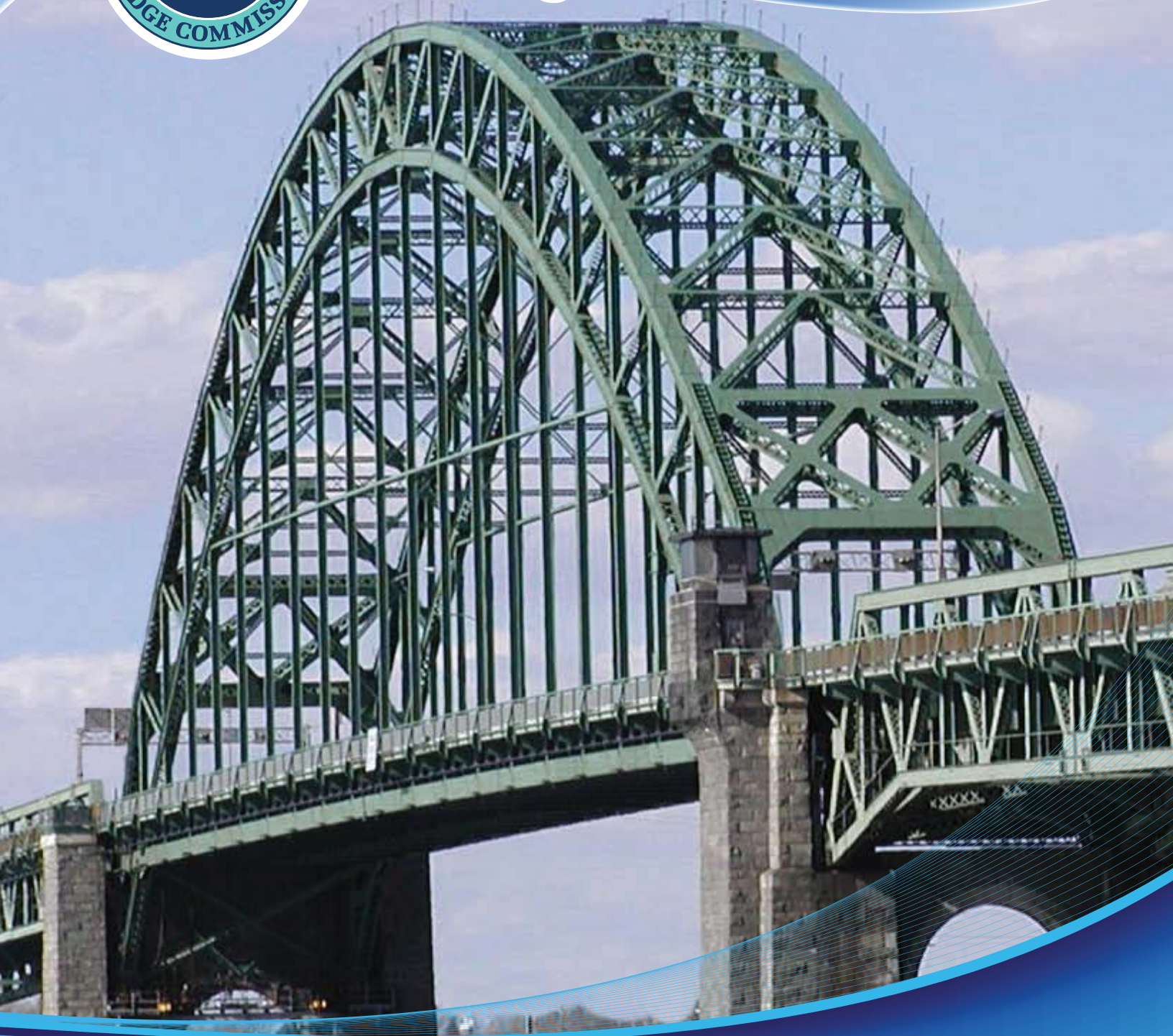




Burlington County Bridge Commission: **Crossing Into a New Future**



**"State of the Bridge" Report
2008-2011**

Below: Burlington Bristol Bridge at sunset

Cover: Tacony-Palmyra Bridge



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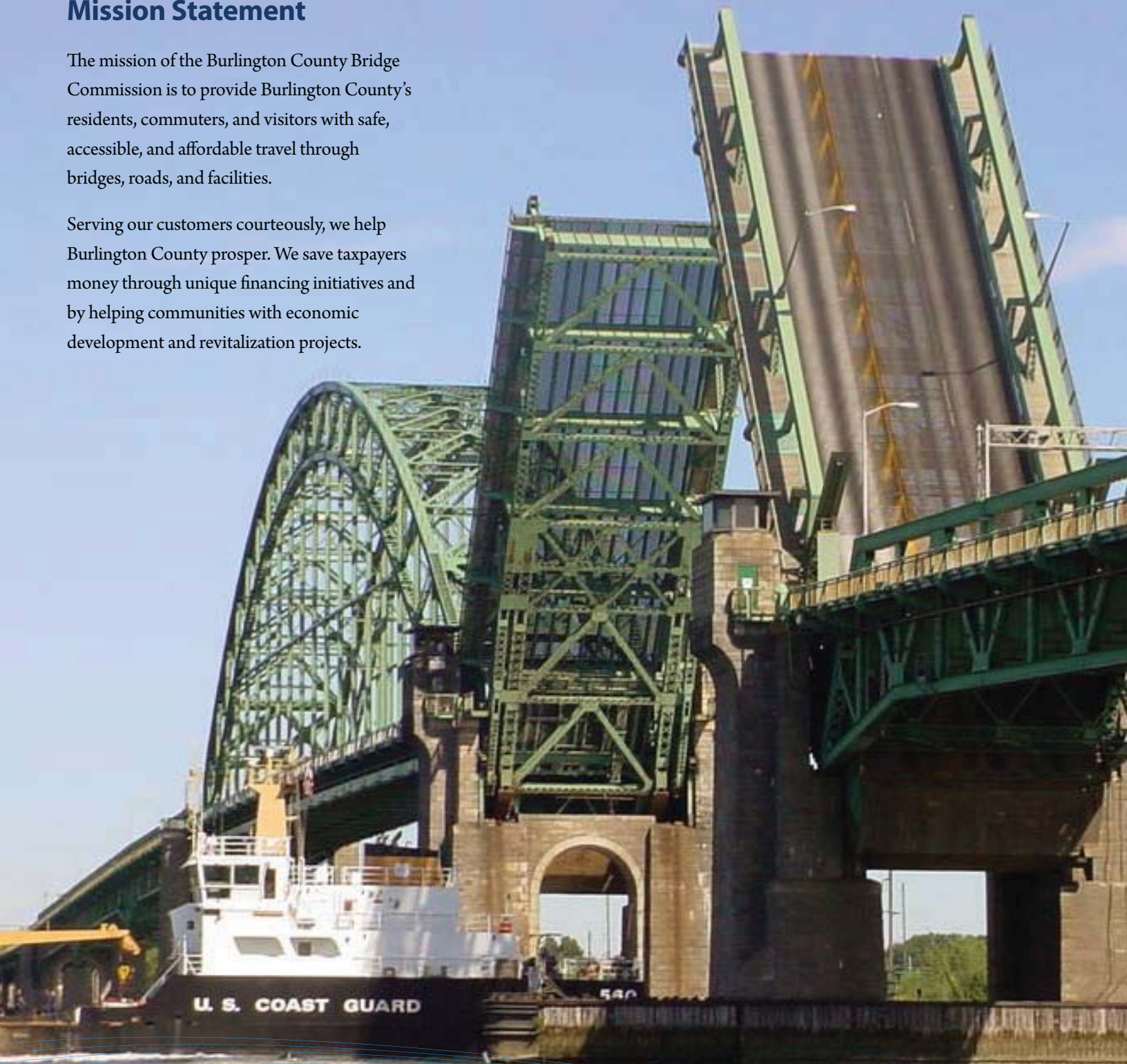
NOTE: In an effort to be environmentally and fiscally responsible, we chose to post this report to the Commission's website only.

Introduction

Mission Statement

The mission of the Burlington County Bridge Commission is to provide Burlington County's residents, commuters, and visitors with safe, accessible, and affordable travel through bridges, roads, and facilities.

Serving our customers courteously, we help Burlington County prosper. We save taxpayers money through unique financing initiatives and by helping communities with economic development and revitalization projects.



Letter from BCBC Chairman John B. Comegno II



The Burlington County Bridge Commission: “Still the best bargain around.” Residents of Burlington County and beyond likely know the Burlington County Bridge Commission mostly through our bridges. We are justifiably proud of the eight bridges we operate—the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge, the Burlington-Bristol Bridge and six minor bridges in the county.

At a time when consumers are feeling the pinch of tight economic times, we haven’t raised tolls on Pennsylvania-bound traffic since 2000. As we’ve said in the past, “our bridges go up, but our tolls haven’t.” Thanks to our aggressive approach to bridge safety and maintenance and “smart technology” which helps us monitor our bridges’ activities on a real-time basis, our bridges are safer and more secure than ever. Our E-ZPass system is state of the art—it ensures that we receive virtually no E-ZPass processing costs.

But the Burlington County Bridge Commission is about more than just bridges. Through innovative initiatives in partnership with the Burlington County Freeholders, we are saving our citizens tax dollars by fostering economic development, encouraging shared services, and offering financing to municipalities and other public entities.

We’re also mindful of our obligations to accountability and transparency. Our Commission meeting minutes, financial information, and other items of interest are on our website; and we keep the public informed about what we are doing through regular press announcements and advisories.

This State of the Bridge is a further example of how we are expanding efforts to communicate with the public.

Please take a moment to read further... we’re more than just bridges.

And, as always, we invite your comments and feedback. You can reach me at chairman@bcbridges.org.

Sincerely,

John B. Comegno II

Chairman, Burlington County Bridge Commission

A New Era, A New Span

Launched several years ago, the Commission's "New Era, New Span" initiative has made the Commission a model agency of transparency and accountability by ensuring that our work is fully transparent to the public through a series of internal controls and other reforms.

The result: the Commission has more checks and balances, internal controls, and communication avenues in place today than ever before.

For example, as part of our "Bridges to the People" initiative, Commissioners began holding meetings outside the Commission's Administration building and has scheduled night meetings to make meetings more accessible to the public.

The Commission has also launched an ongoing and aggressive public-information campaign about its capabilities and successes. We want the public to know about the Commission's safe bridges with proactive and technologically advanced maintenance, understand the leading role the

Commission's improvement authority plays to save taxpayers money, and appreciate the way the Commission's economic development efforts are revitalizing communities.


To extend our outreach, Commissioners now use technology to enhance communications with local officials and others through an e-newsletter. And we have updated our twelve-year-old website's design and navigation. Users can find out about upcoming Commission meetings, read Commission meeting minutes and press releases, find budget and other financial information, and see traffic advisories issued throughout the year. The website's content is arranged in a more user-friendly manner and a "search" feature helps users find just what they're looking for.



As part of the "Bridges to the People" initiative, Commission meetings were held in locations outside the usual administration building—this time in the Commission's Maintenance building.

Expanded Services for Burlington County Communities

While our primary obligation to the public begins with safe bridges, the Burlington County Bridge Commission also offers financial and other support to communities for economic redevelopment. The goal: Saving tax dollars.

Through economic development and improvement authority powers granted to the Commission, we have been able to offer Burlington County public entities unique pooled financing options as well as assistance in their economic development, redevelopment, and community revitalization projects. To date, through these financing options alone, the Commission has saved the taxpayers of our County over \$15.5 million dollars.  (More in Section IV)

This is in addition to the \$13.6 million dollars the Commission has obtained for our municipalities by providing grantwriting and planning services, and by encouraging shared services.

In partnership with the Board of Chosen Freeholders, the Commission expanded its role in the County by assuming the functions of the County's Department of Economic Development and Regional Planning. Merging the economic development and planning role of the County department with the Bridge Commission improvement authority operations not only capitalized on the strengths of the department and the Commission, but has also saved our County's taxpayers much-needed tax dollars.

Assistance to the County's taxpayers occurs in other ways as well. To assist the County in its maintenance of infrastructure which feed our bridges, the Commission has provided financial assistance to the County which again, has resulted in direct tax relief for the County's residents.

Palmyra's Streetscape improvement project was just one example of how the Commission's in-kind assistance saves County taxpayers millions of dollars.

Bridges and Infrastructure



Bridge Commission maintenance staff successfully replaced the trolley wire system at the Burlington-Bristol Bridge, a job historically outsourced to outside contractors. Savings to the Commission? \$100,000.



Pompeston Creek Bridge, on County Route 543, in Riverton.



Riverside-Delanco Bridge, the Commission's only swing-span bridge.



Swede Run Bridge, on County Route 543 in Delran.

WHILE MOST PEOPLE KNOW the Commission's two toll bridges, the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge and Burlington-Bristol Bridge, most people do not know that we maintain and operate six other bridges in Burlington County: the Riverside-Delanco Bridge; Pennsauken Creek Bridge, Route 73 Overpass; Pompeston Creek Bridge; Swede Run Bridge; and Twin Pipe Culvert.

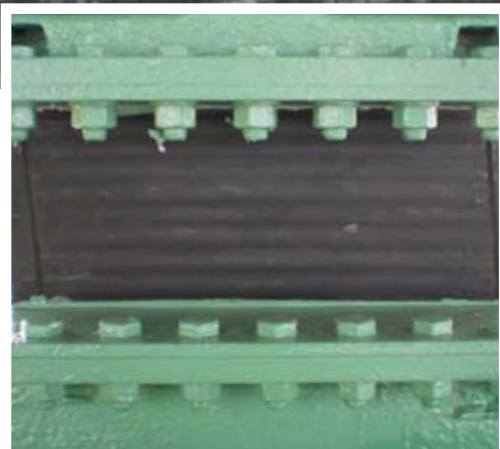
Many also know that there have been no toll increases on either of the Commission's toll bridges since 2000. The Commission's mission of providing safe, accessible and affordable bridges remains even more critical during these difficult economic times. It's a measure of the Commission's commitment to its customers that tolls remain at \$2 for cars, vans, light pickups and motorcycles heading into Pennsylvania (with no return toll to New Jersey). Given recent increases on tolls by other area bridges, this makes the Commission's bridges "the best bargain around" for motorists.

The Commission has managed to hold down costs even while launching an aggressive bridge maintenance program, including the addition of "smart technology" to its bridges and continuing its economic development and tax-saving efforts for the people of Burlington County.

Bridge Safety

The tragic collapse of Minneapolis' I-35W Mississippi River Bridge in August 2007 underlined the critical need for bridge safety across the nation, an issue we have been addressing for years—long before the Minnesota tragedy.

Even though the Tacony-Palmyra and Burlington-Bristol Bridges had just undergone regular inspections in May 2007, Commissioners made the decision to fast-track the in-depth structural inspections that were originally scheduled for the following year—and perform them immediately following the Minnesota tragedy. "We'll do whatever it takes to ensure that our bridges are safe," Chairman Comegno said.



Sensors installed on its bridges provide the Commission with “real-time” data about the condition of its structures.

INSET: These “smart” expansion bearings have load cells built in that will electronically transmit daily safety reports to the Commission.

As part of a proactive approach to bridge safety, the Commission also partnered with Drexel University engineering experts to conduct cutting-edge research and help implement “smart technology,” which allows engineers to base our maintenance program on actual, real-time performance of its structures. A baseline study of the historically significant Bristol-Burlington

“This is the first time smart technology has been added to a construction project on a bridge over the Delaware River to allow for ‘health monitoring’ of the structures for the future,” said Chairman John Comegno.

Bridge, through computer modeling and experiments by experts at Drexel University, showed the bridge to be under minimal stress and completely safe. The partnership with Drexel is yet another way we provide cost-efficient services to our tollpayers. Motorists benefit from research by one of the nation’s leading engineering universities, services that would cost about five times as much if provided by the private sector.

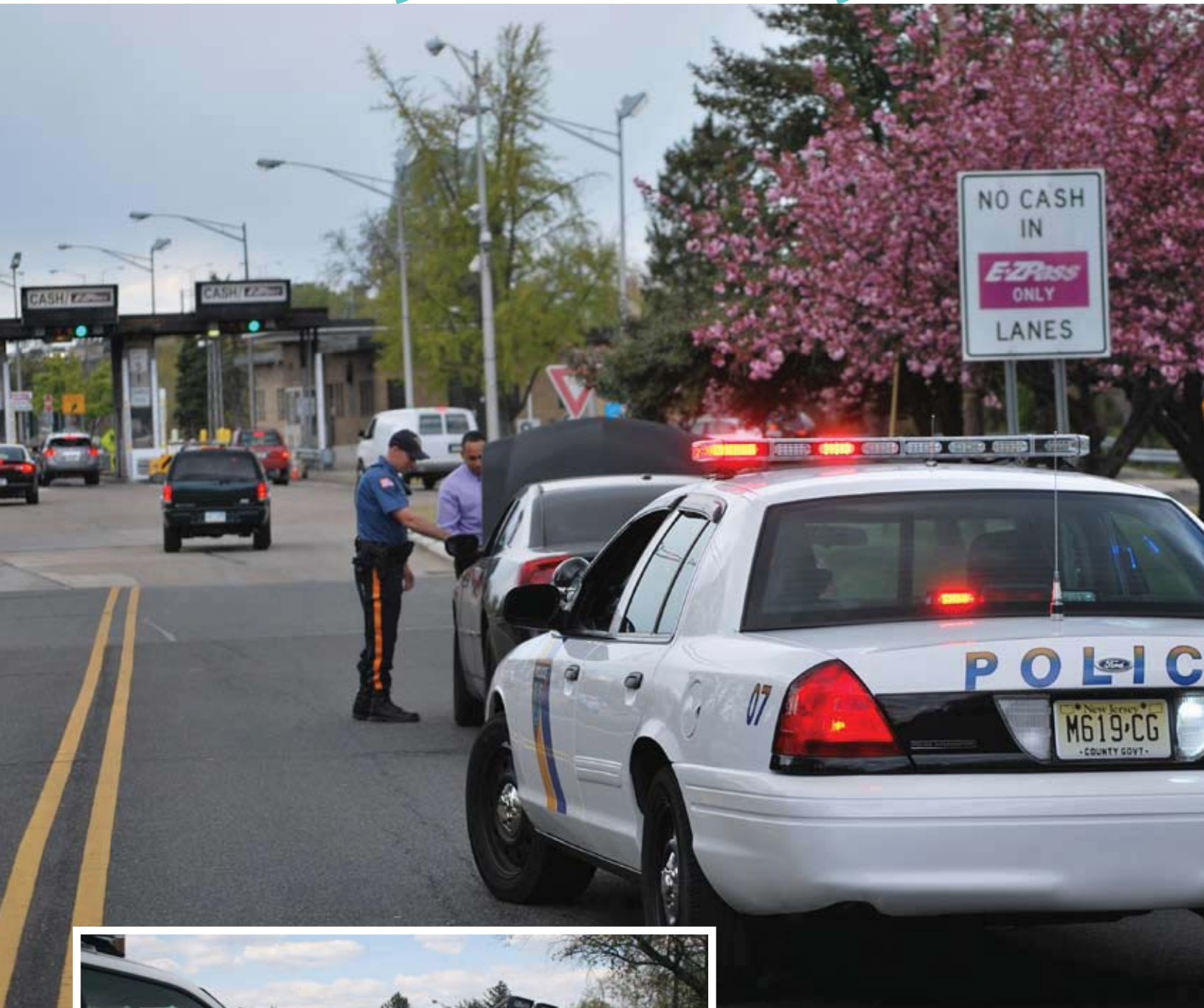
Complementing its unwavering commitment to safe bridges, the Commission has also executed aggressive capital programs year after year. These initiatives include:

- rehabilitation of the south abutment on the Burlington-Bristol Bridge
- replacement of the nearly 80-year-old steel rocker bearings on the Burlington-Bristol Bridge with “smart” expansion bearings, which have load cells built into the bearings that will electronically transmit daily safety reports to the Commission.
- replacement of the grid deck of the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge; “smart” gauges built into the deck will enable engineers to do real-time monitoring of the bascule span during bridge openings.
- installation of a “traveler system” for bridge inspection and maintenance on the Burlington-Bristol Bridge, which enables Bridge Commission maintenance staff and engineers to literally hang from the underside of the bridge. Use of such a system reduces the need to close traffic lanes, allows quicker access to the bridge’s underside, and minimizes the need to rent access equipment (i.e., “snoopers.”) The cost savings is significant—the cost to rent a traveler system for one month is the same as the cost of renting a snooper for one day. A similar system is planned for the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge.
- replacement of a trolley-wire system (completed 100% by in-house maintenance staff) (*see photo on page 8*)
- replacement of submarine termination cable boxes on the bascule span of the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge, which keep the span opening properly
- replacement of the Operating Ropes on the Burlington-Bristol Bridge (routine replacement of the 16 steel cables that lift the span during bridge openings and stretch under the weight of the bridge)
- Counterweight Rope Testing on the Burlington-Bristol Bridge (testing the 64 counterweight ropes, which carry the counterweights that help balance the tremendous weight of the lift span and are lowered on each side of the bridge as the lift span raises),
- Crossbeam/Stringer Connections on the Burlington-Bristol Bridge (proactively replacing welded connections with bolted connections on the primary support for the deck system on the NJ approach)
- repaving of approaches and toll plaza areas of the Tacony-Palmyra and Burlington-Bristol Bridges.
- planned replacement of the fenders surrounding the piers on the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge with a \$10.9 million insurance award against Lloyd’s of London obtained in 2009.



This traveler system will greatly improve the efficiency of inspections and maintenance on the Burlington-Bristol Bridge and save the Commission thousands of dollars. Attached to beams inside the Commission’s Maintenance building, the traveler system will enable maintenance staff and engineers to literally “hang from” the underside of our bridges to inspect and maintain the structures.

Security and Safety



The Commission's police department operates 24/7, keeping motorists safe as they travel the Commission's bridges. They also now have a role in Homeland Security and have initiated shared services among their law enforcement peers.

WHO COULD HAVE IMAGINED that when they first opened to traffic in 1929 and 1931 that the Burlington-Bristol and Tacony-Palmyra Bridges would handle more than 70,000 vehicles a day? In 2011, 14.1 million vehicles crossed the two bridges.

The Burlington County Bridge Commission is committed to keeping motorists and their passengers safe and secure as they travel all our bridges. With the addition of a Director of Public Safety and Homeland Security in late 2009, the Commission heightened its level of protection. The Commission's police department operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, handling security details, performing motor vehicle stops, issuing warnings and summonses, handling traffic accidents, and ensuring public safety during bridge openings by controlling traffic flow. Bridge Commission police officers assist more than 1,500 motorists each year.



Because Homeland security has become an increasingly important role of the Commission Police Department, officers have received additional training and attended programs offered by the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness. Our police department has also begun participating with state and federal working groups to be prepared in the event of a security breach. The Commission also engaged a security consultant to assess and make recommendations regarding its access and camera systems; implementation of these recommendations will take place in coming months.

Our police department has also initiated shared services among law enforcement. In August 2009 and annually thereafter, the Bridge Commission and Palmyra police departments participated in a statewide DWI crackdown, "Over the Limit, Under Arrest" by establishing a DWI sobriety checkpoint on Route 73 in Palmyra. The shared service initiative, staffed by members of both police forces, is designed to help curtail impaired drivers along this heavily traveled thoroughfare. In fact, approximately 40 DUI arrests were made each year.

In May 2011, the "Click it or ticket" initiative, a seat belt enforcement campaign of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration funded by federal grant monies, yielded 211 tickets and one felony arrest by our police.

Another shared service among law enforcement took place in July 2010 under and atop the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge. Seventy-five representatives from ten police units participated in a New Jersey State Police expo of expert tactical maneuvers, including a swift water rescue using boats, a helicopter and a bomb search using a K-9 unit.

We also allow other law enforcement units to use our facilities, which include both the Tacony-Palmyra and Burlington-Bristol Bridges as well as shoreline access to the Delaware River for training their tactical units and marine services, and provides area law enforcement with investigative support by allowing access to tracking systems of motorists passing through our toll lanes.

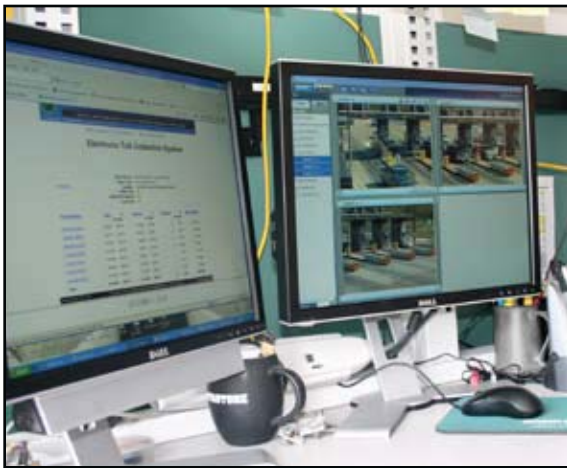
These exercises and ongoing interactions are not only a show of expertise but are also a shining example of the economic benefit and advantages to the community that come from sharing services among law enforcement.



Innovation



Whether motorists pay cash or use E-ZPass, they pay less on the Tacony-Palmyra and Burlington-Bristol Bridges than other bridges over the Delaware. At \$2, the Commission's bridges are still the best bargain around.



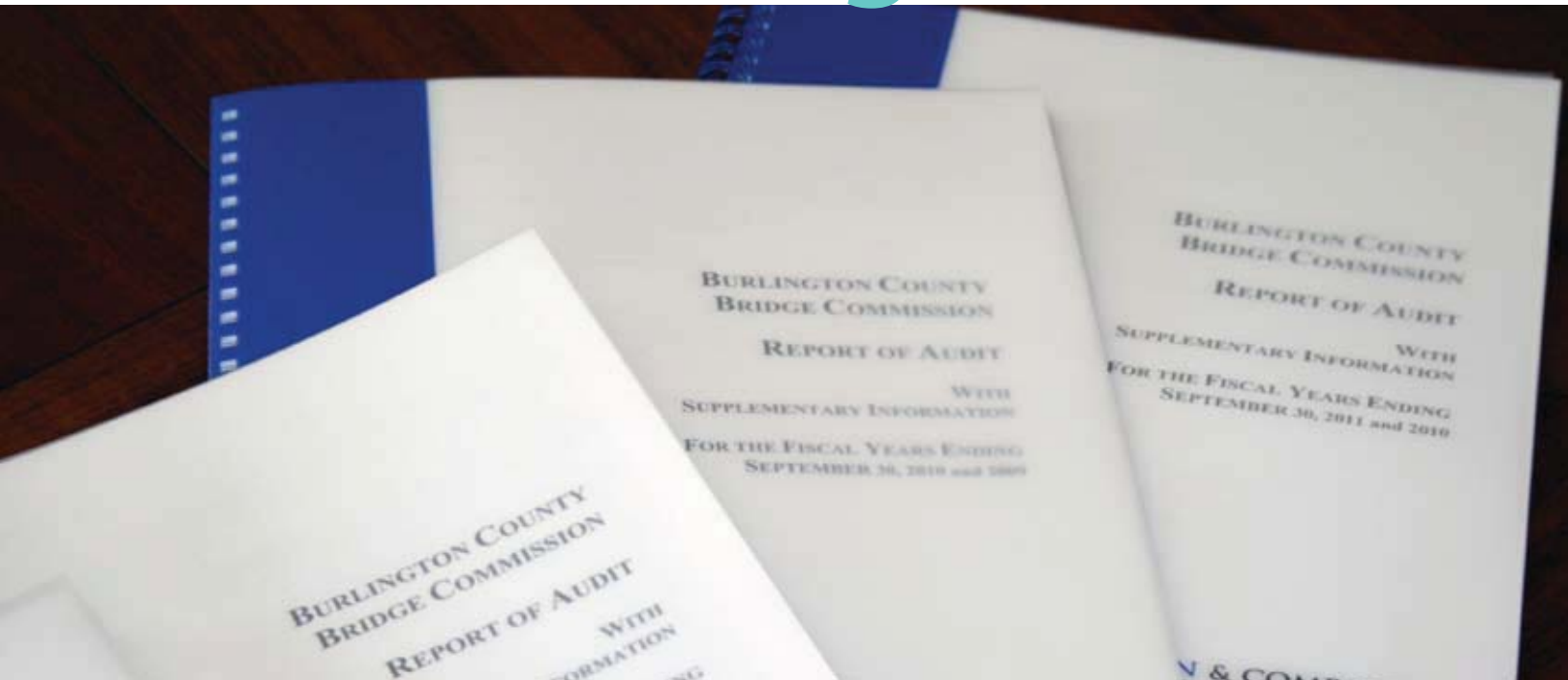
The Commission's state-of-the-art E-ZPass technology yields accurate transactions, safe travel, and satisfied customers.

SINCE 2003, motorists have been able to use E-ZPass on both the Burlington-Bristol and the Tacony-Palmyra bridges. The Commission's E-ZPass system is state-of-the-art. The proof is in the results: satisfied customers and almost no “non-pay” violations. Of the hundreds of thousands of motorists who cross the Burlington-Bristol and Tacony-Palmyra Bridges annually, only a handful (less than 0.01 percent, on the average) result in violations. **This means 1 out of 16,300 vehicles, on average, pose a violation.**

Another distinction of the Commission's system is that it is the *only* one in the region that virtually guarantees payment because our toll gates only lift if payment is received. This means all motorists pay and ensures a slower, safer flow of traffic on our bridges. It also means that we save money (expended by other agencies) chasing scofflaws and toll cheats.

This success, very simply, is the result of the Commission's solid investments in E-ZPass technology. The hardware equipment in the lanes is so sophisticated—with both digital video and light screens—that monitors can tell exactly what the vehicle type and classification are and proprietary software prevents us from charging a tag twice.

Fiscal Oversight



THE COMMISSION'S CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER, who also serves as its Chief Compliance Officer, is tasked with ensuring that the appropriate controls, checks and balances, and procedures are in place at the Commission.

In 2009, and under the supervision of our CFO, the Commission's twenty-year-old financial software was upgraded to a new, state-of-the-art financial management system which has greatly increased the efficiency of all aspects of our accounting and purchasing operation.

Commission employees' payroll and attendance records have been converted to the new system, which will improve our internal control access of attendance records and eliminate redundancy. The new accounting system also assists department heads, by providing periodic updates on budget balances and availability of funds and identifying State contract items, which provides significant savings opportunities for the Commission. In fact, by purchasing products from approved vendors, we realized a savings of \$150,000 on State contract items in 2011 alone.

Our successful transition to the new financial system was noted not only by Commission leadership and staff who found it user-friendly and uniquely suited to address general accounting standards and NJ statute based requirements, but also by "zero findings" during the Commission's annual audits.

Through strict internal controls administered under the direction of the CFO and implementation of a new financial system and accompanying procedures, the Commission has positioned itself as a model financial operation worthy of duplication.

Improvement Authority



The Commission works with towns like Riverton and Palmyra on economic development projects that improve the community and, ultimately, reduce the burden on taxpayers.

Fostering Economic Development and Community Revitalization

Over the past several years, the Commission has obtained more than **thirteen million dollars**—\$13,625,574 to be exact—in grant money to help towns with community development and revitalization. One hundred and one grants have been awarded since 2006 with additional grants pending, all with a return on investment of 18 to 1.

Think of grants as “found money” for municipalities struggling with the twin challenges of rising costs and devastating declines in revenue. Thanks to grant applications sponsored by the Commission, through its improvement authority powers, two towns received \$3.6 Million for NJ’s Neighborhood Stabilization Program, one town was awarded \$2.2 Million from NJDEP’s Hazardous Discharge Site Remediation Fund, 14 towns and 3 boards of education received \$708,322 in energy grants from NJ’s Board of Public Utilities, and 17 towns received \$417,125 in Byrne Justice Assistance Grants. These are just a few examples of grants the Commission has fostered to improve community life in Burlington County.

So critical is the Burlington County Bridge Commission to the county’s economic vitality that the Burlington County Chamber of Commerce has honored the Commission with its “Voice of Business” award which recognizes an organization that has demonstrated proactive involvement in promoting growth or revitalization in the county.

Our involvement in the County includes in-kind services such as infrastructure improvements for local communities and professional services for redevelopment and development projects.

Two communities that host the Commission's Tacony-Palmyra and Burlington-Bristol Bridges have benefitted from economic development projects. The Gateway Project in Burlington City is for the Burlington-Bristol Bridge approach and roadwork infrastructure. It includes such improvements as concrete pavers, traffic islands, block walls, lighting and landscaping. It also includes the widening of the turning area of Veterans Drive to allow for proper clearance for tractor-trailers that use the roadway.



The Gateway Project in Burlington City provided a new look to the Burlington-Bristol Bridge approach and improved roadwork infrastructure.

Palmyra's Streetscape Project encompasses Broad Street from Market Street to Route 73 and finishes the improvement work the borough completed further down Broad Street. The project included sidewalks, brick pavers, period lighting (to match the existing lighting), and landscaping.

The Commission's services to Burlington County communities are varied and numerous.

Its initiatives include assistance with:

- The development of land use planning and marketing of housing rehabilitation programs (Beverly).
- Development of municipal planning and master plans (New Hanover).
- A sewer capacity analysis and master plan (North Hanover).
- Wastewater treatment plan saving millions of dollars.
- Revitalization of Maple Shade's Main Street.
- A pocket park in Riverton and parking lot in Delanco.
- Planning and infrastructure assistance (Riverside).

Encouraging Shared Services

The Commission is also easing the financial pain of our neighbors through initiatives that enable towns to share services. Simply stated, shared services bring property tax relief.

For example, in 2008, a shared services initiative of the Commission and the County Freeholders helped towns respond to Governor Corzine's proposal to drastically reduce municipal aid to the 25 towns in Burlington County with fewer than 10,000 residents. A report that documented the cost savings of shared services served as important ammunition in a largely successful battle against Trenton's efforts to massively cut state aid.

Because it itemized the ways towns were actually sharing services, the report also served as a guide to municipal leaders looking for ideas on how to share even more services.

Changing how a town washes its fleet of vehicles might seem an unlikely way to save money, but every penny counts. This is yet another way the Bridge Commission is helping towns share services. Ever since the Commission's environmentally friendly vehicle-wash system opened in the summer of 2008, the Commission has offered the wash system to our neighboring towns, school districts, and fire departments **free of charge**.

SECTION VI. IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY

The Commission's environmentally friendly vehicle-wash system is for use by neighboring towns, school districts, and fire departments—free of charge.



In fact, municipalities can save as much as the cost of building their own washing facility (about \$400,000 to \$500,000) or the cost of commercial wash services (\$2,500 to \$5,000 per year).

A salt dome (housing road salt to be used in the winter) shared by Delran and Riverside is another example of the Bridge Commission's shared service initiatives. The idea of municipalities sharing a salt dome came from Shared Services meetings held at the Commission, at which town officials voiced concerns about the cost burden of road salt.



Shared Services meetings hosted by the Commission provide municipalities with the opportunity to discuss, strategize, and solve issues like changes to COAH rules, energy conservation, and dwindling municipal budgets.

Another shared services initiative helped local officials cope with another difficult challenge—the onerous increases the State was requiring for towns to meet their affordable housing obligations. Changes to the state's Council on Affordable Housing (COAH) rules had the potential to cause local property taxes to skyrocket and gave municipalities little time to meet the deadline to file their new affordable housing plans with COAH. In response, the Commission and the County's Freeholders made COAH planning services available to municipalities, helping local officials, free of charge, to prepare the basic sections of their new affordable housing plans.

In the wake of ever-increasing demand for energy (and cost) saving projects, in June 2009, the Commission and the Freeholders hosted the County's first-ever "Energy Conservation Summit", explaining energy-saving programs, grants available to fund program applications, and financing options to implement green initiatives.

The summit was the precursor to a comprehensive shared services initiative designed to generate cost-savings through green energy capital improvement projects, the "Greenbacks to Go Green" program.

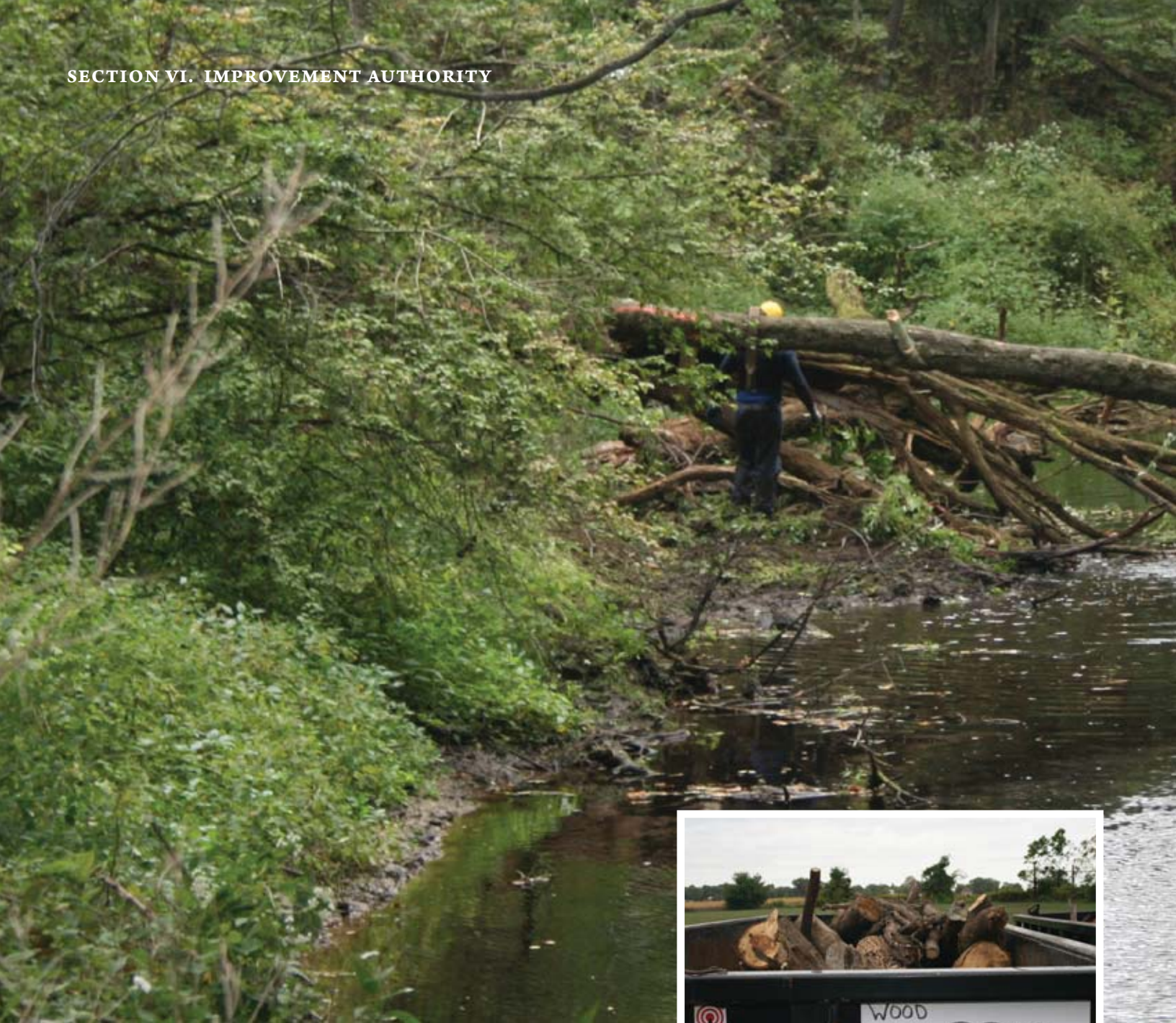
This clean energy program, initiated by the County Freeholders and the Commission, provides assistance to 64 Burlington County municipalities, schools, and authorities desiring to participate in the NJ BPU's Local Government Energy Audit Program, which will reimburse those entities for cost-saving energy audits performed on their facilities and buildings. Assistance by the Commission includes preparation of applications for Energy Audits and Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants (EECBG) and, of course, helping our neighbors navigate what can be a complicated and bureaucratic process.

Twenty-two municipalities and 24 school districts have already signed up for this program and 14 applications are actually in process. More than \$189,259 has been awarded in energy audit funds, more than \$1.1 million dollars in direct install funds have been received, and more than \$947,165 has been received in EECBG funds. That makes for a total of nearly \$2.1 million

The Commission has secured nearly \$2.1 million dollars for Burlco municipalities and schools for the "Greenbacks to Go Green" program, a shared service initiative of the Burlington County Freeholders and the Bridge Commission.

dollars the Commission has secured for Burlco municipalities for this energy initiative alone, all at no upfront cost to the municipalities.

The initiative is further bolstered by the Commission's innovative "energy conservation lease bank" which can offer up to \$10 million in low-cost loans to fund local energy projects. This includes everything from basic lighting upgrades to HVAC overhauls. Towns and schools can save twice — first from the utility cost savings generated by new equipment, and, second, on the cost of financing those improvements.



Rancocas Creek Cleanup

Perhaps the ultimate in shared services is the Commission's partnership with the County Freeholders to address the historical flooding of the Rancocas Creek from storms in 2004 and 2007 that caused \$25 million in damage to homes and business and devastated the communities of Lumberton, Southampton, and Medford.

In concert with the Freeholders, the Commission completed the first phase of the Rancocas Creek cleanup project in October 2008 for the purpose of flood mitigation, which involved the removal of long-standing storm debris while the County removed tree parts and trash from the worksite and hauled it to the county's landfill complex for disposal. This collaborative project, which also included the NJ Department of Environmental Protection, is already a model for other regions in our state.



Chairman John Comegno explains to WPVI-Philadelphia Channel 6 reporter Nora Muchanic how as part of a shared services initiative with the County Freeholders and towns, the Commission undertook a multi-million dollar cleanup of major portions of the Rancocas Creek to mitigate flooding that devastated local homes and businesses.

As promised, the second phase of the cleanup project was completed in December 2009 and the final phase wrapped up in December 2010. All told, this shared service covered 7.2 miles of creek, removed 150 obstruction fields weighing 1,680 tons, and greatly improved water flow in the Creek—all with **no impact to local taxes.**

SECTION VI. IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY



As the improvement authority for Burlington County, the Commission has saved towns more than \$15.5 million dollars on loan and lease financings for things like road improvements, fire trucks, and school buses.



Tax-Saving Financing Programs

Since 2002, the Commission has issued more than \$521 million in bonds in pooled-lease and pooled loan financing programs to benefit local governments and nonprofits in Burlington County. By using the credit strength of the County of Burlington, these initiatives have resulted in direct taxpayer savings of more than \$15.5 million.

Because state law gives the Commission the authority to extend its financing to municipalities, school districts, and local authorities and fire districts in Burlington County, monies financed through the Commission can be used for improving roads, purchasing trucks, fire trucks, school buses, and rehabilitating buildings.

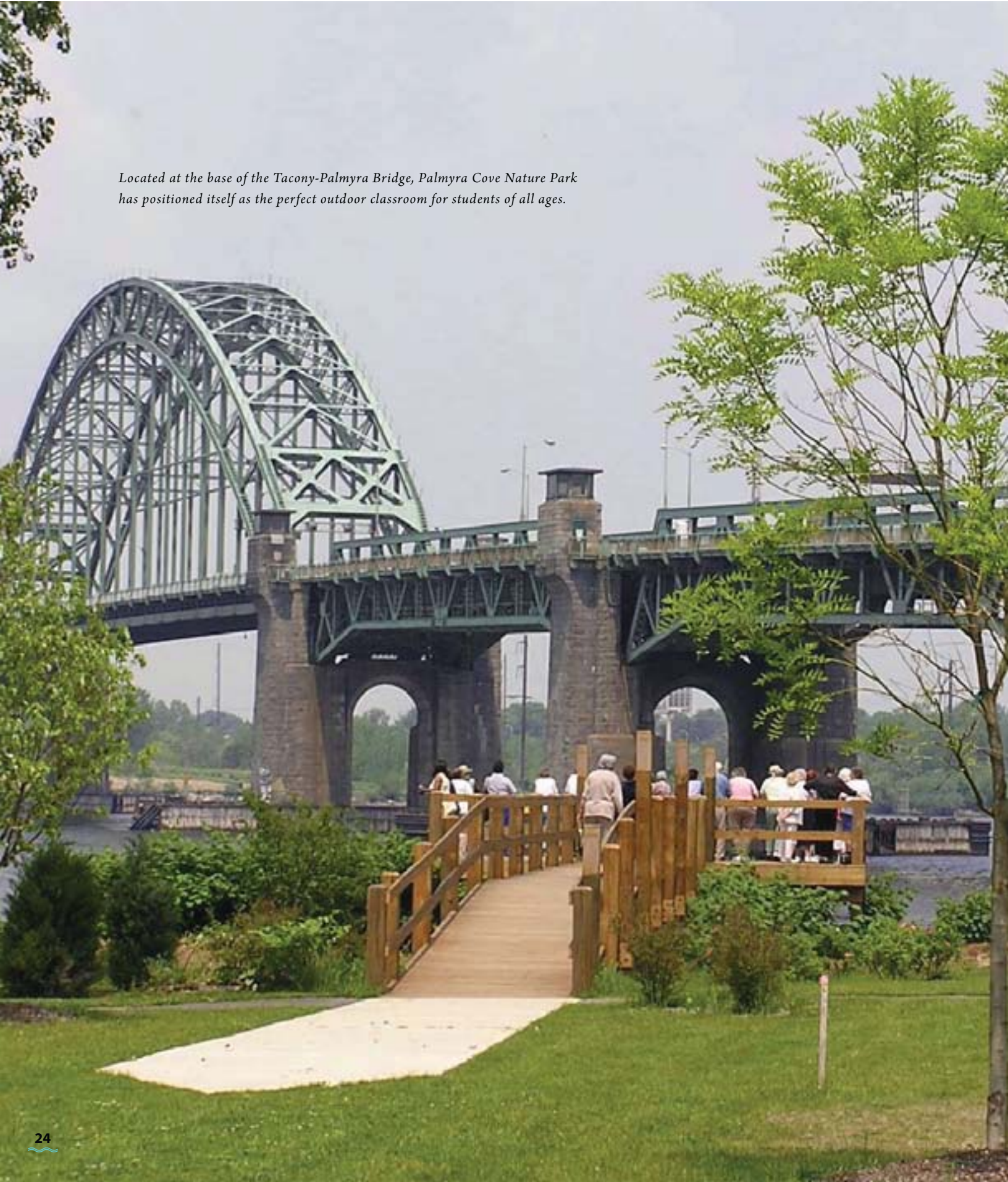
Since the Commission began issuing county-guaranteed pooled loan and lease financings, participants have saved more than \$15.5 million dollars:

SECTION VI. IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY

Year	Financing Type	Amount	Participants	Savings
2002	pooled loan	\$73.5 million	Burlington City, Cinnaminson, Evesham, Maple Shade, Pemberton, Tabernacle	\$2.4 million
2002	pooled lease	\$60.6 million	Palmyra, Riverside, Willingboro	\$1.3 million
2003	pooled loan	\$42.6 million	Bordentown City, Chesterfield Edgewater Park, Evesham Twp, Florence Twp, Palmyra, Willingboro	\$3.1 million
2003	pooled lease	\$24.2 million	Bordentown Twp, Delanco Sewerage Authority, Evesham Twp, Mansfield Twp	\$903,000
2004	pooled loan	\$49.6 million	Bordentown Twp, Evesham Twp	\$150,000
2004	pooled lease	\$15.9 million	Bordentown Twp Fire Dist. #2, Cinnaminson, Delran Twp Fire Dist. #1, Pemberton Twp	\$1.96 million
2005	pooled loan	\$12.2 million	Cinnaminson, Evesham Twp, Fieldsboro, Lumberton	\$276,000
2005	pooled lease	\$8.73 million	Burlington City, Chesterfield Fire District County of Burlington, Delanco Fire District, Pemberton Twp	\$453,000
2006	pooled loan	\$22.6 million	Bordentown City, Maple Shade, Medford Twp	\$132,000
2007	lease refunding	\$34 million		\$1.2 million
2007	pooled loan	\$4.6 million	Cinnaminson, Mt. Holly, Riverside	\$41,000
2009	pooled loan	\$18.9 million	Cinnaminson, Delran, Evesham, Lumberton	\$853,000
2010	pooled loan	\$17.7 million	Bordentown City, Maple Shade	\$832,000
2011	lease refunding	\$9.5 million	County of Burlington, Delanco Sewerage Authority	\$618,000
2011	loan refunding	\$37.8 million	Burlington City, Evesham, Maple Shade, Pemberton	\$1.4 million

Environmental Initiatives

Located at the base of the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge, Palmyra Cove Nature Park has positioned itself as the perfect outdoor classroom for students of all ages.



Palmyra Cove Nature Park: An Outdoor, Living Laboratory

THE COMMISSION OPERATES Palmyra Cove Nature Park (PCNP), a 250-acre nature preserve on the Delaware River at the foot of the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge. PCNP not only serves as an important feeding site for migratory birds and the endangered Peregrine Falcon, but has hosted more than 21,000 students from 71 school districts since its opening in 1999.

With its woodlands, wetlands, tidal cove and wild river shore line, PCNP is a perfect outdoor classroom for students of all ages. PCNP staff collaborates with schools to tailor hands-on, interdisciplinary experiences that correspond to specific sites in the park and are linked with the school's curriculum.

From its base at the Environmental Discovery Center—a state-of-the-art exhibit hall and classroom that opened in 2003—PCNP staff provides a wide range of environmental education programs for all ages including Cove Caterpillars and Nature Craft & Story Time, both for preschool children.

PCNP also boasts a tidal marsh, tidal creeks, a pond, and 9½ miles of scenic trails. The park offers evening hikes for adults and families; and guided hikes usually held on Saturdays. Also offered are orienteering classes, birding hikes, wetlands and forest ecology studies. PCNP is also a unique resource for Boy and Girl Scout troops, providing opportunities to earn badges in engineering, forestry, nature and earth science.

A crew of dedicated volunteers, many of whom are Master Gardeners, complements the Commission's PCNP staff. The gardens are designed to attract birds and butterflies and bring pleasure to those who visit and they have been recognized by the Philadelphia Horticultural Society which awarded PCNP its Greening of America Award for "an outstanding public planting ... improving the quality of life through horticulture."

Registered with the State of New Jersey as a Professional Development Provider, PCNP has hosted workshops on Project Learning Tree, Project WET and Project WILD: Aquatic. And PCNP holds the distinction of being the only GLOBE partner in New Jersey. GLOBE is "Global Learning and Observations to Benefit the Environment," a worldwide, hands-on science and education program. Students from around the world record measurements in investigative fields of atmosphere, hydrology, land cover/biology, and soil, and record those findings on the GLOBE website.

A 1998 agreement with the Tidelands Resource Council—signed one year before PCNP opened to the public—authorized using up to 70 acres at Palmyra Cove Nature Park for Delaware River dredge materials. Thanks to the efforts of the Commission, voices of the public to "Save the Cove," and the strong support of the state environmental commissioner, the Council amended the agreement in August 2008, and limited the area where dredge material could be deposited while enabling PCNP to continue its mission as an outdoor classroom while protecting an additional 50 acres of the park from future dredge deposits.

SECTION VII: ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

PCNP extends its reach beyond its 250 acres to sites atop our signature bridges. In fact, that reach is 115 feet above the Tacony-Palmyra and Burlington-Bristol Bridges because that is where falcon nesting boxes are located. Because Peregrine Falcons are an endangered species in our state, NJ DEP's Division of Fish and Wildlife Endangered and Nongame Species



Local children visit PCNP every year for an annual Water Festival that is part of a nationwide effort to teach water conservation.

Program closely monitors New Jersey's peregrine falcon population. Each year biologists and PCNP staff climb to the top of the spans to band young falcons and gather information on nesting success and productivity. But that's not the only way to see what's happening up there—a "falcon cam" located in PCNP's Environmental Education Center has real-time footage of activity inside the falcon's nesting boxes.

Educational Events

An annual Sustainability Fair held at PCNP offers families and nature enthusiasts the chance to learn how to help protect the environment and improve the quality of their region, nation and world. Free and open to the public, this fun-filled, rain-or-shine educational event showcases goods and services that promote a sustainable lifestyle, and teaches about alternative energy sources, composting and wildlife gardening.

In addition to the Adopt-a-Beach Clean-up along Palmyra Cove's river coastline, participants can enjoy meeting animal ambassadors promoting wildlife conservation from Pompeston Creek Watershed Association. Turtle Lady Cindy Pierson, and Falconer Jennifer Penna add to the day's festivities with their crowd-pleasing presentations.

Make-A-Splash Water Festival brings Cinnaminson, NJ fourth-graders to PCNP every fall—as it has for the last ten years. Part of a nationwide effort to learn about water conservation and resource management, the water festival takes students through 16 learning stations and inspires competition through a Water Wizards Challenge.

PCNP has also hosted NJ DEP's "Water Monitoring Day" where 50 seventh and eighth grade students from Camden's St. Joseph-Pro Cathedral School learned about watersheds, the importance of clean water, water testing techniques, and the kinds of aquatic wildlife that thrive in Palmyra Cove Nature Park. Welcomed by the NJ DEP Commissioner and Administrative Head of the United States Geological Survey, students were also introduced to the career possibilities that exist in water science.

PCNP's indoor Environmental Discovery Center (top) features interactive exhibits and displays and a "falcon cam" that offers views of the falcon nesting boxes above the Tacony-Palmyra and Burlington-Bristol Bridges. Children enjoy the hands-on learning that comes with PCNP's popular class, Cove Caterpillars (lower left). The "bubble station" is one stop on the educational rotation that dominates the annual Water Festival at PCNP.





In Summary



No toll increases. Property tax relief. Shared services. Helping our neighbors. Safe bridges and facilities. Accountability. That's what the Burlington County Bridge Commission is all about.

This *State of the Bridge* told that story, as will future yearly reports. Just as we invite you to travel our landmark bridges, we welcome you back here to see what's new on our bridges and in the communities we serve.

People at the Commission

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BURLINGTON COUNTY BRIDGE

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