



TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

Environmental Resources Inventory

OCTOBER 24, 2007

TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE
PLANNING BOARD
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION
CUMBERLAND COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL

Environmental Resources Inventory

Funded by a Grant from the
Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions
Smart Growth Planning Grant Program
and
The Township of Hopewell

Adopted by the Hopewell Township
Environmental Commission

◆ ◆ ◆

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A signed and sealed original is on file with the Township Clerk's office

**TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL
590 SHILOH PIKE
BRIDGETON, NEW JERSEY 08302**

HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE

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BRUCE HANKINS, VICE MAYOR
DUANE CRUZAN
PAUL RITTER III
JOSEPH SHOEMAKER

REQUIRED PLAN ENDORSEMENT COMPONENT
Adopted by the Hopewell Township Council

October 24, 2007

**TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL
590 SHILOH PIKE
BRIDGETON, NEW JERSEY 08302**

PLANNING BOARD

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CONSERVATION ELEMENT OF THE MASTER PLAN
Adopted by the Planning Board

October 17, 2007

**TOWNSHIP OF HOPEWELL
590 SHILOH PIKE
BRIDGETON, NEW JERSEY 08302**

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

DR. BOB COLE
BURT DOREMUS
LEE HEPNER
JERRY LEWIS
KEN STRAIT

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ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE INVENTORY
Adopted by the Environmental Commission

MAY 9, 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Maps in Italics

1.0 INTRODUCTION	I
2.0 A SUSTAINABLE AND ECOLOGICALLY-BASED COMMUNITY	I
<i>Aerial Photograph</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Land Use Map</i>	<i>3</i>
3.0 CONTEXT OF THE HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP RESOURCE INVENTORY.....	4
3.1 Regional Environment.....	4
<i>Planning Area Map</i>	<i>5</i>
3.2 Local History and Concern.....	6
<i>Historic Sites Map.....</i>	<i>7</i>
4.0 GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY AND SOILS	8
4.1 Geology Province	8
4.2 Geologic Framework.....	8
<i>Surface Geology Map</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Geologic Province.....</i>	<i>12</i>
4.3 Topography/Steep Slopes	13
<i>Topography.....</i>	<i>14</i>
4.4 Soils.....	15
4.5 Soil Profile.....	15
4.6 Major Soil Series in Hopewell Township.....	16
4.7 Soil Classification	19

Township of Hopewell
Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI)

	<i>Soil Suitability Map</i>	21
	<i>Important Farmland Soils Map</i>	22
	<i>Soil Mapping Units Map</i>	25
4.8	Radon	26
	<i>Radon Potential Map</i>	27
4.9	Radium in Drinking Water	28
5.0	CLIMATE AND AIR QUALITY	28
5.1	Climate	28
5.2	Air Quality	29
6.0	GROUND WATER, SURFACE WATER, WETLANDS	31
6.1	Ground Water	31
6.2	Ground Water Quality	32
6.3	Private Well Testing Results	33
6.4	Recharge Kirkwood-Cohansey Aquifer System.....	34
	<i>Aquifer Recharge Map</i>	35
	<i>Coastal Plain Aquifer Map</i>	36
6.5	Wells in Hopewell Township	37
6.6	Well Head Protection	37
	<i>Well Head Protection Map</i>	39
6.7	Water Allocation Permits.....	40
6.8	Septic Systems.....	40
	<i>Septic Limitation Map</i>	41

<i>Depth to Seasonal High Water Table & Sewer Service Map</i>	<i>42</i>
6.9 How a Septic System Works	43
6.10 Surface Water	45
<i>Watershed Map</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Sub-Watershed Map/PSE&G</i>	<i>47</i>
6.11 Surface Water Quality.....	48
<i>Streams/Wetlands Map</i>	<i>49</i>
6.12 The Cohansey River.....	50
6.13 Stream Classification.....	50
6.14 Category One Streams	51
6.15 C-1 Designation for the Cohansey.....	51
<i>Fisheries Map</i>	<i>52</i>
6.16 Suburbanization and Water Quality Protection	53
6.17 Funded Projects for Water Quality Protection.....	53
6.18 Tidal and Freshwater Wetlands, Vernal Pools.....	55
6.19 Classification of Wetlands	56
6.20 Transition Areas	56
6.21 Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act.....	57
6.22 Wetlands Act of 1970.....	57
6.23 Regulated Wetlands Activities	58
6.24 Floodplains	58

Township of Hopewell
Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI)

<i>Flood Plan Map.....</i>	<i>60</i>
6.25 Stormwater Management	61
6.26 Coastal Areas.....	61
7.0 AGRICULTURE, WOODLANDS AND NATIVE VEGETATION	62
7.1 Agriculture and Woodland Management.....	62
<i>Zoning/CAFRA Map.....</i>	<i>63</i>
7.2 Mature Trees and Woodlands.....	63
<i>Forest Cover Map</i>	<i>65</i>
7.3 Threatened and Endangered Plant Species.....	66
7.4 Invasive Species.....	66
8.0 WILDLIFE AND BIODIVERSITY.....	69
8.1 Wildlife	69
8.2 New Jersey’s Landscape Project	69
<i>Threatened & Endangered Species Map.....</i>	<i>71</i>
8.3 Hopewell Rare and Endangered Species.....	72
8.4 Bald Eagle Project.....	72
8.5 Conservation Incentive Programs	74
9.0 POLLUTION AND CONTAMINATED SITES	75
10.0 SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING	75
11.0 ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND CONSERVATION OPTIONS.....	76
11.1 Farmland Preservation	76
11.2 Transfer of Development Rights	76

**Township of Hopewell
Environmental Resource Inventory (ERI)**

11.3	Non-Profit Sector	76
	<i>Preserved Lands Map</i>	77
11.4	Open Space Protection.....	78
11.5	Parkland in Hopewell Township	78
12.0	CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL AREAS	79
12.1	Favorable Development Potential.....	79
12.2	The Cohansey River	79
12.3	Aquifers	79
12.4	Contaminated Water	79
12.5	Burden Hill Forest	80
12.6	Bald Eagles and other T&E Species	80
12.7	Contaminated Sites.....	80

APPENDICES

1. Septic System Maintenance Guide
2. Certified Water Testing Laboratories
3. Natural Heritage Bicycle Trail Map
4. Significant Trees of Hopewell Township
5. Site of Historic Interest

REFERENCES

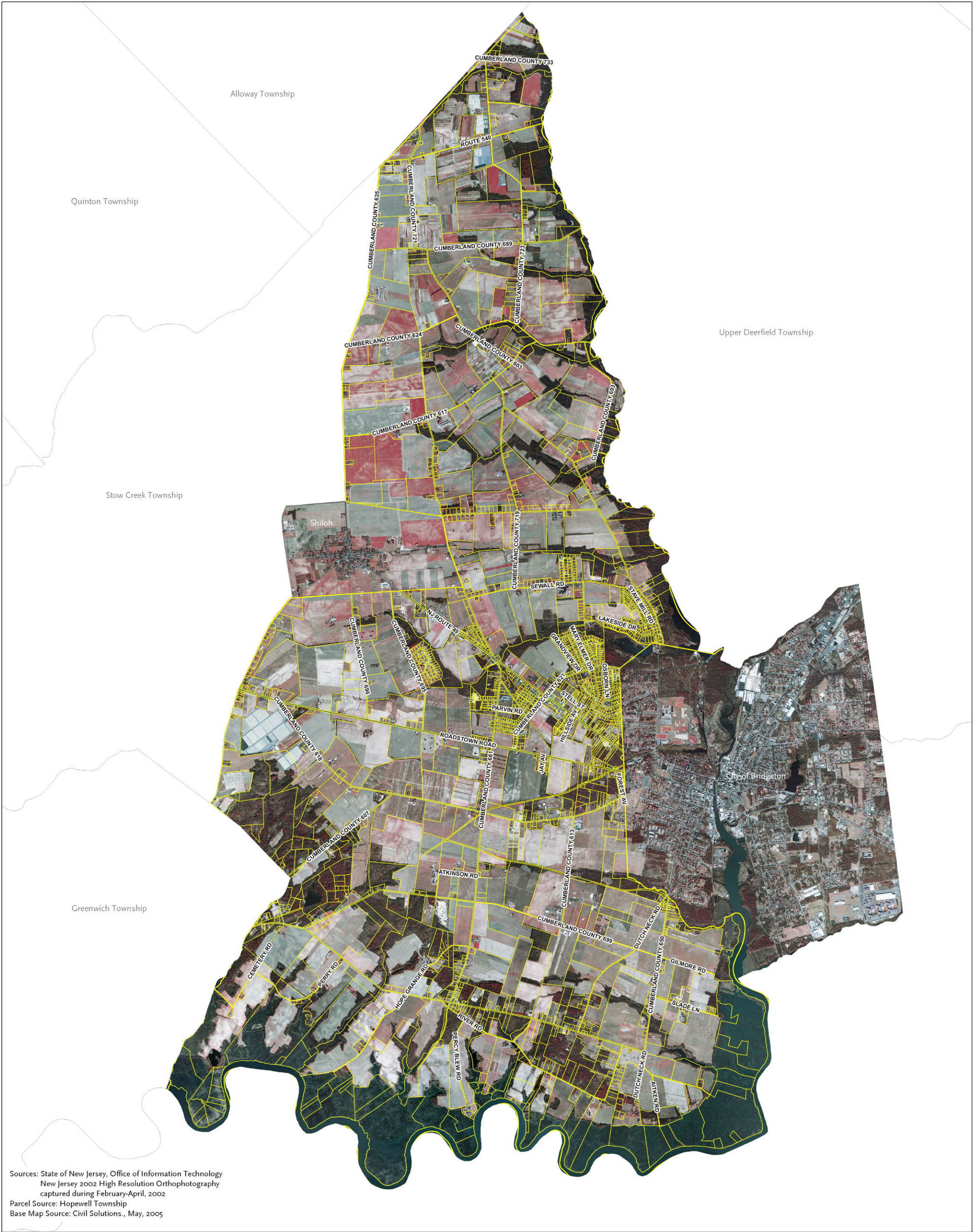
1.0 INTRODUCTION

An Environmental Resource Inventory, ERI, is a community resource and management tool for the Hopewell Township Planning Board, Zoning Board, Governing Body and all of the Township's advisory committees to use in their respective decision-making responsibilities which ultimately shape the development and character of the Township. This ERI describes, in maps and text, the environment of the Township's land, water, life forms, and atmosphere. The report details contaminated sites, environmental constraints to development and conservation options.

2.0 A SUSTAINABLE AND ECOLOGICALLY-BASED COMMUNITY

Hopewell Township, Cumberland County is an agriculturally viable, environmentally important, and highly developable community. Hopewell lies in the heart of one of New Jersey's most active and productive agricultural areas. Nearly 75% of the Township is farmed or forested. The farmers of Hopewell owe their success to adequate water, excellent soils, favorable climate, nearby markets, and local agricultural support businesses. In addition to agriculture, Hopewell Township is defined by the Cohansey River which bounds the Township completely on two sides of its triangular form. The river and its associated wetlands provide important wildlife habitat, mitigation of flood waters, and recreational opportunities. One of the largest and most stable nesting populations of Bald Eagles is located along the Cohansey River wetland/upland interface in Hopewell. According to the United States 2000 census, Hopewell has a population of 4,434 persons and a land area of 30.9 square miles. With less than 150 people per square mile in a state where average population density is 1,030 persons per square mile, Hopewell can be characterized as one of the most rural communities in New Jersey.

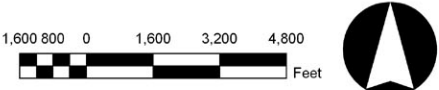
Like many other rural, New Jersey towns, Hopewell Township is experiencing increased pressure for residential and commercial development. Accordingly, the Township is comprehensively revising the master plan and land use ordinances to design and implement a transfer of development rights (TDR) program which will ensure that Hopewell Township can accommodate new growth without sacrificing its agricultural industry, sensitive environmental areas, or rural character. The City of Bridgeton abuts Hopewell to the east, see aerial map. Carefully planned extension of infrastructure from the city will help direct the future development of Hopewell Township. Creating a sustainable, working balance between economic growth, preservation of agriculture and protection of the environment is a priority for Hopewell Township. The success of this effort will shape and define not only Hopewell Township but the sustainability of the region in the future.



NATURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

Aerial Photograph

Hopewell Township, Cumberland County, NJ June 2006



Clarke Caton Hintz

Architecture

Planning

Landscape Architecture



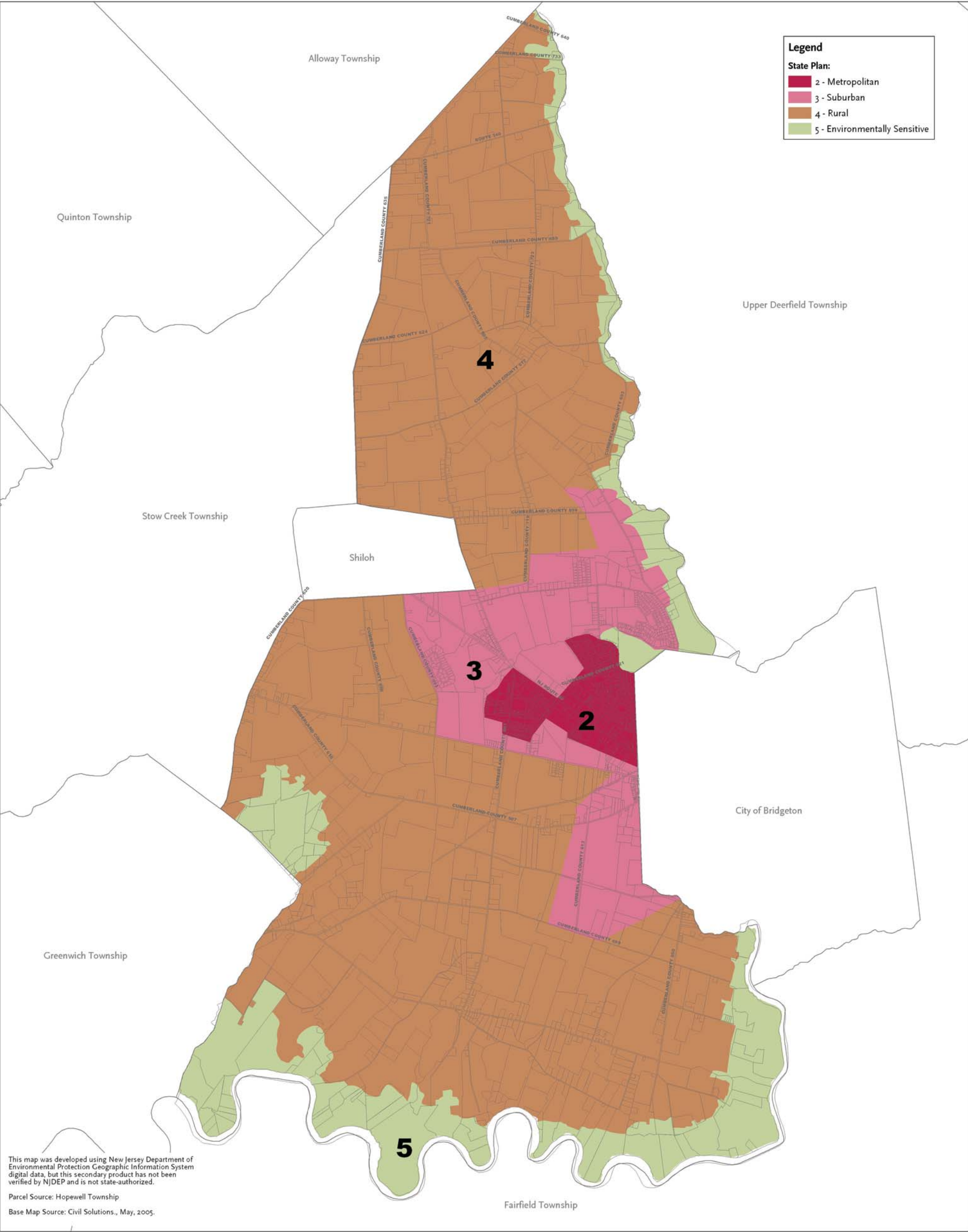
3.0 CONTEXT OF THE HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP NATURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

3.1 Regional Environment

Hopewell Township is situated in the western portion of Cumberland County within the Coastal Plain Province of New Jersey. Hopewell is rural with less than 150 persons per square mile; however, the Township's land use is remarkably diverse. When compared to other rural, Cumberland County towns, Hopewell is unique in that nearly 10% of the land is classified as urban and just under 65% is farmed. The rest of the land is forested, wetlands, or open water. Most of the urban development is adjacent to the City of Bridgeton where infrastructure and employment have been historically available. The New Jersey Office of Smart Growth through the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan has designated PA 4 Rural, PA 3 Suburban, PA 1 Metropolitan, and PA 5 Environmentally Sensitive planning areas within the 30.9 square mile municipality, further indicating the diversity of Hopewell in the largely agricultural region. See Planning Area Map below. The Township is located wholly within the Cohansey River Watershed and is essentially defined by the river which is fresh above Sunset Lake in Bridgeton and brackish below. The watersheds in the region eventually flow into the Delaware Estuary and contribute to the overall hydrologic quality of this important regional environment.



Cohansey River, Photo by Carol Bell



ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCE INVENTORY

State Planning Areas

Hopewell Township, Cumberland County, NJ February 2007

3.2 Local History and Concern

The local history of Hopewell Township has been well documented by the Hopewell Township Historical Society through a publication entitled:

*Hopewell Township A Brief Early History to Celebrate the 250th Anniversary of Its Formation
as a Precinct of Cumberland County January 19, 1748.*

That publication is incorporated herein by reference with the full text included on the digital form of this ERI as well as on the Township website.

(http://hopewelltpw-nj.com/environmental_commission.)

Sites of historic interest in Hopewell Township have been identified and are mapped and labeled by block and lot, (see Sites of Historic Interest Map). Appendix 5 also contains a list of significant historical sites within the Township, including those shown on the map.

Strong local concern exists both for protection of the unique environment of Hopewell and for equitable zoning which protects land value, often called equity. Creating a balance between protection of land value and protective zoning, conservation, and environmental stewardship is not unique to Hopewell but has historically been a statewide challenge. Hopewell has begun looking at tools proactively to help craft the balance of land use interests including TDR, Farmland and Open Space Preservation, and federal Farm Bill assistance programs such as EQUIP and WHIP which provide funding for wildlife and environmental protection on farms.



Bald Eagle over the Cohansey, Photo by Burt Doremus

One can not begin to describe the local context of Hopewell Township without first mentioning the Cohansey River, the dominant environmental feature in Hopewell. The river bounds the town on two sides and everything seems somehow connected to the river. There is even a local radio program dedicated to fishing news on the Cohansey. Hopewell can best be put into context as a quiet farming community with close urban amenities, sculpted by a river, populated with white perch, orchards, and eagles, hoping to grow smart and remain rural.

