres from the South Jersey Land and Water Trust near the Vineland High School, and with this donation the high school established a "School of Agriculture", with courses on distribution, pesticide control, land management, food service, cold food storage and agricultural production. The district is working to establish an FFA chapter and includes the Rutgers Food Innovation Center, located in Bridgeton, as a partner in the program.

College Education

In 2019, the local county college merged with Rowan College of Gloucester County to become Rowan College of South Jersey. This created a regional college in southern New Jersey offering more than 120 unique degrees and certificates along with multiple high school dual enrollment programs and an arrangement with Rowan University for easy transition to 4-year degree completion and graduate studies. Within this system are offered Associate degrees and certificates in agriculture, horticulture and agribusiness.

Workforce Development

The Cumberland County Department of Workforce Development is located in the Center for Workforce & Economic Development directly on the Rowan College of South Jersey Cumberland Campus. The department provides training and transportation services for workers throughout Cumberland County, including shuttle bus transportation services to many of the food processing facilities in the county. The department also directly with companies to establish industry-specific on-the-job training programs.

The Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experimental Station (NJAES) Cooperative Extension also offers education and training for beginning or experienced farmers. The Cooperative Extension's Department of Agricultural and Resource Management provides assistance, information and consultation on issues related to agriculture, the environment, and natural resource management, as well as educational programs on increasing farm productivity.

Financing Services and Loan Programs

Farmers need assistance in securing financing to invest in their businesses, buy equipment, expand land holdings, erect farm buildings, and supply housing.

The NJ Department of Agriculture provides a list of grants and other financial assistance opportunities in the areas of agriculture, conservation, and rural development. These includes Soil and Water Conservation Grants, New Jersey Junior Breeder Loans, and several others.

Cumberland County is also home to one of the two Farm Credit East branches in the state (the other is in Hunterdon County). Farm Credit East specializes exclusively in agricultural financing, with loan programs, new farmer programs, estate planning, financial benchmarking, crop insurance, and practically any other agriculture-related financing service you can imagine. Located in Upper Deerfield Township, just north of the City of Bridgeton, Farm Credit East staff work closely with the Cumberland County Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs on the Farmland Preservation Program, both promoting the program to clients and working on subordinations and other methods to refinance farms entering the preservation program.

The USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) works to stabilize commodity prices in the agricultural industry for both farmers and consumers by financially helping farmers adjust to demand. The FSA has offices on the federal, state, and county levels that administer farm and conservation programs, support loans and payments, and provide disaster relief. The FSA has a state office in Bordentown and a county office in the City of Vineland.

Farm Link Program

The Farm Link Program is run by the New Jersey State Agricultural Development Committee and provides services and support to farmers at all stages. One of the program's objectives is to match farmers seeking access to land with landowners looking to lease or sell their farmland. Those looking for access to land are typically young or first-time farmers or are experienced farmers seeking to expand or relocate their operations. The program also helps to arrange partnerships, apprenticeships, and other work arrangements. Another service offered by the Farm Link Program is assistance in estate or farm transfer planning. The transference of a family farm or agricultural business can be a difficult task due to legal, tax, and other issues. The Farm Link Program provides a number of resources for estate and farm transfer planning and has developed a publication designed for farmers preparing to transfer farm ownership to the next generation.

Marketing & Public Relations Support

Jersey Fresh

The Jersey Fresh marketing campaign has existed for thirty years. The Jersey Fresh brand has been locally promoted in a number of ways, including a "Proud to Offer Jersey Fresh" signage program at participating restaurants. The program has been extended to include Jersey Grown, Jersey Bred, and Jersey Seafood brands. Point-of-sale promotional materials are available through the NJDA. The Jersey Fresh program continues to be promoted on the local, state, and regional levels.

Community Farmers Markets

Direct marketing through community farmers markets can be profitable and rewarding for farmers while providing consumers with fresh, locally-grown produce and other agricultural products. Although New Jersey has very high rates of direct marketing compared with other states, these opportunities can be further expanded. Direct marketing allows proceeds to go directly to the farmer instead of to a chain of middlemen. It can also be very rewarding to the farmer to have immediate contact with the consumer. The creation of more farmers markets or the development of a central market place could expand the potential of direct marketing.



Millville Farmers Market

The City of Millville holds its “Farmer’s Market at Glasstown Plaza” on the 4th Saturdays of the month from June through September.

Both the City of Bridgeton and the City of Vineland held community farmers markets prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the County of Cumberland is working with bot communities to restart those markets in 2023.

Community Supported Agriculture

Agritourism involves establishing farms as tourist destinations with educational, recreational, and commercial potential. Agritourism can take on many forms from bed and breakfasts, pick-your-own produce, cider mills, summer camps, corn mazes, hay rides, petting zoos, horseback riding, farm tours, wine tasting, and festivals. Agritourism benefits farmers by supplying an opportunity for additional income, particularly during slower periods between harvests. Agritourism also serves to reinforce the agricultural identity and rural character of a place. Through agritourism, both children and



Hedge Field Farm, Upper Deerfield

adults can learn about the process of food production and the importance of protecting their local food resources. Current agritourism activities in the county include the Cumberland County Fair held in July, the oldest county fair in New Jersey, along with corn mazes at Hopewell's Amish Market and Hedge Field Farm in Upper Deerfield, winery operations in Deerfield Township, and other event-oriented activities.

Roadside markets are another way that consumers can purchase produce directly from the farmers. These direct markets are an important source of agritourism and attract customers from the entire region who are interested in purchasing fresh, locally grown fruits, vegetables, flowers, and other agricultural products. While the state no longer lists farm markets throughout New Jersey, at last count, Cumberland County held well over two dozens markets.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) allows a consumer to buy a share, or pre-pay, to receive a weekly or biweekly supply of produce. A CSA enables a farmer to operate within a known cash flow, predetermine a customer base, diversify crops, cut down on waste, reduce risk, and avoid going into debt at the beginning of a season. Customers can benefit not only from the interaction with a local farmer, but also with understanding how food is grown. Because CSA customers come to the farm to pick up weekly or biweekly shares of food, farmers can enjoy some of the benefits of participating in a farmers market, like interacting with customers and obtaining higher profits from direct marketing, without losing money to transportation and spoiled or bruised produce. Additionally, a small amount of land can yield many customer shares.

NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION

Natural Resource Protection Coordination

Several organizations exist, both public and private, that administer, fund, and provide technical guidance for farmers and communities in Cumberland County/ These organizations are in place to assist with natural resource conservation issues and are assets for farmers to assist in the management of the land and water upon which their farms depend.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) provides technical assistance to private land owners and managers to conserve their soil, water, and other natural resources. A relatively small government agency in the United States Department of Agriculture, the mission of the NRCS is to improve, protect, and conserve natural resources on private lands through voluntary cooperative partnerships with local and state agencies. The NRCS has broad technical expertise in animal husbandry, ecological sciences, engineering, resource economics, and social sciences. The agency also provides expertise in soil science and the leadership for soil surveys and the National Resources Inventory, which assesses natural resource conditions and trends in the United States.

NRCS's assistance is directed towards the natural resource needs of farmers. Staff members are available to work with farmers to help identify their conservation goals and then craft appropriate conservation plans to meet those goals. NRCS also provides cost-sharing and financial incentives for programs such as the Wildlife Habitat Incentive program (WHIP) and the Environmental Quality Incentive program (EQIP). The NRCS field office that serves Atlantic, Cape May, and Cumberland counties is located in Vineland.

Deer Fencing Grant Program

The State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) provides cost-share grants to eligible farmers for the installation of high-tensile woven wire deer fencing on permanently-preserved farms. The grants may cover 30-50% of the costs of materials and installation, and they may not exceed \$200/acre or a total grant of \$20,000. The applicant must be an established farmer, and the farmland on which the deer fencing is to be constructed must be owned by the applicant and be permanently preserved. Project must be commenced within six months of an award and completed within three years. The fencing also must be maintained for and have a lifespan of at least ten years.

Water Resources

The protection of water resources is a fundamental issue for agriculture and farmland preservation. Without a consistent, plentiful, and relatively clean water source, agriculture is simply not viable. Farms, due to their high surface area and limited impermeable surface cover, are also critical in maintaining aquifer recharge. Steps can be taken at the farm level to preserve water quality. These include:

- ☞ Minimizing the use of synthetic chemicals such as fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, and fungicides so as to lessen impacts to groundwater. Farmers should also coordinate timing of chemical application to minimize its runoff into water bodies.
- ☞ Providing riparian buffers along bodies of surface water so as to protect surface water bodies from synthetic chemicals and organic byproducts, and from soil erosion. These buffers ideally take the form of a line of trees and shrubs, followed by a strip of native grass.
- ☞ Practicing water conservation techniques, such as drip irrigation and the reuse of water for certain farming types where it is viable, such as on smaller scale vegetable and fruit operations.

The State Agriculture Development Committee (SADC) provides grants to eligible landowners to fund up to 50% of the costs of approved soil and water conservation projects. Landowners apply to local Soil Conservation Districts, which assist in developing farm conservation plans and ensure projects are necessary and feasible. Applications are forwarded to the N.J. State Soil Conservation Committee, which recommends projects to the SADC for funding approvals.

Farms must be permanently preserved or enrolled in a term (8-year or 16-year) farmland preservation program.

Permanently-preserved farms receive first priority for grant funding. Term-preserved farms receive second priority (farms with a 16-year term) or third priority (farms with an 8-year term). Some independently-preserved (non-SADC-preserved) farms (e.g. farms preserved through county independent easement purchase without SADC cost-share, cluster development, transfer of development rights, or severing of Pinelands or Highlands development credits/rights, also may receive first priority if they meet certain criteria.

Project must be completed within three years of SADC funding approval. Grants may be renewed for a one-year period under certain circumstances, such as seasonal constraints or other unavoidable delays, only upon the approval of the local Soil Conservation District, the State Soil Conservation Committee and the SADC.

Waste Management

The management of livestock waste has serious implications for the quality of ground and surface waters. Unrestricted, these wastes can cause serious water-quality problems by spreading harmful microorganisms into water resources to the detriment of humans, farm animals, and the ecosystem as a whole.

Of particular concern are Animal Feeding Operations (AFOs) and Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). AFOs include all facilities where animals are stabled or confined and fed or maintained for a total of 45 days per year. CAFOs are classified as any operations with more than 1,000 non-dairy cattle, 700 dairy cattle, 2,500 swine, 500 horses, or other animal populations. An AFO operation, even if it doesn't reach this size threshold, can also be considered a CAFO if it discharges waste into state waters or ecologically sensitive areas. CAFOs are more likely to cause water pollution than other types of operations due to their large size. In order for CAFOs to receive a general permit from the NJDEP, they must develop and implement a comprehensive waste management plan.

Mismanagement of animal waste has the potential to cause large amount of soil and groundwater contamination through the introduction of bacteria such as fecal coliform, a known contaminant from animal farming operations. Some waterborne pathogens can lead to ear infections, dysentery, typhoid fever, gastroenteritis, and hepatitis A.

Energy Conservation

Promoting increased energy conservation and renewable, local energy is a significant priority in New Jersey's energy planning efforts. Rising energy costs and continued improvements in technology have heightened interest in finding alternatives to supplement electric use on farms.

Preserved farms may apply for limited energy generation facilities on their farms. Conditions include that facilities will not interfere significantly, as set forth in N.J.A.C. 2:76-24.6, with the use of the land for agricultural or horticultural production, and that energy production is limited to the farm's previous calendar year's energy demand plus 10 percent. Alternatively, at the option of the landowner, energy generation can be demarcated by an occupied area consisting of no more than one percent of the area of the farm.

New Jersey is in the midst of establishing comprehensive goals for energy efficiency and renewable production. In 2020, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU) approved the final New Jersey Offshore Wind Strategic Plan, the State's comprehensive roadmap for achieving 7,500 megawatts (MW) of offshore wind energy by 2035. The plan was developed by Ramboll U.S. Corporation through an extensive public stakeholder process. It presents recommendations on establishing an offshore wind industry that achieves net economic benefits and gives New Jersey residents the best overall value, while also protecting the environment, commercial and recreational fishing interests, and mitigating the impacts of climate change.

As well, New Jersey is committed to supporting solar energy. The Successor Solar Incentive (SuSI) Program is the current solar program which allows new solar projects to register to earn New Jersey Solar Renewable Energy Credits II (SREC-II).

Finally, in May 2018, Governor Murphy signed L.2018, c.17, which mandated the creation of the Community Solar Energy Pilot Program, on January 17, 2019, NJBPU adopted rules establishing the Community Solar Energy Pilot Program. This Pilot Program enables utility customers to virtually connect to a solar energy project in their utility service territory and receive a credit on this utility bills. Community solar will therefore enable access to clean energy generation for utility customers currently unable to place solar generation directly on their own properties.

Outreach and Incentives

Cumberland County can work on promoting to farmers the conservation enhancement programs that are available through the Natural Resource Conservation Service and the New Jersey Agriculture Department, including the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP). The latter could be highly beneficial on farmland in environmentally sensitive areas. It is important that Cumberland County farmers understand what benefits they can derive from these programs. Such programs will link Cumberland County's environmental protection goals to those of the farming community.

AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRY SUSTAINABILITY, RETENTION AND PROMOTION

Existing Agricultural Industry Support

Right to Farm / Agricultural Mediation Programs

In order for Cumberland County's farming culture and industry to remain viable, sufficient policies must be in place to support agriculture as an appropriate and valuable land use. The Cumberland County Planning Board and the Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board support a number of policies and planning efforts that promote the county's agricultural industry, including right-to-farm ordinances. Right-to-Farm ordinances are designed to protect farmers from complaints of nearby residents regarding the noise, odor, dust, traffic, and other perceived disturbances from normal farming operations. These ordinances can also protect from unnecessary ordinances and regulations that may conflict with agricultural activities.

The Right-to-Farm Act protects those farms operators who meet the definition of a "commercial farm" and meet a number of other criteria defined in N.J.S.A. 4:1C-3. Any person aggrieved by the operation of a commercial farm is required by the Right-to-Farm Act to file a complaint with the applicable CADB, or directly to the SADC, prior to filing an action in court. Aggrieved municipalities seeking to enforce an ordinance are also required to file such a complaint rather than issue a summons against the farmer. Once a complaint is filed, the CADB or SADC holds a public hearing to determine whether the farmer is entitled to the protections of the Act. A finding by the CADB may be appealed to the SADC and, if necessary, to the New Jersey Superior Court, Appellate Division.

Seven out of 14 municipalities in Cumberland County currently have Right-to-Farm ordinances. They are Deerfield, Greenwich, Hopewell, Lawrence, Millville, Upper Deerfield, and Vineland. Upper Deerfield and Vineland also have a notification clause in their ordinance that requires new property owners to sign a statement acknowledging the existence of neighboring farms and farming operations. The codes of Lawrence and Upper Deerfield explicitly contain Right-to-Farm ordinances, while other municipalities' codes contain similar language protecting the rights of farmers to practice normal agricultural operations.

One of the responsibilities of the CADB is to mediate between residents and farmers when right-to-farm conflicts arise. The SADC also offers an Agricultural Mediation Program to assist communities in resolving right-to-farm conflicts at no charge. Through this program, a trained and impartial mediator facilitates discussions between the two parties to arrive at a mutually agreed upon solution.

The Cumberland CADB has a general practice of referring all right-to-farm issues to mediation as an initial step. Most of time conflicts and grievances are resolved in the mediation process and only rarely do issues rise to the level of a formal hearing. In fact, since the adoption of Cumberland County's last Comprehensive Farmland Preservation Plan, there have been only two

formal Right-to-Farm determinations by the Cumberland CADB. In both cases, initial complaints were resolved through Site-Specific Agricultural Management Practice Requests.

A commercial farm can proactively request a site-specific agricultural management practice (SSAMP) determination from the CADB regarding whether its operations or practices conform to generally accepted practices. The CADB handles these formal requests similar to how it handles formal complaints. It reviews the Act's eligibility criteria, holds a public hearing, and issues its findings. A farm can request an SSAMP determination at any time.

Following are the two SSAMP determinations made by the Cumberland CADB within the last ten years. As can be seen, these determinations are methodical and comprehensive, taking considerable effort by county staff and the CADB, which is why mediation is the preferred method for resolution of complaints.

RESOLUTION OF THE CUMBERLAND COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD 2022-04 <i>Determination of Site-Specific Agricultural Management Practice for Hidden Creek Farms</i> WHEREAS pursuant to the Right to Farm Act, N.J.S.A. 4:1C-1 <i>et seq.</i> and the State Agriculture Development Committee regulations, N.J.A.C. 2:76-2.3, a commercial farm owner or operator may make a request to the County Agriculture Development Board to determine if his or her operation constitutes a generally accepted agricultural management practice, <u>and</u>, WHEREAS Jesse and Abigail Sickler, doing business as Hidden Creek Farms, submitted a request for a Site-Specific Agricultural Management Practice (hereinafter "SSAMP") via letter dated April 19, 2022, <u>and</u>, WHEREAS Jesse and Abigail Sickler are the owners of property located at 272 Marlboro Road in Stow Creek Township, Cumberland County, New Jersey, designated on the Stow Creek Township Tax Map as Lot 10 in Block 7, <u>and</u>, WHEREAS the request asked for clarification of the existing On-Farm Direct Marketing Facilities, Activities, and Events, N.J.A.C. 2:76-2A.13 component of their agricultural operations, <u>and</u>, WHEREAS said request was clarified subsequent to a Notice of Violation and Order to Cure received by the Sicklers from the Stow Creek Township Zoning Officer dated May 4, 2022 which noted Stow Creek Ordinance 6.4C(2) only permitting the sale of items produced from the farm exclusively and Ordinance 6.4-C(2)(c) requiring site plan approval for the sale of all farm related products, <u>and</u>, WHEREAS the Township of Stow Creek was notified of the SSAMP request by letter dated May 6, 2022, <u>and</u>, WHEREAS the Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board by resolution 2002-03 dated May 10, 2022 determined Right-to-Farm eligibility for Hidden Creek Farms noting the parcel is larger than five acres and engages in agricultural or horticultural production worth at least \$2,500 and is eligible for differential property taxation pursuant to the Farmland Assessment Act of 1964, N.J.S.A. 54:4.23.1 and that agriculture is a permitted use on the farm under the municipal zoning ordinance, <u>and</u>, WHEREAS in response to the SSAMP request a site inspection/visit was conducted on June 2, 2022 by Matthew E. Pisarski, AICP, PP, Cumberland County Planning Director and a report of said site inspection/visit is attached hereto for reference, <u>and</u>, WHEREAS a formal hearing was conducted on June 14, 2022 in which predicate facts and clarifying testimony was presented by Jesse and Abigail Sickler and the Township of Stow Creek and their legal representatives. Said hearing was noticed to neighboring property owners to Hidden Creek Farms and publicly advertised. NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board hereby determines that the On-Farm Direct Marketing Facilities, Activities, and Events on Hidden Creek Farms constitutes a generally accepted agriculture management practice and makes the following findings: 1. The Property in question is known as Stow Creek Township, Block 7 Lot 10; 2. Jesse and Abigail Sickler doing business as Hidden Creek Farms is the owner/operator of the Property; 3. The Property meets the eligibility criteria for differential property taxation pursuant to the Farmland Assessment Act of 1964, P.L. 1964, c. 48 (N.J.S.A. 54:23.1 <i>et seq.</i>); 4. The operations conducted at the Property meet the definition of a commercial farm in N.J.S.A. 4:1C-2;	5. The Property is located in an area in which agriculture is a permitted use under the municipal zoning ordinance and is consistent with the municipal master plan; 6. Hidden Creek Farms is engaged in the business of raising cattle, hogs, chickens, and turkeys, as well as traditional row crops as well as hosting limited special occasion events used to facilitate and provide for direct farmer to consumer sale of agricultural output of the commercial farm and the products that contribute to farm income; 7. Hidden Creek Farms is engaged with on-farm direct marketing facilities, activities, and events, which is an eligible activity under the Right to Farm Act; 8. Site Specific Agricultural Management Practices shall not conflict with existing adopted Agricultural Management Practices; 9. The conditions established in the existing Agricultural Management Practice for On-Farm Direct Marketing Facilities, Activities, and Events (N.J.A.C. 2:76-2A.13) are identified as the conditions to be met for this operation with the sole exception of N.J.A.C. 2:76-2A.13(g)3.1, specifically given the configuration of the driveway a set back of at least 10 feet from the paved portion of the street right of way is not currently met and the existing conditions do not pose a direct threat to public health and safety and as such may remain. IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that upon consideration of all the documentation presented and the findings of fact the Cumberland CADB determines the following: 1. Section 6-4C(2) of the Stow Creek Township Land Development Ordinance appears to permit only the sale of products produced on the farm from which they are sold. This Ordinance provision is inconsistent with superseding provisions of the Right-to-Farm Statutes and Regulations, which set the standard of 51% of on-farm production. Stow Creek Township is requested to amend its Ordinance to bring the threshold percentage into compliance with State law; 2. As a commercial operation, the on-farm direct marketing facilities referenced herein require site plan review submission to the Cumberland County Planning Board and the Stow Creek Township Planning and Zoning Board. It is recognized pursuant to N.J.A.C. 2:76-2A.13 that applicant may request said agencies to consider waiving, or reducing review requirements, based upon a consideration of relevant site specific elements. IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board shall forward a copy its recommendation of the site-specific AMP to Jesse and Abigail Sickler, the Township of Stow Creek, the State Agriculture Development Committee and any other individuals or organizations deemed appropriate by the Board within 30 days of the recommendation. Motion made by: _____ Motion seconded by: _____ DATE _____ Alfred Caggiano, Jr., Chairman <i>This resolution was duly heard and approved at a publicly advertised meeting of the Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board held on June 14, 2022 at 7:00 P.M.</i>
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**RESOLUTION OF THE CUMBERLAND COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
2016-14**

Determination of Site-Specific Agricultural Management Practice for Fralinger Farms

WHEREAS Robert E. Fralinger, III, doing business as Fralinger Farms, submitted a request for a Site-Specific Agricultural Management Practice (hereinafter "SSAMP") via letter dated September 12, 2016, and,

WHEREAS the request asked for clarification of the existing Poultry Manure Agricultural Management Practice, N.J.A.C. 2:76-2A.3, specifically, for a determination on whether the sod "middles," or strips of grass between the trees in the orchards operated by Fralinger Farms are considered by definition pasture pursuant to N.J.A.C. 2:76-2A.3(d)(3)(ii), and whether under certain circumstances poultry manure may be spread on frozen or snow-covered ground, and;

WHEREAS Robert Fralinger, III presented his SSAMP request at a regular Cumberland CADB meeting on September 14, 2016, which in addition to his SSAMP request letter included correspondence from Rutgers Professor Emeritus Jerome L. Frecon, a New Jersey and Bridgeton weather averages data sheet, a document from Michigan State University Agricultural Extension pertaining to runoff potential from frozen and snow-covered soils, and a Clemson University Agricultural Extension document pertaining to land application of animal manure, and;

WHEREAS the Township of Hopewell was notified of the SSAMP request by letter dated September 26, 2016, and;

WHEREAS this SSAMP request was precipitated by complaints submitted to the Cumberland CADB from a neighboring property owner regarding the method by which Fralinger Farms was spreading its poultry manure, specifically said method did not involve any attempt to incorporate the manure into the soil, and;

WHEREAS in response to this complaint a site inspection was conducted on June 20, 2016 by Matthew E. Pisarski, AICP, PP, Cumberland County Assistant Planning Director and Administrator of the Cumberland CADB as a Deed of Easement enforcement procedure, and;

WHEREAS the results of the site inspection were memorialized in correspondence to Fralinger Farms dated June 20, 2016 in which it was agreed that Fralinger Farms would remediate any unincorporated poultry manure and maintain full compliance with the Poultry Manure Management Practice moving forward, and;

WHEREAS verbally and in its correspondence of September 12, 2016, Fralinger Farms indicated its intent to spread poultry manure utilizing a custom built injection spreader, and;

WHEREAS the Cumberland CADB requested clarification from the State Agriculture Development Committee via correspondence dated September 26, 2016 regarding the definition of pasture as it relates to the Poultry Manure Agricultural Management Practice and whether under any circumstances it was the intent of the Poultry Manure Agricultural Management Practice to permit the spreading of manure on frozen or snow-covered soil, and;

WHEREAS via correspondence dated October 19, 2016 the State Agriculture Development Committee responded indicating that it was their legal opinion that the Poultry Manure Agricultural Management Practice intended to prohibit under any circumstances the spreading of poultry manure on frozen, snow-covered or wet ground and that under the "commonly-understood" definition of "pasture" sod middles would not be identified as pasture;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board makes the following findings:

1. The Property in question includes multiple lots in lower Hopewell Township either owned or leased by Fralinger Farms, of which Hopewell Township block 78, lot 3.01, block 79, lot 6, block 80, lot 17, and block 89, lots 4, 5 and 6 are permanently preserved by Deed of Easement under the Agriculture Retention and Development Program;
2. Fralinger Farms is the operator of the Property;
3. The Property meets the eligibility criteria for differential property taxation pursuant to the Farmland Assessment Act of 1964, P.L. 1964, c. 48 (N.J.S.A. 54:23.1 *et seq.*);
4. The operations conducted at the Property meet the definition of a commercial farm in N.J.S.A. 4:1C-2;
5. The Property is located in an area in which agriculture is a permitted use under the municipal zoning ordinance and is consistent with the municipal master plan;
6. Fralinger Farms is engaged in the business of producing and packaging eggs for the fresh shell egg market through a 40,000 layer hen poultry house and producing peaches and nectarines on a 500-acre +/- orchard;
7. Fralinger Farms is engaged with the on-site disposal of organic agricultural wastes, which is an eligible activity under the Right to Farm Act;
8. Site Specific Agricultural Management Practices shall not conflict with existing adopted Agricultural Management Practices;
9. Spreading of poultry manure on the grass strips, or "middles", between fruit trees is not an accepted Poultry Manure Agricultural Management Practice pursuant to interpretation by the State Agricultural Development Committee;
10. The spreading of poultry manure on preserved farmland must be in compliance with existing Agricultural Management Practices and generally requires incorporation into the soil with the intent to minimize runoff and to maintain and transfer poultry manure's nutrient value to the crop on which the manure is spread;
11. The Cumberland CADB accepted information and evidence from the applicant and a neighboring complainant and made inquiries of the State Agricultural Development Committee with regard to the findings in 9 and 10 above and determined that there was no factual disputes which required hearing further evidence as to these factual conclusions.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that upon consideration of all the documentation presented and the findings of fact the Cumberland CADB determines the following:

1. The current and historic practice of poultry manure spreading by Fralinger Farms without any incorporation into the soil does not comply with the existing Poultry Manure Agricultural Management Practice;
2. Sod "middles" do not constitute "pasture" as identified in the Poultry Manure Agriculture Management Practice;
3. It is the intent of the Poultry Manure Agricultural Management Practice to prohibit under any circumstances the application of poultry manure on frozen, snow-covered or too wet to be plowed ground;
4. The Site Specific Agricultural Management Practice request by Fralinger Farms is denied;
5. Fralinger Farms must immediately come into compliance with the Poultry Manure Agricultural Management Practice on any lands owned or leased which are permanently preserved under the Agriculture Retention and Development Program;
6. The practice of spreading poultry manure on sod strips, or "middles," between orchard trees without soil incorporation is not a protected practice under the Right to Farm Act.

Motion made by:

Motion seconded by:

DATE

Blake Maloney, Vice-Chairman

This resolution was duly heard and approved at a publicly advertised meeting of the Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board held on November 9, 2016 at 7:00 P.M.

Farmland Assessment

The New Jersey Farmland Assessment Act of 1964 allows eligible farmland to have a reduced tax assessment. To be eligible, the property must have a minimum of five acres that have been actively devoted to agriculture or horticulture for at least two years. There are additional requirements for the boarding, training, or rehabilitation of livestock and for forested land under a woodlands management program. The Farmland Assessment Act does not apply to buildings of any kind and land beneath of pertaining to the farmhouse is ineligible. Buildings and homes on farms are assessed like all other non-farm property. There are also requirements for the amount of gross sales accumulated from the property.

The Act does not preempt local land use restrictions, and farmland is not entitled to farmland assessment if located in a zone in which agriculture is forbidden by the municipality's zoning ordinance. It is important to keep in mind, though, that there are assessment conditions such as woodland stewardship which do not strictly qualify as agriculture and therefore QFarm designation does occur outside of agriculturally zoned areas. In addition, if land qualified under the Act changes to a non-agricultural or non-horticultural use, it is subject to roll-back taxes for the year in which the change takes place, and for the two proceeding tax years.

Other Strategies

Permit Streamlining

Municipal ordinances within Cumberland County should be reviewed in order to eliminate any barriers to farming and to add measures that support farm operations and preservation. This could include amending zoning and subdivision regulations, revising fees, and streamlining permits.

Zoning, subdivision, and site plan requirements should differentiate between the requirements for agricultural enterprises and those regulating residential, commercial or industrial development. Such efforts may reduce the regulatory obstacles, fees, and fines that farmers face when attempting to comply with regulations designed for development other than farms. Additionally, zoning that is amenable to agriculture helps maintain the profitability of agriculture by providing flexibility.

Agriculture-friendly ordinances permit housing for agricultural labor and ease height, bulk, and setback standards for agricultural facilities. Such ordinances may also have less restrictive regulations for farm markets and related parking and signage, and may also ease restrictions for home-based businesses and other accessory activities on farms that complement the operation and help supplement farm income.

Agricultural Vehicle Movement Routes

To promote awareness among neighbors and out-of-town drivers and to protect slow-moving agricultural vehicles and drivers, Pennsylvania has established agricultural vehicle movement routes and identified these routes with highly noticeable road markers. This signage is also found in some parts of New Jersey. Most farm vehicles, like harvesters and tractors, do not travel faster than 40 miles per hour. Like wildlife crossings or school zones, vehicular movement route signs can signify to drivers to drive slower or pass with care. Such signage also helps to alert drivers that they are traveling in an agricultural area.

Agricultural Labor Housing/Training

Onsite farm labor housing, once heavily utilized throughout Cumberland County, has been dwindling in usage, with a growing preference for off site labor housing or laborers entering the general rental market. In the few instances that remain, Federal law requires that housing must be well-built and protected from wind, rain, ground dampness, and fire hazards; it must provide sleeping areas free of vermin and infectious/contagious matter, and; it must have well-ventilated rooms, clean kitchen/bathrooms, and floors free of dirt and garbage.

On preserved farms, agricultural labor housing is a permitted use under the easement.

Wildlife Management Strategies

While New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the nation, it is also home to a myriad of wildlife species. While many are harmless to agricultural operations, and perhaps even beneficial, there are others which can create havoc on a farming operation. To this end, the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish and Wildlife, has created special permitting rules for farmers.

Any commercial farm operation owners and their immediate family members who also reside on the farm may hunt, trap and fish on the farm without being licensed or possessing a valid rifle permit. This exemption does not apply to a tenant or employee who is not an immediate family member. Also, all fish and wildlife laws and regulations, season dates and bag limits that apply to the hunting and fishing seasons also apply on the farm. NJDEP has special permitting options for farming operations related to turkeys, bears, deer, and geese – all of which can be very damaging to crops.

Agricultural Education and Promotion

An essential part of enhancing and supporting the agricultural industry in Cumberland County is to provide education to residents about the importance of farming to the community. This would help to prevent potential conflicts and would lay the groundwork for possible marketing enhancements and economic supports. It would also be helpful for generating support by residents of any future proposed increase in the dedicated tax to fund the Farmland and Open Space Trust.

Education of the public could include development of literature about the role of farming and its importance in the history of Cumberland County. In general, Cumberland County has been promoting the agricultural industry through promotion of agri-tourism. Cumberland County was the recipient of a USDA Specialty Crop Grant, which runs from 2022 through 2024 and funds promotion of specialty crops, which are extensively grown in Cumberland County. This grant offsets tourism funding from the county itself and the State Division of Travel and Tourism. The county's primary tourism campaign in 2022 was agriculture with a special emphasis on farm markets. This will continue over the coming two years. In fact, it is the intent of the county to sponsor a weekly farm market through the summer months of 2023 for Cumberland County-based farmers.

Additionally, the Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs, which manages the Farmland Preservation Program, was recently placed in charge of the Agricultural Extension Center and 4-H. In 2023, goals will be established to dramatically increase programming and marketing of all of the various initiatives within 4-H and Agricultural Services.



APPENDIX A: EASEMENT PURCHASE SCORING WORKSHEET

CUMBERLAND COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD

EASEMENT PURCHASE PROGRAM

SCORING WORKSHEET

Application Number _____
Municipality _____ Block(s)/Lot(s) _____
Application Name _____

SUMMARY

1. Soil Quality Score	
2. Boundaries and Buffers Score	
3. Local Commitment Score	
4. Degree of Imminence of Change Score	
5. Special Considerations Score	
TOTAL SCORE	

Completed By _____ Date _____

1.	SOIL QUALITY	(Weight 25)	Points
	a.	_____ % Prime Soils X 0.25	_____
	b.	_____ % Statewide Soils X 0.20	_____
	c.	_____ % Local Soils X 0.10	_____
	d.	_____ % Unique Soils X (0 or 0.20)	_____
	TOTAL SOILS SCORE		
2.	BOUNDARIES AND BUFFERS	(Weight 20)	
	a.	Percentage of farm perimeter adjacent to compatible natural or man-made buffers.	
		80-100% 10 points	_____
		60-79% 8 points	
		40-59% 6 points	
		20-39% 4 points	
		0-19% 0 points	
	b.	Ratio of road frontage to total acreage of applicant's property.	
		40.1 > ft./ac. 10 points	_____
		20.1-40 ft./ac. 8 points	
		10.1-20 ft./ac. 6 points	
		0.1-10 ft./ac. 4 points	
		o ft./ac/ 0 points	
	TOTAL BOUNDARIES AND BUFFERS SCORE		

3.	LOCAL COMMITMENT	(Weight 15)	Points
	a. Compatibility with Municipal Plan		5 points
	b. Compatibility with State Development & Redevelopment Plan		4 points
	c. % of municipal matching funds	1-25% 1 point 25>% 2 points	_____
	d. Distance to Sanitary Sewer	.50 > mile 2 points	_____
	e. Distance to Municipal Water	.25-.49 mile 1 point	_____
		0-.24 miles 0 points	
	TOTAL LOCAL COMMITMENT SCORE		
4.	SIZE AND DENSITY	(Weight 15)	
	a. Farmland Acreage	> 100 ac. 3 points	_____
		50-100 ac. 2 points	
		20-49 ac. 1 point	
		< 20 ac. 0 points	
	b. Percent Tillable	80-100% 3 points	_____
		50-79% 2 points	
		25-49% 1 point	
		<25% 0 points	
	c. Relationship to average farm size in project area	>125% 3 points	_____
		75-124% 2 points	
		50-74% 1 point	
		< 50% 0 points	
	d. Percentage of area within 1 mile in agricultural use	80-100% 3 points	_____
		50-79% 2 points	
		25-49% 1 point	
		< 25% 0 points	
	e. Distance to ADA	within ADA 3 points	_____
		outside ADA 0 points	
	TOTAL SIZE AND DENSITY SCORE		
5.	DEGREE OF IMMINENCE OF CHANGE (Weight 5)		
	a. High percentage of land developable		2 points
	b. High threat of development within 5 miles		3 points
	TOTAL DEGREE OF IMMINENCE OF CHANGE SCORE		
6.	SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS (Weight 20)		
	a. Full time farmer		5 points
	b. Primary earned income source		5 points
	c. Soil and water conservation practice in place		5 points
	d. Historic considerations		1 point
	e. Unique agricultural operation		1 point
	f. Environmentally sensitive features		1 point
	g. Other considerations		2 points
	TOTAL SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS SCORE		

APPENDIX B:
Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board
2023

Application To Sell a Development Easement

NOTE: Read and complete all portions of this application.

This application to sell a development easement is made this ____ day of _____, 2023.

A "development easement" means an interest in land, less than fee simple absolute title thereto, which enables the owner to develop the land for any non-agricultural purpose as determined by and acquired under the provisions of N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq. P.L. 1983, c. 32, and any relevant rules or regulation promulgated thereto.

I/We, _____, landowner(s) of property located in the Municipality of _____, in the County of Cumberland, known and designated as Block(s) _____, Lot(s) _____ on the Municipal Tax map of _____, Cumberland County, New Jersey, (hereinafter "Premises"), apply to the Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board, to sell a development easement pursuant to the Agriculture Retention and Development Act, N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., P.L. 1983, c.32, and N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.

OFFER TO SELL A DEVELOPMENT EASEMENT

As landowner(s) of the premises described above, I/we are willing to make an offer to sell a development easement to the Board in the amount of \$_____ per acre. The final total purchase price shall be based on the acreage of the premises determined by a survey authorized by the Board, as well as, fair market appraisals.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.3, it is required that the applicant(s) submit an offer to sell a development easement to the Board. While the offer is a key element in the evaluation of this property, it is non-binding, and is not a commitment on the part of the County of Cumberland to pay this amount should this property be selected for acquisition.

NOTE: Landowners hereby acknowledge that they have been fully informed of the provisions related to the sale of a development easement and that a **recommendation was made to obtain legal counsel**.

I. LANDOWNER INFORMATION

Write the name, mailing address, phone/fax number, and email address (if available) of all the landowners of the premises.

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE/FAX	EMAIL
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Write the farm, corporate or business name, if any.

Indicate the ownership structure of the farm.

☐ Sole Proprietor ☐ Corporation ☐ Partnership ☐ Contract Purchaser

Indicate if the record owner of the premises is involved in any of the following.

☐ An Estate Situation ☐ Bankruptcy ☐ Foreclosure

Indicate the name of the person(s), if any, residing on the property.

II. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION

Indicate the street address of the property or describe the farm location to the nearest crossroad.

Identify the tax block and lot and deed reference of the premises.

Block _____, Lot(s) _____; Deed Book _____, Page _____
Block _____, Lot(s) _____; Deed Book _____, Page _____
Block _____, Lot(s) _____; Deed Book _____, Page _____
Block _____, Lot(s) _____; Deed Book _____, Page _____

Recorded in: _____ Municipality, Cumberland County.

Please attach a copy of the deed(s) for the premises.

Total acreage of the premises described above. _____ **gross acres**

Source of acreage ☐ Deed ☐ Tax Map ☐ Survey (survey date _____)

Will any portion of the above tax lots be **EXCEPTED** (i.e. not included) from the application?

☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

If YES, identify the location, approximate shape and the acreage of the excepted area on a tax map.

If an exception is requested, please indicate the requested classification below.

☐ **SEVERABLE** ☐ **NON-SEVERABLE**

A "severable" exception can be subdivided and sold separately from the Premises, while a "non-severable" exception is an area the owner does not wish to have encumbered by the easement, but which **cannot** be subdivided and sold separately.

If an exception is requested, are you willing to restrict the exception to only one existing or future residential unit? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

What is the net acreage of the premises to be considered for easement purchase?

gross acreage - exception = _____ net acres

Indicate the total number of residential units on the premises. _____

Please identify the residential units on the premises by type as listed below:

Single Family Residential Buildings # _____ ☐ Standard single family house ☐ Trailer with foundation
☐ Other ☐ Trailer without foundation

Multifamily Residential Buildings # _____ ☐ Duplex ☐ Single family with apartment
☐ Other

Residential Buildings for Agricultural Labor # _____ ☐ Single family house ☐ Dormitory style ☐ Other
☐ Trailer with foundation ☐ Trailer without foundation

Indicate the type and number of all non-residential buildings on the property (e.g. barns, stables, corn cribs, silos, garages, etc.).

Are any of the residential or non-residential buildings on the premises under a lease or rental agreement?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If YES, please describe: _____

Are you requesting the option to build future residences pursuant to N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.17?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If YES, please explain on an attached sheet.

NOTE: N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.17 refers to Residual Dwelling Site Opportunities (RDSO's), which require a minimum of 100 acres/residence. Additional housing units are subject to negotiation and approval by the CCADB and SADC.

Are there presently any non-agricultural uses or activities on the premises? (Examples: office for a non-farm Commercial business, studio, antique shop or other service business, rental of buildings for non-farm use, etc.)

NON-AGRICULTURAL USES MUST BE IDENTIFIED AT TIME OF APPLICATION.

☐ YES

☐ NO

If YES, please identify: _____

Is there a pending or approved subdivision or site plan application for the Premises?

☐ YES

☐ NO

If YES, please indicate the date of such approval and status: _____

Is the Premises served by public sewer?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Is the Premises served by public water?

☐ YES

☐ NO

III. AGRICULTURAL USE AND PRODUCTION

List, in order of importance, the type of agricultural enterprises on the premises (e.g. dairy, field crops, orchard, etc.).

Identify the approximate acreage and/or percentage land use of the parcel to be considered for easement purchase.

Tillable cropland	_____ acres	_____ %
Orchard	_____ acres	_____ %
Woodland	_____ acres	_____ %
Other	_____ acres	_____ %

Pasture	_____ acres	_____ %
Nursery	_____ acres	_____ %
Farmstead	_____ acres	_____ %
TOTAL	_____ acres	_____ %

Please provide a copy of your APPLICATION FOR FARMLAND ASSESSMENT (breakdown of land use).

Does the farm have a current Farm Conservation Plan?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Is the farm currently enrolled in an 8-year Farmland Preservation Program?

☐ YES

☐ NO

Please describe all soil and water conservation practices: _____

IV. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Identify anything particularly special about the premises (historical significance, uniqueness of the agricultural operation, environmental significance, etc.): _____

Are you a full-time farmer?	☐ YES	☐ NO
Is farming your primary income source?	☐ YES	☐ NO

V. LIENS/EASEMENTS/RIGHTS-OF-WAY

List all liens, easements, or rights-of-way that exist on the Premises: _____

NOTE: The applicant shall receive preliminary approval from current lien, easement and right-of-way holders granting the applicant permission to proceed with negotiations involving the sale of a development easement. This preliminary commitment is NOT a final subordination of all rights. In accordance with N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.13, where the landowner has accepted an offer to sell a development easement, the landowner shall provide evidence that the current lien, easement, and right-of-way holders as required by the Committee and Board, subordinate their rights to the rights and privileges granted by the sale of the development easement to the Board and shall supply recordable evidence of their subordination at the time of the transfer of the easement.

Regarding public utility easements, the applicant shall note if any exist. The Board will determine if the easement holder should be notified or if a waiver should be granted.

VI. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: The Board may request additional information.

The landowner hereby gives the Board permission to proceed with the review and evaluation of this application to determine the suitability of the land for development easement purchase pursuant to N.J.S.A. 4:1C-11 et seq., P.L. 1983, c.32 and N.J.A.C. 2:76-6.

I/We hereby certify that all information contained in this application is complete and accurate.

_____	_____
_____	_____
Landowner Signature(s) (All persons listed on the deed must sign above.)	Date

THIS PROGRAM HAS A ROLLING ADMISSION. WHEN COMPLETED, PLEASE SEND TO:
Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board
164 W. Broad Street
Bridgeton, NJ 08302

QUESTIONS: phone (856)453-2175, or email mattpi@cumberlandcountynj.gov

www.CumberlandCountyNJ.gov

APPENDIX C:

Resolutions of Adoption and Approval

**RESOLUTION OF THE CUMBERLAND COUNTY AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
2023-03**

Adoption of the 2022 Farmland Preservation Plan of Cumberland County

WHEREAS the County of Cumberland supports the promotion and preservation of the agricultural industry and the Farmland Preservation Program, and;

WHEREAS the Cumberland County agricultural community is, and always has been, an important part of the county's economy and a major contributor to the State of New Jersey's farming industry, and;

WHEREAS Cumberland County continues to rank first in the state in market value of agricultural products sold according to the 2017 U.S. Census of Agriculture, and;

WHEREAS in an effort to more effectively preserve the county's remaining farmland, the Cumberland County Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs staff has prepared the *2022 Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Plan*, and;

WHEREAS this document, finalized in February 2023, replaces the previous farmland plan entitled *Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Plan* adopted by the Cumberland County CADB in November 2009;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board hereby adopts the *2022 Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Plan* dated February 2023;

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the *2022 Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Plan* be forwarded to the Cumberland County Planning Board with the recommendation that it likewise approve said plan;

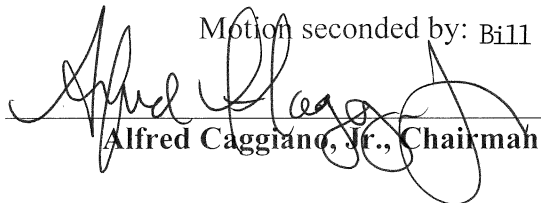
IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that the *2022 Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Plan* be forwarded to the State Agriculture Development Committee for its review and approval.

Motion made by: Joe Sparacio

Motion seconded by: Bill Van Pelt

2.21.2023

DATE


Alfred Caggiano, Jr., Chairman

RESOLUTION OF THE CUMBERLAND COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Approving the 2022 Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Plan

WHEREAS the County of Cumberland supports the promotion and preservation of the agricultural industry and the Farmland Preservation Program within the County; and

WHEREAS the Cumberland County agricultural community is an important part of the county's economy, culture and landscape as well as a major contributor to the State of New Jersey's farming industry; and

WHEREAS Cumberland County ranks first among New Jersey counties in terms of market value of agricultural products sold according to the 2017 U.S. Census of Agriculture; and

WHEREAS in an effort to more effectively preserve the county's remaining farmland, the Cumberland County Department of Planning, Tourism & Community Affairs has prepared the 2022 Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Plan; and

WHEREAS this Plan was adopted by the Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board on February 21, 2023, and forwarded to the Cumberland County Planning Board for review and approval;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cumberland County Planning Board approves the Cumberland County Farmland Preservation Plan, dated 2022 as adopted by the Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the Cumberland County Agriculture Development Board and the State Agriculture Development Committee.

PASSED AND ADOPTED AT A REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE CUMBERLAND COUNTY PLANNING BOARD at 1:00 PM on Wednesday, March 1, 2023, in the County Administration Building, 164 West Broad Street, Bridgeton, N.J. 08302 and virtually.

Sign: _____

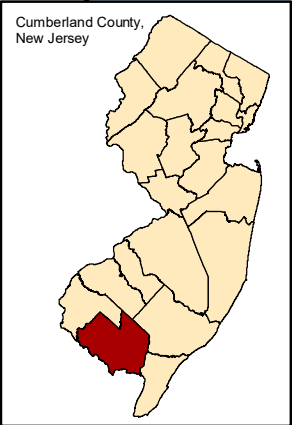
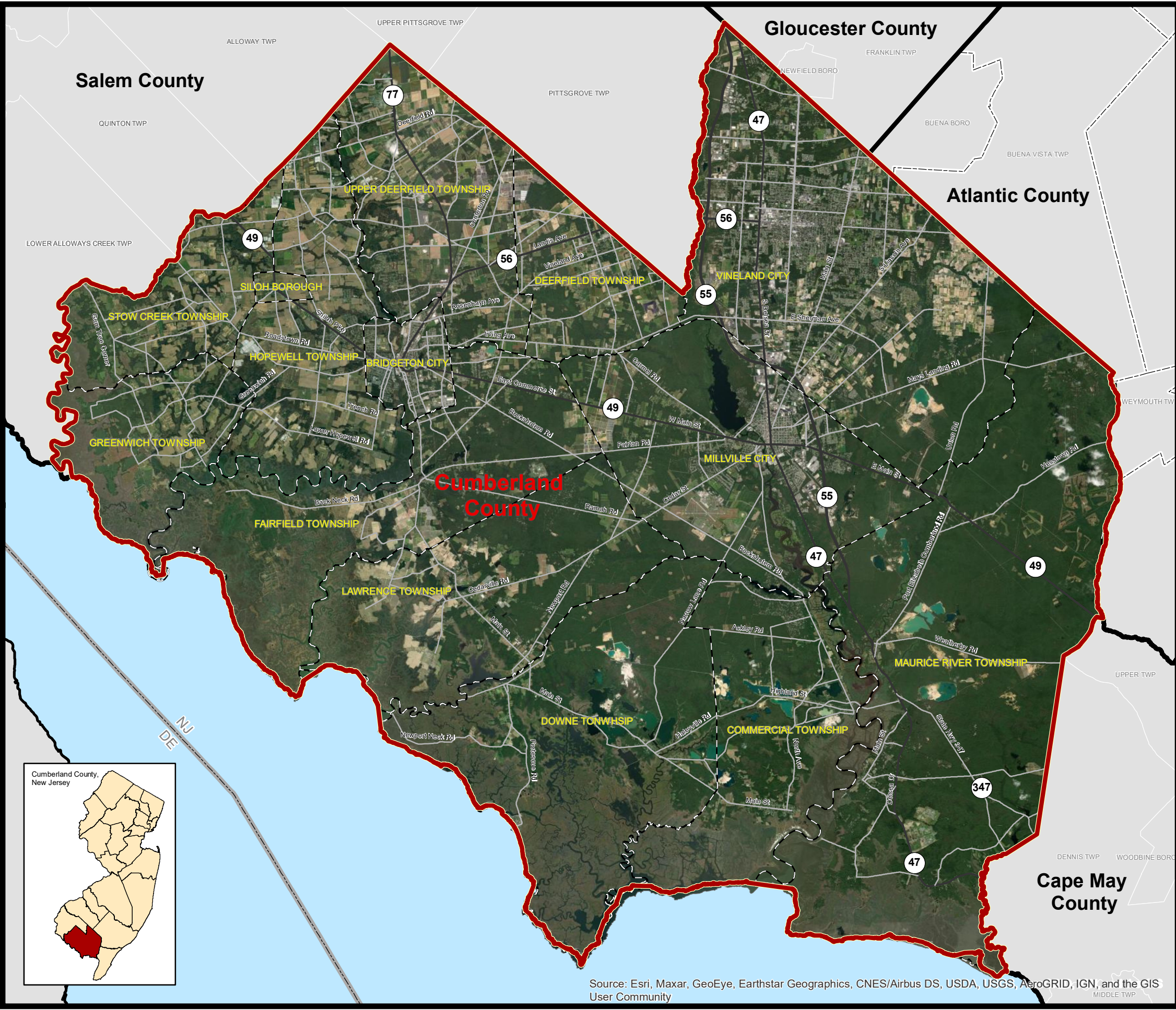
Jerry Lewis, Chairman

Attest: _____

Matthew E. Pisarski, Planning Director

Date: _____

03/01/23



Cumberland County

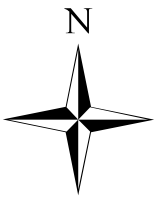
Map 1: Aerial Photo

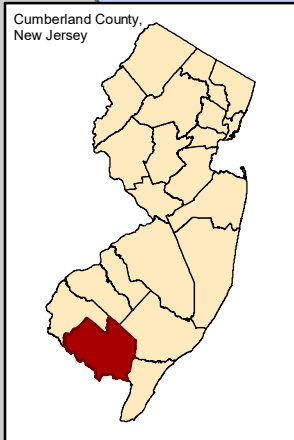
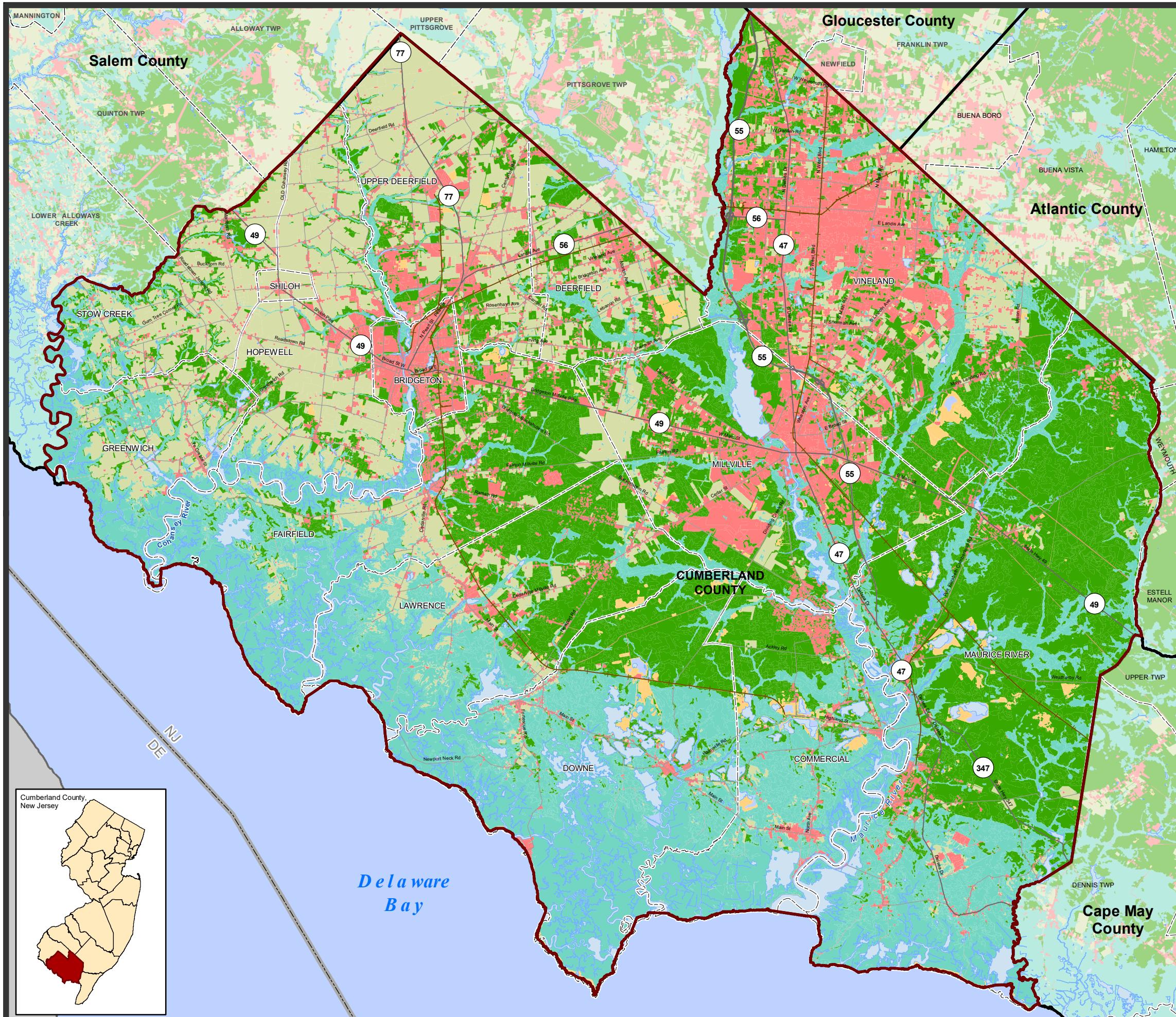
-  Cumberland County Boundary
-  County Boundary
-  Cumberland Municipal Boundary

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, Cumberland County GIS.
This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.



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Cumberland County Department of Planning, Tourism, & Community Affairs
164 West Broad Street
Bridgeton, NJ 08302
Tel. 856-453-2175
December 2021





Cumberland County:

Map 2: Land Cover (2015)

NJDEP Land Cover Categories

	AGRICULTURE
	BARREN LAND
	FOREST
	URBAN
	WATER
	WETLANDS

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, Cumberland County GIS.
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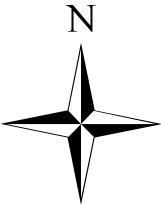
Cumberland County:

Map 3: NJDEP Agricultural Land Cover 2015

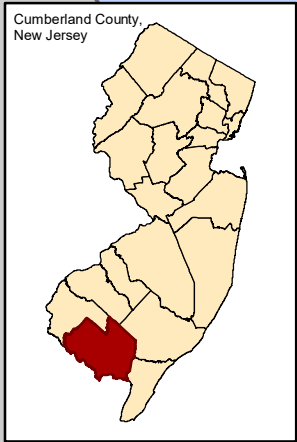
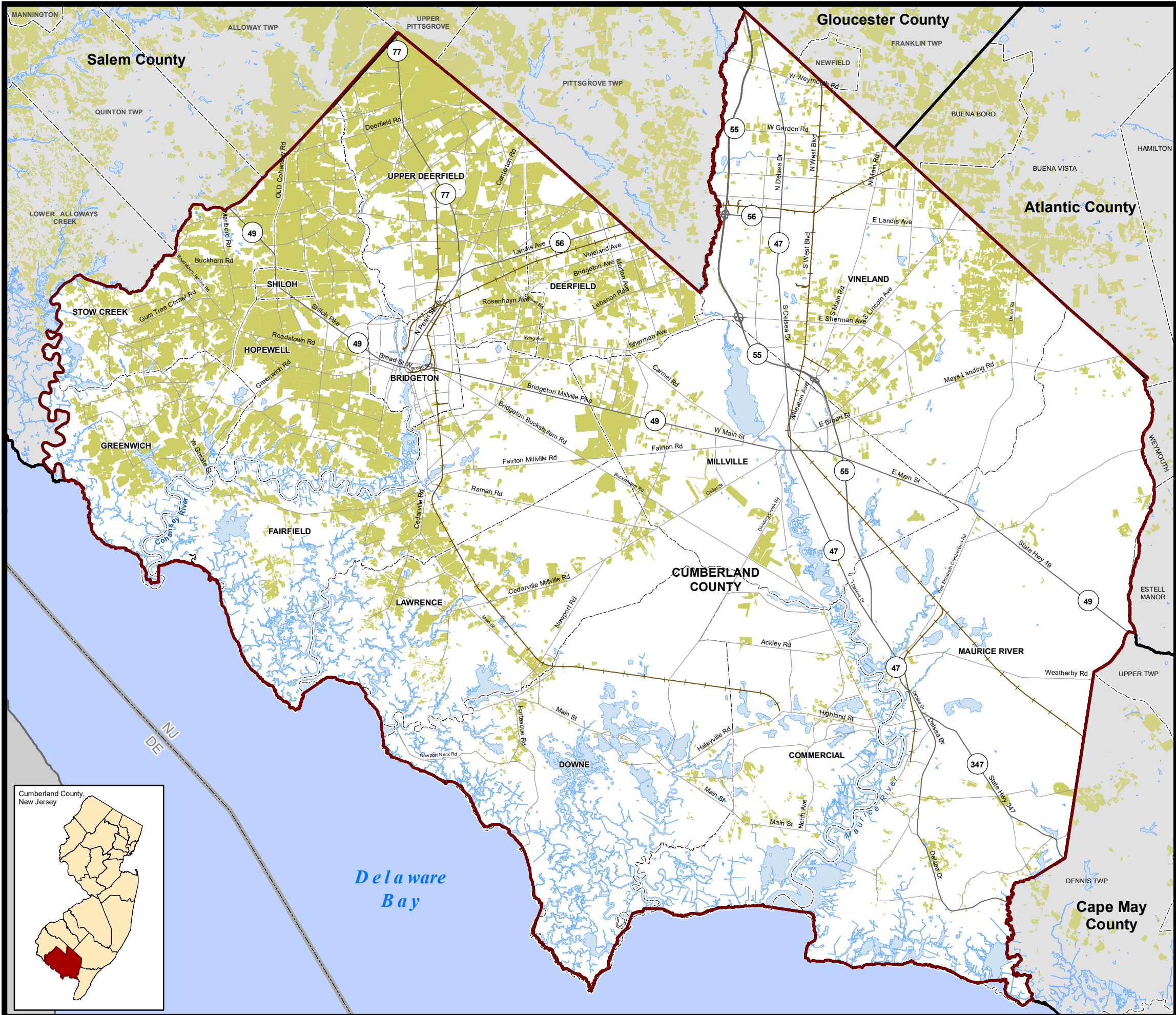
Agricultural Land

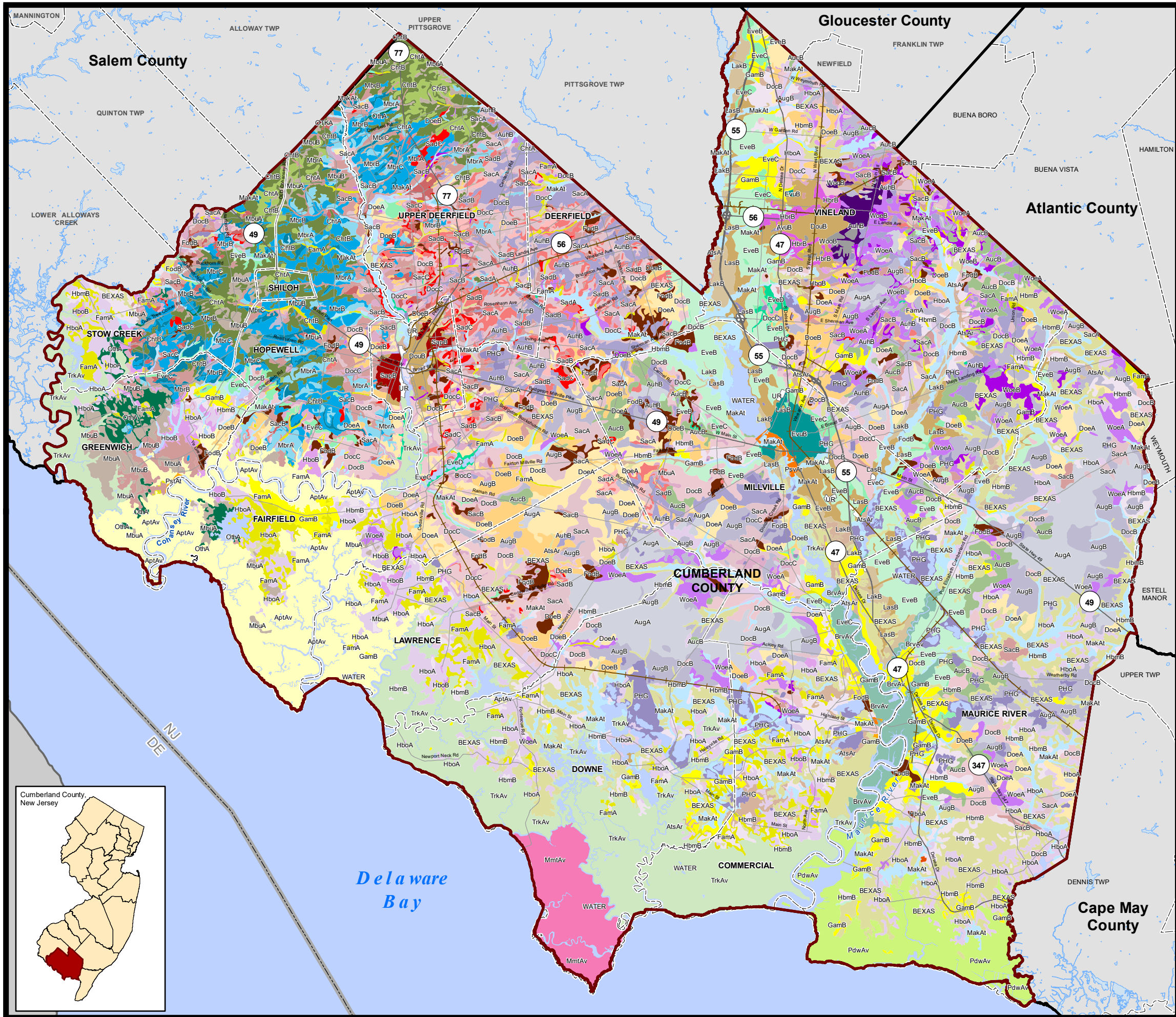


Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
Cumberland County GIS.
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Cumberland County:

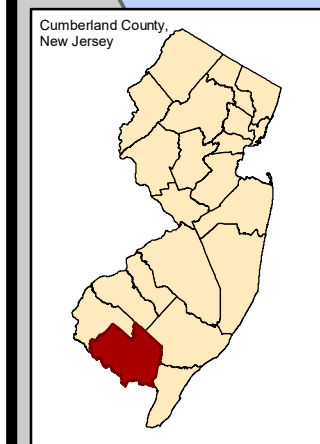
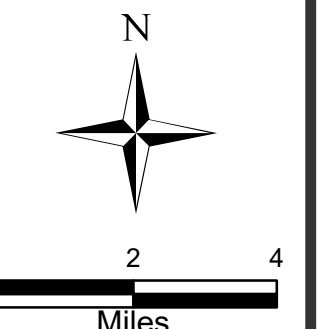
Map 4: Soils 2015

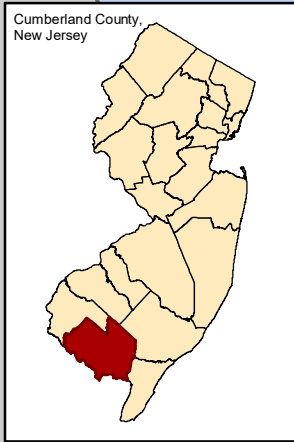
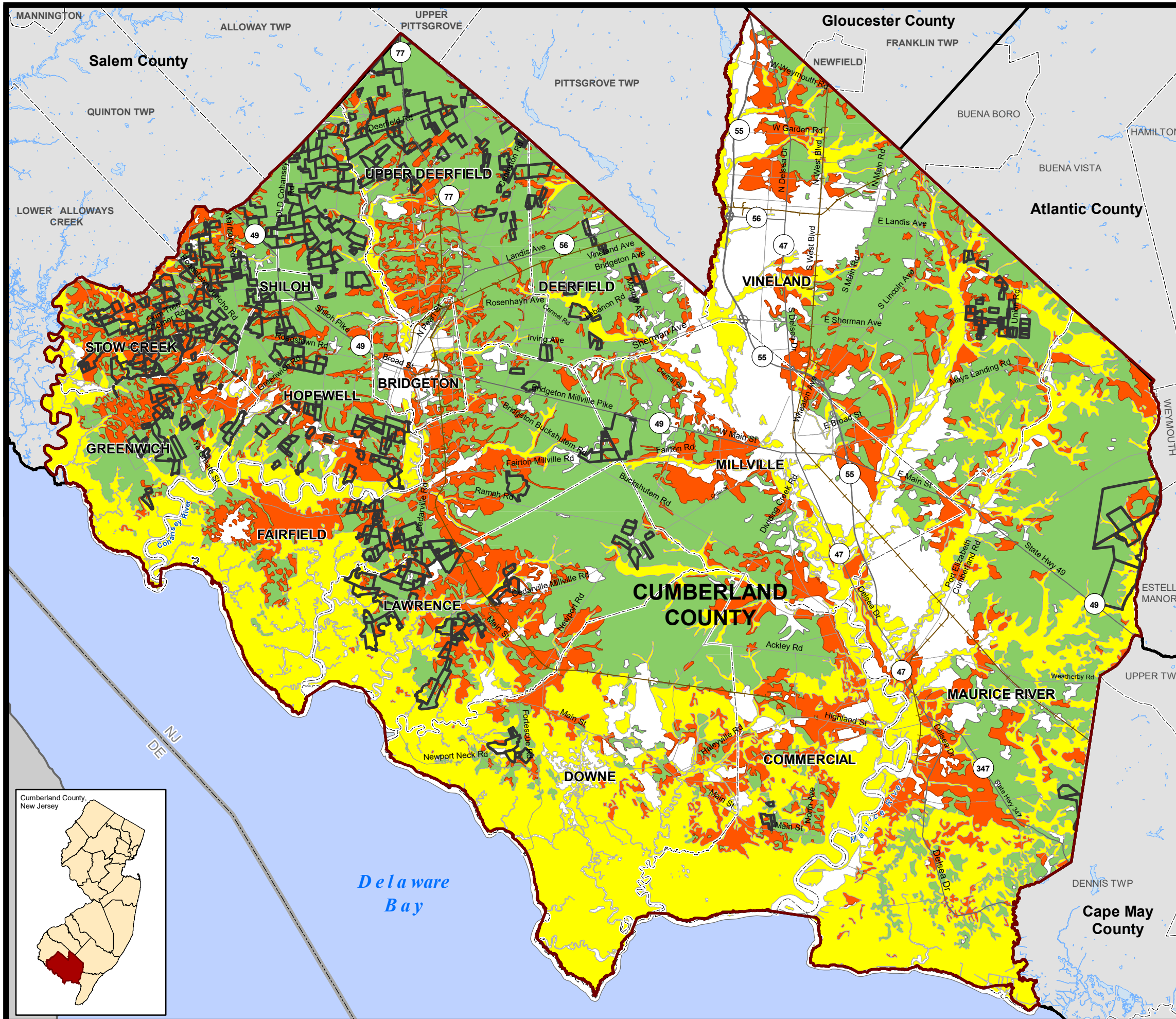
	AptAv		DoeB		MakAt		SacB
	AtsAr		DouB		MbrA		SacC
	AucB		EveB		MbrB		SadA
	AugA		EveC		MbrC		SadB
	AugB		EveD		MbuA		SadC
	AuhB		EvuB		MbuB		SapB
	AvuB		FodB		MmtAv		TrkAv
	BEXAS		FamA		OTKA		UR
	BrvAv		HbmB		OTMA		UdrB
	ChsAt		HboA		OthA		WATER
	ChtA		GamB		PHG		WoeA
	ChtB		HboB		PdwAv		WoeB
	DocB		HbrB		PstAt		WooB
	DocC		LakB		PsvAr		
	DoeA		LasB		SacA		

AptAv	Appoquinimink-Transquaking-Mispillion complex	LasB	Lakewood sand
AtsAr	Atsion sand	MakAt	Manahawkin muck
AucB	Aura loamy sand	MbrA	Matapeake silt loam A
AugA	Aura sandy loam A	MbrB	Matapeake silt loam B
AugB	Aura sandy loam B	MbrC	Matapeake silt loam C
AuhB	Aura gravelly sandy loam	MbuA	Mattapee silt loam A
AvuB	Aura-Urban land complex	MbuB	Mattapee silt loam B
BEXAS	Berryland and Mullica soils	MmtAv	Mispillion-Transquaking-Appoquinimink complex
BrvAv	Broadkill silt loam	OTKA	Othello and Fallsington soils
ChsAt	Chicone silt loam	OTMA	Othello, Fallsington, and Trussum soils
ChtA	Chillum silt loam A	OthA	Othello silt loam
ChtB	Chillum silt loam B	PHG	Pits, sand and gravel
DocB	Downer loamy sand B	PdwAv	Pawcatuck-Transquaking complex
DocC	Downer loamy sand C	PstAt	Psammments, sulfidic substratum
DoeA	Downer sandy loam A	PsvAr	Psammments, wet substratum
DoeB	Downer sandy loam B	SacA	Sassafras sandy loam A
DouB	Downer-Urban land complex	SacB	Sassafras sandy loam B
EveB	Evesboro sand B	SacC	Sassafras sandy loam C
EveC	Evesboro sand C	SadA	Sassafras gravelly sandy loam A
EveD	Evesboro sand D	SadB	Sassafras gravelly sandy loam B
EvuB	Evesboro-Urban land complex	SadC	Sassafras gravelly sandy loam C
FamA	Fallsington sandy loam	SapB	Sassafras-Urban land complex
FodB	Fort Mott loamy sand	TrkAv	Transquaking mucky peat
GamB	Galloway loamy sand	UR	Urban land
HbmB	Hammonton loamy sand	UdrB	Udorthents, refuse substratum
HboA	Hammonton sandy loam A	WATER	Water
HboB	Hammonton sandy loam B	WoeA	Woodstown sandy loam A
HbrB	Hammonton-Urban land complex	WoeB	Woodstown sandy loam B
LakB	Lakehurst sand	WooB	Woodstown-Urban land complex

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, NRCS
Cumberland County GIS.
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December 2021





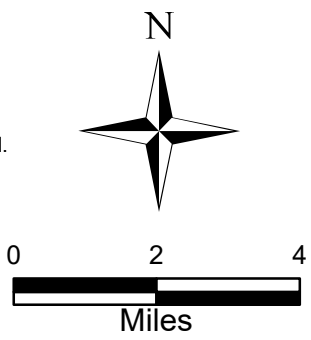
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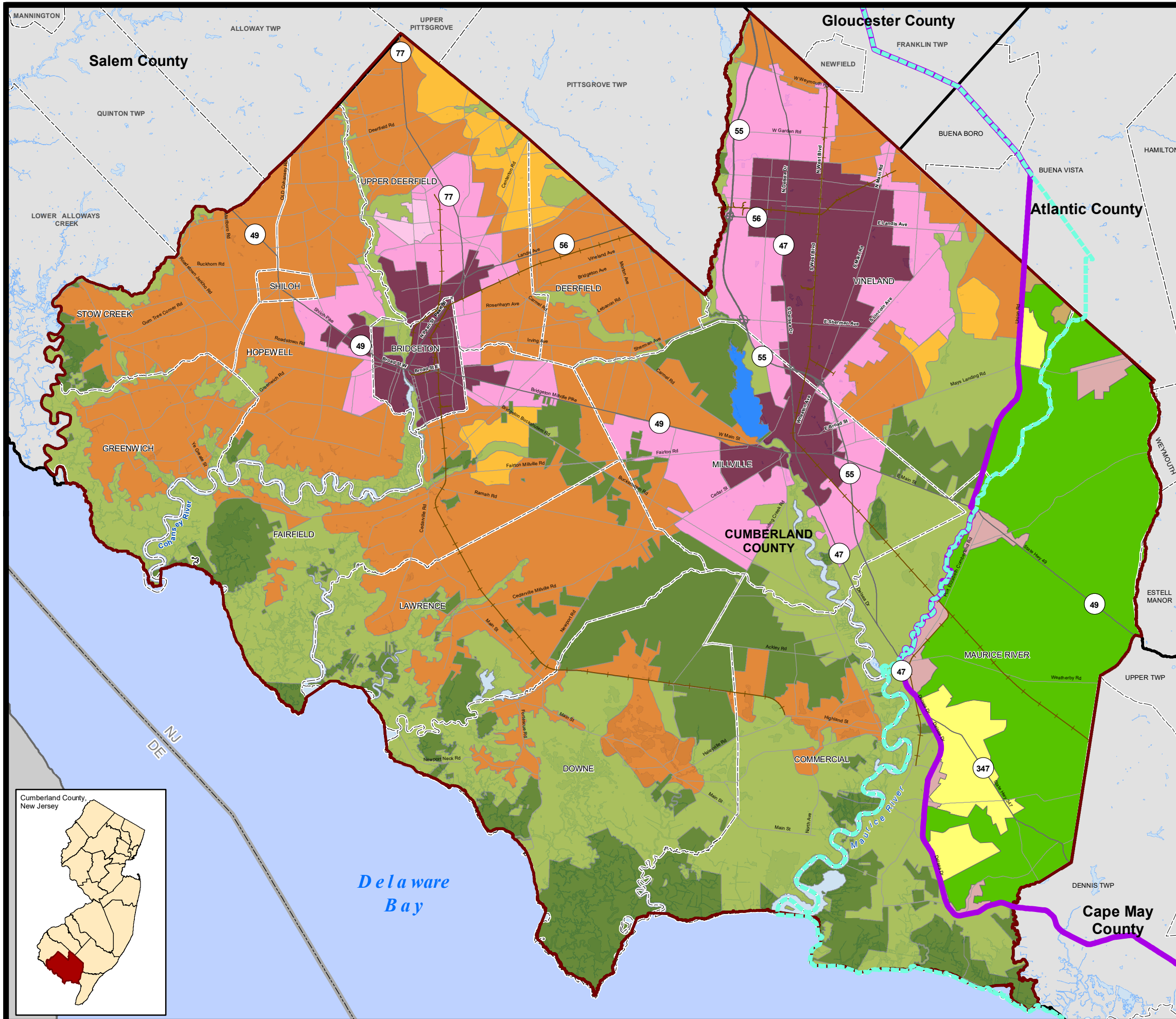
Map 5: Soil Agricultural Classifications

-  Target Farms
- Soil Classifications**
-  Prime Farmland
-  Farmland of Statewide Importance
-  Unique Farmland
-  Not Rated for Agricultural Use

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, USDA/
SURGO Soils, NJDA/SADC
Cumberland County GIS.
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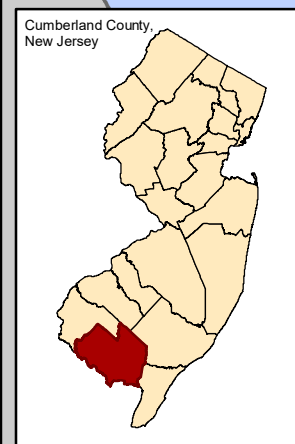




Cumberland County:

Map 6: Premiminary Policy Map of State Development & Redevelopment Plan

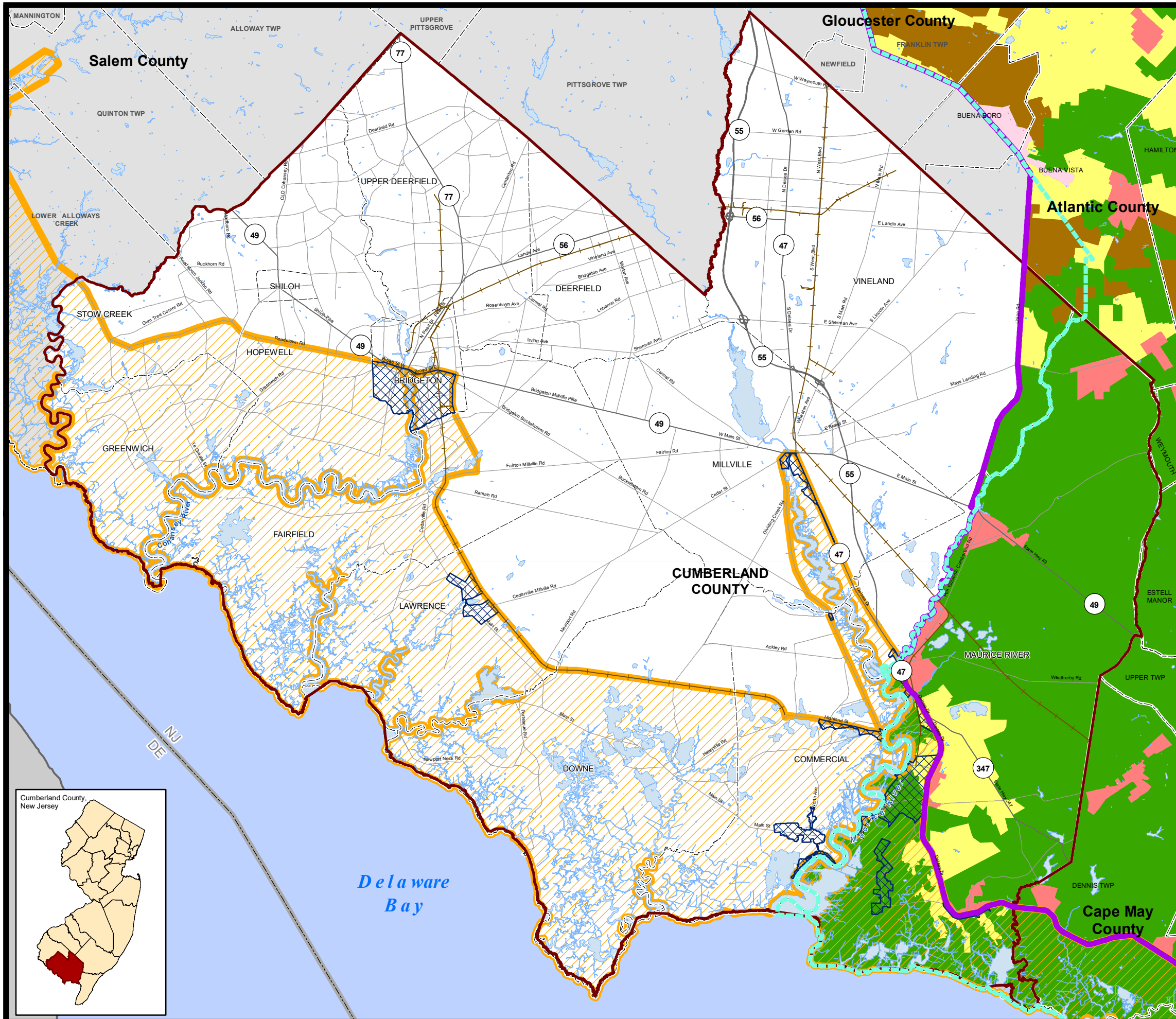
- Boundaries**
- Pinelands National Reserve
 - Pinelands Boundary
- Planning Areas**
- Metropolitan
 - Suburban
 - Fringe
 - Rural
 - Environmentally Sensitive
 - Park
 - Rural Environmentally Sensitive
 - Pinelands
 - Water
- Pinelands Management Areas**
- Agricultural Production Area
 - Forest Area
 - Pinelands Village
 - Rural Development Area



Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, NJ Dept. of Community Affairs - Office of Smart Growth, Cumberland County GIS, NJ Pinelands Commission. This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.

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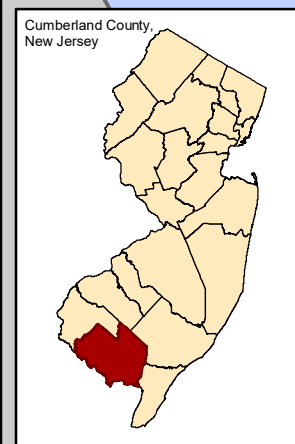
Cumberland County:

Map 7: Pinelands & CAFRA

- Municipal Boundary
- Pinelands National Reserve
- NJ Pinelands Boundary
- CAFRA Boundary
- CAFRA Center

Pinelands Management Areas

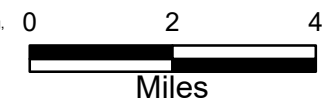
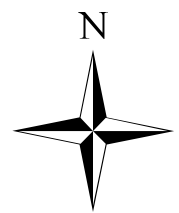
- Agricultural Production Area
- Forest Area
- Pinelands Town
- Pinelands Village
- Rural Development Area

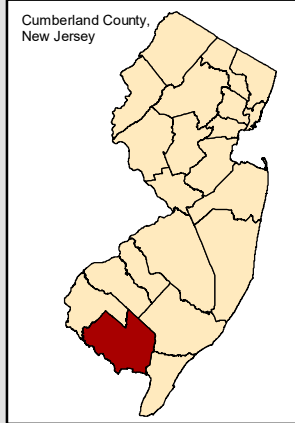
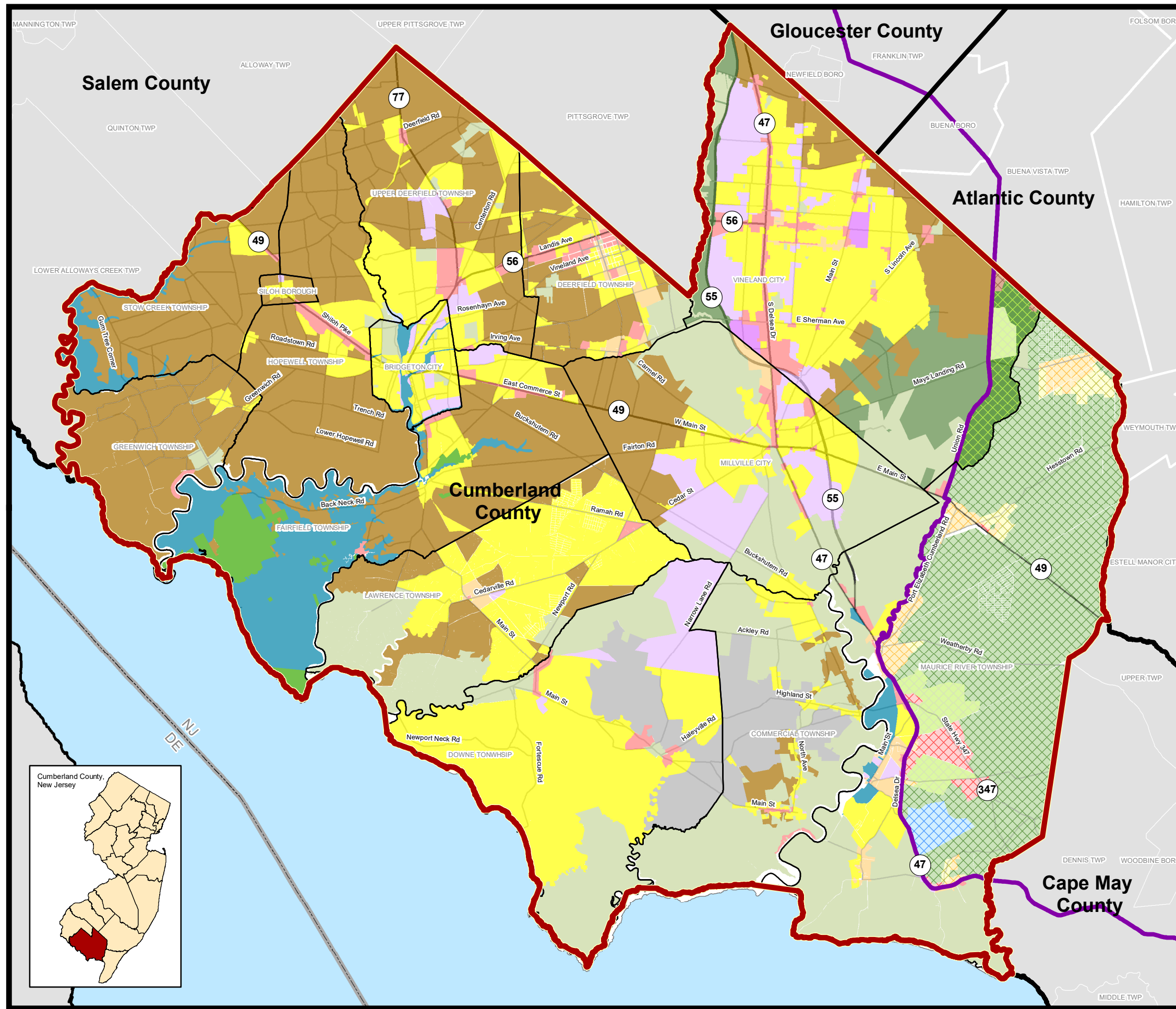


Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, NJ Pinelands Commission, Cumberland County GIS. This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.



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Cumberland County

Map 8: Zoning - General

Boundaries

- Pinelands Boundary
- Municipal Boundary

General Zoning

- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Residential
- Floodplain
- Park or Openspace
- State
- Mining Extraction
- Agriculture
- Woodlands
- Lake

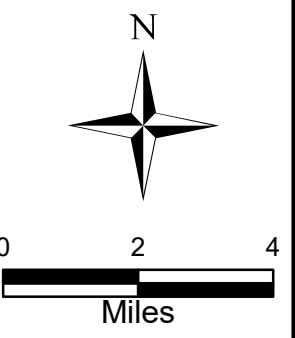
Pinelands Zoning

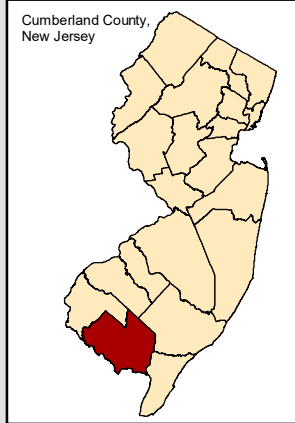
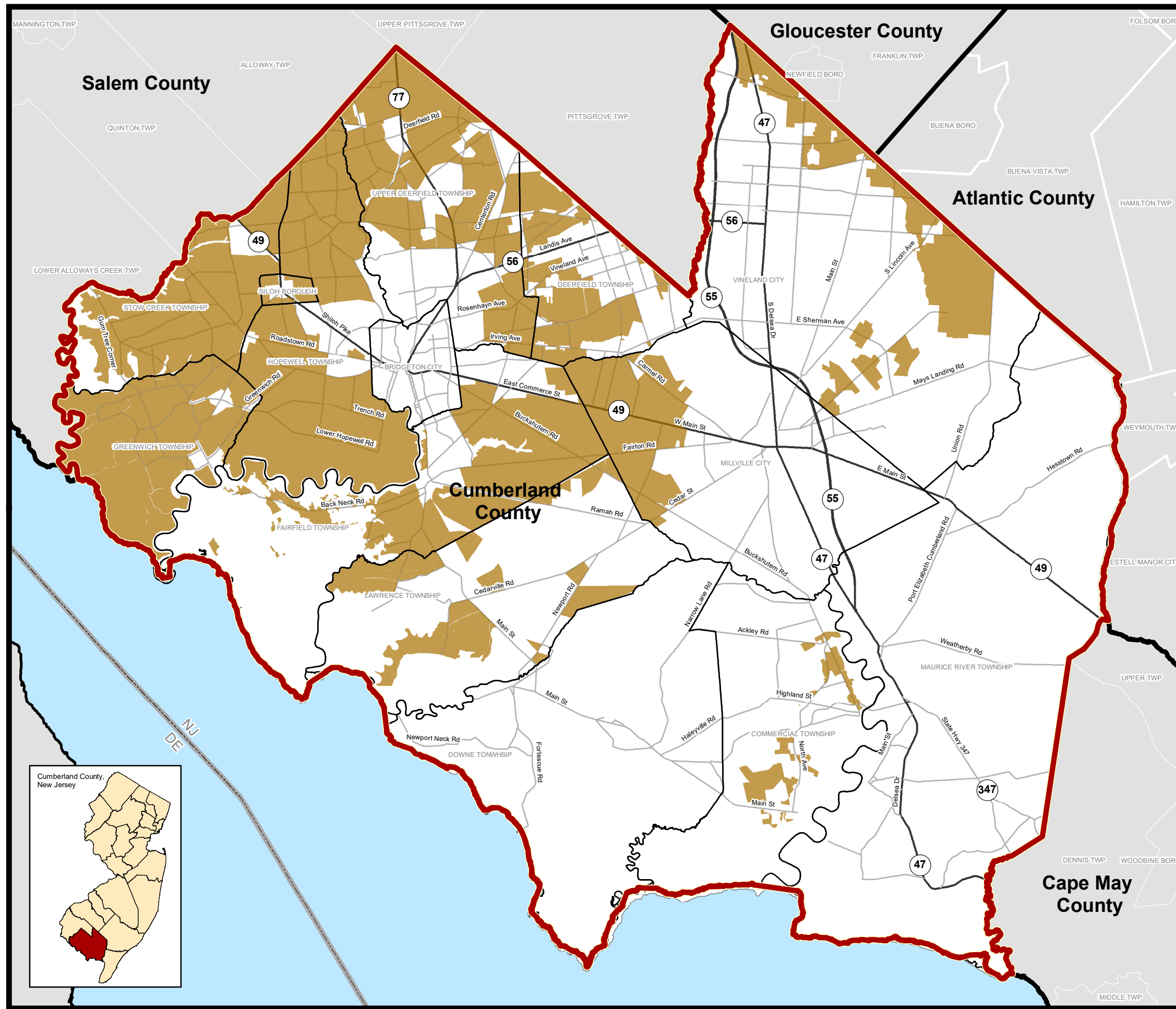
- Commercial
- Conservation
- Residential
- Rural Development
- State Institutional
- Village
- Agriculture
- Forest

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, NJ Pinelands Commission, Cumberland County GIS. This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.



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Map 9: Agriculture Zoning

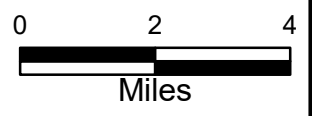
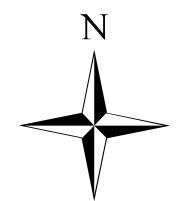
Municipal Boundary

Agriculture Zoning

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
Cumberland County GIS.
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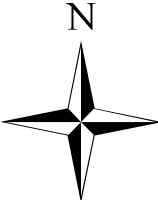
Cumberland County:

Map 10: Sewer Service Area

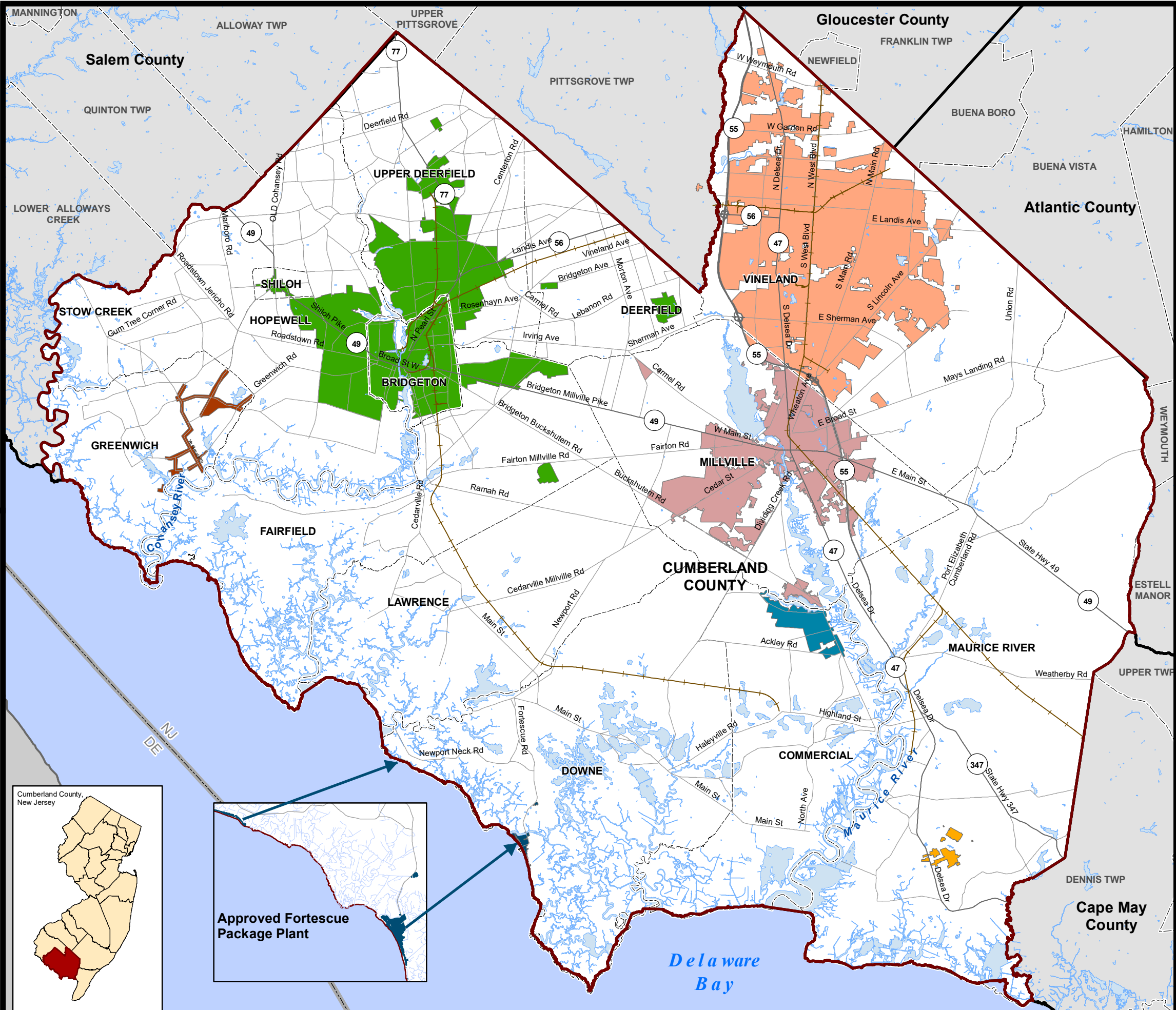
Proposed and Existing Sewer Service Areas

- Proposed Greenwich SSA
- Bayside State Prison
- CCUA
- Landis Sewer Authority
- Proposed Laurel Lake SSA
- Approved Fortescue SSA
- Millville Sewer Utility

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, Cumberland County GIS.
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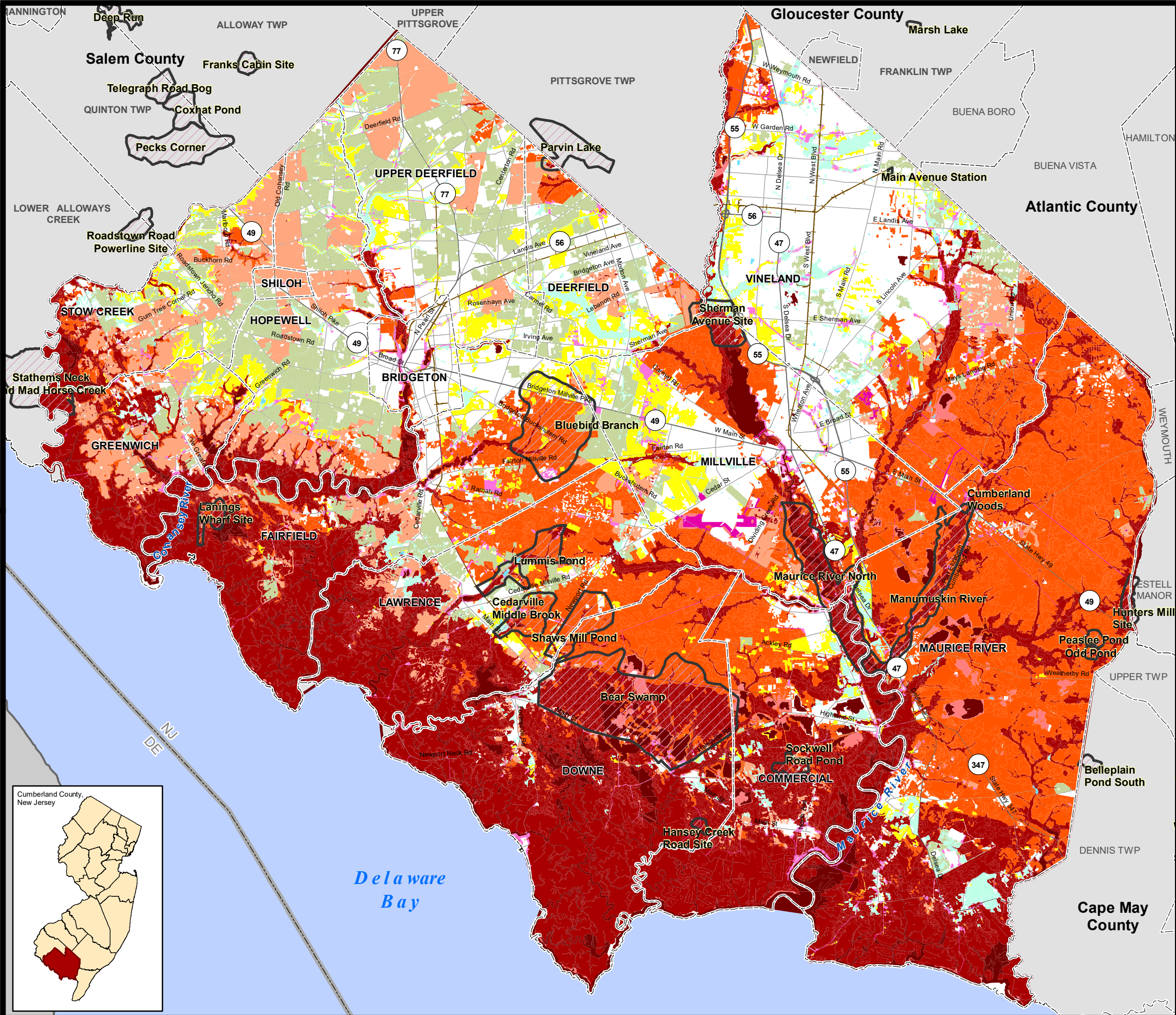


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Cumberland County:

Map 11: Landscape Project 3.3

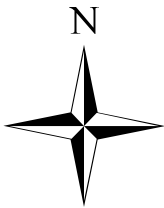


 Natural Heritage Site

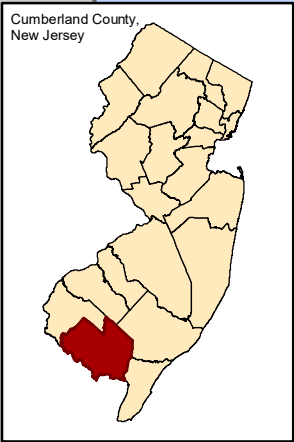
Conservation Priory Type

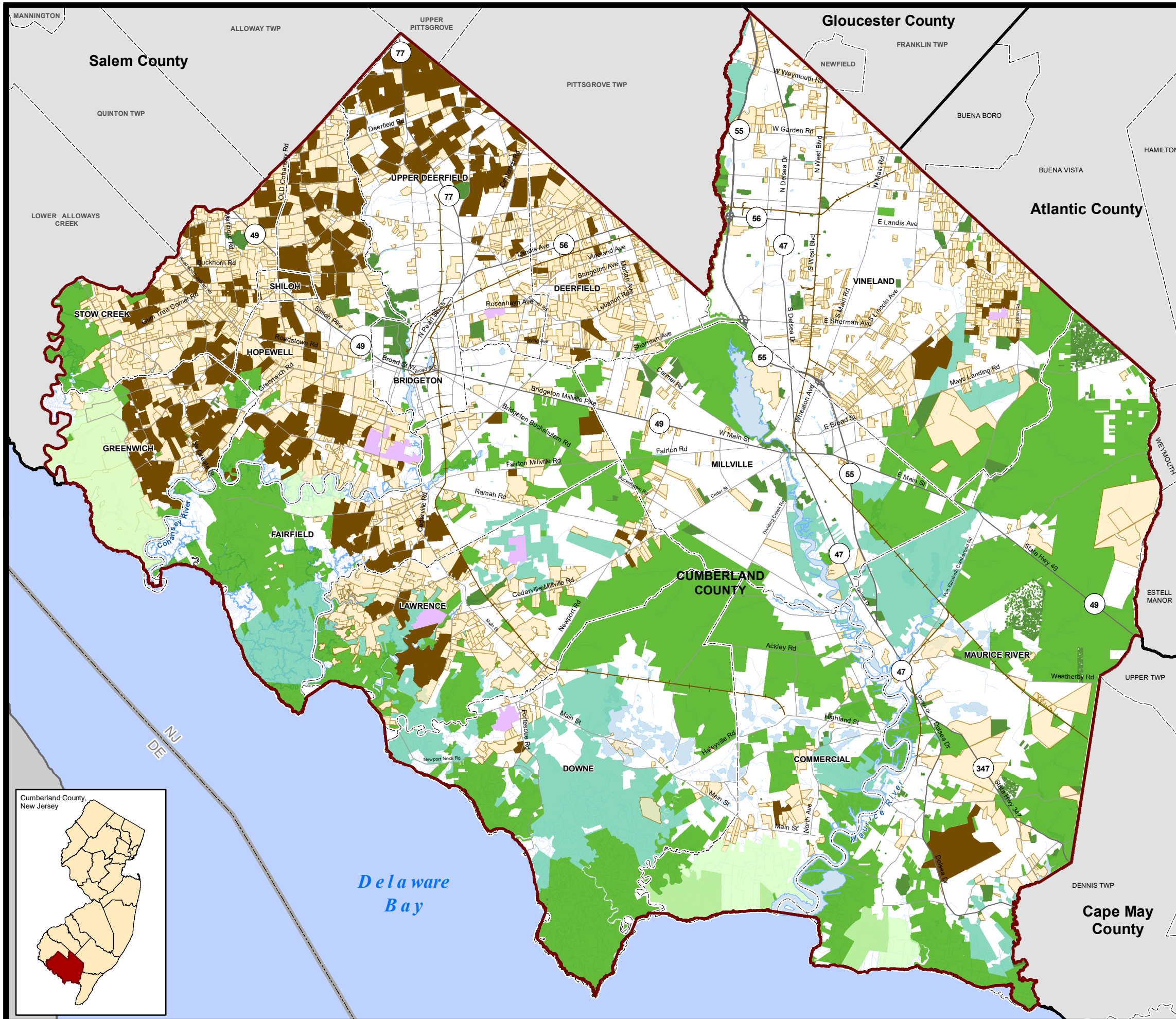
Agriculture	Urban
 Suitable Habitats	 Suitable Habitats
 Critical Habitats	 Critical Habitats
Barren Land	Wetlands
 Suitable Habitats	 Suitable Habitats
 Critical Habitats	 Critical Habitats
Forest	Water
 Suitable Habitats	 Suitable Habitats
 Critical Habitats	 Critical Habitats

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, NJ DEP
Landscape Project v.3.3,
Cumberland County GIS.
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Cumberland County:

Map 12: Protected Open Space & Preserved Farms

Farm Assessed

Farmland Preservation

State or County Preserved Farmland

Nonprofit Preserved Farmland

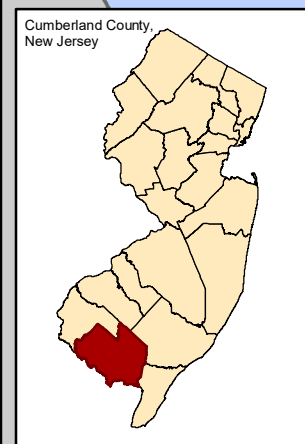
Protected Open Space

Utility Owned Open Space

State Owned Space

Locally Owned Space

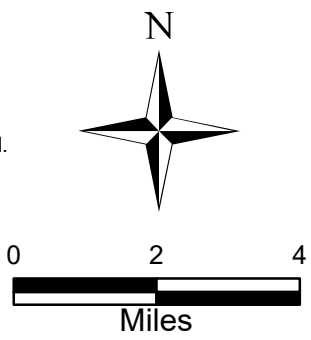
Nonprofit Owned Open Space



Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, NJDA/SADC, Cumberland County GIS.
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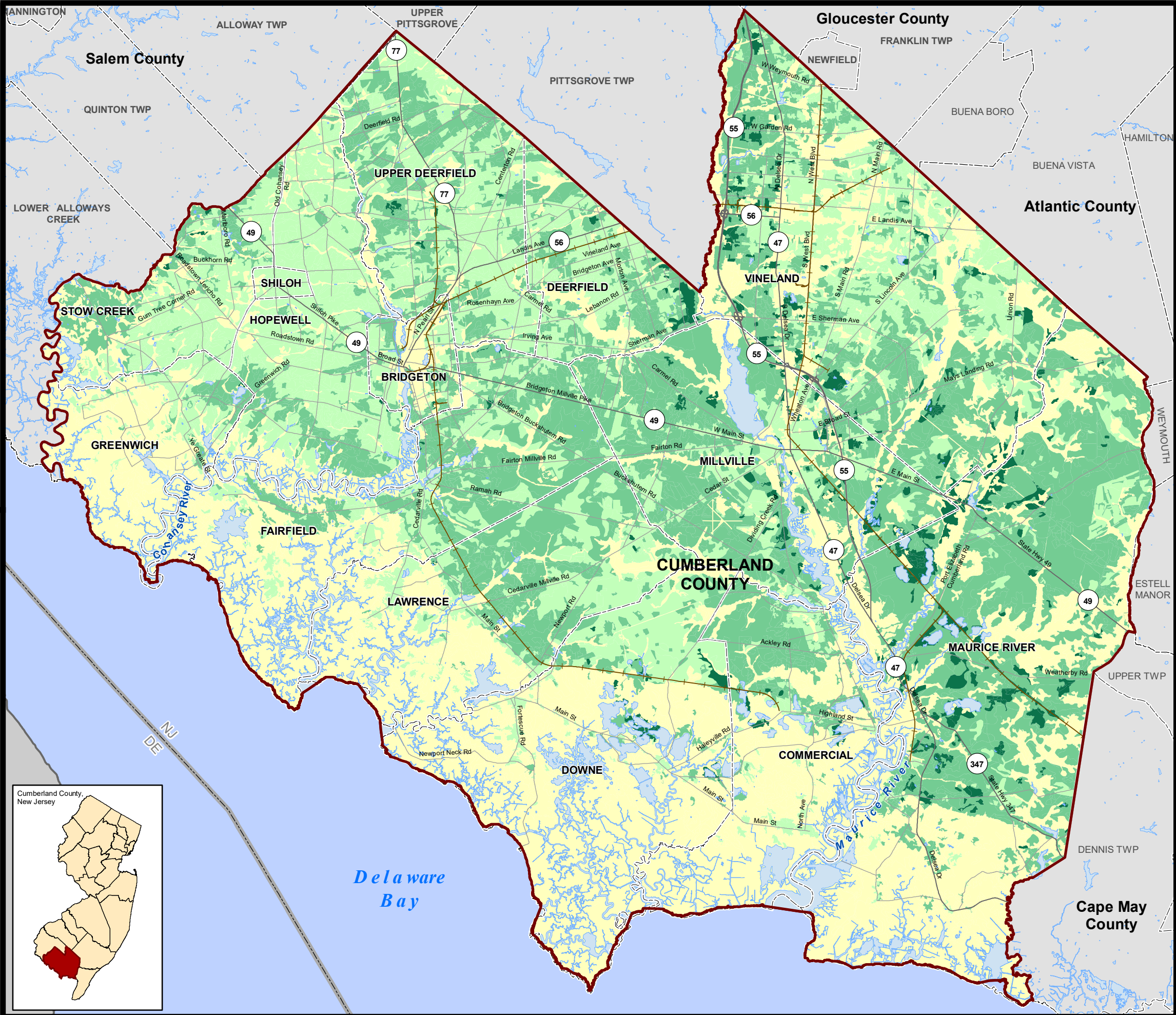


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Cumberland County:

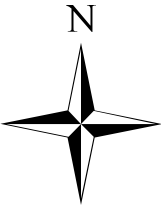
Map 13: Groundwater Recharge



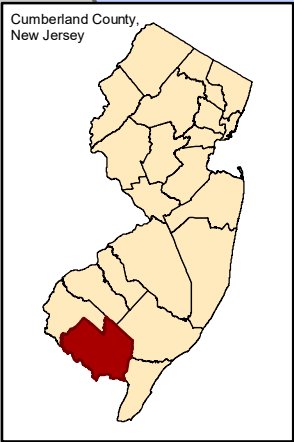
Inches per Year

- 0 - 8
- 9 - 10
- 11 - 12
- 13 - 15

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, Cumberland County GIS.
This map was developed using New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.

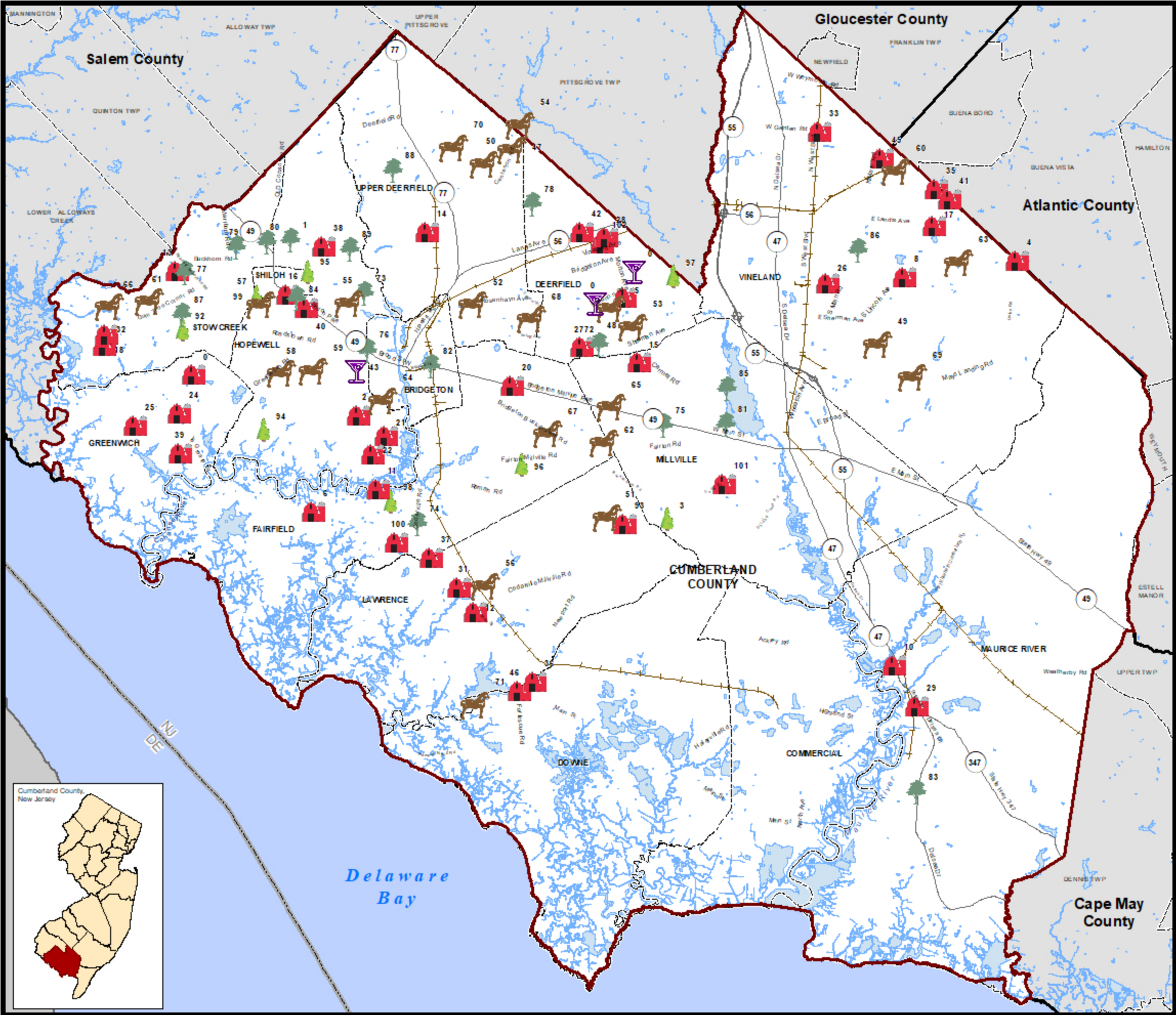


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Cumberland County:

Map 14: Agritourism



Agritourism

Farm Market

Greenhouse or Nursery

Christmas Tree Grower

Agritourism

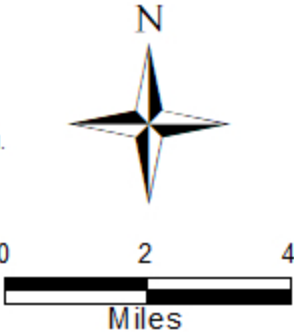
Horse Farm

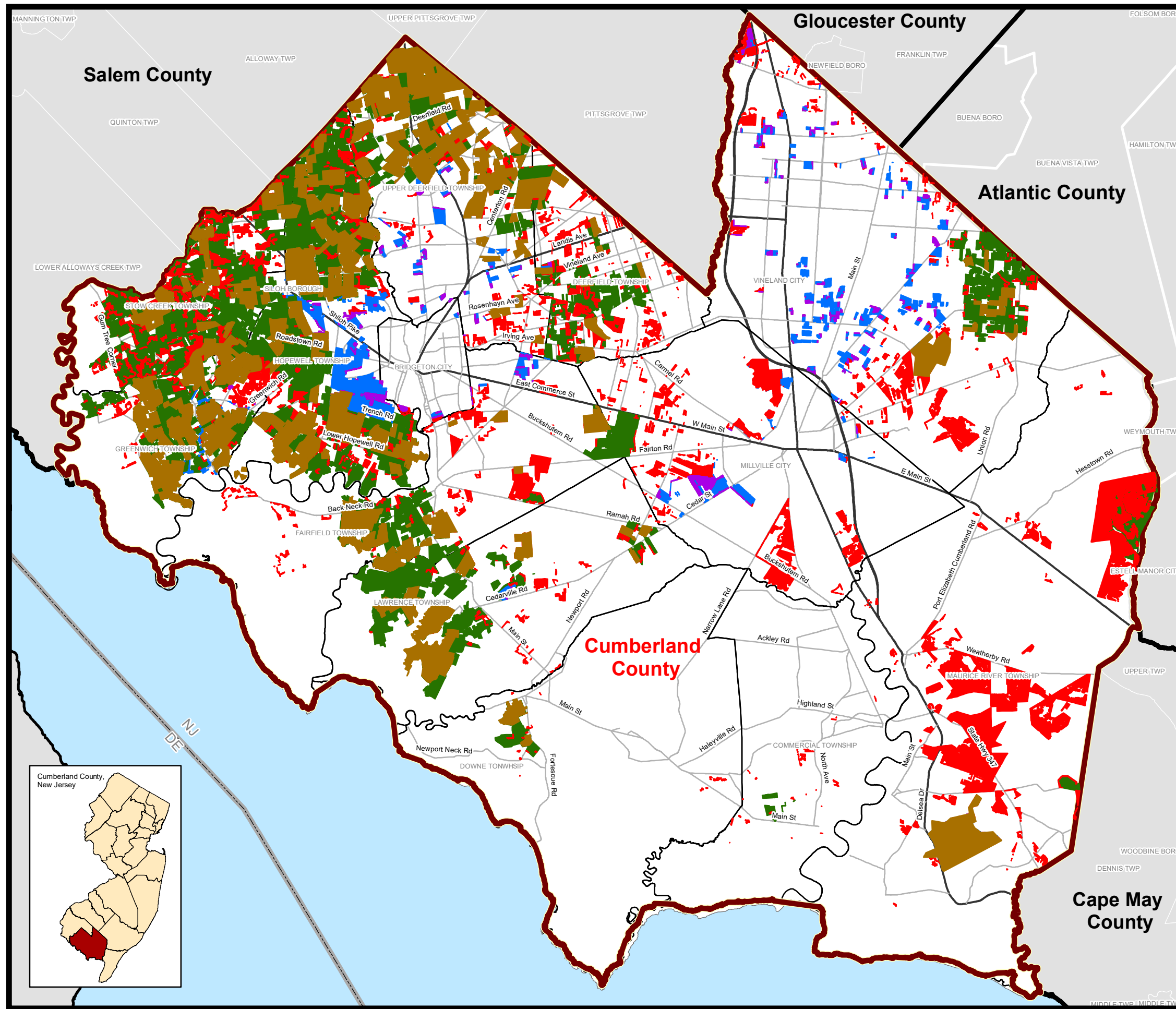
Winery

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT, Cumberland County GIS.
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Cumberland County

Map 15: Eligible Farm Assessed

Preserved Farmland

Sewer Service Area & Forest

Forest

Sewer Service Area

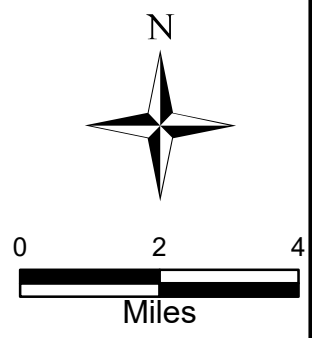
Eligible Farm Assessed

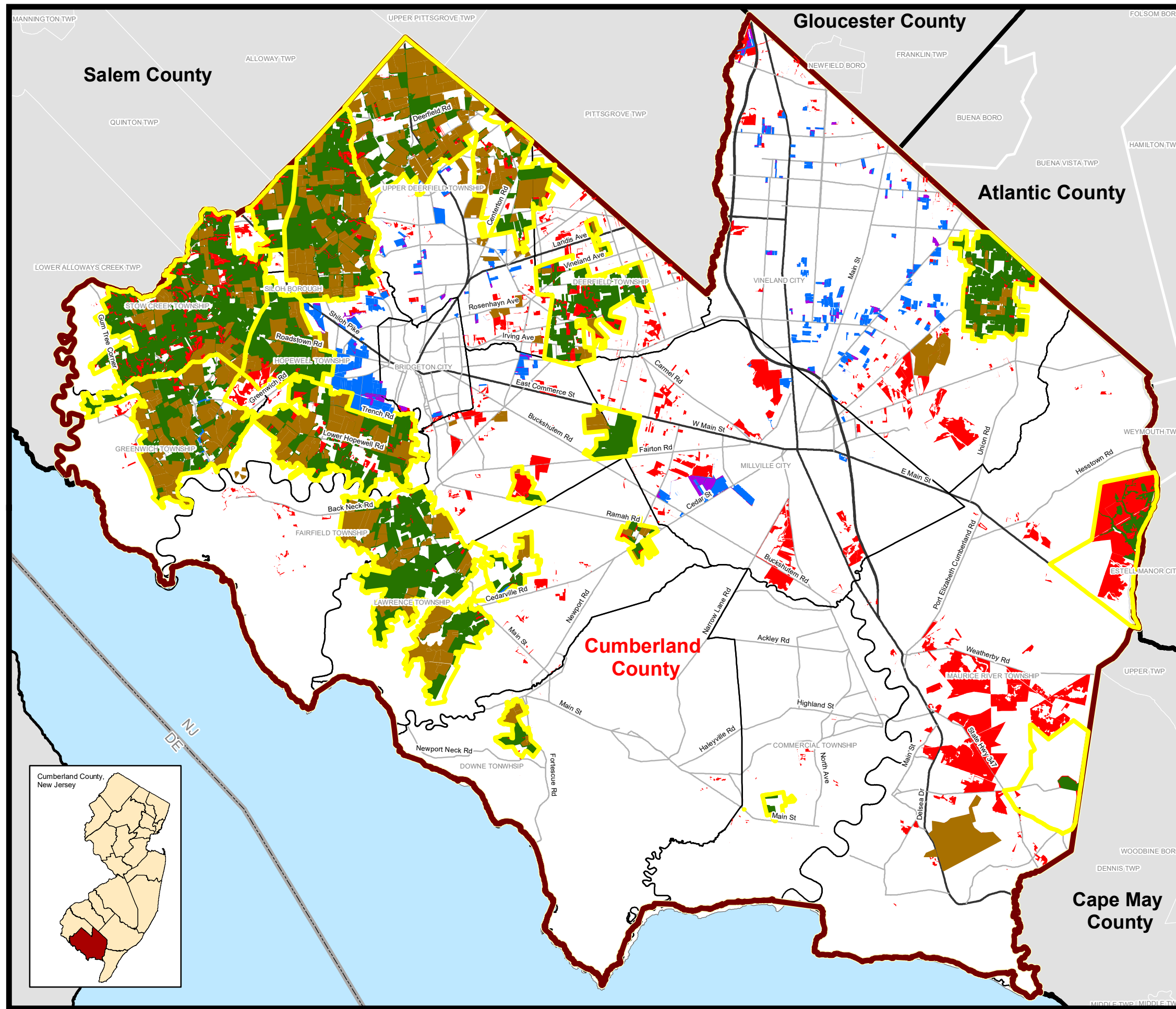
Preserved Farmland - 21,595 Acres
Eligible Farm Assessed - 22,905 Acres
Forest - 16,172 Acres
Sewer Service Area - 4,918 Acres
Sewer Service Area/Forest - 561 Acres

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
Cumberland County GIS.
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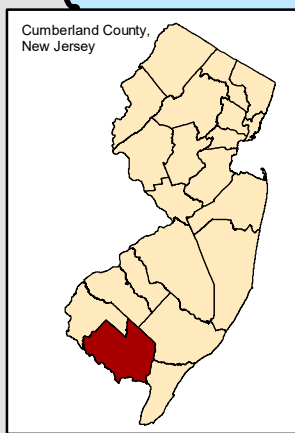


Cumberland County

Map 16: Eligible Farm Assessed, Project Areas

-  2021 Project Areas
-  Preserved Farmland
-  Sewer Service Area & Forest
-  Forest
-  Sewer Service Area
-  Eligible Farm Assessed

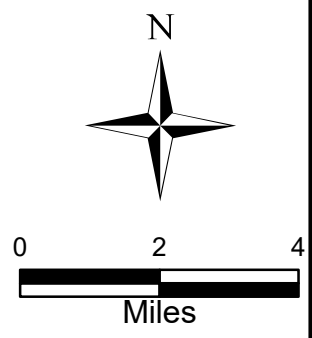
Preserved Farmland - 21,595 Acres
Eligible Farm Assessed - 22,905 Acres
Forest - 16,172 Acres
Sewer Service Area - 4,918 Acres
Sewer Service Area/Forest - 561 Acres

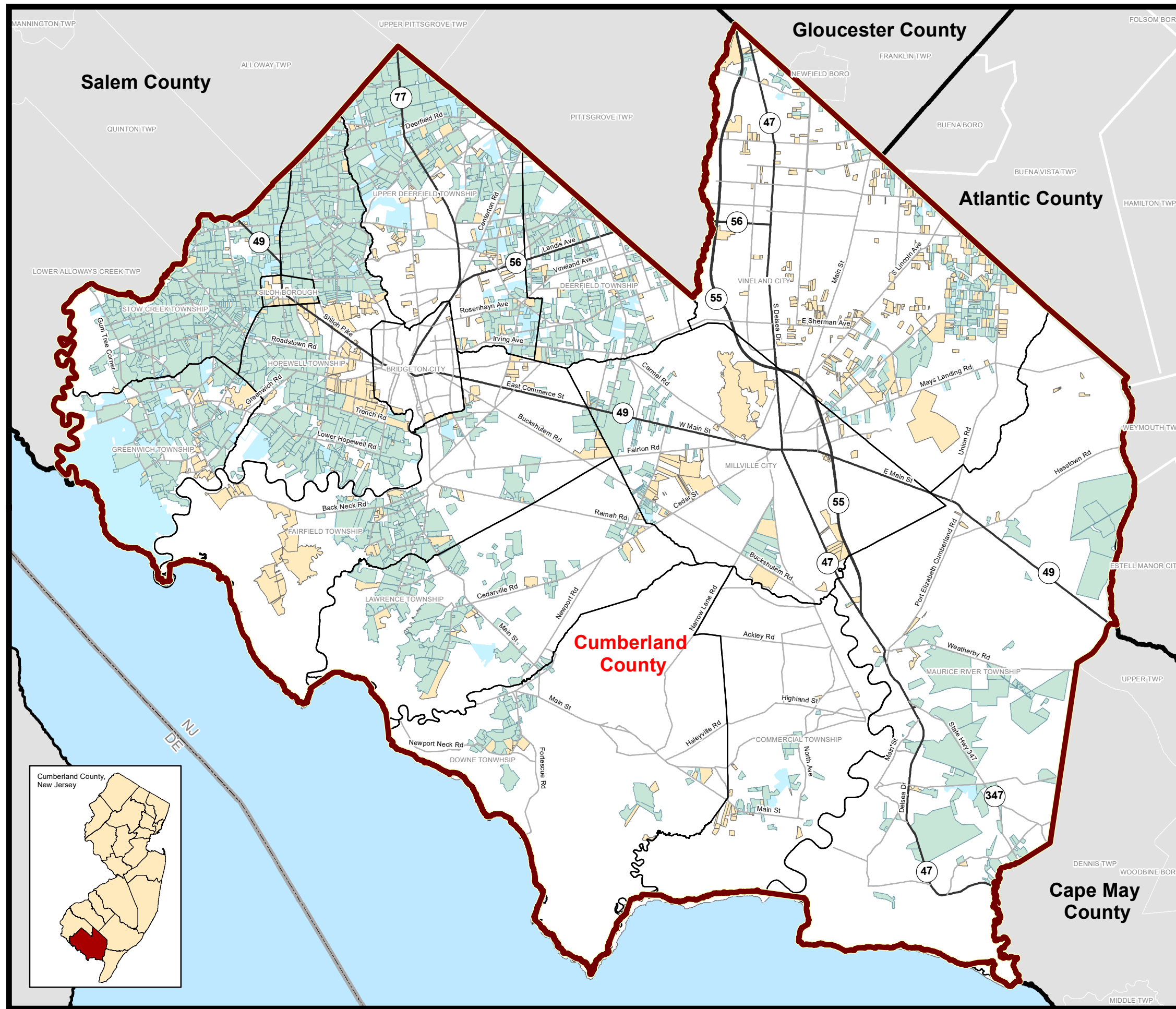


Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
Cumberland County GIS.
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Cumberland County

Map 17: Agricultural Development Areas

Municipal Boundary

Agriculture Development Area

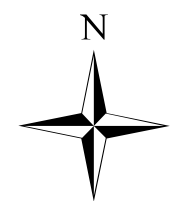
Farm Assessed

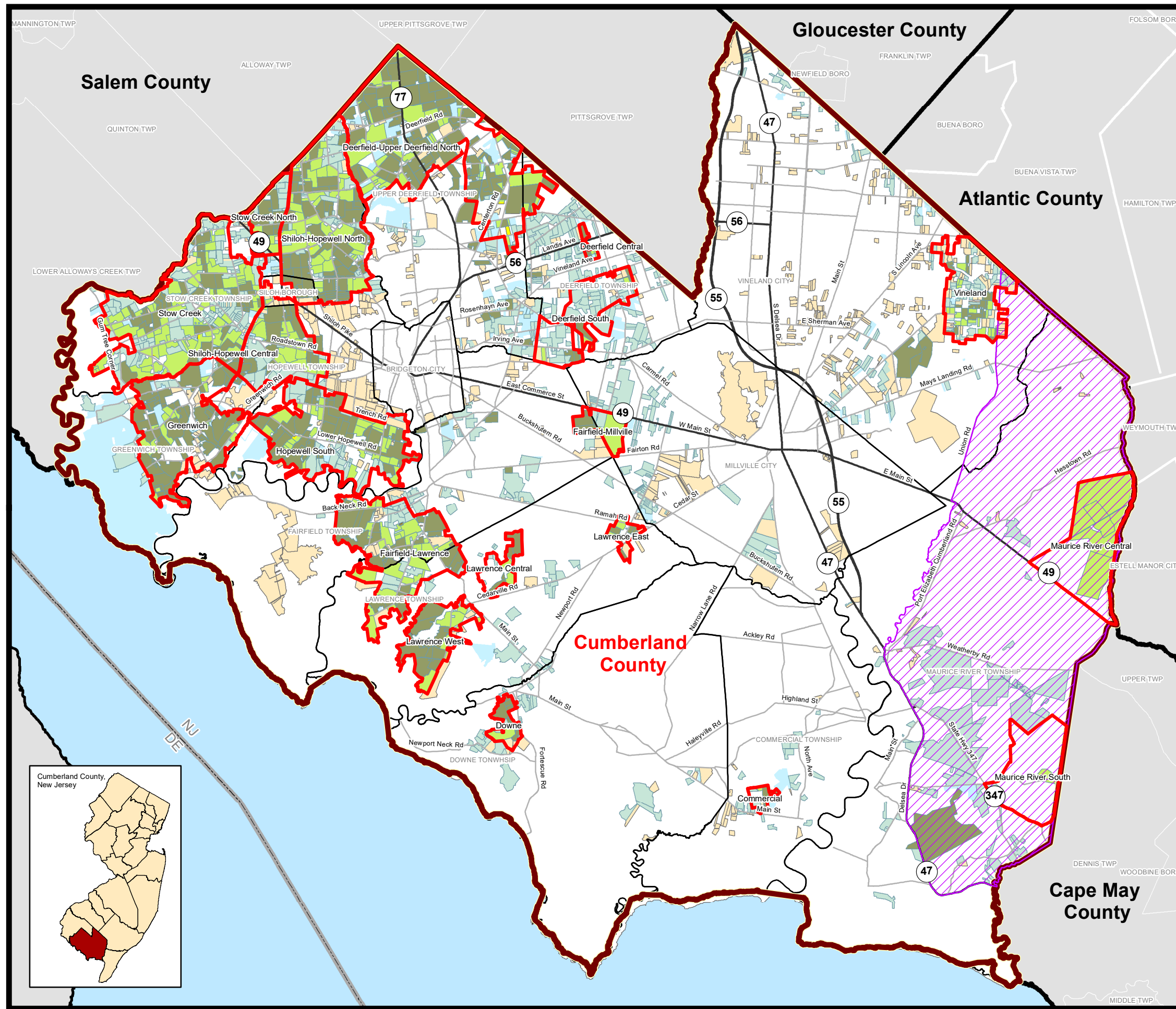
ADA Critirea:
Farm Assessed
Outside of Sewer Service Area
Soils - State & Prime
Zoning - Farming as a permitted use

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
Cumberland County GIS.
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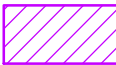
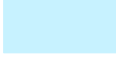
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Cumberland County

Map 18: Agricultural Development Areas & Project Areas

-  Project Areas
-  Pinelands
-  Municipal Boundary
-  Agriculture Development Area
-  Preserved Farmland
-  Target Farms
-  Farm Assessed

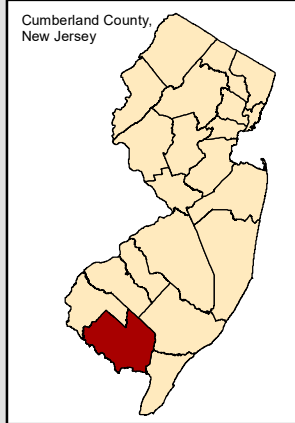
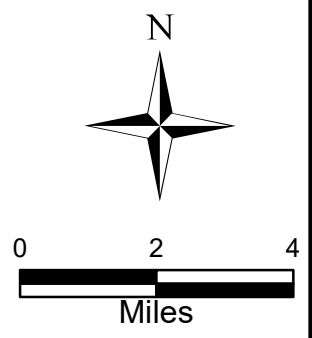
ADA Critirea:
State Planning Area - 3, 4a, 4b, 5
Soils - State & Prime
Zoning - Farming as a permitted use

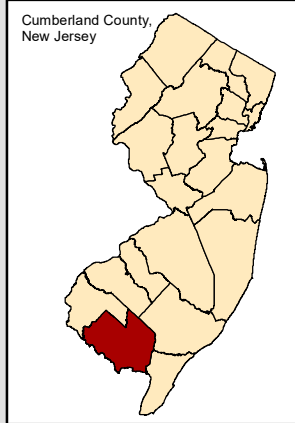
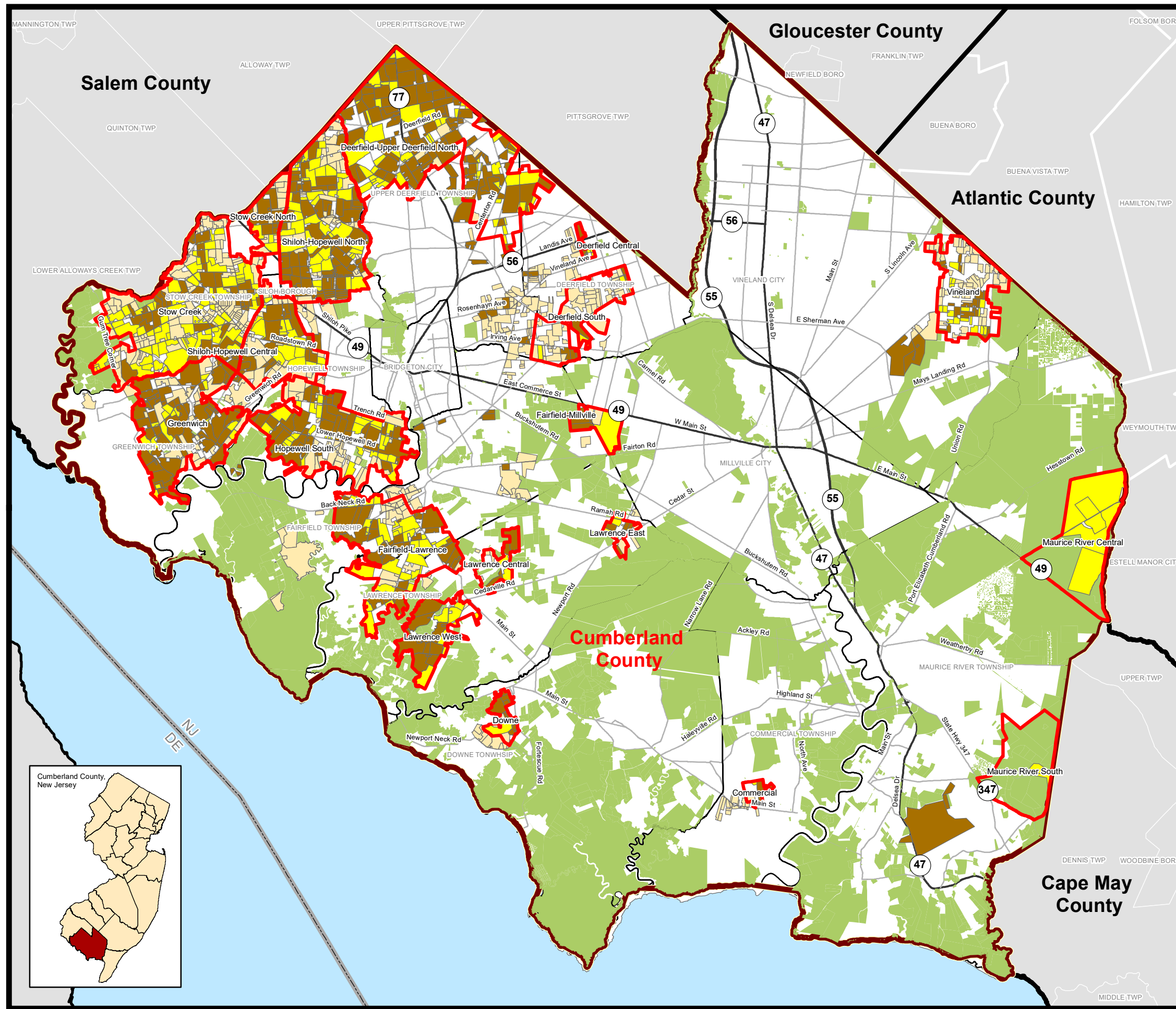
Pinelands ADA Critirea:
Pinelands Management Area - 2, 3, 32, 34, 4
Soils - State & Prime
Zoning - Farming as a permitted use

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
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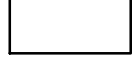
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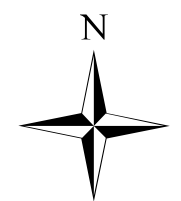
Map 19: Project Areas, Farm Assessed, Target & Preserved Farms

-  Project Areas
-  Preserved Farmland
-  Target Farms
-  Farm Assessed
-  Protected Open Space
-  Municipal Boundary

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
Cumberland County GIS.
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Map 20a: Commercial

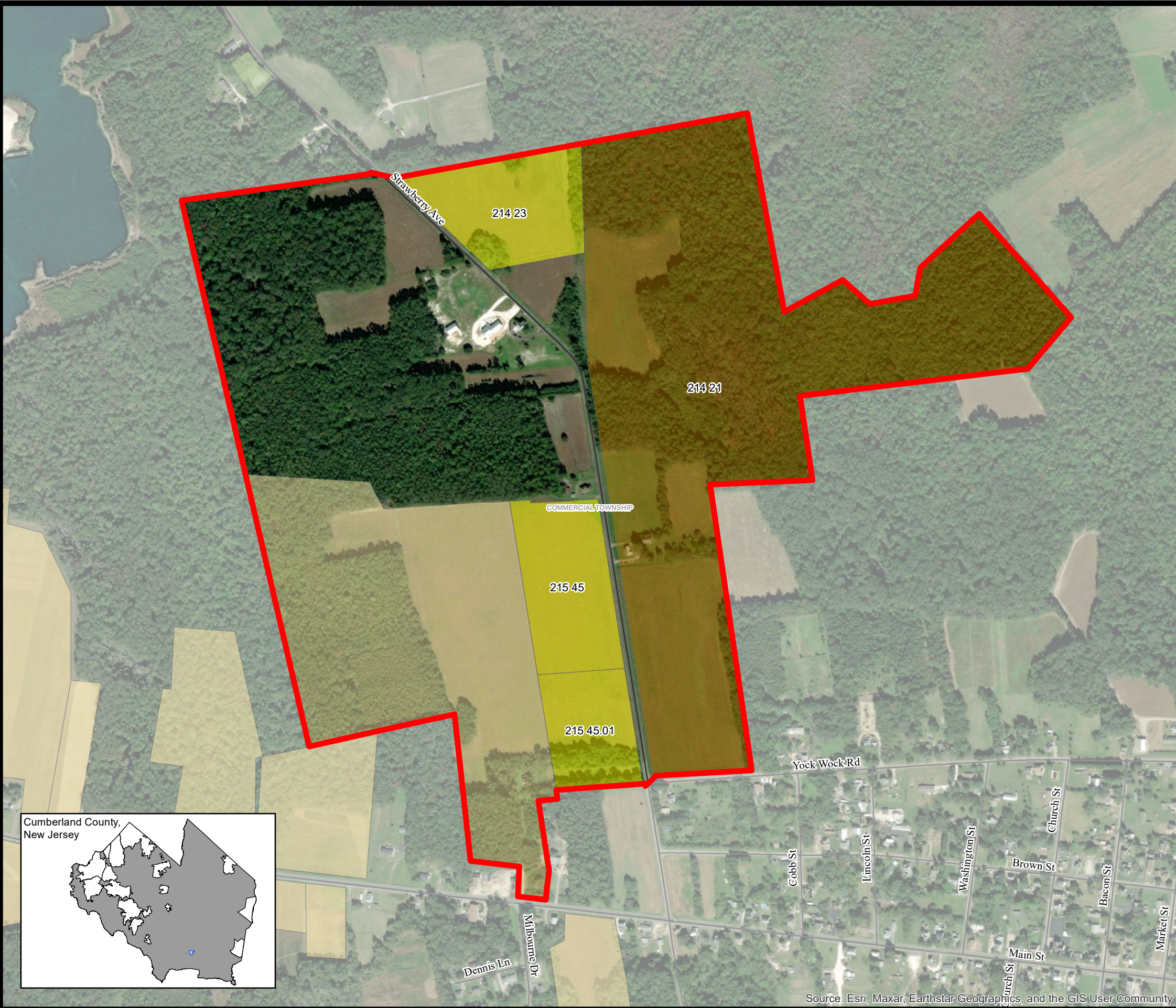
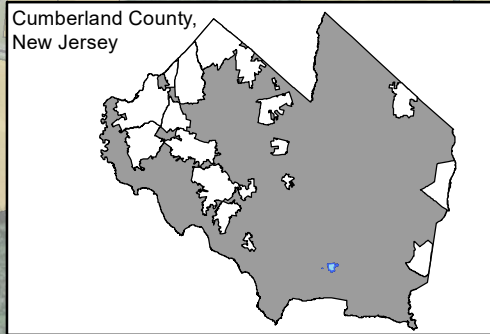
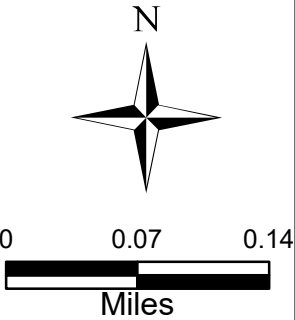
- 2021 Project Areas
- Preserved Farmland
- Target Farms
- Farm Assessed
- Protected Open Space
- Municipal Boundary

Total Acreage: 230
Preserved Acreage: 83
Target Acreage: 27
Assessed Acreage: 47
Leftover Acreage: 73

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
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Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

Cumberland County

Map 20b: Deerfield Central & Deerfield South

Deerfield Central
Total Acreage: 133
Preserved Acreage: 71
Target Acreage: 35
Assessed Acreage: 0
Leftover Acreage: 28

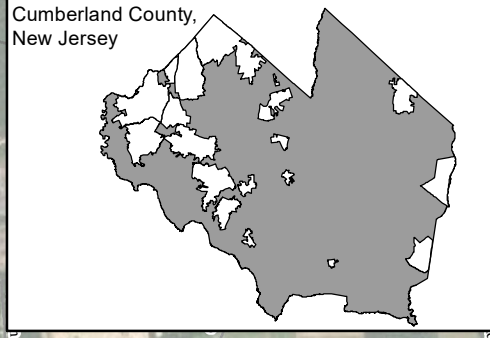
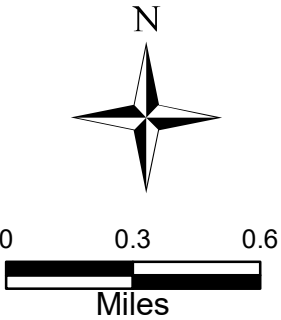
Deerfield South
Total Acreage: 2337
Preserved Acreage: 253
Target Acreage: 131
Assessed Acreage: 1128
Leftover Acreage: 825

- 2021 Project Areas
- Preserved Farmland
- Target Farms
- Farm Assessed
- Preserved Open Space
- Municipal Boundary

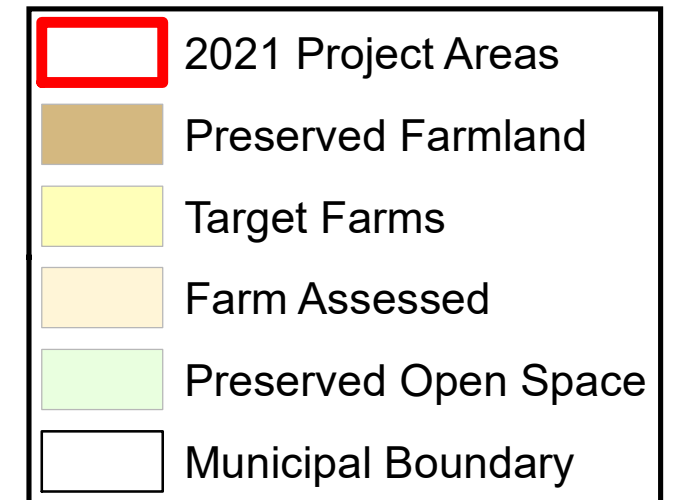
Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
Cumberland County GIS.
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**Map 20c:
Deerfield-
Upper Deerfield North**

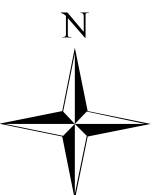


Total Acreage:	9748
Preserved Acreage:	4789
Target Acreage:	1980
Assessed Acreage:	338
Leftover Acreage:	2634

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
Cumberland County GIS.
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verified by NJDEP and is not state-authorized.

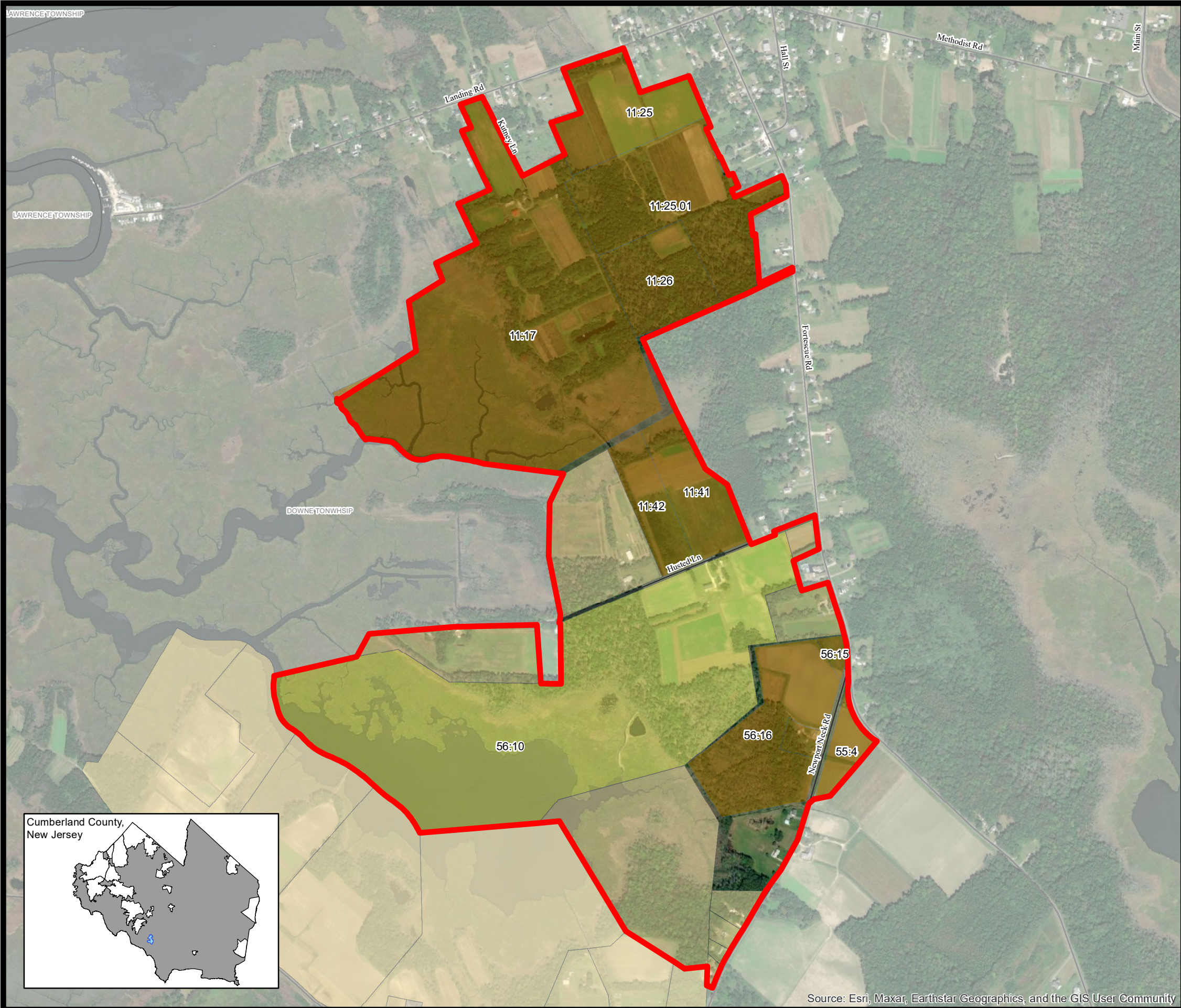


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A horizontal scale bar with a black background and white markings. The markings are labeled '0', '0.4', and '0.8' at the top. The bar is divided into four equal segments by three vertical white lines. The word 'Miles' is written in white below the bar.

Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community



Cumberland County

Map 20d: Downe

2021 Project Areas

Preserved Farmland

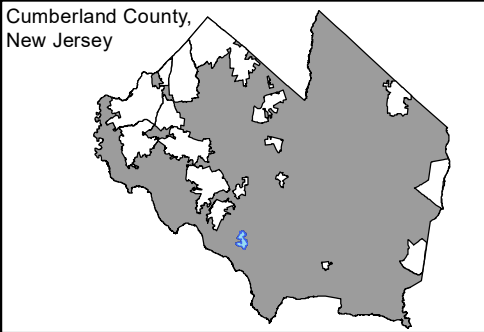
Target Farms

Farm Assessed

Preserved Open Space

Municipal Boundary

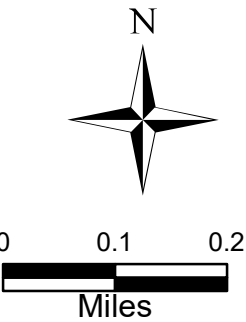
Total Acreage: 486
Preserved Acreage: 240
Target Acreage: 138
Assessed Acreage: 89
Leftover Acreage: 19



Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
Cumberland County GIS.
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Map 20e: Fairfield - Lawrence

2021 Project Areas

Preserved Farmland

Target Farms

Farm Assessed

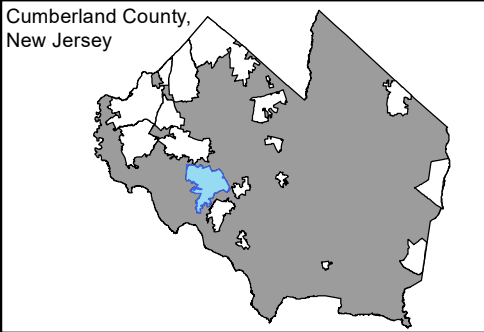
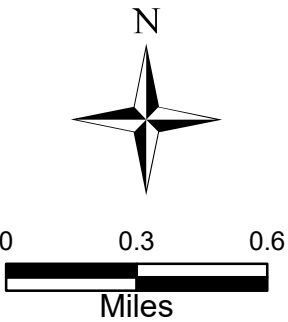
Preserved Open Space

Municipal Boundary

Total Acreage: 4906
Preserved Acreage: 1914
Target Acreage: 1469
Assessed Acreage: 606
Leftover Acreage: 917

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
Cumberland County GIS.
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Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

Cumberland County

Map 20f: Fairfield - Millville

2021 Project Areas

Preserved Farmland

Target Farms

Farm Assessed

Preserved Open Space

Municipal Boundary

Total Acreage: 706
Preserved Acreage: 206
Target Acreage: 383
Assessed Acreage: 101
Leftover Acreage: 16

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
Cumberland County GIS.
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December 2021

N

00.10.2

Miles

Cumberland County

Map 20g: Greenwich

2021 Project Areas

Preserved Farmland

Target Farms

Farm Assessed

Preserved Open Space

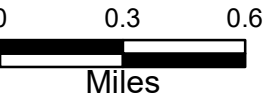
Municipal Boundary

Total Acreage: 5066
Preserved Acreage: 2972
Target Acreage: 446
Assessed Acreage: 1260
Leftover Acreage: 388

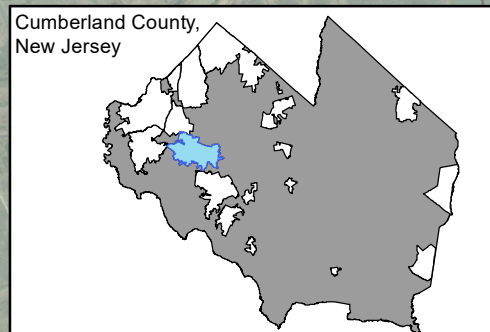
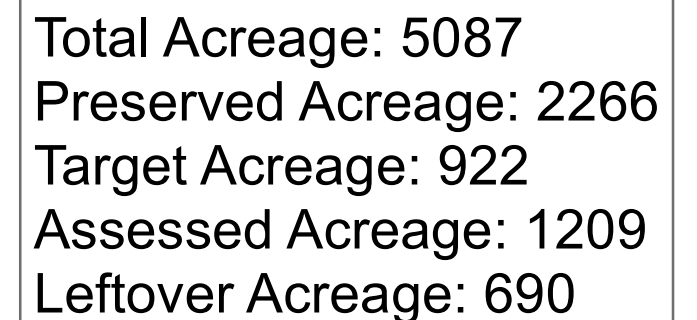
Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
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Map 20h: Hopewell South



Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

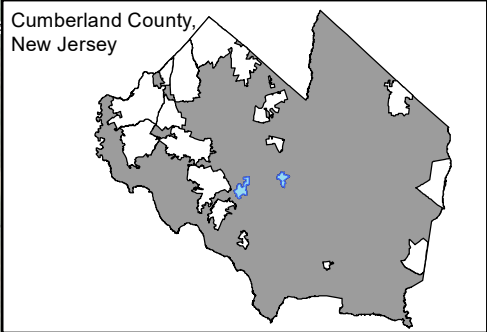
Cumberland County

Map20i: Lawrence Central, and Lawrence East

Lawrence Central
Total Acreage: 679
Preserved Acreage: 243
Target Acreage: 96
Assessed Acreage: 48
Leftover Acreage: 292

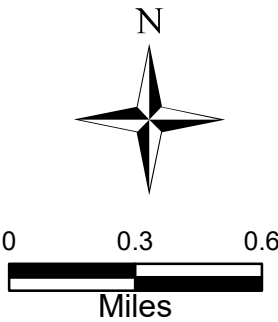
Lawrence East
Total Acreage: 379
Preserved Acreage: 110
Target Acreage: 107
Assessed Acreage: 83
Leftover Acreage: 78

- 2021 Project Areas
- Preserved Farmland
- Target Farms
- Farm Assessed
- Preserved Open Space
- Municipal Boundary



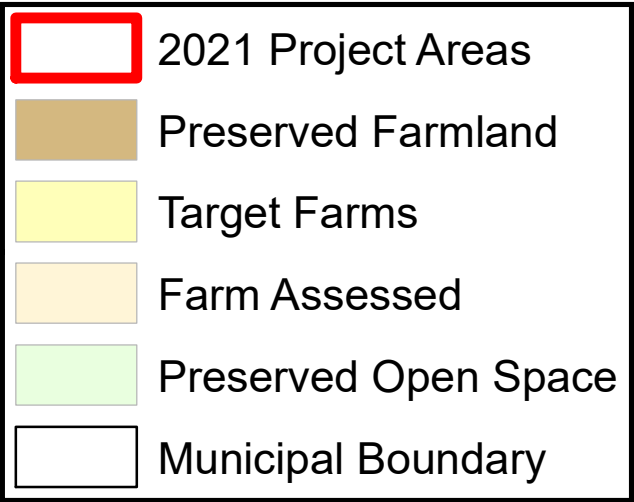
Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
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Map 20j: Lawrence West

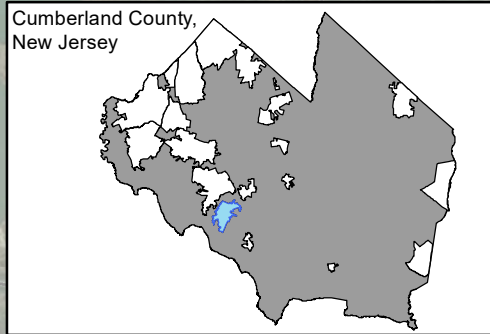
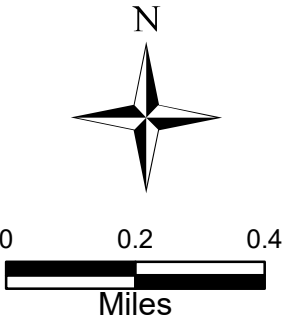


Total Acreage: 1816
Preserved Acreage: 1009
Target Acreage: 414
Assessed Acreage: 106
Leftover Acreage: 287

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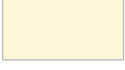
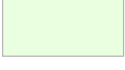
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Map 20k: Maurice River Central



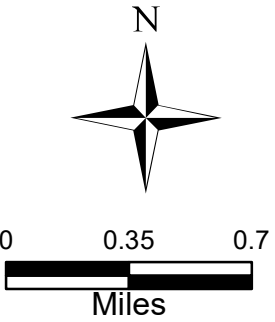
-  Project Areas 2021
-  Preserved Farmland
-  Target Farms
-  Farm Assessed
-  Preserved Open Space
-  Municipal Boundary

Total Acreage: 3744
Preserved Acreage: 0
Target Acreage: 2357
Assessed Acreage: 0
Leftover Acreage: 1387

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
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Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

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Map 20I: Maurice River South

2021 Project Areas

Preserved Farmland

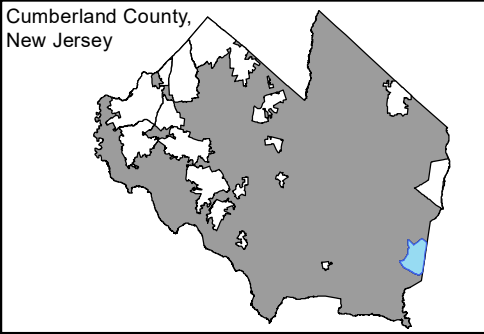
Target Farms

Farm Assessed

Preserved Open Space

Municipal Boundary

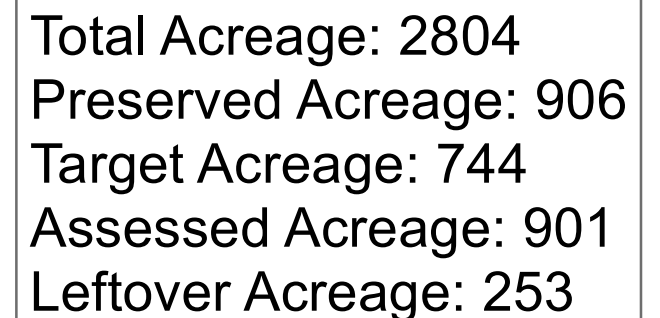
Total Acreage: 2702
Preserved Acreage: 0
Target Acreage: 119
Assessed Acreage: 0
Leftover Acreage: 2583



Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
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Map 20m: Shiloh-Hopewell Central



Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community

Cumberland County

Map 20n: Shiloh-Hopewell North Stow Creek North

Stow Creek North
Total Acreage: 1065
Preserved Acreage: 514
Target Acreage: 152
Assessed Acreage: 383
Leftover Acreage: 16

Shiloh-Hopewell North
Total Acreage: 6154
Preserved Acreage: 2766
Target Acreage: 1783
Assessed Acreage: 1029
Leftover Acreage: 576

2021 Project Areas

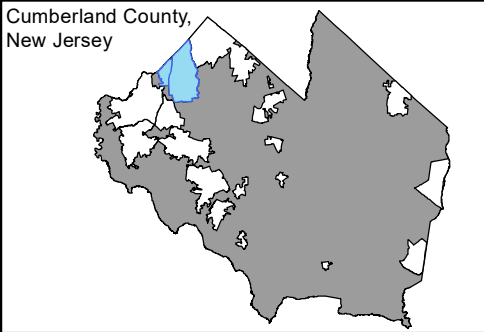
Preserved Farmland

Target Farms

Farm Assessed

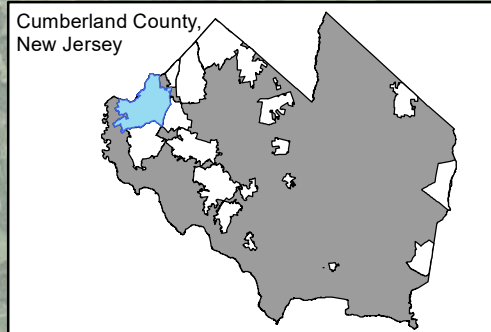
Preserved Open Space

Municipal Boundary



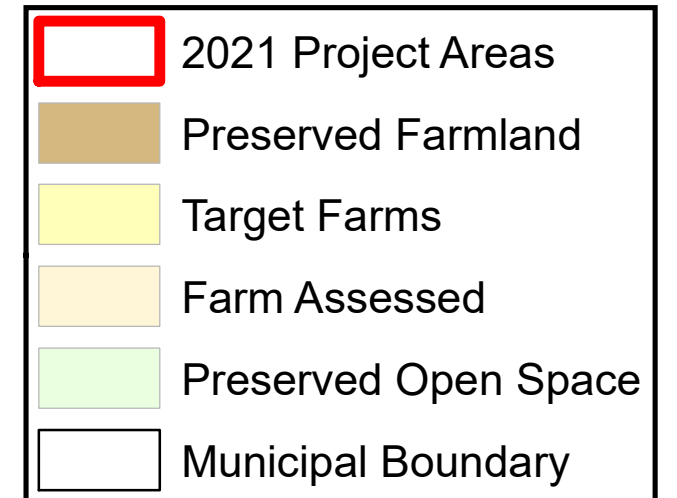
Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
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Map 20o: Stow Creek

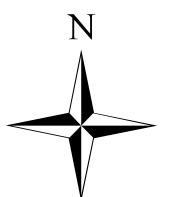


Total Acreage: 8127
Preserved Acreage: 1748
Target Acreage: 2891
Assessed Acreage: 2552
Leftover Acreage: 936

Sources : NJDEP, NJDOT,
NJ Pinelands Commission,
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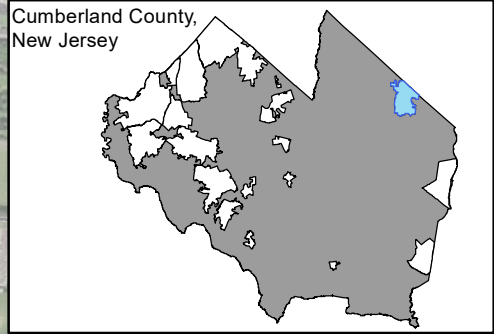


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0 0.35 0.7
Miles

Source: Esri, Maxar, Earthstar Geographics, and the GIS User Community



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Map 20p: Vineland

2021 Project Areas

Preserved Farmland

Target Farms

Farm Assessed

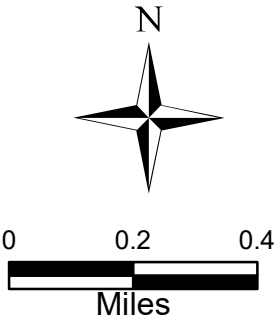
Preserved Open Space

Municipal Boundary

Total Acreage: 2793
Preserved Acreage: 317
Target Acreage: 271
Assessed Acreage: 994
Leftover Acreage: 1211

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