

Commissioners Seek to Prevent Foreign Ownership of Farmland

By Art Charlton

WHITE TOWNSHIP, NJ — Proposed state legislation that would protect New Jersey farmland from falling under control of hostile foreign governments won support from the Warren County Board of County Commissioners tonight.

"Food security is national security and we cannot risk nations that wish to undermine us taking control of our farmland, particularly here in New Jersey," Commissioner Director Lori Ciesla said.

A resolution adopted by the commissioners expresses the board's support for New Jersey Senate Bill 3534 (S-3534) and encourages the State Senate and Assembly to pass it.

Introduced on January 30, 2023 by state Sen. Douglas J.

Steinhardt of District 23, which includes much of Warren County, and co-sponsored by state Sen. Michael Testa Jr. of District 1 in southern New Jersey, S-3534 would restrict foreign governments and persons from acquiring, purchasing, or otherwise obtaining agricultural land in New Jersey.

The Board of County Commissioners' resolution recognizes that food security is national security and that rising concerns exist regarding foreign governments and persons acquiring American farmland.

"New Jersey is known as the Garden State and we should be doing everything in our power to keep it that way," Commissioner James R. Kern III said, adding, "This board has been long committed to the preservation of our farmland and tackling the many challenges that face the agriculture industry. This bill, sponsored by Senator Steinhardt, addresses a new threat to our farming community. It is vital that our land remains part of America's food supply and I hope that Trenton will support the senator's proposal."

With the resolution, the Board of County Commissioners recognized the importance of protecting New Jersey's agricultural land from acquisition by hostile foreign governments or persons and resolved that S-3534 will help to achieve that goal.

"We're an agricultural community and it's important to our economy and the rest of northwestern New Jersey's economies that our farmland stay in the hands of those who will be feeding our families," Commissioner Jason J. Sarnoski said.

"Warren County works tirelessly to protect our farming community and this bill is necessary to protect this state from the potential reality of nations who are unfriendly to the US hindering our ability to produce food for our own domestic needs," Commissioner Director Ciesla said.

Bald Eagle

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teeter on the edge of the nest, take their first terrifying plunge toward flight — eagle-watching at this time of year is, no doubt about it, just plain thrilling.

Much as you love watching them, do the birds a favor. Keep your distance. Give them the privacy and peace they need — don't try to get "just a little" closer; use binoculars or a scope instead. Move slowly and avoid moving toward the nest. If you must speak, whisper. Watch and photograph from a blind, even if it's just some concealing shrubbery. And of course, never even think of trying to make the birds fly.

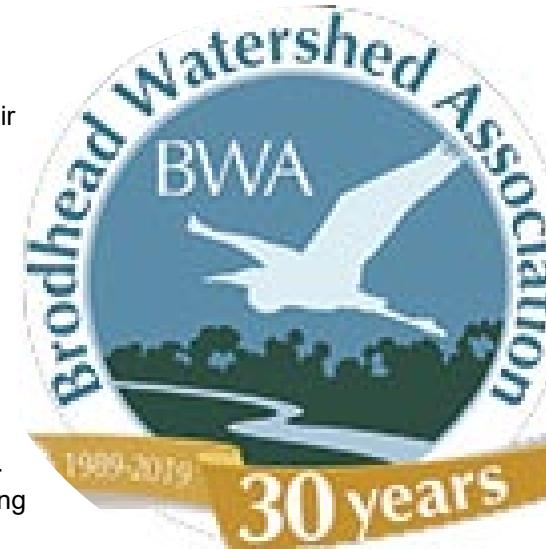
You should also notice their behavior. If a bird becomes agitated, starts vocalizing, or heaven forbid, moves away, you are doing and leave the area. The emotional rush of catching sight of an eagle, on a nest or soaring above a creek, elevates a normal day to something magical. Do your part to protect them!

For more information about eagle etiquette from the Pennsylvania Game Commission:

<https://www.pgc.pa.gov/Wildlife/WildlifeSpecies/BaldEagles/BaldEagleWatching/Pages/BaldEagleNestEtiquette.aspx>

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