

## Raritan Basin “Lands for Water” Initiative Strategy Worksheet: RB-S1

<p><b>Strategy:</b> Focus land preservation on high priority lands to protect lands that are critical to the quality and quantity of Basin ground and surface water resources</p> <p><b>NSLU-S1B2:</b> Develop a status and tracking system to monitor progress toward increasing preserved open space and preserved farmland acreage to ensure protection of critical habitats and water resources.</p> <p><b>NSLU-S1B3:</b> Develop criteria for identification and prioritization of lands for future preservation in the Raritan Basin</p> <p><b>NSLU-S1B4:</b> Promote the preservation of open space by promoting the use of the Raritan Basin water resources protection open space criteria by land preservation entities and municipalities.</p> <p><b>LRLM-S1D1.</b> Develop open space preservation criteria for the Lower Raritan WMA.</p> <p><b>LRLM-S1D2.</b> Enable municipalities to adopt appropriate water resources protection criteria while expanding their open space planning capacity.</p> <p><b>LRLM-S1D3.</b> Increase the amount of protected open space in the WMA.</p> <p><b>MOR-S1B1:</b> Identify, evaluate, and promote water resources protection open space criteria for use by land preservation entities</p> <p><b>MOR-S1B3:</b> Educate the public about the importance of riparian areas and the need for their protection</p>	<p>Strategy Priority: <b>H</b> (H/M/L)</p>
<p><b>Objectives Addressed by Strategy:</b></p> <p><b>NSLU-O1B:</b> Increase preserved open space and farmland acreage by ___% to ensure the protection of critical habitats and water resources.</p> <p><b>LRLM-O1D.</b> By 2004, a system that:: Quantifies, to the extent possible, the relationship between open space preservation and water resources protection; Provides criteria and guidance for land acquisition, land protection and land management decisions; and Identifies appropriate management of all lands will be adopted for use within the WMA to protect and improve the water resources of the Lower Raritan WMA.</p> <p><b>MOR-O1B:</b> By 2006, application of the full range of land preservation and stewardship techniques for water resources protection including acquisition, conservation easements, riparian area preservation and proactive management in the Millstone WMA</p>	<p>Strategy Schedule: 2003+ (Begin/End)</p>
<p><b>Narrative Description of Strategy:</b> The Raritan Project has developed and applied criteria to identify critical lands for water quality and quantity. (See Water Resources Protection Open Space Criteria document and related GIS maps at <a href="http://www.raritanbasin.org">www.raritanbasin.org</a>.) The criteria include riparian areas (as defined by the Raritan Project), prime ground water recharge areas, Tiers 1 and 2 of well head protection areas (WHPAs), and emergent wetlands and forested wetlands that are identified by the NJDEP Landscape Project as known or potential habitat for endangered and threatened species. The criteria are not weighted or ranked, and the maps provide information on the individual criteria and the composite results so that any land preservation organization can incorporate one or more criteria in their own preservation systems. While some of these criteria do include regulated lands (e.g., flood plains and wetlands), upland areas that are considered prime development locations are also included and regulation cannot be considered a permanent means of preservation. Although most land preservation can be justified to some extent based on water resources issues, these criteria focus on critical lands. One caveat is that preservation programs can be guided to certain areas through the use of regional criteria and maps, but preservation decisions require site-specific analyses. A second caveat is that current maps show critical lands, but not how those lands relate to specific land parcels, due to the lack of GIS-based parcel data in most counties. Hunterdon County has such data, and both Somerset and Morris Counties are completing their coverages. The use of such criteria is supported by PL2002,C.76, legislation that gives priority to lands that protect water resources, for Green Acres purchases.</p> <p>This strategy focuses on achieving broad use of these open space criteria by a wide variety of land preservation organizations. Much preservation work is already in progress, using diverse criteria ranging from simple availability to comprehensive regional or local assessments. The basic premise is that providing useful information to capable preservation organizations will influence their choice of preservation targets. A second premise is that integrating these criteria with ongoing preservation planning will greatly improve the likelihood that many players will use the criteria. A third premise is that these criteria will be used primarily by existing land preservation organizations and that a new preservation organization is not needed, but that there is a benefit to providing a “name” to this initiative as an organizing and outreach tool. The working title is the Raritan Basin “Lands for Water” Initiative.</p> <p><b>Areawide WQM Plan Consistency Determination Issues:</b> NA</p>	

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Action Plan (Steps or Tasks)	Responsible Parties for Planning, Design & Implementation	Responsible Parties for Oversight	Resource Needs (L,M,H,VH)	Committed or Recommended Resources	Major Challenges and Opportunities	Evaluation Method & Indicators	Schedule and Milestones for Implementation
1. Ensure that Garden State Greenways criteria are compatible to the maximum extent possible with Raritan open space criteria	C:  R: NJWSA, NJ Conservation Foundation	C:  R: Raritan Basin Council, WMA open space subcommittees	L	C:  R: NJDEP 604b grants, existing resources	Statewide system vs. regional system	Extent of compatibility	Early 2003
2. Ensure that NJDEP Green Acres criteria under PL2002,C.76 (Smith Bill) are compatible to the maximum extent possible with Raritan open space criteria	C:  R: NJWSA, NJDEP Green Acres	C:  R: Raritan Basin Council, WMA open space subcommittees	L	C:  R: NJDEP 604b grant, existing resources	Statewide system vs. regional system. Apply to State purchase criteria and also local grants criteria	Extent of compatibility	Early 2003
3. Ensure that Farmland Preservation Program criteria are compatible to the maximum extent possible with Raritan open space criteria	C:  R: NJWSA, NJDAg State Agricultural Development Committee	C:  R: Raritan Basin Council, WMA open space subcommittees	L	C:  R: NJDEP 604b grant, existing resources	Agricultural operations can be beneficial and harmful to water resources – compatible uses are key. Possible points for preserving lands that are not farmed but provide water to farms?	Extent to which farmland criteria keep beneficial farm uses and avoid harmful farm uses in critical water resource areas	Early 2003

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4. Provide Raritan open space criteria and maps on-line in user-friendly format, and also in GIS format to Green Acres, County open space coordinators, land trusts, municipalities and other acquisition entities	C:  R: NJWSA, State land preservation agencies	C:  R: Raritan Basin Council, WMA Committees	L	C:  R: NJDEP 604b grant, foundation grant	Information must be in format usable by the recipient (i.e., clipped to municipal scale for local use). Must make clear how the criteria can be used in connection with other criteria	Extent to which the likely needs of each user class are met by the format and availability of information	Late 2002 for State and county use; 2003 for local use Workshop?
5. Create and build a coalition of support for use of Raritan open space criteria within existing and future preservation programs	C:  R: NJWSA, NJDEP, NJDAg, County and municipal open space and farmland programs, NJ land trusts, watershed associations	C:  R: Raritan Basin Council, WMA Committees	L	C:  R: NJDEP 604b grant, foundation grant, existing resources	Raritan criteria can serve as a primary focus or adjunct to other criteria, depending on the program purpose	Size of coalition ◆ Level of support ◆ Percentage of Raritan Basin preservation funds in coalition	Early 2003 +
6. Present broadly and provide technical assistance in the use of the Raritan open space criteria to increase support for and use of the criteria (e.g., NJ Land Trust Rally, Natural Land Network, County Green Tables, ANJEC workshops)	C:  R: Raritan Basin "Lands for Water" Initiative members, ANJEC, NJCF	C:  R: Raritan Basin Council, WMA Committees	L	C:  R: Existing resources	Monmouth, Morris and Hunterdon Counties have Green Tables. ◆ Need to show decision-makers how criteria help solve issues of concern	Number of presentations and audience reached ◆ Increase in coalition membership Increase in use of criteria	2003
7. Create an attractive map to help attract attention to the "Lands for Water" Initiative and create broader public support	C:  R: Raritan Basin "Lands for Water" Initiative members	C:  R: Raritan Basin Council, WMA Committees	L	C:  R: Foundation grant		Public and stakeholder feedback on map quality and influence	2003

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8. Update Raritan open space criteria maps periodically using GIS-based parcel mapping, 2002 Land Use/Land Cover data, preserved lands coverages, etc.	C: R: Raritan Basin "Lands for Water" Initiative members	C: R: Raritan Basin Council, WMA Committees	L-M	C: R: Foundation grant	Availability of data	Updates within 3 months of data availability	2003+
9. Track acres preserved within critical areas as defined by Raritan open space criteria	C: R: Raritan Basin "Lands for Water" Initiative members, NJDEP-Green Acres, NJDAg Farmland Preservation Program	C: R: Raritan Basin Council, WMA Committees	L	C: R: Existing resources	Availability of data	Completion of analysis every two years	2004 and biennially thereafter