



## **Facts are clear: Millions receive Highlands water**

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Although letter writer Jim Kelsey is tired of hearing it (Protect the environment, but don't steal from neighbors, Dec. 7,) the Highlands reservoirs are the water supply to 5.4 million people in 244 municipalities throughout New Jersey. Also, it is worth noting that this water is essentially free. We pay only for the costs associated with its storage, transportation and delivery.

It remains cheap and plentiful — and largely taken for granted — only because the watersheds that feed the Highlands reservoirs are regulated. That is, unless Gov. Chris Christie has his way. By nominating appointees to the Highlands Council who are vocal opponents to the Highlands Act, the governor will undermine the council's ability to continue in its mission to protect the Highlands water supply.

A 2004 study by the North Jersey District Water Supply Commission concluded that if the Highlands were to be developed, it would cost us an additional \$50 billion to treat our water.

*Elliott Ruga*

**BOONTON**

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