

# AUDUBON AD VOCA TE

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## Governor designates new Bird Conservation Areas

### Staff Report

In late April and early May, Governor George E. Pataki designated three new state Bird Conservation Areas. They include the Nissequogue River State Park on Long Island, the Northern Montezuma Wetlands Complex west of Syracuse and Braddock Bay near Rochester on Lake Ontario. In addition, designation of several other Bird Conservation Areas is pending, including the Bashakill and Mongaup Valley Wildlife Management Areas, as well as the proposed Schodack State Park. All of these areas have been recommended for designation by the Bird Conservation Area Advisory Committee, which was established under the

Bird Conservation Area Law of 1997. These designations will help guide future management plans and decisions for these state owned lands.

The Nissequogue River Bird Conservation Area on the shore of Long Island Sound provides one of the few points for true public access to the Sound. State Parks Commissioner Bernadette Castro stated, "I commend Governor Pataki for designating the Nissequogue River Bird Conservation Area, establishing this park and providing more Long Island Sound access for the people of New York state."

Braddock Bay is a unique wetland and shoreline complex on the shores of  
*DESIGNATIONS continued on page 4*



NYS DEC

Gov. Pataki and DEC Commissioner John Cahill announce new Bird Conservation Area designations.

## Growing communities the smart way...



New York State Office

At the second annual Smart Growth Conference, organized by Audubon in Albany May 4, about 350 attendees heard from members of the governor's Task Force on Quality Communities, chaired by Lt. Gov. Mary Donohue. Other task force members, from left, include David Catalfamo of Empire State Development Corp., Nathan Rudgers of NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, and Secretary of State Alexander F. Treadwell. See page 10 for details.

## State revising open space plan

### By Graham Cox

The state Environmental Conservation and Parks agencies have begun an 18-month process to update the state open space conservation plan, beginning with a series of meetings of their regional open space advisory committees between April and September.

The open space plan, first prepared in 1992 and revised twice since then, "proposes what open space and historic sites should be saved for New York state's future and describes how we can conserve and manage these resources in a sensible and affordable way."

The eight chapters and appendixes of the current plan, finalized in 1998, include: natural and cultural inventory data; lays out a framework of open space conservation needs; describes the rating system used for conservation choices; lists the nine regional committee's recommendations for open space priorities; and lists 131 specific high priority conservation projects.

Francis Sheehan, director of natural resource planning at the state DEC, in charge of the plan revision, said the timetable for the work is as follows:

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## DOT commissioner emphasizes new ethic

Following is an interview with New York State Department of Transportation Commissioner Joseph Boardman regarding his views on conservation issues facing the state. The interview was conducted by National Audubon Society of New York State Executive Director David J. Miller.

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*MR. MILLER: As Commissioner of DOT, Department of Transportation, what role do you and your agency play in environmental and conservation issues? How do transportation issues and environmental issues come together?*

COMMISSIONER BOARDMAN: An interesting fact is that DOT owns 1 percent of the real estate in New York, and that 1 percent of real estate is really down where the wetlands and the bird sanctuaries and the conservation issues are found. We put out a film on these areas, called The

Natural Corridor, highlighting the waterways in New York. When you're on the waterways, you're certainly in an area that is a tremendous asset to New York, both from

the standpoint of what it's been in the past in transportation, and also in wildlife and in conservation. So we have the opportunity to make a positive contribution to what's going to happen in this state on that 1 percent.

And, I think the thing that New York State DOT has tried to do under George Pataki's leadership is to begin to change how it thinks about what its job is in connection with the environment, whether we're building roadways or whether we're providing access for industrial development and economic development, or whether we're working with communities for mass transit and public transportation.

Yanty Marsh, for example, off Lake Ontario, near Rochester, was a bird sanctuary that was being encroached upon, and while there wasn't any direct need for us to make changes to that, there was a recognition by the people in this department and others in the state that we could be a help in making sure that that sanctuary didn't go away. And we stepped in, stepped up to the plate to help.

*The federal T-21 program provides for environmental enhancement, restoration and protection projects. Can*

*you describe some of the successful implementations of that program here in New York.*

I think the first thing that makes the program successful also makes it difficult. We have a metropolitan planning organization-based advisory group that looks at the projects, the dollars, the types of categories of projects, and they work on that on a local level identifying, from their perspective on a local level, what projects they want done.

We also look at it on a broader perspective. Is it meeting the kinds of goals that the governor and the department and others want, across the state, to meet environmental responsibilities or transportation access responsibilities? I think

*BOARDMAN continued on page 3*



Joseph Boardman

