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## INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

*What is interpretation?*

SEP 13 1993

N.J. DEPOSITORY

It is the bridge between the resources and the public which excites the imagination, fosters appreciation, and leads to improved understandings of people and places.

*How will the Interpretive Plan affect the Pinelands?*

Groups involved in interpretation will benefit from a network of people and places created to coordinate current efforts and outline new possibilities. Many sites and programs will continue to operate independently but will be enhanced by increased publicity and coordination of services. Existing sites and programs may have their services expanded or tailored to include ideas outlined in the Interpretive Plan.

*How can communities get involved in the planning process?*

Three "Open Houses" will be sponsored throughout the Pinelands. They will provide an opportunity for community groups and residents to learn more about the Pinelands Interpretive Plan and express their opinions. The dates and locations for Open Houses are listed on the back of your newsletter. You may also contact the project team members listed on the back page for further information.

*Who are the cooperators?*

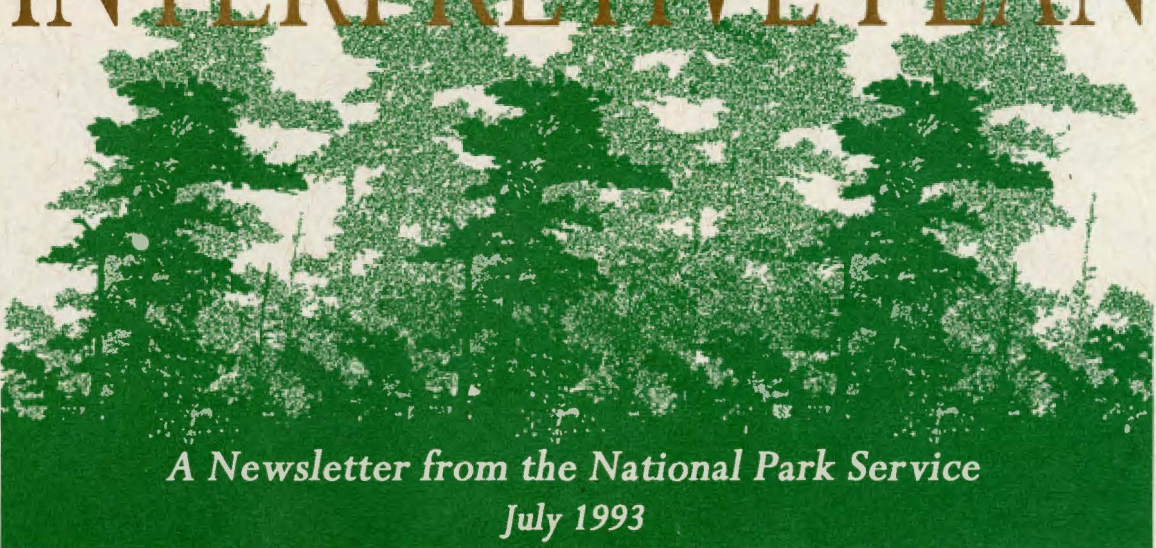
The National Park Service has joined with the State of New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection & Energy (DEPE) and the Pinelands Commission to develop an interpretive program for the Pinelands.

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# PINELANDS

## INTERPRETIVE PLAN



*A Newsletter from the National Park Service  
July 1993*

### CHARTING A COURSE FOR INTERPRETATION

Congress has called for the creation of a Pinelands interpretive and educational program. The New Jersey DEPE, the Pinelands Commission, and the National Park Service have formed a cooperative partnership to create an interpretive plan for New Jersey's Pinelands. The plan's goal is to "enhance public understanding, awareness, and appreciation of the natural and cultural resources included in the New Jersey Pinelands" (Public Law 100-486). The Interpretive Plan will identify an overall vision for the Pinelands which encourages an appreciation of its many resources and outlines a role for education and interpretation in the region.

Community involvement continues to be an important part of the planning process. Community groups and leaders have participated in round table discussions to identify important Pinelands' resources, review the region's existing ability to accommo-



*Canoeists on the Oswego River near Martha Furnace*

date current and anticipated visitors, and establish a set of themes and objectives that each alternative should include.

#### Four Alternatives

Project partners have worked with the community to draft a set of four "Interpretive Alternatives" which outline different ways of interpreting Pinelands' resources. Each alternative suggests a strategy for involving visitors and residents in Pinelands' interpretation. These alternatives are the focus of this newsletter. Public comments on the four alternatives are critical to the identification of a preferred alternative and the development of a final plan.

This newsletter will introduce interested Pinelands' residents and visitors to the planning process and, more importantly, the alternatives.

Three "Open Houses" will be held in the Pinelands to allow individuals and groups to discuss the alternatives with the project team.





# OBJECTIVES TO GUIDE THE PLAN

A series of objectives have been drafted which summarize the community issues and concerns identified in round table discussions. The following objectives are working tools to guide the planning effort and to establish criteria for the selection of a preferred alternative:



**Outline a long-term vision** which plans for visitation at sites and facilities best able to sustain such use without environmental degradation, respects private property rights, and is financially feasible or self-sustaining whenever possible.



**Coordinate with existing organizations** currently providing interpretation or education about Pinelands' resources. Many ongoing efforts, like the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail, will complement the alternatives outlined in this newsletter.



**Adhere to the land use and development standards of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan** when sites and/or facilities are involved.



**Provide interpretive and educational opportunities** for visitors, Pinelands' residents, and those in the surrounding region which encourage an understanding and appreciation of Pinelands' natural and cultural resources; promote and enhance ongoing efforts; and coordinate sites, facilities, and programs to create a cohesive identity and interpretive experience.

## LOOKING AT THE PINELANDS

*Just east of Philadelphia and a short drive from New York City, the New Jersey Pinelands Reserve is a large undeveloped area in a densely populated state. The Pinelands encompasses almost 1.1 million acres in the southeastern part of the state, including a portion of seven counties and all or part of 56 municipalities. Visitors and residents alike have canoed its dark lazy streams, hiked the dry sandy pitch pine uplands, marveled at the expanse of pygmy pine forest, or witnessed the fall ritual of cranberry harvesting. Long-time residents of the Pines are known for their timeless relationship with the land.*



*The Jersey Central Railroad bridge crossing the Batsto River*

### The Pinelands Today

Concerns for resource protection, combined with increasing growth pressures from surrounding metropolitan areas, have challenged citizens and governments to become involved in conservation. In 1978, Congress created the Pinelands National Reserve, the first of its kind in the country. The Pinelands Commission, under the guidance of the Pinelands Comprehensive Management Plan, was charged with management and education for the reserve. Since that time, many organizations and individuals have become involved in interpreting Pinelands' resources through field trips, educational programs, festivals, and other efforts.



### Interpretive Themes and Stories

A careful look at the Pinelands reveals unique combinations of natural habitats, plant and animal populations, and a regional culture which reflects centuries of adaptation to the environment. A set of three interpretive themes has been developed to explain Pinelands' stories. These themes will become the central ideas to be communicated about the Pinelands:

- **ENVIRONMENT:** New Jersey's Pinelands is a unique natural environment.
- **PEOPLE:** People have inhabited New Jersey's Pinelands for centuries and created traditions that continue today.
- **INTERACTION:** The diversity of Pinelands' landscapes and man's interaction with this land is continually evolving.

These themes are based upon scientific and historic facts that continue to play a significant role in shaping New Jersey's Pinelands. Each theme is incorporated into all of the alternatives.



# THE PLANNING PROCESS

## Looking to the Future— Interpretive Planning and the Pinelands

Although long a remote area, separated from the adjacent urban centers of the northeast, the Pinelands now attracts more than a million visitors annually and is home to over 700,000 people. Pinelands' communities must continue to educate visitors and residents alike about their fragile ecosystems. Interpreting the resources and traditions of the region can increase awareness of their importance and reinforce traditional community values. Pinelands' residents and visitors can explore their relationship with this unique environment. Many organizations and individuals currently offer educational programs, lectures, field trips, and festivals which celebrate and explore the region's resources and lifestyles. A comprehensive Interpretive Plan will coordinate and enhance these efforts.

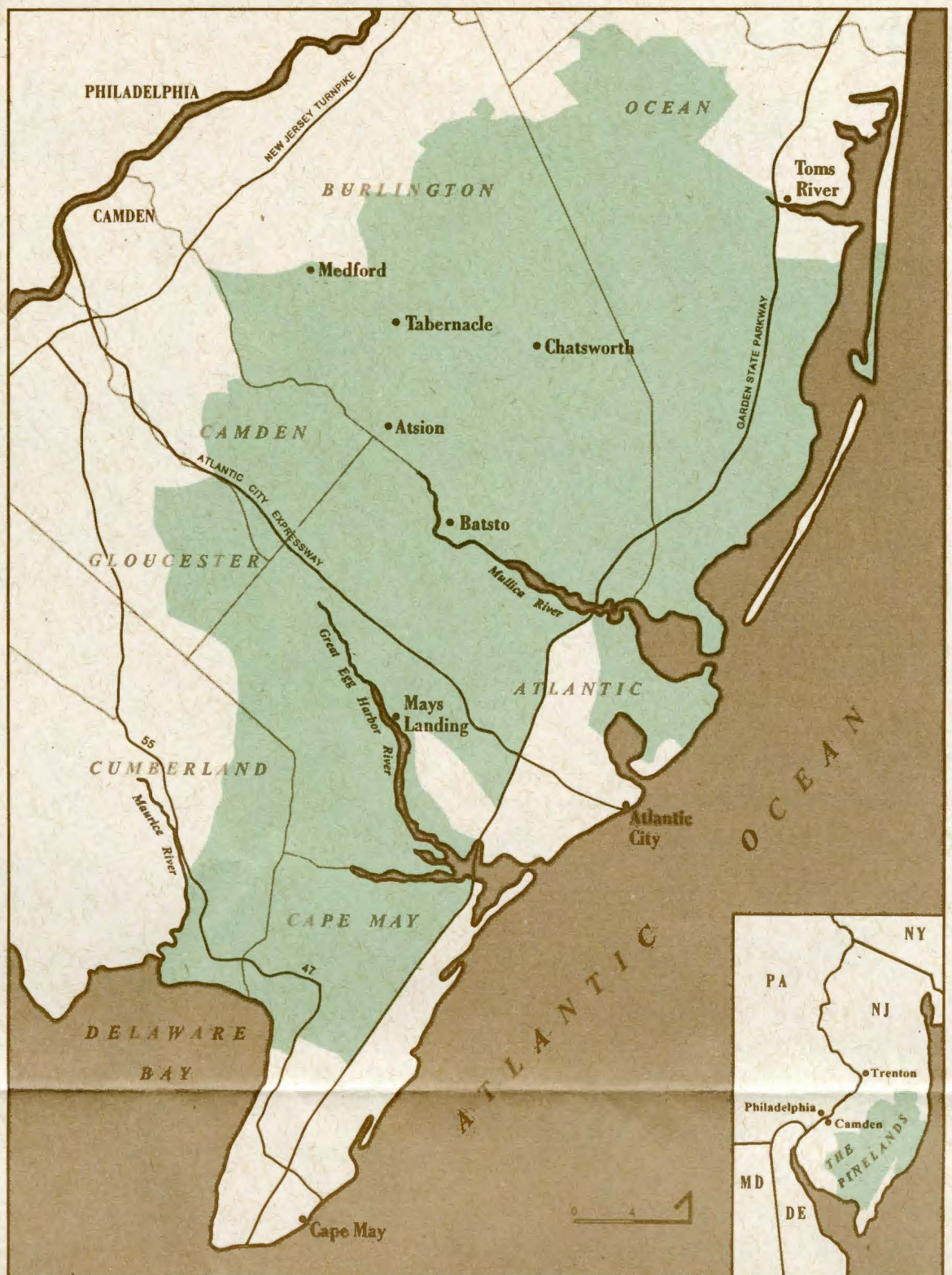
### Elements of the Plan

The Interpretive Plan will identify a uniform sign program for the region and the need for interpretive sites and facilities. Linkages between sites and programs, as well as ways to coordinate existing programs, will be determined. All of the interpretive themes—environment, people, and their interaction—will be addressed by a site or program. Certain features are common elements in all of the alternatives:

- wayside exhibits
- interpretive literature
- interpretive and directional maps of the region



*School children from the Helen A. Fort  
Middle School at Cattus Island*



### Developing a Choice— The Four Alternatives

Four approaches—or alternatives—to interpreting Pinelands' resources have been developed. These alternatives will focus community interests and provide a tool to evaluate the impacts of each. Although different, the alternatives are not mutually exclusive and may be combined. A public comment period will encourage interested individuals and groups to express their vision for interpreting the Pinelands. A preferred alternative will be identified at the conclusion of the public comment period.



### The Community Voice— Public Participation

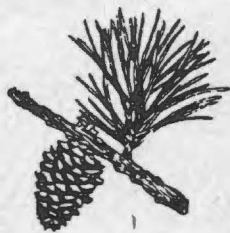
Public participation in the planning process is essential! Although the interpretive themes, objectives, and alternatives have been shaped through public participation, your recommendations are needed. Everyone with an interest in the Pinelands needs to get involved.



*Planting cranberry vines in new bogs at Haines and  
Haines Cranberry Farm*



# GATEWAYS AND INTERPRETIVE TRAILS



## Interpretive Strategy

- Gateway contact stations will introduce visitors to the Pinelands' interpretive themes and direct them to resource sites with a set of interpretive paths.
- Interpretive sites will concentrate on specific pieces of the Pinelands' story, linking each site to a theme.

## Sites and Facilities

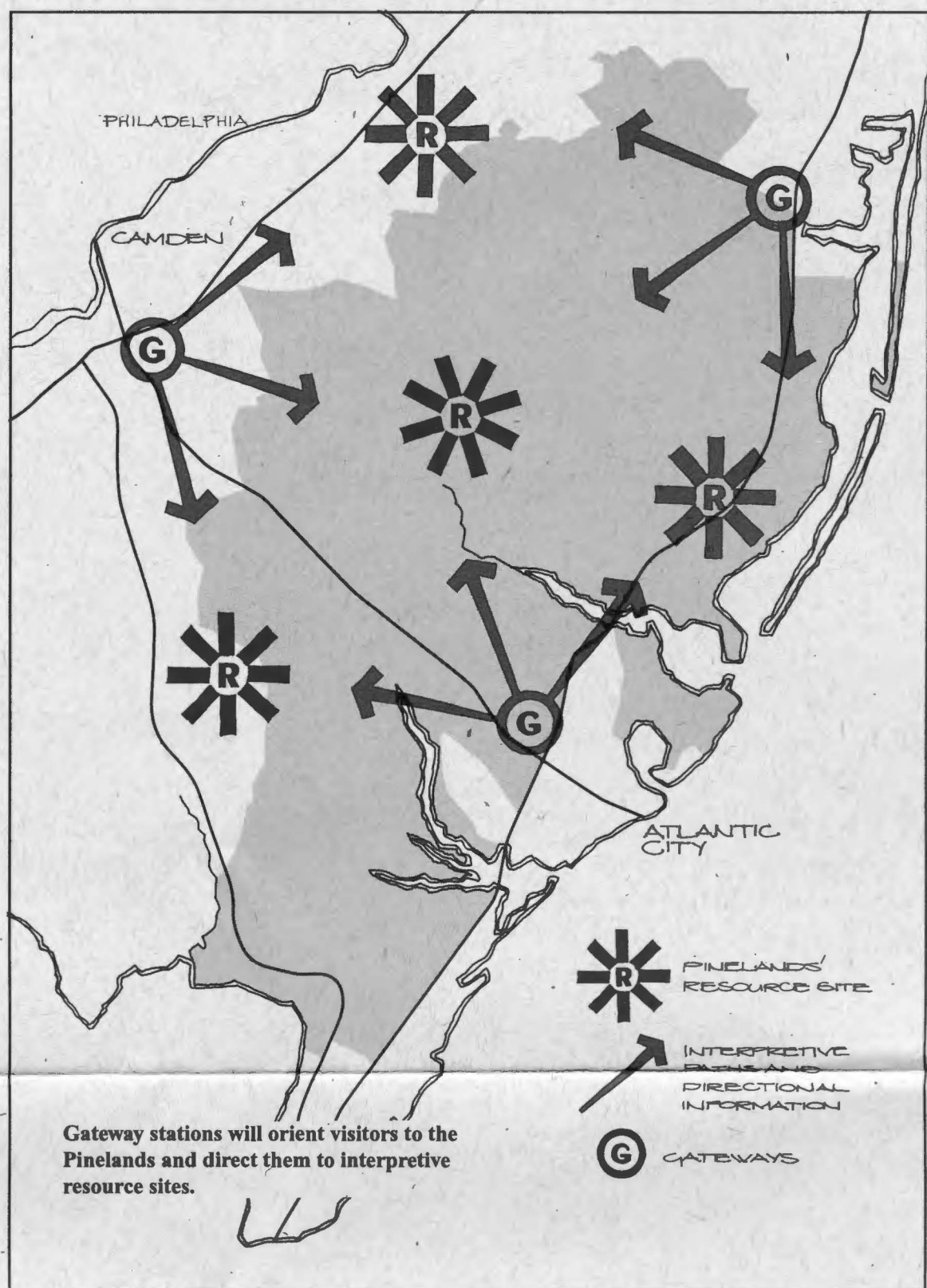
Gateway stations will orient visitors to the region's geography, resources, and interpretive themes. They will be located along the major transportation routes that border and bisect the Pinelands. These low-key contact points will be easily coordinated with existing rest stops and facilities along the edge of the Pinelands Reserve, or combined with New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail gateways.

Interpretive sites will be linked to a specific interpretive theme which best explores the theme and history of that resource. These sites will be identified from existing facilities and sites, when possible. Interpretive paths will link the sites that best explain specific themes.

## Programs

Gateways will provide a brief interpretive overview of Pinelands themes and direct visitors to discover the region. Brochures, maps, and self-guided tours will provide general information about the area's resources, community services, and recreation opportunities.

# ALTERNATIVE 1



Interpretive site exhibits and media will introduce visitors to the importance of that site to the Pinelands. Visitors will be encouraged to explore the site through guided tours, demonstrations, and hiking opportunities. Greater coordination between sites will make it possible to sponsor educational programs, joint interpretive efforts with the New Jersey Coastal Heritage Trail, other federal efforts, the state, the Pinelands Commission, and other communities.

## Management

The National Park Service will work with the Pinelands Commission, the New Jersey DEPE, and the region's communities to identify gateway locations and to designate interpretive paths and sites. An independent interpretive council will coordinate interpretation at the regional level. Both gateways and interpretive sites will incorporate privately owned facilities as well as public facilities currently operated by the federal, state, or municipal government.

Technical assistance from the federal and state levels will help identify costs and specific management strategies for each gateway and site. Ongoing operations and management will be assumed by current property owners or joint public-private partnerships.





# PINELANDS PARTNERS



## Interpretive Strategy

- Existing programs will continue to explore Pinelands' resources, history, and traditions.
- Interpretive programs will encourage environmentally sensitive use of Pinelands' resources.

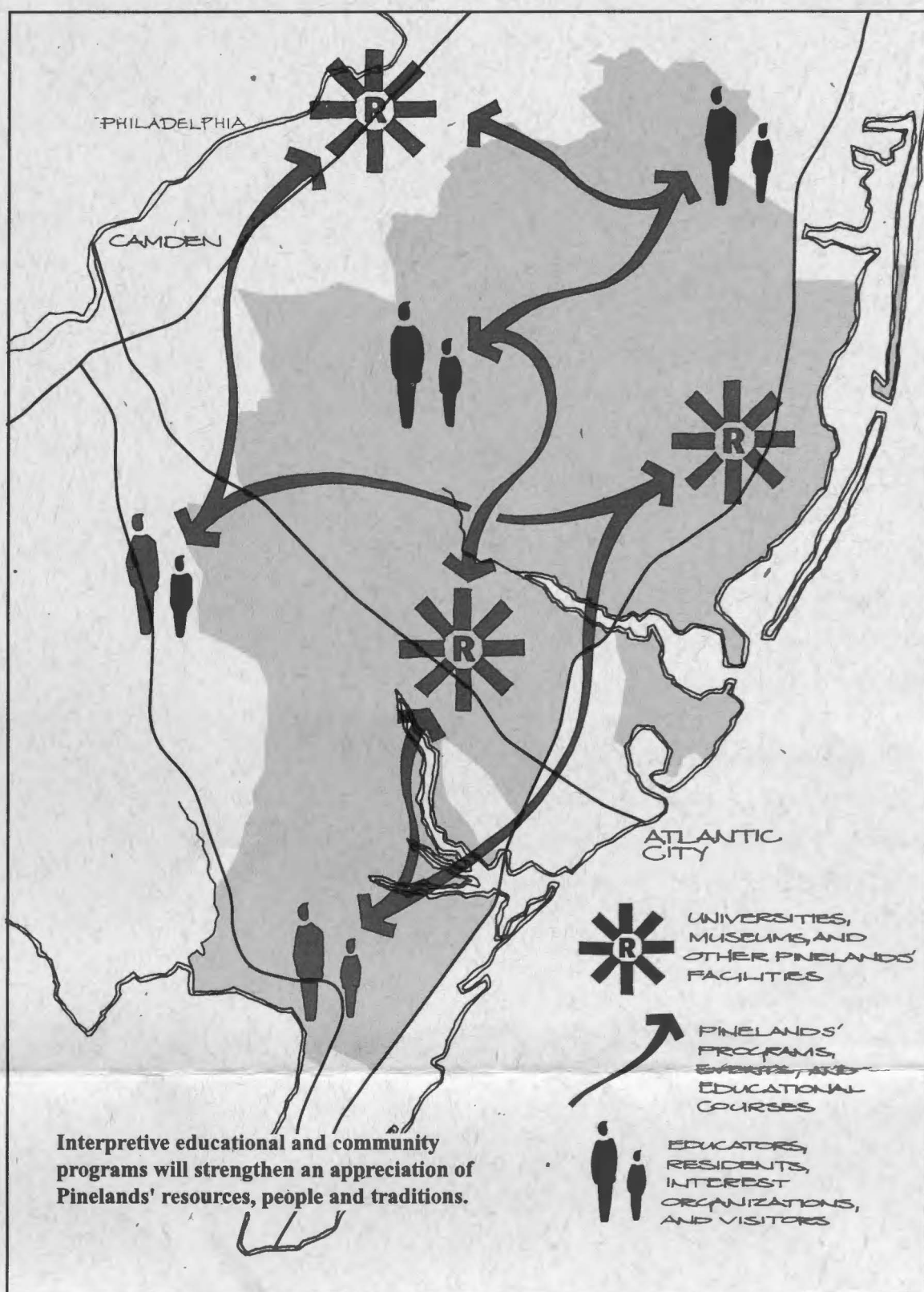
## Sites and Facilities

Existing sites which attract visitors and residents will be used to distribute information about interpretive, educational, and community programming. These sites will be varied and might include rest stops along major transportation routes bordering the Pinelands, nature centers, community centers, and recreation facilities. Small unmanned kiosks or racks will be installed to create space for the distribution of information about regional programs and events. Wayside exhibits will be installed in such facilities along major recreation and hunting grounds to inform visitors about the appropriate use of Pinelands' resources.

## Programs

Ongoing programs will be promoted and expanded to address Pinelands interpretive themes. Presentations, interpretive media, and written material will be distributed to interested individuals and organizations.

# A L T E R N A T I V E 2

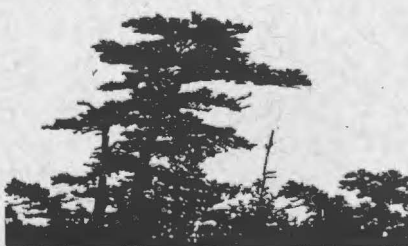


New programs will support Pinelands' cultural traditions through education, apprenticeship, and/or research. They will also provide information about the careful use of Pinelands' resources.

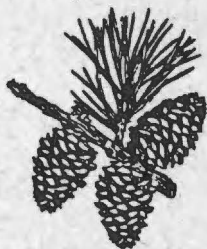
Where needed, new programs will be developed and coordinated with those already in place to address Pinelands' interpretive themes.

## Management

A non-profit organization will be formed that includes members from the public and private sector. This organization will coordinate the delivery of interpretive programs and services offered throughout the state. It will help secure grants, seed money, and financial assistance for such programming. The National Park Service will provide technical assistance to the organization to help determine its structure as well as coordinate, plan, and implement the interpretive and educational programs.







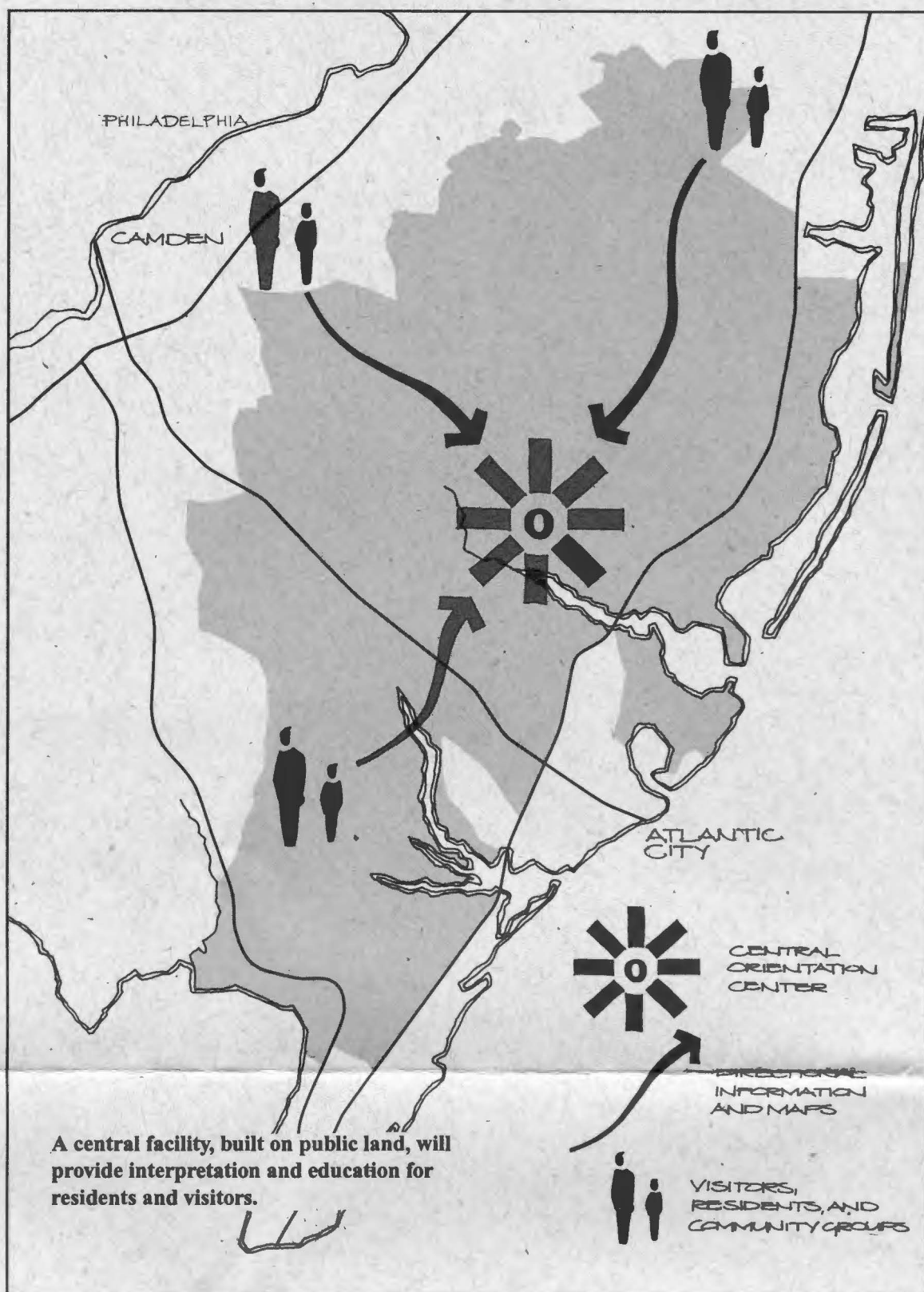
## Interpretive Strategy

- Interpretation will be focused within a central facility and will emphasize the unique physical and cultural resources of the Pinelands.
- Interactive media and programs will introduce visitors to Pinelands' history, land management, interpretive themes, and resources.
- Information will be available on Pinelands' historic sites, area environmental centers, colleges and universities offering Pinelands courses, and community programs.
- Academic facilities will provide opportunities for educational courses, workshops, and research.

## Sites and Facilities

A central facility will provide access for visitors and residents alike. Hub facilities will accommodate interpretation for visitors along with academic programs. Interpretive exhibits, interactive media, an observation platform, an outdoor trail, and a bookstore specializing in Pinelands materials will provide the visitor with a comprehensive overview of the Pinelands. An outdoor area will allow visitors to view a sampling of Pinelands' ecosystems. Information describing Pinelands' historic sites, environmental centers, colleges and universities with Pinelands programs, recreational facilities, and continuing community programs will allow the visitor to explore the region.

Space for educational and research programs will be provided with a modest auditorium, several multi-purpose rooms, and a centralized library for Pinelands materials to facilitate academic study of the region.



## Programs

Interpretive programs will focus on increasing an awareness of Pinelands' ecosystems and traditions. An educational staff will coordinate in-service training of teachers and classroom programs for area students. Workshops, lectures, symposiums, and ongoing programs like the Pinelands Short Course will reach out to communities, local businesses, interested citizens, and educators. National and international interest in the Pinelands International Biosphere Reserve will be enhanced by the Hub's library collection and facilities.



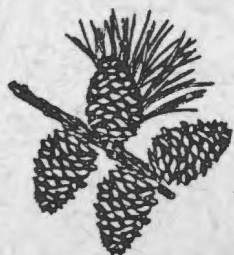
## Management

The Pinelands Commission will be responsible for the initial implementation and ongoing operations. New Jersey's DEPE and the National Park Service will provide technical support in interpretive planning and community outreach programs. A partnership of public and private interests will form an advisory council to the commission to guide the development of the Hub. Federal and state funding will ensure the implementation of the facility.

A non-profit organization composed of public and private representatives will oversee the long-term operation and management of the facility and its programs. Revenue generated from entry fees, membership dues, private donations, and grants will help support the facility, its staff, and programs.



# STATE PARK ORIENTATION TO PINELANDS RESOURCES



## Interpretive Strategy

- A visitor orientation facility centrally located at an existing state site will present an overview of Pinelands' history and resources.
- State-owned sites will illustrate specific interpretive themes and provide for visitor exploration.
- Information about related resources, recreation opportunities, and interpretive opportunities will also be provided.

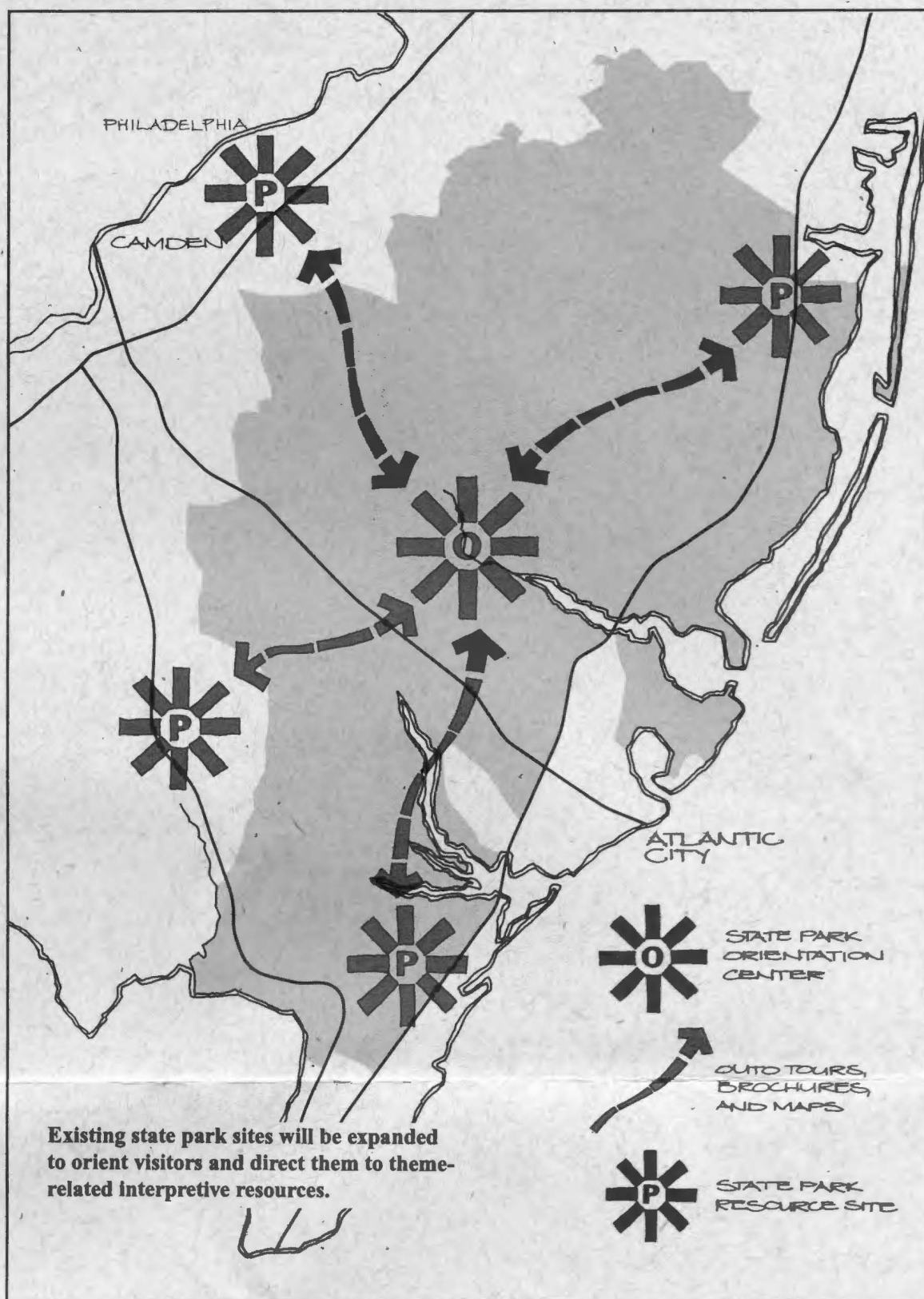
## Sites and Facilities

The visitor orientation center will be located within a state park. Interpretive media will introduce visitors to Pinelands' resources and invite them to explore park resource sites. The center will provide visitor amenities, including an observation platform with vistas of the Pinelands' landscape, a bookstore, a cafe, and meeting spaces for Pinelands' organizations.

Four to five park resource sites will provide a high level of interpretation related to specific interpretive themes. These sites might include Batsto, Double Trouble, Allaire, Whitesbog, or Atsion. A second tier of less intensive interpretive sites will be drawn from state, county, federal, and private facilities.

Wayside displays will be installed at popular recreation points to remind visitors about the careful use and protection of Pinelands' resources.

## A L T E R N A T I V E 4



## Programs

Exhibits, demonstrations, and lectures will develop an overview of interpretive themes. The orientation center will coordinate and administer interpretive programs for the resource sites. Center staff will work with existing Pinelands' groups to better promote ongoing programs. Theme-specific programs and demonstrations will be held at resource sites.

## Management

New Jersey's DEPE will take the lead in initiating the project and providing ongoing operation and management of the orientation center and resource sites. Both the National Park Service and the Pinelands Commission will provide technical support for interpretive facilities. The Park Service will assist the DEPE in developing interpretive programs and identify staffing needs, if necessary. Independent organizations currently providing interpretation will form a task force to assist and advise the DEPE.





## NEXT STEPS

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS  
ALEXANDER LIBRARY  
RUTGERS UNIVERSITY  
NEW BRUNSWICK, N. J. 08903

For more information about the Pinelands Interpretive Plan or further copies of the newsletter, contact:

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Liberty State Park  
Wolf Drive  
Jersey City NJ 07305  
(201) 915-3410

The preferred alternative will articulate a vision for the Pinelands' community. It will guide long-range interpretive planning and the implementation of interpretive goals. Your participation is important to the creation of a meaningful plan—please act now! Open house public meetings will be held—look for announcements in your community!

Please come share your views about the Interpretive Plan.

The views presented in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect any policy or position of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Photographs courtesy of Joseph Lucas

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## OPEN HOUSE MEETINGS

1

Date, location and time to be determined.

Watch for notices in local media.



2

DATE

September 20, 1993

LOCATION

Ocean County College  
Toms River, New Jersey

TIME

7:00 P.M.



3

DATE

September 27, 1993

LOCATION

Stockton State College  
Pomona, New Jersey

TIME

4:00 P.M.



Division of Park and Resource Planning  
National Park Service  
U.S. Custom House - Room 260  
2nd and Chestnut Streets  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

