



**Board of County Commissioners**

County of Hunterdon  
71 Main Street, Building #1  
PO Box 2900  
Flemington, NJ 08822-2900

**MEDIA RELEASE**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Storm Damaged Park Trails And Parking Lots On The Mend In Hunterdon County**

### **Removing Dangerous Trees Will Protect Public Using The Parks**

Parking lots and trails in Hunterdon County Parks that were damaged by tropical storm Ida are being repaired, the County Commissioner Board's Deputy Director Zach Rich reported at the Board's June 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, where authorization was also given for an inventory of high-risk trees in the Parks.

Rich, the Board's liaison for the Parks Division, reported, "The parking lots at Sunnyside and Westcott Preserve, which were badly damaged by tropical storm Ida, are being upgraded to permeable pavers.

These pavers are more environmentally friendly, as water can saturate through the pavers rather than running off, assisting with water re-charge."

Rich also noted, "Ash tree removal and trail trimming at the Wings section of the South branch reservation, which began several weeks ago, has been completed. These actions help to make the trails safer and more viable for public use, including our equestrians.

The next park trail areas to be addressed are the Musconetcong Gorge in Holland and Teetertown Preserve in Lebanon Township."

The Commissioner Board also approved a \$78,900 contract with Gracie & Harrigan Consulting Foresters, Inc. for the firm to conduct an inventory of high-risk trees in the County Parks.



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Rich said, “The inventory will consist of an examination of all existing high-risk trees along property borders, infrastructure, and active use areas in the county’s over 9000 acres of land in over 29 defined park areas.

Once the inventory is completed the contractor will create a high-risk tree plan, with recommended and prioritized maintenance actions to be carried out in the future by the Parks Division.

The various park areas encompass a different types of environments and public use, with correspondingly varied maintenance needs and habitat management goals and requirements.

This work is necessary for the protection of the public using the county parks, particularly the many trails.”

Parks Division Head Dan Bush reported, “Based on preliminary staff investigation, we anticipate that approximately 400 trees per park area will be identified for the study.

With increased Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) activity, it is possible that up to 200 additional trees per park may be identified as high risk. Proper postings for these areas will be created to ensure public safety, and our goal is to provide a healthy eco-system for future generations to enjoy.”