

# *League of Women Voters of Delaware*

Clash Wing, 1st Floor  
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Wilmington, DE 19803

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statement before the Open Space Council

Thank you for this opportunity to address a revision of the Land Protection Action Standards and Criteria. My name is Lisa Pertzoff. I represent the League of Women Voters of Delaware.

We congratulate the Open Space Council for earnestly working to improve its criteria for the selection of open space areas to include on its list of properties desirable to acquire. We think that everyone will agree that the clearer and more impartial the criteria, the smoother will be the acquisition process. With dwindling funds set aside for open space acquisition, a clear and impartial process is even more important.

The League of Women Voters of the United States supports land use planning that reflects conservation and wise management of resources, as well as the identification and regulation of areas impacted by public or private investment where siting results in secondary environmental and socioeconomic impacts.

The following comments reflect these positions, though in some cases they have more to do with the process than with a simple listing of standards and criteria.

Crucial to the Open Space Council's acquisition process is the assumption that an impartial and professional appraisal of the value of the property and/or its development rights will be made in every case.

Extraordinary efforts must be made to make sure that all landowners within the State Resource Areas (SRAs) are treated impartially, and particularly neighbors within a particular area. All properties determined to be equally valuable in terms of their natural resources must receive equal offers, subject to impartial professional appraisals.

We believe that the effects of sea level rise on all properties currently designated as SRAs and all properties proposed for designation as SRAs ought to be considered through careful examination of DNREC's inundation maps. Any lands which will be inundated under the most conservative of the scenarios (.5 meter) ought to be removed from the SRA list/maps.

Open Space funds are solely for the preservation of open space, and not for the preservation of farmland. In order to maintain a high level of transparency it is important that the two funding sources remain separate.