COUNTY OF OCEAN BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

# BARNEGAT BRANCH TRAIL

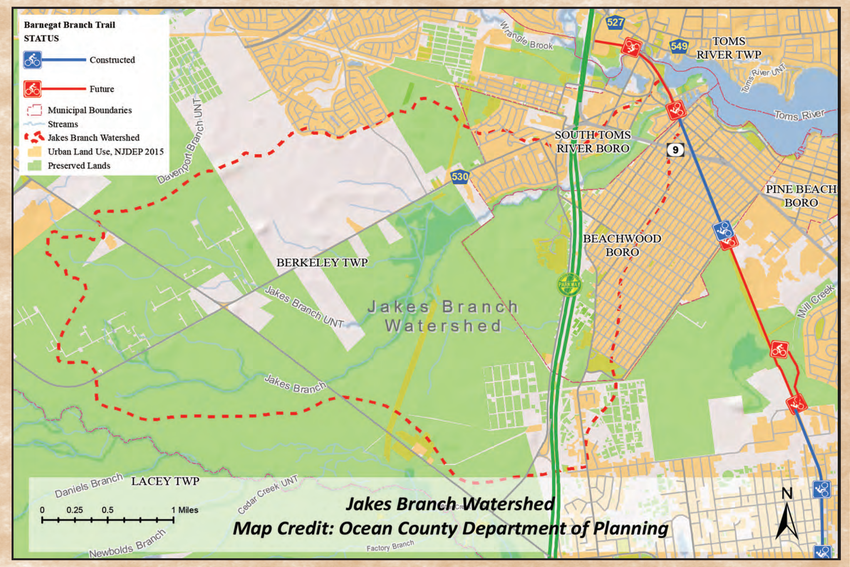
DEPARTMENTS OF PLANNING, ENGINEERING AND PARKS & RECREATION

# GATEWAY TO JAKES BRANCH



Photo Credit: Ocean County Parks & Recreation

Jakes Branch Visitors Center.




Forest fires are a vital part of the fire ecology that dominates the Pinelands. Historically, the 1963 forest fire is remembered for burning 183,000 acres and threatening the homes in the area. Another major fire occurred on June 2, 2002. A combination of factors including 80 degree temperature, relative humidity of 54 percent and winds of 12 mph caused the fire to burn 1,277 acres and jumped the Garden State Parkway endangering thousands of residential homes.

Opened to the public in 2009, Jakes Branch County Park is 400 acres (360 forested) west of the Garden State Parkway in the Borough of Beachwood. The park has one of the most comprehensive visitor centers acting as a gateway to the NJ Pine Barrens. The visitor center has a five story tall observation deck with ADA access that offers magnificent, unequaled views of the Jakes Branch Watershed and beyond, including Hangar One at the Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst complex. The park includes 5 active recreation fields, basketball courts and areas for public picnics. The park also includes nearly ten miles of nature trails at various skill challenges.

*Information adapted from the Jakes Branch County Park Brochure*

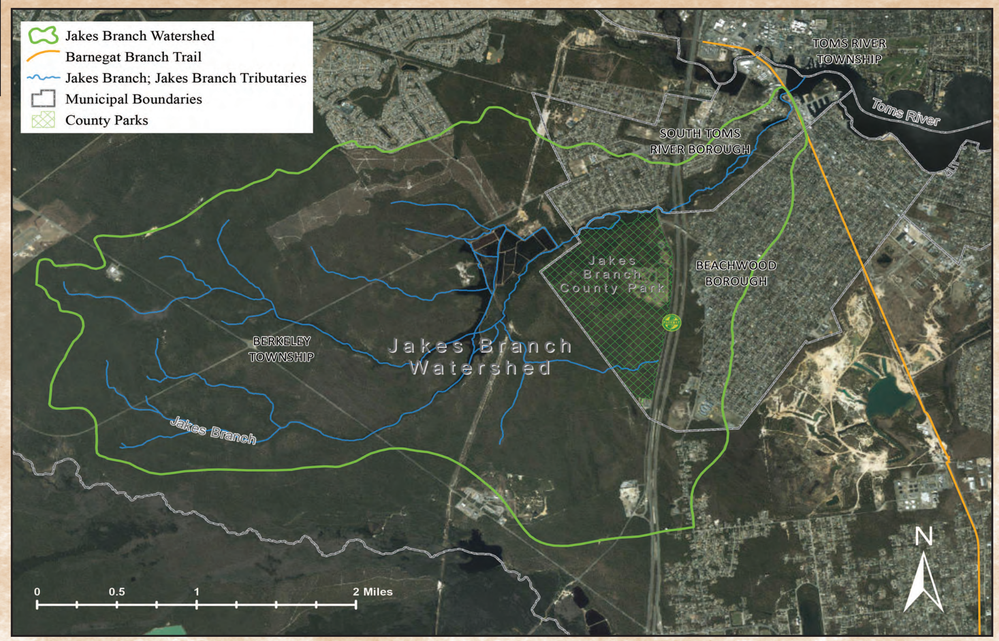
Jakes Branch is a tributary of the Toms River. The watershed covers approximately 9.5 square miles and includes parts of the Borough of South Toms River, the Borough of Beachwood and the Township of Berkeley.

Jakes Branch was previously known as Jacob's Creek, thought to be named for local land owner Jacob Jacobs. Jacob Jacobs purchased land in the area in 1760 and proceeded to build a water powered saw mill on a stream that drained Doctors Long Swamp, just south of this spot where the tributary enters into the Toms River. Jacobs operated the mill until 1779 when he left to oversee another saw mill at Speedwell (located within present day Tabernacle Township in Burlington County) on the East Branch of the Wading River.

At various times, other mills were owned or operated by William Giberson, Samuel H. Shreve and Eli Yoder.

The mill at the end of Mill Street was converted to an iron foundry and later the Caleb Falkinberg talcum powder mill. The same mill was operated in 1881 by Christopher Lake, the father of Simon Lake (an early developer of the open sea submarine.)

*Information adapted from Pauline S. Miller in Ocean County: Four Centuries in the Making.*







The Barnegat Branch Trail logo was explicitly designed with history in mind: Lady Liberty's silhouette is reminiscent of the Central Railroad of NJ (CNJ) logo, adopted by the railroad in 1944 to reflect the close proximity of the CNJ Terminal in Jersey City to the Statue of Liberty. The BBT logo also includes a ghost locomotive, as well as Ocean County's most recognizable environmental features.