

## **NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR RELEASE: IMMEDIATE**  
**Wednesday, March 24, 2010**

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### **Public Hearing on Updated Draft Pine Bush Plan Scheduled**

The Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission released its updated Draft Management Plan/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for public review and comment March 24, 2010. A public hearing is scheduled for Thursday, April 15, 2010 from 7:00-9:00pm, at the Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center, 195 New Karner Road, Albany to gather public comment on this document. Individuals or organizations may state their support or opposition to the updated plan or certain parts of the plan, and also point out areas in the report that may not be accurate or need further explanation. People can participate at the hearing and/or provide written comments via email to [managementplan@albanypinebush.org](mailto:managementplan@albanypinebush.org) or standard mail to Management Plan, Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission, 195 New Karner Road, Albany, NY 12205. The comment period of the Draft Management Plan/DEIS ends at the close of business May 5, 2010. The Draft Management Plan/DEIS has been made available for public review at public offices and libraries around the Capital Region. A list of these locations is available by calling the Commission (518-456-0655) or from its website at [www.albanypinebush.org/commission/management\\_plans.htm](http://www.albanypinebush.org/commission/management_plans.htm).

Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission Executive Director Christopher A. Hawver said in a statement, "This draft document updates the previous 2002 Pine Bush Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement. It identifies and further refines the Commission's goals and challenges for land protection, natural resource management, public education, outreach, recreation and Preserve operations. The recommendations in the Draft Plan balance environmental and community needs and are based on scientific criteria and nearly two decades of experience in managing the Pine Bush Preserve. In developing a reasonable plan we are building on partnerships and cooperation, and the principle that everyone can and should work together to protect and enjoy the benefits of this globally-rare natural resource."

The 1988 Legislation (NYS Environmental Conservation Law, Article 46) which established the Albany Pine Bush Preserve and the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission, requires that the Preserve Management Plan be reviewed and, if necessary, updated every five years. The updated Draft Management Plan/DEIS consolidates and updates all earlier Preserve management plans. This document incorporates new data and experience gained by the Commission and further refines information in the former plans with the best currently available information; appendices to the Plan include a: Pine Barrens Viability Assessment, Fire Management Plan, Karner Blue Butterfly Recovery Plan, Invasive Species Management Plan, Education and Outreach Plan, and Recreation Plan.

The Draft Management Plan/DEIS was written to provide people who have an interest in the Albany Pine Bush with an opportunity to participate in the planning for its future. The document has also been prepared to comply with State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) procedures.

On July 31, 2007 a public meeting was held which provided the public with an opportunity to identify the issues and concerns that should be addressed in the updated Draft Management Plan/DEIS. Comments received are included in the document.

The Albany Pine Bush once stretched over 25,000 acres, spreading across vast sand dunes of the bed of glacial Lake Albany. According to New York's Natural Heritage Program, the Preserve contains globally unique pitch pine-scrub oak barrens, pine barrens vernal ponds, several rare plants and at least 45 wildlife Species of Greatest Conservation Need including the federally-endangered Karner blue butterfly.

In 1988, the New York State Legislature recognized the Albany Pine Bush, located in the City of Albany and Towns of Guilderland and Colonie as "a landscape of rare and endangered natural communities and species...". The legislature found that "because of the fragile qualities of the Pine Bush and its dependence on periodic fires, effective, coordinated management is essential." The legislature established the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission "to manage the Preserve for purposes of its protection and controlled and appropriate recreation and education."

The Commission consists of the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historical Preservation, City of Albany, Albany County, Towns of Colonie and Guilderland, The Nature Conservancy and four private citizen representatives.