



cc: Adm.

#R-2012-39

**TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS State Legislators are considering a bill that would open New Jersey's prized State owned lands to commercial logging, (S1085, Forest Harvest on State Lands), and

WHEREAS New Jersey's State Lands, including its Parks, Wildlife Management Areas and forested Green Acres Lands have been set aside for conservation and recreation purposes, and

WHEREAS these forested State lands were paid for and preserved with the support of a trusting public which assumed they would be protected from commercial exploitation, and

WHEREAS the towering hardwood trees growing in our State parks and forests contribute a far greater ecological and recreational value to the citizens of the State than they would if they were to be cut and sold as commercial lumber, and

WHEREAS according to information provided by the DEP, at the end of the five-year contract for the proposed Forest Harvest Program, a \$2.7 million net operating deficit is projected due to the high cost of oversight, and

WHEREAS commercial logging is likely to cause damage to roads, streams, and drainage swales in State lands that will cost money to restore and cause soil compaction and disturbance of the fragile ecosystem on the forest floor that will be impossible to restore, and

WHEREAS 37 PhD biologists, forest scientists, and ecologists from across the State have signed onto a letter in opposition to this Bill, agreeing that commercial timber harvesting would be detrimental to the public forests, and

WHEREAS this bill does not properly address the most serious threat to today's forests; that common hardwood species such as oaks, hickory, poplar and birch among others, are not regenerating due to high deer densities, and

WHEREAS, because of high deer densities, openings in the forest canopy, occurring as a result of timber harvesting, are colonized not by young hardwood trees, but by noxious weeds, typically vines, briars, and invasive plants from Asia, and

WHEREAS opening State lands to commercial logging would be detrimental to the flora and fauna, including the threatened and endangered species, that presently inhabit these lands;

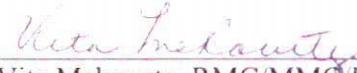
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Readington Township Committee hereby finds and declares that the commercial exploitation of public lands that have been set aside for conservation and recreation purposes is a betrayal of the public trust, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Readington Township Committee urges the legislators of the State of New Jersey to vote NO to S10-85 Forest Harvest on State Lands.

CERTIFICATION

I, VITA MEKOVETZ, Clerk of the Township of Readington, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Township Committee on the 6th day of February, 2012.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of this Township this 7th day of February, 2012.



Vita Mekovetz, RMC/MMC/RPPO
Municipal Clerk