



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF NEW JERSEY

June 7, 2015

Judeth Piccinini Yeany, Chief
Bureau of Legal Services and Stewardship
NJ Department of Environmental Protection
Green Acres Program
P.O. Box 420
Trenton, NJ 08625-0420

Subject: Green Acres Purchase of Split Rock Reservoir Properties

Dear Ms. Yeany:

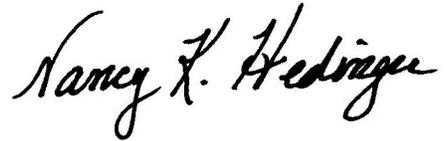
The League of Women Voters of New Jersey is writing to request the DEP designate the Split Rock Reservoir and surrounding watershed properties as a Natural Area - Conservation Preserve, pursuant to NJAC 7:5 A-1.7 (b) 2. The League is a nonpartisan political organization. We study issues that impact the public and consult experts before we take positions. An issue of great importance to the League and our state is the health and welfare of our citizens and the protection of our drinking water. Recently, the N.J. Green Acres Program acquired over 1,500 acres of watershed properties from Jersey City, lands that have been already protected by a Green Acres conservation easement purchased in 1996.

Split Rock reservoir is a potable water source, which feeds the Jersey City water supply reservoir in Parsippany by gravity flow down the Upper Rockaway River. Preservation of this source of potable water mandates that this reservoir be maintained in pristine condition. DEP's announcement of this Green Acres purchase highlights the property's exceptional natural resources but also forewarns of the State's intention to open up the area to more intensive use. Split Rock Reservoir and the surrounding watershed properties are located in a remote area of Morris County that cannot support additional recreational development without the required infrastructure to support these activities. As we have seen elsewhere in New Jersey, the inevitable result of such improvident planning is degraded water quality and the loss of natural resources.

To ensure strict preservation of this extraordinary potable water supply, the League of Women Voters of New Jersey recommends that all state-owned property at Split Rock reservoir be designated for protection under NJAC 7:5A-1.7, as a Conservation Preserve and added to Fanny State Park Natural Area, which is existing state protected land and contiguous to the Split Rock properties.

We look forward to your response to our comments and questions.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nancy K. Hedinger". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "N".

Nancy Hedinger, President
League of Women Voters of New Jersey

Cc: Honorable Steven M. Fulop, Mayor, City of Jersey City, 280 Grove Street, Jersey City, NJ 07302