

Greenwood Lake Protection Act

C.32:20A-1 Short title.

1. This act shall be known, and may be cited, as the "Greenwood Lake Protection Act."

C.32:20A-2 Findings, declarations relative to Greenwood Lake.

2. The Legislature finds and declares that the States of New Jersey and New York and their respective citizens share a common concern to protect the quality of the environment through the preservation of natural and scenic resources and open space to the maximum extent possible along their common border; that the two states and their respective citizens also share the benefits of several environmentally significant waterbodies and watersheds that cross the interstate border region, including Greenwood Lake and its watershed; that, because of the geology and hydrology of the land in the border region, development, land use, and land management practices and patterns in each state necessarily impact, often negatively, upon the natural and scenic resources of, and the extent of open space and recreational opportunities within, both states; that Greenwood Lake is the largest lake in the Highlands region of northern New Jersey and southern New York and is a prime source of enjoyment and recreation for the people who live in or visit the bi-state border area; that Greenwood Lake is vital to the recreation and economy of the Highlands region of northern New Jersey and southern New York; and that there has been a long history of cooperation among state and local governmental entities and various private organizations and individuals in the vicinity of Greenwood Lake and its watershed to ensure the preservation of Greenwood Lake.

The Legislature therefore determines that there is a need to endorse and formalize that bistate cooperative effort to help ensure that the natural, scenic, and recreational resources of Greenwood Lake and its watershed are protected from despoliation due to environmental and other threats from both sides of the border, so that the pristine beauty of the area will be preserved and maintained for the enjoyment and recreation of present and future generations; and that the creation of a bi-state commission is an appropriate means to accomplish that very important goal.

C.32:20A-3 Greenwood Lake Commission.

3. a. There is created the Greenwood Lake Commission, which shall comprise 11 voting

members, as follows: a representative appointed by the Board of Chosen Freeholders of Passaic County, New Jersey; two representatives appointed by the governing body of the Township of West Milford, New Jersey; the Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, or a designee thereof, who shall serve ex officio; a representative appointed by the governing body of Orange County, New York; a representative appointed by the governing body of the Village of Greenwood Lake, New York; a representative appointed by the governing body of the Town of Warwick, New York; the Commissioner of the New York Department of Environmental Conservation, or a designee thereof, who shall serve ex officio; a representative of the Greenwood Lake Watershed Management District, Inc.; and two members of the public with expertise in the protection, preservation, maintenance, management, or enhancement of lakes or the natural, scenic, or recreational resources associated therewith, of whom one shall be appointed by the Governor of the State of New Jersey with the advice and consent of the Senate thereof, and one shall be appointed by the Governor of the State of New York with the advice and consent of the Senate thereof.

b. Vacancies in the appointed positions on the commission shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments were made.

c. Members of the commission from New Jersey shall serve without compensation, but the commission may, within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to it, reimburse members for actual expenses necessarily incurred in the discharge of their official duties.

d. Members of the commission from New Jersey shall serve at the pleasure of the relevant appointing authority.

C.32:20A-4 Organization, meetings.

4. a. The commission shall organize as soon as may be practicable after the appointment of its members, and shall select two co-chairpersons from its members, one from each state, and a secretary who need not be a member.

b. The commission shall meet regularly as it may determine. Meetings of the commission shall be at such times and places as the co-chairpersons of the commission deem appropriate, but to the maximum extent practicable and feasible, shall be rotated between the two states on an

alternating basis. Meetings held in New Jersey shall be subject to the provisions and requirements of the "Open Public Meetings Act," P.L.1975, c.231 (C.10:4-6 et seq.).

The commission shall also meet at the call of the governor of either state or at the call of either co-chairperson.

c. A majority of the voting membership of the commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of commission business. Action may be taken and motions and resolutions adopted by the commission at any meeting thereof by the affirmative vote of eight members of the commission.

d. The commission shall be entitled to call to its assistance, and avail itself of the services of, such employees of the two states, or any political subdivisions, instrumentalities, entities, agencies, or authorities thereof, as it may require and as may be made available to it for the purpose of carrying out its duties under this act. If requested by the commission, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and the New York Department of Environmental Conservation shall provide primary staff support.

e. The commission may, within the limits of funds appropriated or otherwise made available to it for those purposes, employ such professional, technical, and clerical staff and incur such traveling and other miscellaneous expenses as it may deem necessary in order to perform its duties.

C.32:20A-5 Duties of commission.

5. The duties of the commission shall be to:

a. assess present and projected development, land use, and land management practices and patterns, and identify actual and potential environmental threats and problems, around Greenwood Lake and within its watershed, and determine the effects of those practices and patterns, threats, and problems upon the natural, scenic, and recreational resources of Greenwood Lake and its watershed;

b. develop recommended regulations, procedures, policies, planning strategies, and model ordinances and resolutions pertaining to the protection, preservation, maintenance, management, and enhancement of Greenwood Lake and its watershed, which would be implemented as appropriate on a voluntary basis by those entities with representatives on the commission;

- c. coordinate environmental clean up, maintenance, and protection efforts undertaken, for the benefit of Greenwood Lake and its watershed, by those entities with representatives on the commission;
- d. coordinate with the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's watershed management program for the area that includes Greenwood Lake;
- e. recommend appropriate state legislation and administrative action pertaining to the protection, preservation, maintenance, management, and enhancement of Greenwood Lake and its watershed;
- f. advocate, and where appropriate, act as a coordinating, distributing, or recipient agency for, federal, state, or private funding of environmental cleanup, maintenance, and protection projects for Greenwood Lake and its watershed, which projects may include the work of the commission; and
- g. take such other action as may be appropriate or necessary to further the purpose of this act.

C.32:20A-6 Report to Governors, Legislatures.

6. The commission shall, within 18 months of the date it organizes, prepare a progress report on its activities, and submit it, together with any recommendations for legislation, administrative action, or action by local governments, to the Governors and Legislatures of the States of New Jersey and New York.

C.32:20A-7 Legislation by New York required.

7. This act shall take effect upon enactment of substantially similar legislation by the State of New York, unless the State of New York has enacted such legislation prior to the date of enactment of this act, in which case this act shall take effect immediately.

Approved January 18, 2000.