

## OPEN SPACE COUNCIL

March 4, 2009

**TO:** Acting Secretary David S. Small  
Charles A. Salkin, Director, Division of Parks and Recreation  
Lee Ann Walling, Chief of Planning

**FROM:** Lynn Williams, Chair, Open Space Council

**RE:** Standards and Criteria for State Resource Areas

In accordance with the Delaware Land Protection Act (Delaware Code Title 7, Chapter 75), I hereby request that the Interagency Working Group begin developing standards and criteria consistent with the purposes of the law “for evaluating the lands and waters of the state for inclusion as state resource areas in the open space program.”

The Interagency Working Group’s scientific and technical contribution to the standards and criteria will assist the Open Space Council in determining “the existence and location of state resource areas; their degree of endangerment; an evaluation of their importance; and information related to their natural, historic or open space values.”

I also request that members of the Open Space Council be apprised of and invited to participate in all meetings of the working group related to the development of standards and criteria. I will present progress reports on the draft standards and criteria to the Open Space Council at its regularly scheduled meetings.

After the standards and criteria are in final draft form, they will be reviewed by the full Council. This would be followed by a presentation to the stakeholders group that has been meeting at the request of Rep. V. George Carey. After these two presentations, the Open Space Council will hold a public hearing on the standards and criteria, followed by a final review and recommendation by the Council. The recommended standards and criteria will be forwarded to the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control for review and adoption by means of a Secretary’s Order.

These newly adopted standards and criteria will then be used by the Open Space Council and the Interagency Working Group to develop proposed State Resource Area maps. The proposed maps will go through a similar review and recommendation process as the standards and criteria. Draft maps will come before the Open Space Council, followed by presentation to the stakeholders group, followed by a public hearing and final review and recommendation by the Council to the Department. The Department would review and adopt the new State Resource area maps by means of a Secretary’s Order.

I find that the involvement of the stakeholders group has been most productive, and I look forward to extensive and improved communication with legislators, local government officials, and landowners as we move forward.