

Vickers Charles R. (DNREC)

From: Roger Jones [rjones@tnc.org]
Sent: Tuesday, May 02, 2006 8:41 AM
To: Vickers Charles R. (DNREC)
Subject: TNC Comments on State Resource & Natural Area Maps
Attachments: SRA MapsLetterMay1.doc; Alternative and Proposed SRA1.pdf

Ron,

Please find attached an electronic version of my comments submitted at last evenings public hearing with respect to State Resource & Natural Area Maps for proposed consideration by the Delaware Open Space Council.

Regards,

Roger

Roger L. Jones
State Director
The Nature Conservancy, Delaware Chapter
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Received

MAY 05 2006

Department of Parks & Recreation
Director's Office

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May 1, 2006

Mr. John Hughes, Secretary
Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control
89 Kings Highway
Dover, Delaware 19901

Division of Parks & Recreation
Director's Office

Dear Secretary Hughes:

I write to express The Nature Conservancy's conditional support for the recently updated State Resource Area Maps that have been completed by the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control pursuant to the Delaware Land Protection Act (Title 7 Chapter 75 of the Delaware Code). This recent update fits nicely into the ongoing efforts by the State to conserve and protect the state's natural resources. The maps do a reasonably good job in identifying priority areas that should be considered by the Open Space Council when acquiring and preserving open space for the citizens of Delaware.

In reviewing the maps, my staff found that they encompassed most areas identified as conservation priorities in Delaware by The Nature Conservancy, with the exception for two special places. I strongly recommend to you and members of the Delaware Open Space Council that the maps be revised to more fully recognize the unique natural resource values found in and around forested corridors of the Blackbird/ Millington and Upper Nanticoke River/Ellendale-Redden areas. I am concerned that the proposed state resource area coverage does not adequately protect important ecological functions that are known to exist in these two corridors. I recommend that the original Green Infrastructure map coverage for those specific areas be consulted with the net effect being to expand State Resource Area designated lands in these areas to create more continuous coverage within these corridors. A proposed alternative State Resource Area map prepared by the State at the request of The Nature Conservancy is attached and offered for your consideration at this time.

Inclusive of the above recommendations, we fully support the adoption of the updated State Area Resource maps by the Open Space Council. The Nature Conservancy recognizes that these maps will be utilized in consultation with all three counties and affected municipalities as they update their respective comprehensive plans. Primary responsibility for implementing the land use requirements for these maps falls to the counties, as Delaware code requires them to adopt zoning ordinances that enact these guidelines and standards within 18 months after receipt of state resource area maps from the Department. We encourage the Department to work in partnership with the counties to develop ordinances that incorporate market-based incentives as well as regulatory provisions for private landowners to preserve and protect the ecological functions on their lands.

The conservation of these lands in partnership with the affected landowners will do much to preserve and protect Delaware's important natural habitats and our green infrastructure.

Sincerely,

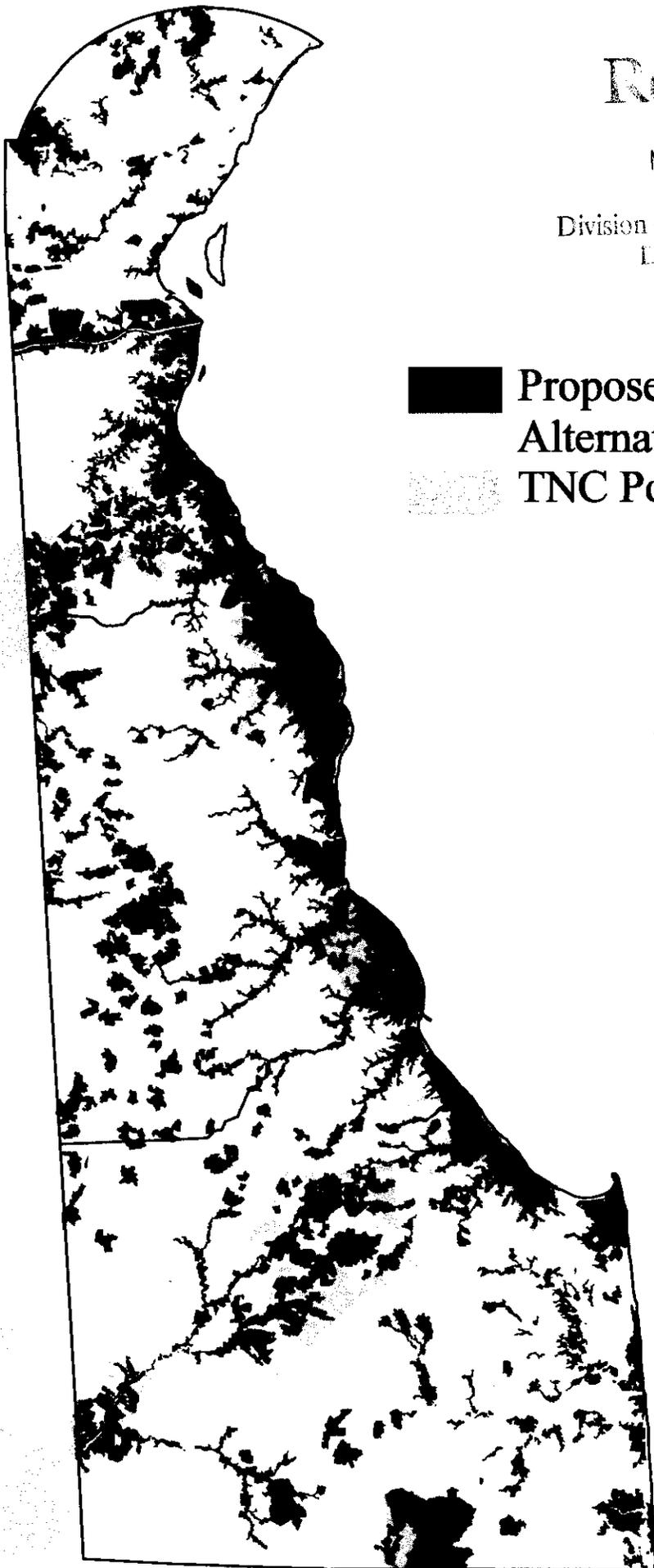
Roger L. Jones, Jr.
Vice-President and State Director

Enclosure
cc: Delaware Board of Trustees

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MAY 05 2006

Division of Parks & Recreation
Director: C. Wise



-  Proposed SRA
-  Alternative Proposed SRA
-  TNC Portfolio Sites

