

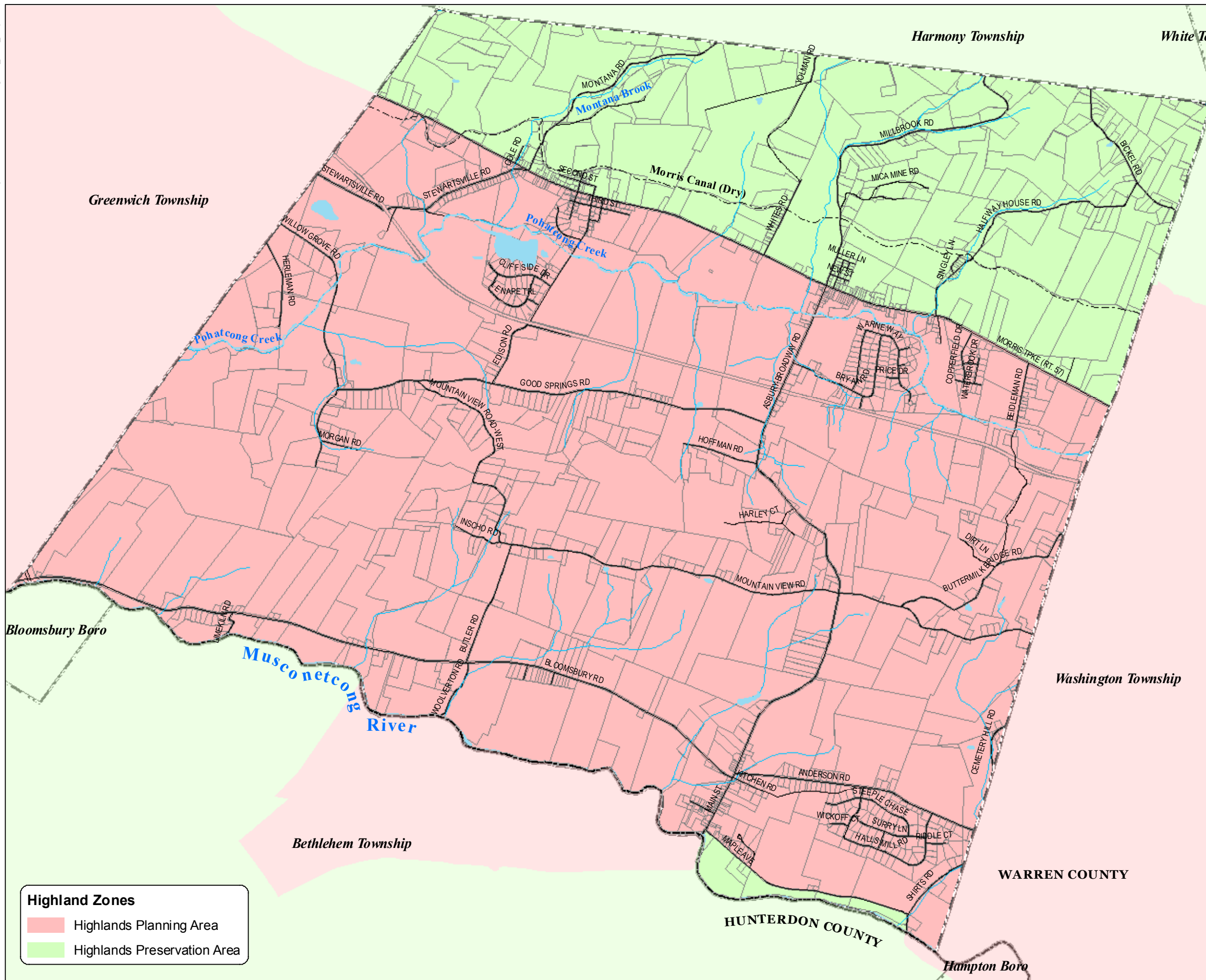
16: HIGHLANDS PLANNING AND PRESERVATION AREA

The Highlands Water Protection and Planning Act (Highlands Act, N.J.S.A. 13:20-1 et seq.) was signed into law in August 2004. The Act specifies the boundaries of the 800,000-acre New Jersey Highlands Region, including 88 New Jersey municipalities in the counties of Bergen, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex and Warren (Rutgers Cooperative Extension 2005). The Highlands Region is a vital source of drinking water for more than half of New Jersey's 8.5 million residents, yielding approximately 379 million gallons of water daily. In addition, the region contains exceptional natural resources such as contiguous forest lands, wetlands, pristine watersheds and plant and wildlife species habitats. This area also includes many sites of historic significance and provides abundant recreational opportunities.

Rules implementing the Highlands Act were adopted in June 2005 as N.J.A.C. 7:38-1 et seq. All development in the Highlands Region is subject to the enhanced protections of these rules, with regional standards to be implemented through the Regional Master Plan (RMP). Within the region, the Act establishes two development zones: the Preservation Area, defined by its high ecological sensitivity, and the Planning Area, a more intensely developed zone. The strongest development and water quality protections in the Act are provided for development in the Preservation Area. Lands within the Highlands Preservation Area are subject to strict limitations on the amount of impervious cover; as well as limitations of development on steep slopes, in forested areas, flood zones and within 300 feet of all water bodies. In addition, all waters located within the Highlands Preservation Areas are afforded C-1 water quality protections.

As presented in [Figure 15](#), the majority of Franklin Township is located within the Highlands Planning Area (75%), although a small portion (25%) lies within the Preservation Area. Under the Highlands Act rules, the Preservation Area is to be protected through enhanced environmental regulation, transfer and purchase of development rights, acquisition of environmentally valued real estate and regional planning. Municipal designation as a Preservation Area requires modification of local codes and development regulations to ensure compliance with the RMP (which is currently in a draft format and as of February 2007, still accepting public comment), including the regulation and approval of any major Highlands development (as defined by statute) by NJDEP. In contrast, municipalities within the Planning Area are encouraged—but not required—to achieve compliance with the RMP. The information contained in this NRI is intended to be used in concert with the Highlands rules in evaluating impacts within the Planning Area and assessing the benefits of site-specific measures such as the transfer and purchase of development rights, acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands, and related planning and land development activities.

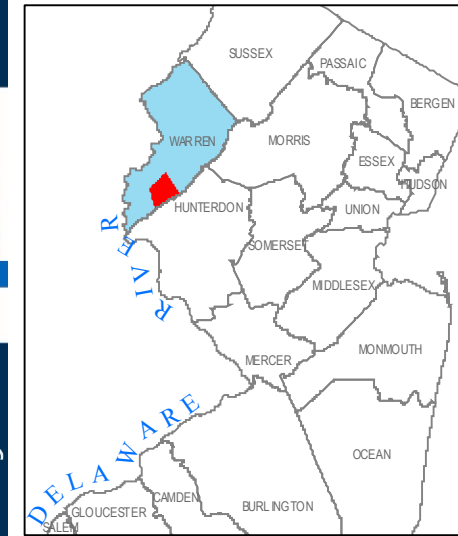
Additional information about the Highlands Act is available at <http://www.state.nj.us/dep/highlands> and <http://www.highlands.state.nj.us>.



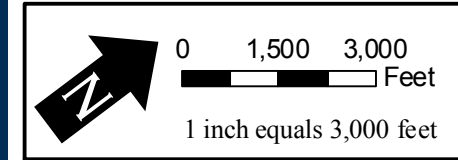
Highland Zones

- Highlands Planning Area
- Highlands Preservation Area

NEW JERSEY COUNTY MAP



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SOURCES:

- Parcel, roads and the Franklin Township Boundary data obtained from Warren County Planning Dept. "This map was developed using the Warren County New Jersey, Geographic Information System digital data, but this secondary product has not been verified by Warren County and is not county-authorized."
- Surface water and Highland data obtained from the NJDEP, Division of GIS.

**FIGURE 15
HIGHLANDS AREAS**

NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY
FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
WARREN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

Legend

- County Boundary
- Municipal Boundaries
- Roads
- Parcels
- Ponds/Lakes
- Streams**
- Streams
- Morris Canal (Dry)

