



# DEP NEWS RELEASE

New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection

Chris Christie, Governor  
Kim Guadagno, Lt. Governor  
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## IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### DEP TO AUCTION FARMING LEASES AT 12 STATE PARKS, FORESTS, RECREATION AREAS

*TWO REGIONAL AUCTIONS NEXT WEEK OPEN TO ALL FARMERS*

**(15/P78) TRENTON** – The Department of Environmental Protection will hold two regional auctions next week for farm leases on land owned by the DEP, managed by the State Park Service and spread across a dozen state parks, forests and recreation areas.

The auction leases in New Jersey’s Central and Northern regions, to be held on Tuesday, September 29 and Thursday, October 1, will see the 2,744 acres of land available for bidding.

Central Region farming leases are up for auction in Allaire State Park, Delaware and Raritan Canal State Park, Monmouth Battlefield State Park, Rancocas State Park, Spruce Run Recreation Area, Upper Freehold Township and Washington Crossing State Park.

Northern Region farming leases are available in High Point State Park, Hopatcong State Park, Jenny Jump State Forest, Kittatinny Valley State Park and Wawayanda State Park.

Farmers may preregister to bid on specific parcels. Each lease will be for a five-year term, with an option to renew for three additional five-year terms. Multi-year farm leases will allow farmers to invest in the land and be eligible to participate in federal conservation or set-aside programs. A professional auctioneer will auction the parcels.

“Supporting agriculture within appropriate locations on our preserved open space lands has long been an initiative for the DEP,” said Rich Boornazian, the DEP’s Assistant Commissioner for Natural and Historic Resources. “We hope the availability of these long-term leases will encourage farmers to consider working public lands for the mutual benefit of the agricultural community as well as the public.”

Rental values and minimum bids will be based on the soil types of each parcel and calculated using the soil rental rates established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency (FSA), and discounted by 20 percent in consideration of the disadvantages of farming on

public lands. Hedgerows and other property characteristics where farming cannot occur will not be included in the calculated lease rates.

The DEP launched the farm lease program in 2009, auctioning 49 leases. Last year, auctions yielded 46 leases. This year, farmers will have a variety of plot sizes from which to choose on 45 leases across both regions.

Land leases range in size from a 1.56-acre lot in Wawayanda State Park to nearly 100-acre plots in Monmouth Battlefield State Park. In many cases, farmers may bid on multiple smaller plots of land that are adjacent to or near other plots of varying sizes.

The auction details are as follows:

**Central Auction (Hunterdon, Middlesex, Monmouth and Somerset counties):** Tuesday, September 29, 2015 at 11 a.m., Assunpink Wildlife Management Area, Conservation Building, One Eldridge Road, Robbinsville, NJ 08691.

**Northern Auction (Morris, Sussex and Warren counties):** Thursday, October 1, 2015 at 11 a.m., Pequest Trout Hatchery, 605 Pequest Road, Oxford, NJ 07863.

Interested bidders must preregister by 5 p.m. Thursday, September 24, 2015. For information about the individual farm parcels and about registering, please visit:

[http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/business\\_ops/current\\_leases.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/parks/business_ops/current_leases.htm)

In total, the DEP's Division of Parks and Forestry owns 445,409 acres of land across the state. The Division of Fish and Wildlife owns 354,000 acres.

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