



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kenneth P. LaValle

LaValle/Sweeney: Carman's River Watershed Protection Passes Senate and Assembly, Will Add 1,000 Acres to Central Pine Barrens Area.

KENNETH P. LAVALLE June 17, 2011

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New York State Senator Kenneth P. LaValle (R,C,I – Port Jefferson) said today that his legislation to protect the Carmans River watershed and add approximately 1,000 acres of land to the Central Pine Barrens area has passed the New York State Senate by a vote of 60 – 0 and the Assembly 140-0.

The Carmans River Watershed Protection and Management Plan initiative recognizes that the most expeditious and effective means of achieving the dual objectives of environmental preservation and economic development is to expand the Core Preservation Area of the Central Pine Barrens. This legislation will expand the Core Preservation Area boundary to encompass those groundwater contributing areas most critical to the Carmans River, those from which groundwater requires the least amount of time to reach the river and include those areas identified as being critical for preservation in regard to the hydrological and ecological integrity.

“This legislation will preserve and protect for generations to come the quality and character of our region and, importantly, further protect our drinking water,” Senator LaValle said.

"The Carmans River represents an integral part of the Central Pine Barrens ecosystem. This legislation sets in place a process that will allow for better protection of this critical habitat and watershed. This goal has brought together a wide variety of groups including environmentalists, builders, civic associations and local governments," said Assemblyman Bob Sweeney (D-Lindenhurst) Chair, New York State Assembly Committee on Environmental Conservation and the bill's sponsor in the Assembly.

"I am proud to have worked with my colleague, Senator LaValle, on this legislation. It is important that we partner with localities and our communities to find the right balance to help preserve Long Island's water quality without imposing unfair burdens," said Senator Zeldin (R, C, I- Shirley), a co-sponsor of the legislation in the Senate.

"This legislation is the first step in an important process of preserving the Carmans River for future generations of Long Islanders," said Assemblyman Dan Losquadro (R,C-Shoreham), a bill co-sponsor. "I look forward to working with Senator LaValle, environmental groups, local governments, and civic groups to ensure the proper management of this local treasure."

"This legislation will help protect and preserve our groundwater, the area surrounding the Carmen's River, and the rural character of these communities," said bill co-sponsor Assemblyman Dean Murray. "It's been a pleasure to see so many levels of government, and such a diverse group of stakeholders, come together to achieve this plan. Generations from now, our grandchildren will be grateful for what we have done here today."

"I want to thank Senator LaValle and Assemblyman Thiele, as well as all of the members of Long Island's state delegation, for their incredibly hard work on this important piece of legislation. Our jewel of a natural resource, the Carmans River, will be healthier and protected forever as a result of this bill," said Supervisor Mark Lesko.

The Brookhaven Town Board also unanimously supported the state legislation through a home rule message.

The Carmans River is 10 miles long and is located in the Central Long Island Pine Barrens Region, which is publicly protected and managed land. Sections of the Carmans River are designated by New York State as a wild, scenic, and recreational river and a New York State Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat. The Carmans River and the Peconic River are Long Island's only rivers in the Pine Barrens Region and two of Long Island's four major Rivers. The other two are the Nissequoque and the Connetquot Rivers. The headwaters of the Carmans River are in Middle Island and it descends to Shirley.