



**From:** Eileen Swan [mailto:eileen.swan@highlands.state.nj.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 25, 2009 2:50 PM  
**To:** Sabina Martine  
**Subject:** Highlands Municipal Plan Conformance

Dear Highlands Mayors and Professionals:

With release on September 23 of the final instructions for Module 6 (Highlands Ordinance) and Module 7 (Petition for Plan Conformance), and also the final Model Highlands Area Land Use Ordinance (see our Web site at <http://www.highlands.state.nj.us/njhighlands/planconformance/>), municipalities now have guidance and support documents for all aspects of a Petition for Plan Conformance.

I want to take this opportunity to thank you and your municipalities and professionals again for all your efforts, and to provide some updates and further information.

1. **Petitions** - We are approaching the mandatory December 8, 2009 deadline for Petitions for Plan Conformance from municipalities with Preservation Area lands. Planning Area municipalities are also greatly encouraged to meet this deadline given the fact that a Petition for the Planning Area lands is not binding on the municipality. We encourage each municipality to review the Module 7 instructions and lay out a schedule to ensure timely completion of the Petition.
2. **Modules 1 and 2** – We are very pleased with the success of the Highlands Municipal Build-Out process. Almost every municipality has finished Module 1, and 57 have received their final Highlands Municipal Build-Out Reports. Please, if your municipality is one of the 15 that has not completed the process, your professionals should complete the Module submittals as soon as possible.
3. **Module 3** – While the extension grant by COAH to many Highlands municipalities provides for an extension until June 8, 2010, there are requirements in Module 3 that must be completed and submitted to the Highlands Council by December 8, 2009.
4. **Module 4** - We have received 43 draft Highlands Environmental Resource Inventories. Nearly all have been reviewed, and we will be providing staff comments on these submittals next week. Again, if your municipality has not submitted a draft Highland ERI, please do so promptly.
5. **Module 5** – We have received 20 draft Highlands Elements for master plans. We are reviewing these documents, and will be providing staff comments on these submittals shortly. Again, if your municipality has not submitted a draft Highlands Elements, please do so promptly. **Please note:** we will be making a few changes to the model Highlands Element (based on the final Highlands Area Land Use Ordinance) and will provide the revised version soon. It will also be posted on our website with edits clearly indicated. If you have already submitted your draft, we will provide the modifications (using “track changes”) in our edits. There will be no need to resubmit Module 5. For those about to submit, please do so and we will make the same changes – there is no need to delay submittal.
6. **Mapping** – Based on municipal comments and Highlands Council work, we have identified a few mapping issues that will be resolved by the Highlands Council and provided to the municipalities for use. They are:

- Agricultural Priority Areas – There is a mapping issue regarding Low Priority agricultural areas that will need to be addressed in some municipalities. These municipalities will be provided with a new map for inclusion in the Highlands ERI and Highlands Element. This map does not affect the Highlands Area Land Use Ordinance.
- Boundary Issues – The Land Use Capability Zones and several Highlands Resource Areas used an approach called raster mapping, which uses grid cells. We will be identifying a method to ensure that these maps can be used easily in development review.
- Parcels – Maps will be created for use in the Highlands Element and Highlands Area Land Use Ordinance that show parcel lines along with the Land Use Capability Zones, Highlands Resource Areas and various Highlands Resources, to show how these mapped areas affect individual parcels. The Highlands Council will provide digital maps that can be printed at various sizes, up to plotter-sized paper.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have about these issues. Thank you again for your efforts.

Thanks,  
Eileen

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