

Date: August 30, 2011

To: New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council

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From: Erica Van Auken, Campaign and Grassroots Coordinator, NJ Highlands Coalition

Hardyston Township Petition for Plan Conformance – Preservation Area Only

The New Jersey Highlands Coalition supports Hardyston Township's petition for plan conformance. We support their Stream Corridor Restoration/Protection Plan to mitigate the impacts of future land use on water resources. We are eager to see what the Council and the Township develop to implement this Plan.

We do question why Hardyston chose not to conform their planning area in addition to their preservation area and why they did not apply for a Center Designation. Hardyston has areas of heavy development and plans for increased development including the Village Center at Crystal Springs – part of the Crystal Springs Resort and proposed to be “125,000 sq. ft. of shopping, entertainment and dining space surrounded by over 3,000 homes and world-class amenities” according to the Crystal Springs website.

The plans for the Village Center at Crystal Springs are extensive and include minor sustainable elements that would be appropriate in a town center such as housing within walking distance to jobs, shops, recreation, etc. We recognize that most future development is proposed by a private developer, but if Hardyston were to conform its entire township these massive projects could be sensibly guided by the Highlands Council to ensure the protection of priceless Highlands resources.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit comments.