

CHAPTER XI

INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

State, county, municipal, and non-profit agencies should work together to coordinate open space preservation efforts and to pool financial and technical resources to help ensure that large and possibly more difficult acquisitions can be attained. The acquisition of White Lake in Hardwick Township is one example of interagency coordination. The purchase pooled the financial resources of the County of Warren, the State of New Jersey, and the Ridge and Valley Conservancy, through private donations. Working with the Township of Hardwick to support the acquisition, the \$3.5 million purchase was accomplished. Without this coordination and cooperation, the acquisition may never have happened.

It is recommended that, at least once per year, the Warren County Planning Board and the Warren County Board of Recreation Commissioners sponsor an Open Space Preservation Forum. All players involved with open space preservation will be invited to share with each other the past year's successes and failures, and discuss the following year's activities. This forum will become the catalyst for formal and informal contacts to be made.

In addition to this, interagency cooperation can be taken a step further. With the recent overwhelming support of the \$98 million dedicated source of funding for open space and farmland preservation, there will be opportunities for Warren County to acquire land with technical and financial assistance from the State Green Acres Program. Periodically, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Green Acres Program, has received offers of land that do not meet the criteria for state agencies to acquire and manage. Some of these lands, however, may meet the County's site selection criteria and, through this cooperative agreement, the land could be purchased

utilizing all available resources and assigned to the county for administration and management.